

Surah al-Saff, Chapter 61

(The Rank)

Section 28(juz')

Number of Verses: 14

General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

The blessed Chapter, revealed in Medina, has fourteen Verses. The designation of the Chapter derives from the Arabic word saff attested in the fourth Verse. The blessed Chapter mainly treats of the superiority of the Islamic faith over other Divine religions and the obligation of jihad in Allah's Cause and supporting Allah's Messengers.

Besides the blessed Chapter in question, Chapters 57 (Surah al-Hadid) and 59 (Surah al-Hashr) opens with

sabbaha ("glorifies"),

Chapters 62 (Surah al-Jum'a) 64 (Surah al-Taghabun) with

yusabbihu ("glorifies"),

Chapter 17 (Surah al-Isra') with

subhana ("glorified"),

and Chapter 87 with the imperative

sabbih ism-i rabbika ("Glorify the Name of your Lord").

The Merit of Reciting the Chapter

According to a tradition narrated from the Noble Prophet of the Islamic faith (S), whoever recites the Chapter of Jesus, namely the Chapter of the Rank, Prophet Jesus will salute him and as long as he is alive in this world, Jesus will invoke God Almighty to absolve the reciter of his sins and he will be his friend of the Day of Resurrection.

It is narrated from Imam Baqir (as) that whoever recites the Chapter of the Rank in his obligatory and supererogatory prayers and pursues the recitation of the Chapter, God Almighty will rank him with the angels and His Messengers. It is worthy of note, however, that such ranks will be in store for those who act upon Qur'anic Injunctions.

Surah al-Saff - Verse 1

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

سَبَّحَ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

1. Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth glorifies Allah. And He is the Omnipotent, the All-Wise.

According to the Islamic worldview, all the world of existence enjoys perception and glorifies God Almighty.

It is noteworthy that the One Who is the Omnipotent and the All-Wise is deserves to be glorifies

("And He is the Omnipotent, the All-Wise").

It is mentioned above that the blessed Chapter deals with faith, Divine Unity, and knowing God Almighty. According attention to the physical and spiritual glorification of all beings and the wondrous system predominating over them which serves as the best proof for the Existence of the Omnipotent and the All-Wise Creator strengthens the pillars of faith in believers and paves the path for obeying the Injunction as to the jihad in Alla's Cause.

Surah al-Saff – Verse 2

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ

2. O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not act upon it?

Rebuking those who do not stand on their own words, the blessed Verse is asking them:

"O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not act upon it?"

Although the blessed Verses were revealed concerning the jihad and desertion from the Battle of Uhud, but the Occasions of Revelation never restrict the broad contextual meanings of the blessed Verses. Consequently, any vain word deserves censure and rebuke, be it in terms of steadfastness in battlefield or any other positive and constructive act.

According to Imam Sadiq (as), the blessed Verse, among other issues, alludes to failure to keep one's word, saying that a believer's promise is like a vow, though expiation is not required for it. 1

Surah al-Saff – Verse 3

كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ

3. Most detestable it is with Allah that you say what you do not act upon it.

The Arabic word maqt denotes abomination and odiousness. Faith is to be accompanied by action and sincerity, otherwise it will deserve censure and rebuke. Some people utter empty words in friendly get-togethers but they fail to act upon their words when it is necessary to take action.

One of the significant tokens of true believers is that their words and deeds are totally in harmony and the more one distances from such principle, the more he distances from faith.

It is in this vein that in his epistle to Malik Ashtar, Imam 'Ali (as) said unto him:

"Refrain from making promises and failure to keep you word, since such failure will lead to severe wrath by God Almighty and the people as it is said in the Holy Qur'an:

"Most detestable it is with Allah that you say what you do not act upon it."2

Surah al-Saff – Verse 4

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ صَفًّا كَأَنَّهُمْ بُنْيَانٌ مَرْصُورٌ

4. Indeed, Allah loves those who fight in His Cause in ranks as if they were an iron structure.

The Arabic word bunyan denotes construction. The word marsus is cognate with rasas denoting lead. The phrase bunyan marsus connotes a construction resembling lead in terms of solidity. The criticism mentioned in the preceding Verse may be addressed to those who were engaged in sloganeering but failed to act upon such slogans. Thus, God Almighty is saying that Divine Wrath is in store for those who did not act upon their words but those who act upon their words and loved by Him.

