

## Section 9: Not to Act Without Apostle's Permission

### Sura An-Nur – Verse 62

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَإِذَا كَانُوا مَعَهُ عَلَىٰ أَمْرٍ جَامِعٍ لَّمْ يَذْهَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَسْتَأْذِنُوهُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَأْذِنُونَكَ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَإِذَا اسْتَأْذَنُوكَ لِبَعْضِ شَأْنِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلْنَا لِمَنْ شِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرَ لَهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

**62. “Only these are the (true) believers who believe in Allah and His messenger and, when they are with him on a matter requiring collective action, they go not away until they have asked leave of him. Verily those who ask leave of you, are they who believe in Allah and His Messenger. So, if they ask your leave for some affair of theirs, give leave to whom you please of them, and ask forgiveness of Allah for them. Verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”**

#### Occasion of Revelation

In commentaries there are many things mentioned about the occasion of revelation of this verse that we present to you some of them:

1. Some say that this verse is about Hanzaleh in whose wedding night the commandment of holy war was issued. He took permission from the Prophet (S) to go home for doing the ceremony of wedding night. Because of shortage of time, he went to battle-field without taking legal bath and then he became martyr.

The holy Prophet (S) said:

*“Angles did bathe him.”*

After sleeping only that night with his wife, Allah gave Hanzaleh a child whose history is lengthy. 1

2. Some other commentators say that this verse is about the hypocrites who performed ritual prayer when they were with people and if no one saw them and they were alone, they did not perform ritual prayer.2

3. A group of commentators say that this verse is about some persons who were ordered by the Prophet (S) to do a job, but they did their personal jobs.

4. Some say that this verse is about those Muslims who were busy digging a moat and took permission from the Prophet (S) for visiting their family.

Being with godly leader for helping him and solving problems is the sign of faith, and leaving him alone is the sign of hypocrisy and weakness of faith. In social life, the existence of a leader and following him is necessary.

How this verse is related to other previous verses, some commentators, including the deceased Tabarsi in Majma‘ul-Bayan and the writer of Fi Zilal, have said that because the previous verses talked about the way of association with friends and relatives, the current verse talks about the way of Muslims’ association with their leader and puts emphasis on observing regulations before him so that they obey him in every thing, and, even in many important affairs, without his permission they should not leave the group.

Another probability is that: in some former verses the necessity of obeying Allah and the Prophet (S) was mentioned and one of its conditions was that without his permission Muslims should not do anything, therefore, the verse under discussion talks about this matter.

Anyway, in the beginning of the verse it says:

***“Only these are the (true) believers who believe in Allah and His messenger and, when they are with him on a matter requiring collective action, they go not away until they have asked leave of him...”***

The purpose of the Qur’anic phrase: /‘amrin jami’/ (some common errand) is any important affair that necessities gathering of people and their cooperation and help, whether this issue is a crucial matter of consultation or a matter of holy war and fighting with foe, or Friday prayer in very critical conditions, and such like.

Therefore, if we see that some commentators interpreted it as consultation about holy war or Friday

prayer and feast prayer, we must say that they have referred to some part of the meaning of the verse, and the previous occasions of revelation are the extensions of this general ordinance.

This is in fact a disciplinary order or command that no united group or society can ignore it, because in such conditions, the absence of one person can cost a bomb and harms the ultimate aim, especially when the chief of the group is Allah's messenger and a sagacious, influential spiritual leader.

Paying attention to this matter is important that the purpose of taking permission is not that everyone takes permission superficially and goes after his own job, but he must really take permission; that is, if the leader sees that his absence is insignificant, he permits him to go, otherwise, he must not go and sometimes he must forfeit his personal and private job to a more important aim.

Thus, following this matter, the Qur'an adds implying that those who ask you permission and their belief in Allah and His Messenger is not a mere oral one, but they obey you and Allah's commandment with their soul and spirit, then give them leave.

The verse says:

***"... Verily those who ask leave of you, are they who believe in Allah and His Messenger. So, if they ask your leave for some affair of theirs, give leave to whom you please of them..."***

It is clear that such faithful persons have gathered for an important affair and they would not take permission for a trivial matter; and the purpose of the holy phrase /ša'nihim/, mentioned in this verse, is some important and necessary jobs.

On the other hand, the will of the Prophet (S) does not mean he issued permission without considering conditions and consequence of individuals' absence, but this means that the leader is free to prevent people from going away if he thinks that their presence is vital.

