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Section 3: An Excellent Pattern in the Apostle Muhammad

Surah Al-'Ahzab – Verse 21

21. "Indeed in the messenger of Allah you have an excellent pattern (of conduct) for him who hopes in Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much."

The Arabic word *l'uswahl* (*an excellent pattern*) is used in the case that someone follows others in doing good deeds. This word has been used two times in the Qur'an concerning two great prophets. One of them is about Abraham (as), and the other is about the Prophet of Islam (S).

It is interesting that Abraham being an excellent pattern is in acquittance from the polytheists, and the Prophet of Islam (S) being an excellent pattern mentioned in the holy verses relates to his perseverance against the enemies.

So the verse says:

"Indeed in the messenger of Allah you have an excellent pattern (of conduct) for him who hopes in Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much."

Not only in this field but also in the whole life the best pattern of conduct for you is the Prophet of Islam (S). His excellent spiritual conditions, his patience and perseverance, his awareness, wit, sincerity and attention to Allah, his domination upon different events, and not being submitted when confronting

hardships and difficulties, each can be a pattern and a lesson for all Muslims.

This great captain does not show the least weakness or precipitation when his ship faces with the strongest tempests. He is not only the captain of this ship but also its sure anchor. He is both the guiding torch and the cause of calmness and tranquillity of the souls of its travellers.

He is a good companion for the believers. He takes a pick in his hand, digs the ditch, gathers its soil with a spade, and takes them out of the ditch.

In order to protect the spiritual conditions and coolness of his companions, he jokes with them, and for encouraging them he recites epic poems. He constantly reminds them the remembrance of Allah, and gives them glad tidings concerning their glorious future and great victories. He makes them beware of the plots of the hypocrites and gives them the required awareness.

He does not neglect of the correct martial arrangement and selecting the best methods of army even for a moment, and, in the meantime, by applying different ways, he strives to create a gap between the rows of the enemy.

Yes, he is the best leader and excellent pattern of conduct for the believers in this field and in all fields.

It is interesting that the Qur'an in the above verse considers this excellent pattern specific to those who have these three specialties: being hopeful in Allah, hopeful in the Day of the Hereafter, and remembering Allah very much.

In fact, faith in origin and Resurrection is the motive of this motion, and the remembrance of Allah is the cause of its continuation; for, no doubt, the one whose heart is not filled with such a faith, is not able to act like the manner of the holy Prophet (S), and also, in the continuation of paving this way, if he does not ceaselessly remember Allah and does not send away Satans from himself, he will not be able to continue the proper imitation.

This point is also worthy to be noted that Ali (as), with that bravery that he had in all battlefields, a sample of which is the Battle of 'Ahzab, in one of his statements says:

"When the crisis became red-hot, we sought refuge with the Messenger of Allah (S) and none of us was closer to the enemy than he himself."1

Surah Al-'Ahzab - Verse 22

وَلَمَّا رَأِي الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الأَحْزَابَ قَالُوا هَذَا مَا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَصَدَقَ اللَّهُ وَلَمَّا رَأِي الْمُؤْمِنُولُهُ وَمَا زَادَهُمْ اللَّا إِيمَاناً وَتَسْلِيماً

22. "And when the believers saw the allies, they said: 'This is what Allah and His Messenger promised us, and Allah and His Messenger spoke the truth; and it increased not in them but faith and submission."

Formerly, in verse 12, we recited that the hypocrites and those in whose heart was a disease counted the promises of the Messenger of Allah a delusion, while, in this noble verse, the believers consider them the truth.

In this holy verse, the Qur'an refers to the state of the true believers and says:

"And when the believers saw the allies, they said: 'This is what Allah and His Messenger promised us, and Allah and His Messenger spoke the truth; and it increased not in them but faith and submission."

Which promise was it that Allah (s.w.t.) and His Messenger (S) had promised?

Some commentators have said that this promise refers to the saying that the Prophet (S) had said before announcing that soon the tribes of Arab and the Muslims' different enemies would unite with each other and come to attack them, but finally Muslims would be victorious.