Therefore, the blessed Verse is saying that God Almighty loves those who wage war in His Cause like a construction of iron and a stronghold of steel.

Thus, the form of battle is of no significance, but what is important is that such war should be in Allah's Cause through perfect unity and solidity the similitude of which is a construction built of lead or iron. It is mentioned in 'Ali ibn Ibrahim exegetic work that the blessed Verse is saying that warrior waging war in Allah's Cause form ranks like a construction which is never subject to ruin.³

Surah al-Saff – Verse 5

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ يَا قَوْمِ لِمَ تُوذُونَنِي وَقَدْ تَعْلَمُونَ أَنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ ۗ^٤
فَلَمَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

5. Remember when Moses (as)said unto his people: "O my people! Why do you annoy me while you know certainly that I am the Messenger of Allah to you? Therefore when they turned away from the path of Truth, Allah turned their hearts away [from the path]. And Allah guides not the people who are disobedient to Him.

The Arabic verbal form

zagha ("deviated")

is cognate with zigh connoting deviation from the path of Truth.

Man is spiritually inclined toward treading the Straight Path, but it is his concupiscence that deters him

from doing so.

Making a reference to Prophet Moses' (as) people, the blessed Verse is saying that despite having observed so many miracles and proofs regarding his Prophetic Call, they failed to obey him, but they annoyed him to such an extent that they regarded his miracles as magic and ascribed forging lies by him despite the fact that they were certain of his Prophetic Call.

Thus, complaining from his own people, Prophet Moses (as) is saying:

"O people! Why do you annoy me so much when you know that I am Allah's Messenger sent unto you for your guidance? You are supposed to obey me if you follow your reason so that you may be saved."

Nonetheless, the people of Moses (as) failed to persevere in the Straight Path of Divine Unity and deviated from it such that owing to their evil deeds, God Almighty made their hearts turn away from the Path of Truth, since God Almighty never guides those who disobey His Messengers. Thus, it is reflected the blessed Verse that there is no affliction worse than being deprived of Divine Justice and one's heart be turned away from the Path of Truth.

Surah al-Saff – Verses 6-7

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ
يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدُ ۗ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ
بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكُذْبَ وَهُوَ يُدْعَى إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي
الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

6. Remember when Jesus (as), son of Mary, said: "O Children of Israel! Verily, I am the Messenger of Allah unto you, acknowledging the Torah which came before me and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad. But when he came to them with clear proofs, they said: "This is plain magic."

7. And who does more wrong than the one who forges a lie against Allah while he is being invited to embrace the Islamic faith? And Allah guides not the people who are wrong-doers.

The blessed Verse 6 is saying:

"O Muhammad (S)! Remember when Jesus (as), son of Mary, said: 'O Children of Israel [namely the Jews following Moses (as)]! I am Allah's Messenger sent unto you. I believe in Moses (as) acknowledging his Prophetic Call and bearing glad tidings to you that a Prophet (S) will come after me with a perfect religion and his token is that his name is Ahmad, namely praised in words and deeds or the Messenger (S) who will praise God Almighty."

The name Ahmad may reflect that he was Divinely appointed to praise God Almighty by the recitation of His Ninety-Nine Names such that people may know Him through His Most Beautiful Attributes, since it is not known whether other Prophets did not make Him known unto people through the same number of Names each of which reflect one of the Divine Attributes.

Narrating on the authority of his father, Muhammad ibn Mat'am says that the Noble Prophet (S) said that he had names such as Ahmad, Muhammad, Mahi, through whom God Almighty effaces disbelief, Hashir, namely under whose banner people would be resurrected, and 'Aqib, i.e. the last of the Prophets not to be followed by any other Prophet.⁴

According to a tradition narrated concerning the Noble Prophet's (S) Ascension (mi'raj), God Almighty addressed the Noble Prophet of the Islamic faith (S) several times by the name Ahmad which may possibly give rise to the saying that his name is Ahmad in the heavens and Muhammad (S) on the earth.

