

[Home](#) > [Moral Values of Qur'an, a Commentary on Surah Hujurat](#) > [Part 17](#) > Help the legatee of Muhammad or give death

Part 17

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ، إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ، وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا، وَلَا يَغْتَبَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا، أَيُحِبُّ
﴿أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا﴾ فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ

“O you who believe! Avoid most of suspicion, for surely suspicion in some cases is a sin, and do not spy nor let some of you backbite others. Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? But you abhor it... (49: 12)”

Satan's regret for misguiding a believer

The Holy Qur'an, the Command of the Lord of the Worlds, is great in the eyes of every monotheist believer. It is the ordinance issued by the King of Kings. It is the duty of every man to understand this Command, to study it, interpret it properly and to act according to what is mentioned in it. Take care that it is obeyed correctly, lest it be otherwise. Allah orders: It is your duty to refrain from many conjectures. Why? Because, according to one explanation, some conjectures are sins. So never indulge in them. Since this command is addressed to all of us, it is our duty to know the meaning of suspicion (Soo-e-Zann) and to fully understand what it involves. Though we had spoken about these two three verses yesterday, I feel enough was not discussed about this important matter. So, today I will speak at length about the meaning of suspicion or bad opinion and then divide it into two: One, bad opinion about the Creator and, two: Thinking badly about the creation.

Conjecture, between certainty and doubt

Conjecture stands between certainty and doubt, a state of hesitation. It is in the midst of total certainty and total refusal or rejection. In Arabic, it is called 'Zann' and in Persian 'Gumaan'. For example, you see a person at a distance and you cannot make out whether he is a man or a woman. In these days it so happens a number of times you look at these youths but do not understand whether they are male or female, boys or girls! Woe unto these men of today. What calamity has come to mankind? It is prohibited

for men to look like (make up oneself like) women and for women to appear like men.

Woe unto the society that has gone down so much. So this doubt is called uncertainty. You have a doubt about one's being a male or a female. When that fellow comes near, you observe that he wears long hair, a gold ring on the finger and also there is a necklace round the neck. You give preference to the opinion that it is a girl, but you are not quite sure because there also is a possibility that it's a male.

However from outward appearance you are inclined to think that it is a female. This is called conjecture. It means, after seeing that this person has outward signs of a girl, you imagine that it is a girl. But you also have some doubt. Perhaps, these days, there also has come about a change whereby boys make up their appearance like girls. It could also be a eunuch who makes up like females. You have an opposite opinion but you feel more that the person is a female.

Thereafter, the person comes very near to you and sits by your side. You talk with that person and ask, "May I know your good name?" The reply is Miss Zahrmaaryaan. When you hear this you become sure that she is a female. You come out of doubt and suspicion and become sure that she is a girl.

This was a simple example of 'opinion' (Zann), that is, to give preference to one side of doubt. But the meaning of Husn-e-Zann (good opinion) and Soo-e-Zann (bad opinion) is what whenever a man looks at someone's deeds, the looking has two sides; one is the good aspect and the other bad. If you think nicely about it, it is called Husn-e-Zann. If you form a bad conjecture, it is Soo-e-Zann. For example: A man approaches you from a distance and speaks a word, which was not clear. You could not follow what he said. There are two doubts: Either he abused you or praised you. This is good and bad (imagination). If you think that he praised you, as there was no reason (he did not have any ailment) for him to abuse me, then this is called Husn-e-Zann (good opinion). But if you say that since we were not at good terms in the past, he must have abused me. You imagined that he abused you. This is called Soo-e-Zann (having a bad opinion).

Another example: Suppose a man came out of a den of vice. Here also are two possible doubts. One is that he went there to obstruct corruption and to give advice to concerned people. Likewise there also is a possibility to imagine that he went there to take part in evil deeds. If you say: By the permission of Allah, he might have gone there to make reforms, then it is called Husn-e-Zann. But if you give preference to the doubt that he might have gone there to participate in bad deeds, it is Soo-e-Zann.

The prohibited Soo-e-Zann is of two kinds. First, having bad opinion about the deeds of God. If you, God forbid, think that a deed of God is not good then it is Soo-e-Zann towards the Lord of the Worlds. To think that the world (what happens in the world, as allowed by God), that is, the affair of God has no regularity or wisdom, then this is like imagining that God's deeds are, May God forgive, aimless or meaningless!