When the believers observed the attack of the clans they became sure that it was that very promise of the Prophet (S).

They said:

"Now that the first part of the promise has taken place, the second part of it, that is triumph, will surely happen, too."

So, their faith and submission increased in them.

Another thing is that in Surah Al-Bagarah, No. 2, verse 214 Allah had told the Muslims:

"Or have you supposed you will enter Paradise untouched by the suffering which was endured by those before you? They were afflicted by distress and adversity and were so shaken that...said: 'When will Allah's help (come)?'..."

In brief, they had been told that they would be seriously tried by different hard examinations, and observing the clans, they understood the statement of Allah and His Messenger (S) and thus their faith increased.

These two commentaries, of course, do not contradict with each other, specially with regard to the fact that, in principle, one of them is Allah's promise and the other is the promise of the Prophet (S) both of which have been mentioned in the verse under discussion, and this matter seems completely appropriate.

Surah Al-'Ahzab – Verse 23

23. "Among the believers are men who were true to their covenant with Allah; some of them have fulfilled their vow (by martyrdom), and some are still awaiting and they have not changed in the least."

To defend from the truth mainly as far as the boundary of martyrdom, is the sign of truthfulness in faith.

This verse points to two special groups of the believers who always were before others in following the Prophet (S), and were steadfast in their covenant with Allah, i.e., in self–sacrifice until their last breath and that their last drop of blood to be shed. Some of them kept their words and became martyr in the field of Holy Struggle, and some others are waiting, too.

The verse says:

"Among the believers are men who were true to their covenant with Allah; some of them have fulfilled their vow (by martyrdom), and some are still awaiting and they have not changed in the least."

In contrast to the hypocrites, or to the believers of weak faith, whom the tempest of the events causes to sway this side and that side and everyday create a new evil thought in their feeble mind, those true believers stood firmly, like a mountain, and proved that their covenant with Allah was never breakable.

The Arabic word *InahbI* here means covenant, vow, and promise, and sometimes it has also been used in the sense of: death, or danger, or speed, or shedding tear with a loud voice.2

The commentators are divided in belief that about which persons this verse was revealed.

Hakim Abul-Qasim Huskani, the famous scholar of the Sunnites, with document narrates from Ali (as) who said:

"The verse (saying:)

'Among the believers are men who were true to their covenant with Allah'

has been revealed about us, and by Allah I am the same one who is waiting for martyrdom, and I have never changed my style and I am still firm upon my covenant."3

Some other commentators have said that the Qur'anic sentence:

"Some of them have fulfilled their vow (by martyrdom)"

refers to the martyrs of Badr and 'Uhud; and the sentence:

"and some are still awaiting"

refers to some other true Muslims who were waiting for victory or martyrdom.

It has been narrated from 'Anas-ibn-Malik who said his uncle, Anas-ibn-Nadr, was absent on the day of the Battle of Badr. Later when he was informed of it, the Battle had been finished and he regretted why he could not take part in that Holy war.

He made a covenant with Allah that if another battle happened he would participate in it and continue until the end. So, he participated in the Battle of 'Uhud and at the time when a group of strivers ran away he did not and resisted so much so that he was injured and finally he was martyred.4

It has also been narrated from Ibn-'Abbas who said:

"The sentence:

'Some of them have fulfilled their vow'

points to Hamzat-ibn-'Abd-ul-Mutallib and the rest of the martyrs of 'Uhud as well as Anas-ibn-Nadr and his companions."5

There is no contradiction between these commentaries, because the verse has such a vast concept that envelops the entire martyrs of Islam who had been martyred before the event of the Battle of 'Ahzab, and waiters were all those who were awaiting for the victory and martyrdom; and some persons such as Hamzah Sayyid–ush–Shuhada' (as) and Ali (as) were at the top of these two groups.

It is recorded in Tafsir-us-Safi as follows:

"Verily when every one of the companions of Imam Husayn in Karbala intended to go out (towards the battlefield) he went to Imam Husayn (as) for farewell said:

'Peace be on you, O son of the Messenger of Allah!'