It is narrated from Imam 'Ali (as) that the Noble Prophet of Islam (S) has ten names five of which, namely Muhammad, Ahmad, 'Abd Allah, Yasin, and Nun, are attested in the Holy Qur'an.⁵ The foregoing brief discussion reflects that one of the most well-known names of the Noble Prophet of the Islamic faith (S) is Ahmad.⁶

The blessed Verse closes with

"But when he came to them with clear proofs, they said: "This is plain magic."

The antecedent of the pronoun

"them" (hum)

is possibly the Seal of the Prophets (S) who had many proofs and miracles and Prophet Jesus (as) had formerly made known his name and tokens, but the Prophet Muhammad's (S) miracles were regarded as magic by his people saying that it was plain magic.

The antecedent of the pronoun may be Prophet Jesus (as) who performed miracles like raising the dead, curing the blind, and making pigeons out of mud and giving life to it, but the Jews regarded his miracles as magic. People are habitually inclined through concupiscent desires to turn away from the Truth and turn toward Falsehood, as a consequence of which they failed to obey the Prophets and their chiefs knew that people's obeying the Prophets would entail damages to their chieftainship.

In order to waive their obligations, they denied the prophets and regarded their miracles as magic.

Thus, God Almighty censures such people and asks them in the blessed Verse:

"And who does more wrong than the one who forges a lie against Allah while he is being invited to embrace the Islamic faith? And Allah guides not the people who are wrong-doers."

The point is that the Prophets call people unto Islam, namely Guidance, in which the people's physical and spiritual health lies.

Those who deny the Prophets are the worst of people since they not only wrong themselves and deprive themselves of happiness, and have contented themselves to stay with disbelieving and irreligious people and their bestiality without taking any step toward happiness, but also when man fails to seek Guidance and wrongs himself, God Almighty will not guide him.

Such wrongdoers wrong people as well since they impede them from being guided. God Almighty will never guide such people since wrong-doers are not subject to being guided.

Surah al-Saff – Verses 8-9

يُرِيدُونَ لِيُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ
الْمُشْرِكُونَ

8. They intend to extinguish the Light of Allah with their mouths [namely their empty words and slanders]. But Allah will bring His Light to perfection even though the disbelievers dislike it.

9. He it is Who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth to make it triumphant over all religions even though the polytheists dislike it.

The enemy is pre-occupied at all times with extinguishing the Divine Light of Guidance. Allah's Religion is Light, namely it leads to knowledge, growth, treading the path toward Allah and Happiness. The stratagems and devices of the enemies aiming at confrontation with the Truth is fruitless and of no avail.

Thus, in order to reflect that the enemies of the Truth may not efface Divine Religion, the blessed Verse 8 presents a similitude saying that they intend to put out the Divine Light with their mouths, but God Almighty perfects His Light despite the disbelievers dislike it.

Disbelievers in their attempts are resembled to those who intend to extinguish the shining sun by blowing with their mouths. They are like bats imagining that if they close their eyes and seek refuge in the shadows may confront with the Spring of Light. The history of Islam is a clear proof as to the veracity of such Great Qur'anic Prediction, since from its emergence onward, numerous plots and stratagems have been demised by the enemies.

Such stratagems include mockery, harming, and hurting through economic and social sanctions, waging wars in the battlefields, e.g. those of Uhud, Ahzab, and Badr; domestic plots by hypocrites; casting discord amongst the ranks of the Muslims; occupation of Jerusalem as the first place toward which Muslims stood in their prayers; division of vast Muslim lands into more than forty countries; making Muslims change their course; making the youth sever their ties from their ancient culture; dissemination of evil deeds and moral corruption; deviation from the pure Islamic doctrines by the youth, military, political, and political colonialism.

As God Almighty wills, the Divine Light has daily broadened its scope and the dissemination of the Islamic faith has been ever on the increase. Statistics suggest that despite the common endeavors made by Zionists, Crusaders, and materialists of the East, the Muslim population is on the increase the world over.

The Qur'anic Verse is saying that they intend at all times to put out the Divine Light, but Divine Will is otherwise. It is the eternal miracle of the Holy Qur'an.

It is worthy of note that such theme is to found twice in the Holy Qur'an, though the clause

"they intend to extinguish"

is reflected in two forms in the Arabic original: *yuriduna an yutfi'u7* and *yuriduna li-yutfi'u8*.

