

(٤٥) وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ

(٤٦) الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ

And seek assistance through patience and prayer; and most surely it is a hard thing, except for the humble ones (45),

who know that they shall meet their Lord and that they shall return to Him (46).

Commentary

Qur'an: And seek assistance through patience and prayer: Man seeks assistance in such affairs and tasks as he cannot manage alone, and in hardships and difficulties which he cannot overcome himself. In reality there is no helper except Allah.

Man can, therefore, manage all his affairs and overcome all his difficulties by courage and steadfastness (i.e. by patience) and by looking towards Allah (i.e. by prayer).

These two factors are the best way to get assistance: patience makes even the great misfortunes look trivial, and putting all his confidence in Allah awakens the spirit of faith; and thus man comes to realize that the cause which he is relying upon can never fail to produce the desired effect.

Qur'an: and most surely it is a hard thing except for the humble ones: The pronoun, it, refers to the "prayer". It is difficult to relate it to "seeking the assistance", because it will then cover patience too, and the word "the humble ones" will not look appropriate – humbleness does not fit very much with patience.

The word used here for humbleness is "*khush*" (الخشوع); "*khudu*" (الخصوع) too has the same meaning but with one difference: while the latter shows itself in the limbs of the body, the former refers to the inner feeling.

Qur'an: *who know that they shall meet their Lord . . .* The word used in this verse for “knowing” is “*yazunnun*” (يظنون);

it literally means “they think”. But the context, that is, the belief in the hereafter, demands a firm conviction that would leave no room for any doubt or supposition. Allah says:

***and they are sure of the hereafter* (2:4).**

Or, may be, Allah, by using this word, makes us realize that even an elementary idea of the hereafter is sufficient to create in a man humility and humbleness before his Lord. Many a knowledge comes to man in stages:

(1) first he becomes aware of an idea;

(2) then he has some doubts about its correctness;

(3) then he becomes inclined to accept it;

(4) then gradually the possibility of his accepting the opposite view vanishes completely and he becomes firmly convinced of the truth of that idea – and this firm conviction is called knowledge.

If such knowledge is concerned with some frightening affair, then his worry and disquiet will begin as soon as he reaches the third stage when he is only inclined to accept it – is only “thinking” that probably it may be true.

This Qur'anic expression, in other words, says that man, for showing humbleness before Allah, needs only to be aware of the idea that there is a Lord Whom he may return to after his death. In this context only a strong supposition should be enough to make him desist from disobeying his Lord; it would not be necessary, for this purpose, to reach the stage of firm knowledge.

From this point of view, the verse looks almost similar to the verse:

***. . . therefore, whoever hopes to meet his Lord, he should do good deeds, and not join any one in the worship of his Lord* (18: 110).**

The above discourse is based on the assumption that the words, “they shall meet their Lord . . .”, refer to the Day of Resurrection. But if they are interpreted in, another way (as we shall describe in Chapter 7), there should be no difficulty at all in its explanation.

Tradition

as-Sadiq (a. s.) said: “Whenever 'Alī (a.s.) faced a difficulty, he used to stand up for the prayer and then recite this verse: ***and seek assistance through patience and prayer.***”¹

The same Imam said about this verse: “The patience means fasting.” Also he said: “When a man is confronted by a hard misfortune, he should fast. Surely Allah says: **and seek assistance through patience**, that is, fast.”²

The author says: al-'Ayyash[☐] too has narrated the theme of these two Tradition in his *at-Tafsir*[☐]. Interpretation of “patience” as fast is based on the “flow” of the Qur'an.

Abu 'l-Hasan (a.s.) said about this verse: “The patience means fast; when a man is visited by a hardship or misfortune, he should fast; surely Allah says: **And seek assistance through patience and prayer; and most surely it is a hard thing except for the humble ones**. And the humble one is he who shows humility in his prayer, turning all his attention to it; and it means the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) and the Leader of the faithful (a.s.).”³

The author says: The Imam has inferred from this verse the desirability of fasting and praying when one is facing any hardship or turmoil; and likewise, the desirability of seeking the divine help through the medium of the Prophet and 'Al[☐] (a.s.) at that time. In this way, the tradition interprets the fast and the prayer as the Prophet and 'Al[☐] (a.s.).

'Al[☐] (a.s.) said about the verse, who **know that they shall meet their Lord** . . . : Allah says that they are sure that they would be resurrected. And the supposition *az-zann* (الظن) means certainty. (*ibid.*)

The author says: as-Sad[☐]q also has narrated this tradition, al-Baq[☐]r (a.s.) said that this verse was revealed about 'Al[☐], 'Uthman ibn Maz[☐]'un, 'Ammar ibn Yasir and (some of) their friends⁴.

1. al-Kaf[☐]
2. al-Kaf[☐]
3. al-'Ayyash[☐]
4. al-Manaqib, Ibn Shahrash[☐]b

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