Unwise worshipper and his deeds of less value

Once two angels saw a worshipper the weight of whose worship was less, that is, though he was worshipping much, its value was less. They came to try him and said, "O Worshipper gentleman! How are you? How is the condition of things here?" He replied, "Everything is all right but there is one thing amiss. God makes so much grass to grow here. I wish God had a donkey so that all this grass would not be wasted." The two angels looked at one another and went up to heaven. It became known that the worshipper had no intelligence as he had a bad opinion about the management of the universe.

He must have a good opinion about the working of this world. He should never object to it. He must consider himself too low to raise any objection concerning the best management of the universe. If he feels anything worth criticism, it is due to a fault in his own way of looking at things. He must realize that he is too insignificant to interfere in the secrets of the management of the world and in the world of existence. He should understand that whatever he is able to understand is also because of the Grace of God. He had made this wonderful universe in such excellent manner that if all the wisest people of the world come together to make the world better, they would never be able to do so.

Not a blade of grass grows without any wisdom behind it. No vein in a living creature is aimless. Look at this human body having so many parts and organs. The sum total of its major parts number more than a thousand and the number of its secondary parts exceed millions. Ever since the first day in which man started to study human body till today, when he gained a lot of knowledge in any age, no scholar or physical scientist has ever said that any part of the body is extra, that it has no use or benefit.

The surplus intestine or a danger signal!

In ancient medical science it was called "Qulinj" and now they call it "Appendicitis." Sometimes it causes stomachache. It is a small intestine having a length of about three finger joints. It is also a blind gut, that it does not allow food to pass through and rejects it. Sometimes it retains it and then it gives much pain. They say there is no way out except to have it operated upon. Formerly they called it a surplus intestine (of no use). But now, when medical science has advanced, they have succeeded in understanding the wisdom behind the construction of the human body by Omniscient Allah.

They have now changed its name saying it is not correct to call it surplus intestine. It is not surplus, but is an important part of the intestine. What is it? They have now named it Appendix. If this part were not there it would not be possible to know the problem in intestines. It is possible that the patient may die if this danger remains undetected. To make the defect known this part (appendix) produces pus, gives pain and warns the patient to go to a doctor who cuts off this part and the patient gets relief. So, do not say that it is surplus. Finally they all are convinced that it is necessarily an important part, which should be there.

Everything is very well in its place

So if all the intelligent persons of the entire world come together to think about the construction of human body, they will never be in a position to say that it would have been better had it been in a somewhat different form. In this construction, everything is good and in proper place. It is the same in the huge body of the whole universe made by Almighty and All-knowing God.

Look at anything. Everything is proper and well in its place. In the world of outer space above our heads, millions of huge spheres are circling and moving continuously in this unending outer space. Two of them never collide. What would happen if two of them collide with this planet of ours, the world, with the tremendous speed of 24 kms per second!

The spacious atmosphere of the outer world, protects life

According to one of the modern discoveries of science, nearly twenty million celestial rock pieces break away from planets and come continuously rushing towards our earth at a tremendous speed of a hundred thousand kms per hour. If they collide with our earth at this speed what will happen to this world? No atom bomb can equal the power of these rushing rocks. If this imagined collision occurs, say for an hour, will any house remain standing on our earth? Will any man or animal remain alive? All and everything will be destroyed. The planet earth itself will be disintegrated totally. What an organization of the Almighty!

The Lord of the Universe is the Omniscient Manager and Director of this universe, this atmosphere and outer space. The atmosphere, which God has created around our huge globe of earth, has a wonderful effect on the life on our planet of earth. One of its effects is the adjustment of the heat of the sun. The radiation of sun, which gathers in this part of the atmosphere, does not come directly to the planet of earth. If it reaches the earth directly and if it is not taken care of in the space and if it is not adjusted properly do you know what would happen to our earth? All rivers would overflow. The temperature of the earth would reach a hundred degrees above zero. Even blood in your body would boil up. Milk in the breast of mothers would boil. After such heat there will remain no drop of water on the earth and all and everything would vaporize.

Moreover, if the said sector of the atmosphere were not to be there, what would happen at night? The temperature would drop down to 160 degrees below zero. Everything and everybody would freeze. If days were to be so hot and nights so cold, will any life be possible on earth?

So the said strata of the atmosphere around our earth is made by the Almighty to take absorb sun's heat and adjust the temperature in such a way that neither nights become so cold nor days so hot. Moreover, the intense heat in space dilutes and dissolves the rocks raining from the sky.

I intend to draw attention towards the organization of the affairs of the universe. Now let us proceed. To how many things will man pay attention?