In his *Mufradat*, Raghib Isfahani says that the former and the latter connote extinguishing without or with preparation respectively; namely, whether or not they make preparations, they fail to put out the Divine Light.

Therefore, the blessed Verse 9 lays further emphasis by saying that He is the One who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth in order to make the Islamic religion predominate all other religions, even though the polytheists disfavor it.

The expression

"He sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth"

symbolizes the triumph of the Islamic faith, since such triumph is essentially based on Guidance and the Religion of Truth. The Islamic faith and the Holy Qur'an are the Divine Light and Light manifests itself everywhere and at all times and results in triumph; nonetheless, the polytheists' and the disbelievers'

dislike may not impede the path in the least.

It would be of interest to know that the blessed Verse 9 is reiterated thrice with minor alterations in the Holy Qur'an, but it should be borne in mind that such reiteration and emphasis belongs to when the Islamic faith had not totally prevail the Arabian Peninsula let alone the other regions of the world.

The Holy Qur'an laid great emphasis on the question at the time and made such great prediction. Finally, the Islamic faith prevailed in terms of logic and practical advancement in contrast to other religions, made the enemies retreat from vast regions in the world substituted them and it is still spreading in the world.

It is noteworthy that the final stage of such spread to us will be realized upon the arrival of Imam Mahdi (May our souls be sacrifices to him) since these Verse indicate that great arrival. Further discussions on the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse 9, superiority in terms of logic or might, and its relation to Imam Mahdi's (as) arrival were mentioned above under 7:23.

It is narrated in consecutively transmitted traditions that the triumph of the Islamic faith over other Divine religions will realize upon Imam Mahdi's (as) arrival. 10

It is narrated on the authority of 'Ali ibn Ibrahim Qumi that the religion of Muhammad (S) will be complete upon the arrival of the Riser from the Prophet's (S) descendants such that God Almighty alone shall be worshipped. In this vein, it is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S) that as the earth will have been brimming over with injustice, justice will be administered the world over upon his arrival.

Surah al-Saff - Verses 10-13

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ تِجَارَةٍ تُنَجِّيْكُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ ۗ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَيُدْخِلْكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَمَسَاكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِي جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

وَأُخْرَىٰ تُحِبُّونَهَا ۚ نَصْرٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَتْحٌ قَرِيبٌ ۚ وَبَشِيرٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

10. O you who believe! Shall I guide you to a trade that will save you from the excruciating torment on the Day of Resurrection?

11. Believe in Allah and His Messenger and fight in the Cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives. That will be better for you, if you but know!

12. Thus, He will forgive you your sins and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow and pleasant dwellings in the everlasting Paradise. That is verily a great deliverance.

13. And also another bounty which you love, help from Allah and a near victory. And O Prophet (S) give glad tidings to the believers.

The triumph of the Islamic faith over other religions was promised in the preceding blessed Verse but there are three prerequisites in this respect:

1. The Perfect and Universal Law is the Holy Qur'an, a Light perfected by God Almighty, and no one is able to put out such Light.
2. The existence of the Infallible Leader who is Imam Mahdi (as), the Remainder of Allah and the Divine Treasure.
3. Preparedness on the part of the people which is reflected in these blessed Verses.

Therefore, one of the significant goals of the blessed Chapter is to call people unto the Islamic faith and jihad in Allah's Cause and the blessed Verses in question lay emphasis on these two principles through the expression of a delicate similitude that encourages man to make such Divine moves and such incentive is the prerequisite for the triumph of the Islamic faith over all religions as discussed in the preceding blessed Verses.

The blessed Verse 10 is asking:

"O you who believe! Shall I guide you to a trade that will save you from the excruciating torment on the Day of Resurrection?"

Even though faith and jihad are among absolute obligations, but the question is posed as a commercial offer rather than an injunction and the offer is intermingled with expressions reflecting the Infinite Graciousness of God Almighty. The blessed Verse 10 asks the question but without expecting any answer, when the audience is according attention to the question elaborates on the lucrative transaction.

The blessed Verse 11 is saying:

"Believe in Allah and His Messenger and fight in the Cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives. That will be better for you, if you but know!"

God Almighty is indubitably in no need of such lucrative trade, but all the interests will belong to the believers.

Thus, the blessed Verse closes by saying that

"It is the best for you if you know."

