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Part 6

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ﴾

O you who believe! If an evildoer comes to you with a report, look carefully into it, lest you harm a people in ignorance, then be sorry for what you have done. (49:6)

Do not react to the words of a Transgressor

As mentioned before, the first part of Surah Hujurat describes how to maintain respect and honor of God and His Prophet. We have discussed about it in detail.

From today we begin to study the common responsibilities and important orders about social dealings by Muslims with one another. If people act according to these commands it will guarantee success both in this world and the Hereafter. If they disregard these orders their worldly life will be destroyed, their social life will become troublesome and their Hereafter will also be a failure.

The first order, which makes all of us responsible in this verse and on which much emphasis is laid is: O Muslims! If a liar brings you any news then be careful. It should be not so that you may make haste; that you may become affected by it instantly and believing it to be true, light up fire of quarrel only to be ashamed afterwards without any benefit. Here is an example: Suppose he says: I saw a man approaching your wife in your house when you were not there.

Now, O wise man! You have no right to get excited at once believing in his word and begin to quarrel in your family with complaints resulting in approach to court and even a divorce. Then in the end it is learnt that the man who had gone to your house was your wife's brother. The mischievous man did not know this. He thought he was a stranger. He did not know that he was your wife's brother.

You also did not make any inquiry. You believed the troublemaker's word. You became ashamed after giving divorce to your wife. What a bad luck. One of the troubles harassing this society is that everyone

who hears anything from others believes in it instantly. Such acceptance of words worsens matters. How wrong that you become exited so soon, become angry and do not look at the other side. This results in separation, deprivation, and enmity.

Deprivation from attending scholars

Why most of the people are deprived of the benefits of attending scholars? Why mosques have become vacant? It is because they say: Zaid is unhappy with such and such master. You may hear someone saying: Where do you go for prayer? You reply: At such and such place. He says: Did you not hear that people are talking things about this Shaykh! Now, I do not say that he is not telling true, that I asked him for money but he did not oblige. Rather, he puts allegations on him and tells lies too. Being so simple minded, you also say: All right, very good.

Thus you are deprived from the congregation and from the benefit of a scholar's presence. I wish this would end here. But no! This misfortune is such that if you feel any doubt about anybody, that doubt multiplies and you become his enemy. Why, at all, did you accept those words, which came out of that dirty mouth? "If an evil-doer comes to you with a report, look carefully into it, lest you harm a people in ignorance..."

O people! If somebody told you something about your wife! O ladies! If someone backbites your husband! O friend! You heard something about a Muslim. You have no right to accept such things hastily without making inquiry. You must not believe that word and be impressed by it. Be patient. Make inquiries. Perhaps the fact was otherwise. Either the one who said so made a mistake because of any doubt or he said so due to enmity and jealousy like the story, which is said to be the background of the revelation of this Holy verse.

Walid the transgressor and Bani Mustaliq

In the 9th year after Hijrat, Islam spread wide. Among the tribes, which became Muslim was the tribe of Bani Mustaliq too. Its chief was Harith bin Zurar Khuzai. He came to Medina and embraced Islam and gave a promise to the Holy Prophet that: I am going back to my community. There, I will teach them the laws and rules of Islam. I will also collect their Zakat amounts. Please send someone at such and such time so that I will hand over the Zakat money to him. The Holy Prophet accepted his word.

This gentleman, Harith, who was a new Muslim, was a very wise man. He taught all the rules of Islam to his tribesmen and taught them Prayer, Fast and Zakat. He also collected their Zakat and waited for someone to come from the Holy Prophet so that he might hand over the amount to him. Despite waiting, no one arrived. Hopelessly he said: Perhaps the Holy Prophet did not send anyone so let me myself go to Medina with some Muslims and hand over the Zakat amounts to him personally. So he rode to Medina along with some of his tribesmen. They also had their arms with them and so also the amount of Zakat. They advanced towards Medina.

On the other side, the Holy Prophet also sent a so-called Muslim named Walid bin Uqbah from among the apparent Muslims (a brother of Uthman from maternal side). He was looking like a Muslim from outside but his inside was not yet enlightened. (God disgraced him afterwards).