The evidence of this matter is verse 43 of Sura At-Taubah, No.9 in which the holy Prophet (S) was reprimanded for giving permission to some persons, where it says:

***"May Allah pardon you! Why did you give them leave before you had found out those who spoke the truth and before you had known the liars?"***

This verse shows that even the Prophet (S) must be careful in giving permission to individuals and he must count the cost and he is divinely responsible.

In the end of the verse, concerning when giving them permission, it says:

***"...and ask forgiveness of Allah for them. Verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."***

Now the question is that why forgiveness. Were they still wrongdoers while they asked the permission of the Prophet (S)?

There are two ways for answering this question: first, although they were allowed to their jobs, they gave more priority to their personal and private jobs than Muslims' common job and this was not free from a kind of leaving the better<sup>3</sup> and, therefore, they needed forgiveness (like asking forgiveness for a disapproved action).

Moreover, this matter shows that Muslims must not ask permission as much as possible and they must be altruistic and benevolent, because after taking permission their action is abandonment of what is primary, lest trivial matters are considered as excuses of leaving important jobs and works.

The other matter is that they deserve Allah's favour, because of their politeness toward their leader, and the Prophet (S) asks Allah's forgiveness as thanking them.<sup>4</sup>

Anyway these two answers are not inconsistent, and both of them may be the purpose of the verse.

Of course, these two very important Islamic disciplinary commands are not limited to the Prophet (S) and his companions, but this is true about all Divine leaders including prophet, Imam and the scholars who are their successors to observe them, for the issue of Muslims' destiny and Islamic society is under consideration in it.

Even, in addition to the commandment of the glorious Qur'an, it is based on reason and logic, for no organization and group remains without observing this principle, and correct management is impossible without it.

It is really strange that some famous Sunni commentators consider this holy verse as an evidence for exertion and leaving the judgment to religious jurist's opinion, but it must be said that the exertion that is mentioned in the discussions of fundamental dogmas and jurisprudence is about religious ordinances and not about subjects.

No one can reject exertion in subjects and the opinion of every commander and every chief and manager in deciding about executive issues is respected, but this does not mean that we can use independent reasoning in general ordinances of religion and reject or enact an ordinance according to the benefit and interest.

## Sura An-Nur – Verse 63

لَا تَجْعَلُوا دُعَاءَ الرَّسُولِ بَيْنَكُمْ كَدُعَاءِ بَعْضِكُمْ بَعْضًا قَدْ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ يَتَسَلَّلُونَ  
مِنْكُمْ لِيُحَذِّرِ الَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِ أَنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ  
أَلِيمٌ

**63. “Make you not the calling of the Messenger among you as your calling one of another. Allah does know those of you who steal away, hiding themselves. Therefore let those who go against His order beware lest a trial afflicts them or a painful punishment befalls them.”**

Divine leadership has got realm which must be respected and has got high status. Both his name must be called politely and his orders must be obeyed with whole entity, and his call must not be equaled to that of others.

Thus, in this verse, in connection with the commandments of the Prophet (S), it says:

**“Make you not the calling of the Messenger among you as your calling one of another...”**

When he calls people for an issue, which is certainly divinely and religiously important, his call must be counted as vital and important and it must be always paid attention to. His invitations and calls must not be taken simply for his command is Allah’s command and his call is Allah’s.

Then, the verse continues saying:

**“...Allah does know those of you who steal away, hiding themselves. Therefore let those who go against His order beware lest a trial afflicts them or a painful punishment befalls them.”**

The Arabic word /yatasallalun/ is derived from the word /tasallul/ which originally means to draw something. Those who escape stealthily and secretly are called /mutasallilun/.

The Arabic word /liwaṭṭān/ is derived from the word /mulawaṭṭāh/ which means concealment, and here it means to hide oneself behind someone else or behind a wall, and so to speak, they make others asleep and then escape. This was what hypocrites used to do when the Prophet (S) called people for holy war or an important job.

The holy Qur’an implies that if this hypocritical and hideous act of theirs is kept concealed from people, it will never remain concealed from Allah, and their oppositions against the command of the Prophet (S) call for a painful punishment both in this world and the Hereafter.

Commentators are of various opinions about the purpose of the Qur’anic word /fitnah/ (grief). Some Commentators say that it means murder, some say that it means aberration, some say that it means domination of an oppressing king, and some say that it means malady of hypocrisy that appears in the heart of men.