Death, a great bounty of God

Take for example the subject of death. It is one of the divine bounties having several wisdoms. Generally man does not like it. Man dislikes death. But, for instance, suppose that death is kept away from all of us for a hundred years from now. You will see in what condition men would be. What would the aged men and women, being badly disabled, do? Their children and grand children will not find any time beyond attending to the old people's needs, their maintenance, their food, their clothing, their cleanliness and their residences. How then will the younger ones earn their livelihood and when will they take rest? Consequently, they too will become like the aged ones and fall in bed. Life would be upset totally. At that time, all the young and the old will pray to God: O Lord! Kindly do what You consider appropriate. Though we dislike death, we are pleased with what You arrange, in the death destined by You.

Having bad opinion about God's decree and decision, finding faults with the wise administration of the universe is unlawful. Whatever God has done or ordered is proper and good. Rest assured that whatever you have understood is a sample for what you could not comprehend. You may dwell deeply in it or not, rest assured that God is the All-knowing Creator. He is Wise. "Does the One Who created, not know?" He knows all the aspects of good and bad. You have not the slightest right to raise any objection.

Remove the spectacles of ill-view

Here is an example to make this matter more comprehensible. Suppose one has a new pair of shoes. Very nice shoes but too tight fitting. He wears these shoes and walks around on a nice asphalted road, viewing green trees and beautiful flowers all around. Air is nice and there is not much heat. After a while, the pressure on his feet gives him pain. His feet get hurt. Then he begins to scream; what a bad road is this. It has made me ill. It has blistered my feet. It has wounded me. I am unable to walk any more.

Now he should be told: Take off these troubling shoes so that you may be able to enjoy the beauty of a free walk on this comfortable road. The road is not bad. It is very nice and convenient for so many people. The fault is within you.

O the one who looks at the deeds of God but with a lot of ignorance and foolishness! Until and unless you pull off from your feet the narrow tight shoes, you will never be able to enjoy the comfort of walking on a good road nor will you ever be able to understand and appreciate the wisdom behind what God Omniscient has done in this universe. One of His wise decrees is death. It makes life possible for mankind. Here is another example showing the wisdom behind death.

Death, a preliminary to reception by God

If the powerful King invites some people to come to a city full of beautiful gardens and palaces of highest

quality where a number of preparations are made for the entertainment of the invitees. But for time being, he has also fixed a place or compound where the invitees may wait till they are called in as many wonderful and delightful things are under preparation inside.

Now is it not very ridiculous if the waiting people, sitting in the outer compound begin to contend with one another on trifling matters. You ate in a nicer vessel. You sat on a nicer chair etc. The fact is that it is matter of a day or two. It is not worthwhile to fight over such things during that period.

Death is the end of lifespan in this temporary world. It prepares man to receive the Grand Entertainment readied by Almighty God for man in the other lasting world. Till that time, you are in this cage or confinement for a while. Here you are unable to appreciate and imagine the great bounties readied by God for you in the everlasting life after death in Paradise. This world of matter cannot provide those great bounties of heavens.

This matter is very much worthy of attention. A number of guests, as mentioned in the example, in this compound are not prepared to enter the grand hall of Divine entertainment having wonderful gardens, rivers and palaces. They say: We are better off here. We do not like to move from here. Why? Because, they are not aware of the place, which is better and higher than what they can imagine.

But those who have become “believers in the unseen”, the eye of their understanding is open. They have put trust in what God and His Messenger have said. They have put faith in the Divine Word that no one is in a position to comprehend fully the conditions in the world after death.

﴿فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

“So, no soul knows what is hidden for them of that which will refresh the eyes; a reward for what they did.”¹

It is also not possible till they are in this world. Now, is the death, which we do not like, bad? Does it not have wisdom behind it? It is the door for entering the delights and joys.

You have unduly imagined that this (world) is the place for rest and comfort. It is temporary. You are kept here purposely so that, by performing good deeds, you become entitled to the most comfortable permanent house, which is being prepared for you in Paradise. When that palace is ready, you will be told: Welcome. Even if you say: I do not want to come, they will carry you and finally you will have to go. This is not a place to live forever.

Even if man is like the greatest goblet, the stone of death will break it into pieces like a little begging cup.