The Holy Prophet said, “Walid may go to the tribe of Bani Mustaliq with some people, take Zakat from them and come back.” So Walid moved along with some men. As he neared the tribe, he saw from a distance that Harith with some men of his tribe was coming towards Medina. Walid had come to collect Zakat. But he saw that they themselves were coming.

By the way, before Islam, Walid had fought with this tribe of Bani Mustaliq. So he had a hatred and enmity towards this tribe in his heart. When he saw that they were moving towards Medina, this transgressor (in the words of Qur'an), with an intention of taking revenge of the past, hastily went back to Medina. In order to cool his internal anger, he told three lies in Medina. Firstly he said, “O Prophet of God! They have forsaken Islam.”

Two: They refuse to pay Zakat and three: They intend to kill me. So the Holy Prophet may send an army to finish them off. Usually in other cases this word would have been accepted. Troops would have marched; killing, plundering and arresting them. But the Holy Prophet is the one about whom God in Qur'an says:

﴿وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ. إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ﴾

“Nor does he speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed...”¹

So he waited for God's revelation to see what the command of God was, but for so-called Muslims, trouble, killing and blood shedding is easier. So some of them also light a fire saying what Walid has said is true. They said, “O Prophet of God! Walid tells the truth. Please send the troops soon.” They moved on and started fighting, killing them, captured their women and children, looted their property as war booty. The Holy Prophet is still waiting for God's revelation. Then came down these verses from God. This is written both by the Sunnis and Shias in their books. What is stranger is that the Sunnis also accept it but anyhow, Walid was a brother of Uthman!

Eternal discredit for Uthman

The absolute transgressor Walid is the cursed one whom Uthman made the governor of Basra during his caliphate. He disregarded the fact that Qur'an has called him a transgressor. This disgrace is for Uthman, which cannot be justified by anything. After becoming the governor of Basra, can the ruler of an Islamic province indulge in every sin and transgression? The matters worsened to such an extent that one night he drank so much that when people brought him for the morning prayers he was heavily intoxicated. In this condition, he went ahead to lead the prayers and prayed four units (rakats) instead of

two. People exclaimed that he had made an error. He replied, “No I have not made any mistake, it is only that I thought about you. Otherwise I would have offered seven or eight units.”

Then he vomited and dirtied the holy mosque. Uthman was told about all this and people asked him what kind of a governor he had appointed? Why do you consider his relation with you? Even after he was dismissed, no punishment was given to him. There are details available about this. Finally it was Amirul Momineen who punished him as per the penalty for drinking. Let us go ahead. What I was saying is about a transgressor who is, apparently, a Muslim who says: ‘There is no god except Allah’ and also offers prayers...but he does not fear God in indulging in any sin like bloodshed, mischief and corruption. He has no true faith. His faith is in something other than Islam.

God willing, the meaning of these verses will become clear towards the end of the Surah Hujurat.

The revealed verse is saying that, O those who have believed, if a transgressor brings you any news do not react to it instantly. Make inquiries. Do not make haste. Rather look into the matter deeply and see. Perhaps it may not be as told. Maybe he said something due to enmity or ill will. He may be lying; like this story of Walid. This cursed one comes (when the concerned men had brought Zakat to be handed to the Holy Prophet) and says, “No, they have discarded Islam, they do not want to pay the Zakat and they also want to kill me.” What does this mean? What he intends is to react to his past enmity which he had with that tribe before Islam.

O Muslims! Let it not be so that you hear a word from a sinner and transgressor and be impressed and affected by it and react to it and thereafter be ashamed of what you did.

Scholars were martyred due to such mischief

Examples in this connection are numerous. In how many calamities have the Muslims fallen for not acting according to the command of this holy verse! How many families are destroyed and how much property devastated!

I say even more than this. A lot of blood has flown unnecessarily and without any genuine reason. What was the reason? Only due to a word spoken by an enemy or a jealous fellow. They decreased their piety by and by. How the great scholar, the First Martyr, Muhammad bin Makki, the great jurisprudent of his time was martyred? What was the cause of the murder of Qazi Noorullah Shustari? Due to these same mischiefs.