Another possibility is that it means social disorders, riots, defeat and other miseries that entangle society because of disobeying the leader’s commandment. Anyway, the concept of /fitnah/ is so extensive that it includes all these affairs and many others, as ‘a painful punishment’ may include worldly punishment, or Hereafter chastisement, or both of them.

It is interesting that, besides what was said, there are mentioned two other possibilities in the commentary of the above verse. First, the purpose of the first sentence of the verse

***“Make you not the calling of the Messenger among you as your calling one of another”***

is that the Prophet (S) must be called politely as his status and rank deserves, not to call him as others are called, because some persons, who were not familiar with the Islamic politeness, came to the Prophet (S) and only called him among people, or alone, repeatedly in this way; Oh Muhammad!, Oh Muhammad!...

They behaved in a way that was not suitable for a great divine leader. The purpose was to call him in such ways (politely and reasonably): Oh Messenger of Allah! Oh Prophet of Allah!

In some narration this commentary is also mentioned, but, with regard to the previous verse and the rest of this verse, sentences that are about answering the call of the Prophet (S) and not leaving him without his permission, this commentary is not consistent with the appearance of the verse, unless we say that it indicates both matters and we add the first commentary to the concept of the verse.

The third commentary that has been mentioned for this verse, seems very weak. It indicates that they must not take the invocations and curses of the Prophet (S) like those of theirs<sup>5</sup>, for his invocations and curses are surely calculated and are a divine plan that will certainly work.

But, since this commentary is not in line with the rest of the verse and there is no narration about it from Ahl-ul-Bayt (as), therefore it cannot be accepted.

It is also necessary to mention that the scholars of theology understand from the Qur’anic sentence which says:

***“...therefore let those who go against His order beware lest’...”***

that the commands of the Prophet (S) contains an indication to obligation but this argument has got some problems that are referred to in theology.

## **Sura An-Nur – Verse 64**

أَلَا إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ قَدْ يَعْلَمُ مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَيَوْمَ يُرْجَعُونَ إِلَيْهِ  
فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوا وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

**64. “Beware! verily unto Allah belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth. He does know what state you are upon; and (He knows) the Day when they shall be returned unto Him, then He**

***will inform them of what they did; and Allah is Knower of all things.”***

Allah is surely the owner of all things and is aware of all intentions and thoughts; therefore, belief in Allah’s awareness of man’s deeds and thoughts prevents man from doing wrong actions.

In this noble verse a delicate and meaningful reference is made to the issue of Origin and Resurrection that is the motivation of obeying all divine orders. It, in fact guarantees the execution of all His orders and prohibitions, including those important ones that are mentioned throughout this Sura.

The verse says:

***“Beware! verily unto Allah belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth...”***

He is the Lord Whose knowledge covers the entire world and, the verse continues saying:

***“...He does know what state you are upon...”***

All your deeds, your approach, your intention and opinion are known to Him.

All these matters are recorded on the page of knowledge.

The verse says:

***“...and (He knows) the Day when they shall be returned unto Him, then He will inform them of what they did; and Allah is Knower of all things.”***

It is worthy noting that emphasis is thrice put on Allah’s awareness of men’s deeds and this is for the sake that when man feels that someone is watching him ceaselessly, and nothing out of all his concealed and manifest things is hidden from him, this belief and opinion has got a very extraordinarily effect on him and it guarantees man to control him against these sins and deviations.

## **Supplication**

*Oh Allah! May illuminate the lamp (Misbah) of our heart with the light of knowledge and faith and strengthen the niche (Mishkat) of our entity for protecting faith in us so that we may pave the straight path of Your prophets for the sake of Your consent and to be saved from any deviation under the aegis of Your favour as the extension of ‘La Sharqiyyah Wa La Qarbiyyah’ !*

*Oh Allah! May illuminate our eyes with the light of modesty, our heart with the light of cognition, our soul with the light of piety, and all our entity with the light of guidance and do save us from wandering around, ignorance, being entangled in the claws of Satan’s temptations!*

*Oh Allah! May fortify fundamentals of government of Islamic justice for executing Your prescribed punishments and protect our society from being immodest and indecent; and verily You are All-Powerful*

*over everything.*

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1. Al-Mizan, the Commentary
  2. Fakhr-i-Razi
  3. The commentary of Fakhr-i-Razi, Ruh-ul-Bayan, and Qurtabi, following the verse under discussion
  4. Fakhr-i-Razi
  5. If the letter 'L' is used after the word /du'a', it means pray and if the word /'ala/ is used after it, it means curse, and if there is none of them after it, it can mean both meanings.

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