Then he (as) responded him (by saying):

'And peace be on you, and we will come after you, too,'

and recited:

'Some of them have fulfilled their vow (by martyrdom), and some are still awaiting'."6

It is understood from 'books of martyrdom' that Imam Husayn (as) also recited this verse beside other martyrs, such as Muslim-ibn-'Ausajah, and he recited it when the news of the martyrdom of 'Abdillah-ibn-Yaqtar reached him.7

This shows that the verse has such a vast concept that it encompasses all true believers in any time, whether those who became martyr in the path of Allah, or those who remained unchanged upon their covenant with Allah and were ready for Holy war and martyrdom.

Surah Al-'Ahzab – Verse 24

24. "That Allah may recompense the truthful ones for their truthfulness, and chastise the hypocrites if He please, or turn unto them (mercifully), verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

The amount of receiving reward is based on veracity in action.

This holy verse reiterates the result and the final aim of the deeds of the believers and the hypocrites in a short sentence, as follows:

"That Allah may recompense the truthful ones for their truthfulness, and chastise the hypocrites if He please, or turn unto them (mercifully), verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

Neither the truthfulness and loyalty of the sincere believers remains without divine recompense, nor will the negligence and hindrances of the hypocrites be left without retribution.

But in order that even the way of repentance might not be closed to these obstinate hypocrites, He leaves the doors of repentance open to them by the sentence:

"Or turn unto them (mercifully)"

and He qualifies Himself with the Attributes of Forgiving and Merciful, so that the motive of moving toward faith, truthfulness, and fulfilling the Divine responsibilities becomes active in them.

In view of the fact that this sentence has been mentioned as the result of the ugly deeds of the hypocrites, some of the great commentators have said that sometimes a great sin in the receptive hearts may become the source of a revolution and return toward the truth, and it might be a vice which is an

Surah Al-'Ahzab – Verse 25

25. "And Allah sent back those who disbelieved in their wrath, they gained no good; and Allah sufficed the believers of fighting, and Allah is Strong, Mighty."

You should not be afraid of the unity of the enemies. In the Battle of 'Ahzab there were three groups who united against the Muslims: pagans, the Jews, and the hypocrites, but they returned back while they got no victory, nor any booties.

In this verse, the Qur'an states the ending words about the Battle of 'Ahzab, and, in some short sentences, gives clear conclusion from this event and puts an end to the discussion.

At first it says:

"And Allah sent back those who disbelieved in their wrath, they gained no good..."

The Arabic word *[qayz]* means 'wrath' and sometimes it is used in the sense of 'sorrow', but here there is a combination of both of them. The troops of clans, who had used their utmost effort and endeavour for being victorious against the forces of Islam but failed, returned to their lands while they were sad and angry.

The objective meaning of the Arabic word *[xayr]* (*good*) here is victory in the war. The victory of the army of the disbelievers, of course, was never 'good' but it was vice, yet the Qur'an, which speaks from the mouth of theirs, has applied it 'good', pointing to this fact that they did not get any kind of victory in this field.

Some commentators have said that the objective meaning of /xayr/ here is 'wealth', because this word in some other cases is used in the sense of 'wealth', too, such as in Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 180 which says:

"...if he leaves behind wealth for parents..."

One of the main motives of the army of the disbelievers was gaining booties in Medina and spoiling that city. In principle, in the Age of Ignorance the most important motive of war was this very thing.

But we have no evidence here to limit the meaning of /xayr/ to only 'wealth', but it contained any kind of victory that they desired, and 'wealth' was also one of them that they deprived from all.

Through the next sentence, the verse adds:

"...and Allah sufficed the believers of fighting..."

Allah provided such factors that without a vast fight, in which the believers might tolerate abundant damages and harms, the battle ended. From one side, a strong cold wind disturbed the circumstances of the polytheists.

On the other side, their hearts were filled with a serious terror and horrible fear, which itself is one of the unseen armies of Allah. On the third side, the stroke that Ali–ibn–Abitalib (as) used over the body of 'Amr–ubn–'Abdiwudd, the greatest champion of the enemy, and sent him to destruction, caused them to become hopeless.