I remember an example about Mansoor Dawaniqi and the mischief against the holy Imam. Mansoor Dawaniqi was the second Abbaside Caliph. After his coming to throne, one of his bystanders concocted a gossip to get nearness of the king. He claimed, “I am your well-wisher,” and by his lies and false reports got many innocent people arrested. Finally he prepared some documents and put a counterfeit seal of Imam Sadiq.

It was written in those papers that: Go to Khorasan and rise against Mansoor; that Imam wants that you should revolt against Mansoor. So take to arms. He also made some other false letters in the name of Mualla bin Khunais who was the treasurer of Imam Sadiq. It was mentioned therein that the Imam was collecting amounts for a rebellion against Mansoor and for raising an army of rebels. What oppression! Finally they called the holy Imam to the court of Mansoor. The king first gave respect to the Imam but then, by and by, started saying, "Well, you want to disturb my government?" The Imam replied, "No, it is not so. By God, no!"

Mansoor said, "I have reports that you are thinking of a revolt against me; that you are against my rule; that you are claiming the throne and that you want to attack me with your army." The brief reply of the Imam, as per what is mentioned in *Biharul Anwar* was, "God knows that I have reached old age and have almost lost all of my strength (the holy Imam was over sixty years of age). I did not have such thoughts when I was a youth so now when I have become old and am about to die how I can harbor such aspirations. What they have said is falsehood and lies." The king said, "All right. One who brought this news and your letters is present here." They brought the transgressor before the holy Imam. Mansoor asked him, "Whose letters are these?" The fellow replied, "They are from Ja'far bin Muhammad (Though they were fabricated by him)." The Imam said, "These are not my letters. I have never written these letters. I have never made such a stir." Then Imam said, "Will you swear?" He replied, "Yes, I will."

Mansoor saw that here was a good outcome and that the matter will end now. That fellow swore, "By Allah except Whom there is no god, He is the Alive, the Ever-present, the Mighty..." The Imam said, "No, I do not want this kind of swearing from you. Utter what I say." He said, "I am prepared to repeat whatever you say." The Imam said, "Say, 'I am fed up with Allah's Might and Power, if I am wrong in saying that Ja'far did it'." As soon as he uttered these swearing words he was lifted from the earth like a sparrow and fell upside down breaking his head and all the physical organs and he prepared to depart for hell. This way of his rising up and falling down and breaking of his body and his body movement at the moment of his death made Mansoor restless. He said to his men, "Tie up the legs of this cursed one and take him away so that he does not die in front of me."

Finally he was carried out and then he died. Then Mansoor apologized much and asked the Imam's pardon.

He asked the holy Imam, "O Master! How all this happened? How did you turn his swearing?" The Imam said, When he said, 'By Allah except Whom there is no god,' I feared that since he gives witness to His Oneness he may gain God's mercy, and the truth may not be manifested." This is a fine issue to be understood by experts and intelligent beings that it is possible that when one gives witness to God's oneness, even if it is only verbal, one will, at last, be worthy of God's mercy. God may give him respite.

Therefore I asked him to swear, 'I am disgusted with His Power and Might,' which is the worst swearing as it is getting disgusted with God. It amounts to denial of God. It means he has nothing to do with Allah.

This is against belief in God's oneness. Even if the oneness of God is uttered only with tongue (without firm belief in heart) it, anyway, is a kind of respect and honor to God, which may fetch divine kindness. Woe unto that ruffian who says: I have nothing to do with God. Such utterances can bring nothing but punishment from God. So Imam said: Say so. And as soon as he uttered this blasphemy he met with both outward and inward disgrace and destruction.

Greatness of declaring God's oneness

It becomes very clear from this that the formula, "There is no god except Allah" is a very great word. Imam Sadiq says: This tricky man, this liar, this fabricator of allegations, even if he says: "There is no god except Allah", there is a possibility of Allah being kind to him. O God! A man and a woman, young and old, all of us are believers in "There is no god except Allah". Our tongue, our condition represent, "There is no god except Allah, the One for Whom there is no partner". When you stand before grave dwellers do not forget this greatest truth and say: Peace on those who believe in "There is no god except Allah" from those who believe in "There is no god except Allah", O "There is no god except Allah", by the right of "There is no god except Allah", forgive those who say "There is no god except Allah".