Death is a decoration for man

It is Husain who says: Just as a necklace is a decoration for a young girl, so is death a necessary

ornament for every human being.² When the body of a deceased person is being washed, according to narrations, he is asked: Would you like to return to the world with this body? The dead one replies: Well! I have just been delivered and liberated.³

Today it is enough in the matter of bad opinion about God and its prohibition. Tomorrow, God willing, we shall talk about the prohibition of having a bad opinion about the creation. Know that it is the duty of a Faithful believer to obey the Commands of God. One must have a good opinion about God and what God decrees and administers, about the universe created by God. Woe unto the one who thinks adversely about God's creation, about whatever God has created or decreed. He forms an adverse opinion about God's deeds.

Woe unto such a blind fellow. Woe unto you if you see injustice, oppression or unfairness in what God does – May He forgive us if we ever thought so. This is a very dangerous thinking. It is incumbent on you to know that whatever God has done, it is full of wisdom. A young man dies. How do we know? It is possible that if he had lived longer, calamities could have fallen on him whereby he might have left this world in a state of disbelief and thus he would have been totally destroyed. So it was better for this youth to pass away from here at this age. Are you more merciful and kind than God! The One Who created him knows more and He is certainly more full of love for him than you are and He knows best what is in everybody's interest.

Ali is happy and pleased with death

Man must know that death is not a monstrosity wherein he may see injustice and oppression. If you want to become a man of religious recognition (having knowledge of God and His deeds), if you are a Shia of Ali, then you should know what Amirul Momineen has said, "By God! My liking for death is more than a baby's liking for its mother's breast." You see, when a child becomes restless, when it is uneasy, mother's breast is put at its mouth and it gets instant relief. So Ali says, "Whenever I became restless and uneasy I remember my death and thereby I get relief and comfort. I get peace. I remember my original place of residence."

Help the legatee of Muhammad or give death

Tonight is the 19th night of the holy month of Ramadhan. Shaykh Waram, teacher of Sayyid Ibn Tawus, writes in his book *Tanwirul Khawatir* and quotes this tradition. It is from a companion of Prophet, Ismail bin Abdullah who says: After the assassination of Uthman and resulting chaos and confusion among Muslims, I took to a corner to protect myself from this turmoil. I took to the bank of river Euphrates and refrained from having any contact with people. I was there during the 19th night of the holy month of Ramadhan. It was dark but I could see a man praying to God near the water. I could hear two or three words of his prayer, which moved my heart. He was praying: O My Lord! You are the Creator of the skies and the earth. You have sent Your Messenger Muhammad. I beseech You for the sake of

Muhammad. Please help the legatee of Muhammad or take his life.

Then he returned from the riverfront. I followed him and requested him on oath to show me the truth. He said: If you want to see the truth, look behind. Look at the legatee of Muhammad. Submit your religious affair before him. (Perhaps this gentleman was Khizr). I came back to Kufa and when I reached the city gates it was still dark and no one was visible. After a while, I saw a man coming out of the city. He offered four units prayer. Then I heard him praying: O My Lord! After the departure of Your Messenger, I acted according to the tradition of Your Messenger among these people, but these people are annoyed with me. They no more like Ali. What to do?

They dislike what Ali does. Truth is not with them. They are fed up with me and I am fed up with them. (These people are passion worshippers, world-lovers. What have they to do with Ali who is spirit from head to foot? He is total truth. They do not like Ali's actions. His cousin, the Messenger of God, likes his deeds). Then he prayed: O My Lord! My cousin, the Messenger of Allah, has promised me and said: O Ali! Whenever you become restless and uneasy, pray for death and God will grant it. My Lord! Now, I have become quite restless and uneasy. I need nothing but the viciousness of Ibn Muljim. I want to reach my aim. I want to be killed in Your Path.

This was in earnest. There is a narration that whenever Ali returned from a battlefield he looked sorrowful. On enquiring about the reason, he replied, "I had gone with a hope to be martyred in God's Way, but I have returned alive. I am afraid I will not have my wish fulfilled. Since being killed on the path of Allah is a very great fortune, Ali always desired it earnestly until the Prophet gave him glad tidings that finally his beard would be colored by the blood of his head and that he would certainly be killed in Allah's path.

In brief, Ismail narrates: I saw that my master (Ali) concluded his prayer and went back to the town. I also followed him, to ascertain who was this gentleman and for what was all this weeping and desire for death. I followed him and saw that he entered the house of Amirul Momineen. I now understood that he was Ali bin Abi Talib. Then I went to the mosque to stay there till next morning, to meet him personally. Then came the call for prayer. Ali engaged himself in prayer. Within a short time, they cried, "They killed Ali."

1. Surah Sajdah 32:17

2. Nafasul Mahmoom

3. Biharul Anwar

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