So, they gathered their tools, left the siege of Medina and returned back to their own tribes with no gain.

By the last sentence, the verse says:

"...and Allah is strong, Mighty."

There may be found some persons who are 'strong' but they are not mighty and invincible, i.e., a stronger person can defeat him; but the only strong and Mighty one in the world is Allah Whose strength and power is infinite.

It was He Who in such a very hard and dangerous field gave the believers a kind of victory that they did not need even to violently fight, nor did they left so many martyrs.

Surah Al-'Ahzab - Verses 26-27

26. "And He drove down those of the people of the Book (the Jews) who supported them from

their fortresses and He cast awe into their hearts, some you killed and some you made captive." 27. "And He made you heirs of their lands, their dwellings, and their properties, and a land you had not trodden, and Allah is All-powerful over everything."

We must not neglect the penetrating forces and the hidden members of the enemy in the society.

This holy verse refers to the Battle of Bani Qurayzah in the Battle of 'Ahzab who, as they imagined, perjured their own covenant with the Muslims and on the form of hidden members of the enemy helped the polytheists of Mecca in the Battle of 'Ahzab, but they were disgracefully defeated and surrendered.

Three famous tribes of the Jews lived in Medina: Bani Qurayzah, Bani-Nadir, and Bani Qayniqaq. All of these groups had made a covenant with the Prophet of Islam (S) that they should not cooperate with his enemies and would not spy in their benefit, and that they should have a peaceful life with the Muslims.

But the tribe of Qayniqaq in the second year of Hejira, and the tribe of Bani Nadir in the fourth year of Hejira, each with a separate pretext, perjured their covenant and began to fight openly against the Prophet (S). At last, their resistance vanished and they were sent out from Medina.

The members of Bani Qayniqaq went toward 'Atharu'at in Syria, and those of Bani Nadir party were drawn toward Khiybar and partly toward Syria.9

Therefore, when the Battle of 'Ahzab happened in the fifth A.H., the only tribe of these tribes, who remained in Medina, was the tribe of Bani Qurayzah; and as we explained in the commentary of the verses concerning the Battle of 'Ahzab, they knowingly broke their covenant in this field and joined the polytheists of Arab and fought against Muslims.

According to the Islamic narrations, after the end of the Battle of 'Ahzab, when the Quraysh, Qatfan, and other hostile tribes of Arab disgracefully retreated from Medina, the holy Prophet (S) returned home and took off the clothes of war from him and began washing himself.

At this time, by the command of Allah, Gabriel came to him and said:

"Why did you put down your sword? The angels are ready to fight. Just now you must go toward Bani Qurayzah and determine their fate. Truly, there was no chance for verifying the account of Bani Qurayzah better than that opportunity."

The Muslims were busy with their victory, Bani Qurayzah, being horribly terrified, because of their defeat, were returning home with a very weak spirit, and their friends among the Arab tribes were completely tired, and there was no one to support them.

However, a caller from the side of the Prophet (S) announced that before establishing the evening prayer the strivers should move toward Bani Qurayzah. So, they quickly went out to fight. It was just the sunset when the very strong fortresses of Bani Qurayzah were surrounded by the Muslims.

This siege prolonged 25 days and, after that, as we will explain later, all of them were surrendered. In this event some of them were killed and another great victory was added to the victories of the Muslims, and, then, the land of Medina was purified for ever from the dirt of the existence of these hypocritical tribes, and the obstinate enemies.

The verses under discussion have a compressed and exact hint to this event and, as we said before, these verses were sent down after gaining victory and explained the details of this event in the form of a great bounty and merit of Allah.

The verse says:

"And He drove down those of the people of the Book (the Jews) who supported them from their fortresses..."

The Arabic term *|sayasi|* is the plural form of /sisah/ in the sense of strong fortresses, then it has also been applied for any means of defence, such as: a cow's horn, and the small horn of the foot of a rooster.