It is worthy of note that addressed to the believers, the blessed Verse calls upon them to have faith and wage jihad in Allah's Cause.

The expression may reflect that nominal and superficial faith is insufficient, but what is significant is profound and sincere faith as the fountainhead of sacrifice and jihad. Making mention of believing in God Almighty and His Messenger may further elaborate the faith briefly mentioned in the opening of the preceding Verse.

It is noteworthy that belief in the Prophet (S) is not different from that in God Almighty in the same manner that waging jihad in Allah's Cause with one's life may not be different from that with one's property, since waging any war requires financial means.

Some believers are able to wage jihad in two respects and some may be able to support jihad by their property and provide the logistics. Some are only able to wage jihad in Allah's Cause by their lives and they are prepared to sacrifice them.

However, the point is that triumph rests on the accompaniment of these two types of jihad. The precedence of jihad by one's possessions in the blessed Verse does not suggest that jihad by one's life bears further significance, but it suggests that such type of jihad is the prelude, since the path to jihad is paved through the provision of the required funding.

The blessed Verses 12 and 13 are saying that if you do so, God Almighty will forgive your sins and you will be admitted to the Gardens of Paradise beneath whose trees rivers flow where you will reside in pleasant dwellings in everlasting Paradise. This is a great success.

The blessed Verses treat of the forgiving of the sins by God Almighty in terms of the Rewards in the hereafter, since man is above all preoccupied with his sins and when he finds certainty as to the forgiving of his sins, he will be free from preoccupation. The expression suggests that the first Divine Reward granted to the martyrs fallen in His Cause is that all their sins will be forgiven.

Now a question arises that forgiving of one's sins includes what is due to God (haqq Allah) Almighty or it also includes what is due to people (haqq al-nas). The absolute contextual meaning of the blessed Verse suggests generality, though granted that God Almighty vested people with waiving their own rights, some scholars have entertained doubts as to the generality of the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse in question.

Therefore, the blessed Verses in question treat of two types of faith, believing in God Almighty and His Messenger (S), two types of jihad, through life and possessions, and two types Rewards in the Hereafter, forgiving of sins and being admitted to the everlasting Paradise.

The blessed Verse 13 deals with two types of Divine Bounties in this world:

"And also another bounty which you love, help from Allah and a near victory."

Such trade is quite lucrative since it constitutes triumph over the enemies and Divine Bounties and Graciousness. That is why the Holy Qur'an terms it as the great triumph.

It is in this vein that the believers receive the glad tidings:

"And O Prophet (S) give glad tidings to the believers."

It is narrated that when the Noble prophet secretly met with some Medinans on the Night of 'Aqabih and they pledged him their allegiance, 'Abd Allah ibn Rawaha said unto him that the Noble Prophet (S) may ask for any condition for God Almighty and himself to which the Noble Prophet (S) replied that the condition for his Lord was that they may never associate any partners to Him, but for himself, he asked them to defend him in the same manner that they defend themselves and their possessions.

'Abd Allah inquired about the remuneration for such obligations to which the Noble Prophet replied that their remuneration would be Paradise. 'Abd Allah said that the transaction was quite lucrative and it would be totally irrevocable.¹¹ It is worthy of note, however, that the triumph promised in these blessed Verses repeatedly fell into the share of the Muslims in logical terms as well as in battlefields.

Qur'an exegetes present different exegeses as to the contextual meaning of the "near triumph." Many exegetes maintain that the conquest of Mecca is hereby intended. Some maintain that it alludes to the conquest of Persian and Rome. Some also hold that it indicates all Muslim conquests which happened briefly between conversion to the Islamic faith and the battles waged by the Muslims.

Since all the believers down the centuries, rather than solely the Noble Prophet's (S) Companions are addressed herein, the clause

"help from Allah and a near victory"

is quite broad in its application serving as glad tidings to them all, though it clearly designated the conquest of Mecca upon the Revelation of the blessed Verses in question.

It is mentioned in the closing sections of Nahj al-Balagha that meeting with someone who pretended to be a strict Muslim and repeatedly spoke ill of worldly possessions, Imam 'Ali (as) said:

"You've erred, since the world is a great capital for those who are awake and aware."