Especially during Friday eve, in the month of Ramadhan, O God! Because of the holiness of the words: "There is no god except Allah", pardon all the people of "There is no god except Allah". Please do forgive us due to Your Honor and Might, and the holiness of "There is no god except Allah". It is in a narration that this formula of faith: "There is no god except Allah" is heavier than the Throne and the seven-fold sky. O Allah! Decide that all of us also may become truly the people of: "There is no god except Allah". Kindly make us all live by "There is no god except Allah".

O Lord! Do not leave me at the last moment on my deathbed. Let me not forget to recite Your Name. Please do help me O Lord!

In the commentary of *Lumah* the Second Martyr narrates a tradition that the Holy Prophet said that Paradise becomes obligatory for the one whose last utterance is the formula: "There is no god except Allah". I do not know where will you or I be in the last hour of our life; what we would be uttering? Where we would be, in a hospital bed or at home?

Everyone must fear about himself and should shiver thinking how he would be dying. In this month of Ramadhan, which is the month when God Almighty answers supplications, ask from Him: O Lord! Due to the holiness of this holy month, make our end good. Kindly make our last moments, the best moments of our lives. Please lift us from this world while we are remembering You and may our tongue recite with attention: "There is no god except Allah".

Dying with love for the Master of the Age

One of my friends related to me: Fifty years back, his 18 years old brother had learnt the Ziyarat Jamiah by heart. The Twelfth Imam had taught it. At last he fell ill. On his deathbed he recited the Ziyarat Jamiah and names of the twelve Imams. What is wonderful is that he said he was in bed for two months due to his serious illness he had becomes like a skeleton, unable to move. But at the last moment of his life when he recited that he remembered all the twelve Imams and so also Imam Mahdi, he got up from his bed. I do not know what this eagerness was, if not the eagerness of love, which makes a dead person alive! How much affinity and affection this youth had for the Imam of the time that it made him arise from his deathbed. When he took the name of his Master he stands up quite upright. Even after that, he once again for giving respect and honor (to the Master) throws himself at the doorstep of his room saying: Welcome, O Master. Then he rises up and then passes away from this world. Such are the things and events of the pasts.

Now our faiths have become weak and hearts devilish. O God! I do not know, in this age of mine, how I shall die? God forbid, lest I be thinking of and in anxiety for this world! Even at the last moment I may worry about all about the world!

Weep for yourself in advance

During these holy nights you read: I am weeping for the hour of my death. When you die, no one weeps for you. If you have a wife, she says: The crown of my head has gone away. If you have a son, he says: I have lost my might. Someone says: My bread earner is no more. No one ever says: In what condition this unfortunate person died? What will happen to this man in his grave? Ali says: Come, for God's sake, rush to help your dearest thing, that is, rush to help thyself. Weep for your own self. A collective supplication is more precious. It is written in *Wasaelush Shia* that Imam Sadiq says: If forty persons pray to God together, God answers their prayer.

O Allah! Today we have one thing to ask from You. If You give it, You will have given us everything. If You do not grant it, we are helpless. O God! Make us die with Faith. During this Friday eve, in this night, which is full of mercy, please make this group, one of those lucky ones whom You will protect from hell. On every Friday eve in the holy month of Ramadhan, six hundred thousand people get salvation.² Kindly make this gathering one of those lucky ones.

Here I hint towards the last moments of Husain's life. In the solitary pit of his assassination Husain prays to his Lord: O God! No one is my Lord except You and there is no deity for me except You. He holds such sincere talks with God. O Husain, dear Husain! Neither those innumerable wounds nor the burning of your hungry and thirsty stomach, nothing of the kind, nor the separation of your near and dear ones made you unmindful of your Lord! May I be sacrificed for you, O Husain!

¹. Surah Najm 53:3-4

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