This makes it clear that the Jews had built their fortresses in a side of Medina on a high point and defended themselves from their tops. (The application of the Qur'anic word *l'anzalal* (*He drove down*) is also in the same meaning.)

Then, it adds:

"...and He cast awe into their hearts, some you killed and some you made captive."

The next verse continues saying:

"And He made you heirs of their lands, their dwellings, and their properties..."

These sentences state briefly the whole results of the Battle of Bani Qurayzah in which some of these perfidious persons were killed by the Muslims and another group were taken as captives, and a great deal of booties, including: their lands, their houses and their properties were occupied by the Muslims.

The application of the word 'heirs' concerning those booties is for the sake that the Muslims did not tolerate much toil for them and they easily got those abundant booties which were the fruit of the Jews' cruelty, tyranny, and exploitation during many years in Medina.

Then, at the end of the verse, the Qur'an says:

"...and a land you had not trodden, and Allah is All-powerful over everything."

The commentators have delivered different statements about the purpose of the land mentioned in the verse, saying: "a land you had not trodden".

Some of them believe that it refers to the land of 'Khiybar' which was later conquered by the Muslims.

Some others say that it refers to the land of Mecca, while another group believe that it refers to the lands of Room and Iran.

Some commentators say that it refers to all of the lands that from that day on until the Day of Hereafter Muslims occupy as their own realms.

But none of these probabilities is consistent with the apparent of the verse, because the verse in the frame of reference of the verb in the past tense /'aura@akum/ (He made you heirs) mentioned in the verse is an evidence that this land was occupied by the Muslims in this very fight of Bani Qurayzah in addition to the land of Mecca, which is one of commentaries, and it was not a land that the Muslims had not trodden in, while the Qur'an says:

"...and a land you had not trodden...".

Apparently this verse points to the special gardens and lands which were under the authority of Bani Qurayzah and no body had the right to enter them, because the Jews seriously tried to protect their properties.

And if we disregard the past tense of the verb of this victory, it adapts more to the land of Khiybar which was located not so far from the Jewish tribe and, however, the Muslims occupied it 10

Some Points

1- The Main Root of the Battle of Bani Qurayzah

The Holy Qur'an testifies that the main factor of this Battle was the support of the Jews of Bani Qurayzah from the polytheists of Arabs in the Battle of 'Ahzab, because it says:

"...He drove down those of the people of the Book (The Jews) who supported them..."

Moreover, the Jews, in principle, were counted as a hidden group in Medina for the enemies of Islam. They worked hard in propagations against Islam and they used any opportunity they found to damage the Muslims.

As we said before, among the three tribes of the Jews (Bani Qayniqaq, Bani Nadir, and Bani Qurayzah) only the third group had remained in Medina at the time of the Battle of 'Ahzab, and the first and second groups as the result of perjury were condemned to leave Medina, and this third group, who acted to breaking covenant and joining to the enemies of Islam, should receive the retribution of their own treacherous deeds and be punished for their crimes.

2- The Event of the Battle of Bani Qurayzah

We said that the Prophet (S), immediately after the end of the Battle of 'Ahzab, was ordered to make clear the account of Bani Qurayzah.

It has been recorded that the Muslims hurried to attend in the region of the fortresses of Bani Qurayzah so hastily that even some of them neglected to perform their evening prayer and out of necessity they belated accomplishment of it later.

The Prophet (S) issued the command of the siege of their fortresses. This siege prolonged twenty five days. As the Holy Qur'an implies, Allah cast an intensive awe in their hearts.

Ka'b-ibn-'Asad, who was one of the chiefs of the Jews, said:

"I am sure that Muhammad (S) will not leave us alone until he fights against us. I suggest three things that you choose either of them that you desire.

My first suggestion is that we shake hand with this man and believe in him and follow him, because it has been proved for you that he is the Messenger of Allah, and we find the signs of his prophethood in our books. In this case your life, wealth, children and wives will be safe and sound."

They answered that they would not leave the Torah and would not accept anything instead of it.