Then, the Imam (as) elaborated on his statement saying that the world is the trading house of Allah's friends. 12 The world is likened elsewhere to the farm of the hereafter. It is in the trading house of the world that man sells the merchandise being granted to him by God Almighty to Him at the highest price and thereby receives the greatest Bounties in exchange for some insignificant merchandise.

In this vein, thus it is narrated from Imam 'Ali (as):

"Your price is Paradise, do not sell yourselves cheaply." 13

According to another tradition narrated from Imam 'Ali (as), he said that he was the same lucrative trade leading to deliverance from excruciating torment as mentioned in the Holy Qur'an:

"Shall I guide you to a trade that will save you from the excruciating torment on the Day of Resurrection?"

Surah al-Saff – Verse 14

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا أَنْصَارَ اللَّهِ كَمَا قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ لِلْحَوَارِيِّينَ مَنْ
أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ ؟ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ ؟ فَأَمْنَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْ بَنِي
إِسْرَائِيلَ وَكَفَرَتْ طَائِفَةٌ ؟ فَأَيَّدْنَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَىٰ عَدُوِّهِمْ فَأَصْبَحُوا ظَاهِرِينَ

14. O you who believe! Be you helpers in the Cause of Allah as said Jesus, son Mary to the disciples: "Who are my helpers in the Cause of Allah? The disciples said: "We are Allah's helpers. Then a group of the Children of Israel believed and a group disbelieved. Therefore, We provided those who believed Assistance against their enemies and they became triumphant.

The disciples of Prophet Jesus (as) were twelve in number whose names are mentioned in available Gospels.

The Arabic word

***hawari* ("disciple")**

derives from the root h-w-r which denotes to wash, to whiten. The designation is owing to their white clothes and pure hearts or that they were inwardly pure and called upon others to be the same.

Imam Sadiq (as) is narrated as saying:

"Our followers are our disciples. The disciples of Jesus (as) failed to bear him assistance against the enemies and the Jews, but our followers render us help. They are tortured, sent into exile, or they fall

martyrs in our cause and God Almighty will grant them good Rewards in exchange for so many afflictions that they tolerate for our sake."¹⁴

The closing Verse of the blessed Chapter lays further emphasis on jihad that serves as the focal point of the Chapter.

However, the question is treated differently which bears more significance than the Rewards of Paradise and its Bounties as the blessed Verse is saying:

"O you who believe! Be you helpers in the Cause of Allah."

They help in the Cause of Allah Who is the Origin of all the powers and to Whom all return. He is the Lord whose Power is Infinite and Invincible.

It is surprising that God Almighty calls upon His servants to render help in His Cause which is an unequalled glory; though the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse suggests rendering assistance to the Noble Prophet (S) and the Islamic faith, but the blessed Verse embraces wondrous Graciousness and Mercy.

To suggest that treading such path is not unprecedented, a historical illustration is mentioned herein by saying that in the same manner that Jesus (S), son of Mary, asked his disciples:

"Who are my helpers in the Cause of Allah?"

The disciples most proudly replied:

"We are Allah's helpers."

Thus, they rose up to confront the enemies of Truth. Some of the Children of Israel believed and joined the disciples and some disbelieved. Thus God Almighty provided those who believed Assistance against their enemies and they finally triumphed over them.

You are the disciples of Prophet Muhammad (S) and take pride in that you are Allah's helpers. In the same manner that the disciples of Jesus (as) triumphed over the enemies, you will become triumphant and the glory of this world and the world to come will be in store for you.

1. Kafi, vol. 2, p. 363.

2. Nahj al-Balagha, Epistle 53.

3. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, under the blessed Verse in question.

4. Tafsir Manhaj al-Sadiqin.

5. Tafsir Nur al-Thiqalayn, Tafsir Durr al-Manthur.

6. Tafsir Furqan; Ahmad-i Maw'ud-i Injil.

7. 9:32

8. 61:8

9. 9:33; 48:28; 61:9

10. Tafsir Burhan; Tafsir Safi, Majma' al-Bayan, Nur al-Thiqalayn and other sources.

11. Tafsir Fi Hilal al-Qur'an, vol. 8, p. 87.

12. Nahj al-Balagha, Aphorism 131.

13. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 70, p. 132.

14. Tafsir Kaz al-Daqa'iq.

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