He said:

"Now that you did not accept my suggestion, let us kill our children and wives with our own hands so that our thought can be free from them, and then draw your swords and fight against Muhammad (S) and his followers to see what Allah desires.

If we are killed we will not be worried about our wives and children, and if we won the battle, there would be found many wives and children for us later."

They said:

"How do we kill these helpless ones with our own hands? After them, what is the worth of living for us?"

Ka'b-ibn-'Asad said:

"Well! You did not accept this. Tonight is the night before Saturday. Muhammad (S) and his companions think that we will not attack them tonight. Let us attack them insidiously, perhaps we will win the battle."

They said that they would not do that either, because they were never willing to violate the esteem of Saturday.

Ka'b angrily said:

"Since the day you were born from your mothers, none of you have been wise even for a night."

After that, they asked the Prophet (S) to send 'Abu Lubabah to them in order that they would consult with him.

When 'Abu Lubabah came to them, the Jewish women and children began crying in front of him and he was seriously affected by that scene. Then the Jewish men asked him whether he approved that they would submit the command of Muhammad (S).

'Abu Lubabah agreed with them, but at the same time he pointed to his throat which meant that the Prophet (S) would kill all of them.

'Abu Lubabah says when he left that place he understood his treachery. Then, instead of going to meet the Prophet (S), he went directly into the mosque and fastened himself to one of the pillars of the mosque and said he would not move from that place until Allah (s.w.t.) might accept his repentance.

At last, Allah forgave his sin because of his truthfulness and a verse of the Qur'an was revealed in this concern, saying:

"And (there are) others who have confessed to their sins. They have mixed a righteous deed and an evil one. May be Allah will turn (mercifully) to them (and accept their repentance). Verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."11

Finally, the Jews of Bani Qurayzah had to be surrendered without any condition. The holy Prophet (S) told them whether they were content that he should execute whatever Sa'd-ibn-Ma'ath would judge about them, (and they accepted).

Sa'd-ibn-Ma'ath said:

"It is the time when Sa'd must state the ordinance of Allah without considering the scorn of any blamers."

Sa'd made the Jews confess again that they would accept whatever he might judge, and then he shut his eyes and turned his face to that side that the Prophet (S) was standing and said:

"Do you accept my judgement, too?"

the Prophet (S) answered:

'Yes'.

He said:

"I say that those who were ready to fight against Muslims (the men of Bani Qurayzah) must be killed,

and their wives and children must be captured, and their properties must be divided."

But some of them embraced Islam and saved. 12

3- The Sequels of the Battle of Bani Qurayzah

The triumph over this cruel obstinate group had some fruitful results for the Muslims; among them are as follow:

- 1– Purification of the inner army of Medina and that the Muslims become mentally reposeful from the spies of the Jews.
- 2- The destruction of the centre of Arab polytheists in Medina and that they became hopeless of providing an inner rebellion.
- 3– The finance power of the Muslims was strengthened by the booties of this battle.
- 4– The way of the future victories was paved, and that of Khiybar occupation in particular.
- 5– The fixation of the situation of Islam in the view of both the enemies and friends inside and outside of Medina was established.
 - 1. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, wonderful saying No. 9
 - 2. Mufradat by Raqib, Majma'-ul-Bayan, and Lisan-ul-'Arab
 - 3. Majma'-ul-Bayan under the abovementioned verse
 - 4. Tafsir-i-Qurtabi, Fi-Zilal, and Majma'-ul-Bayan
 - 5. Majma'-ul-Bayan, following the verse
 - 6. Tafsir-us-Safi, following the verse
 - 7. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, P. 259
 - 8. The commentary Al-Mizan, following the verse
 - 9. Kamil-i-Ibn-Athir, P. 2, P. 137 and 173
 - 10. The Battle of Khiybar happened in the seventh A.H.
 - 11. Surah At-Taubah, No. 9, verse 102
 - 12. Kamil, by Ibn-i-'Athir, Vol. 2, P. 185 and Sirah, by Ibn-Husham, Vol. 2 P. 244

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