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Section 13: The Hypocrites Among the Bedouins

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 100

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الاَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالاَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُم بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتَهَا الاَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَداً ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيم

100. ***"And the foremost, the first of the Emigrants and the Helpers, and those who followed them in goodness, Allah is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow wherein shall they abide forever. That is the great success."***

Following the content meaning of the former holy verse which was upon the circumstances of the disbelievers and hypocrites, this verse refers to the true believers of the Muslims, and divides them into three definite groups.

1. The first group are those who were the foremost and the first in Islam, who emigrated. The verse says:

"And the foremost, the first of the Emigrants..."

2. Those who were first in helping both the Prophet (S) and his companions of the Emigrants.

"...and the Helpers..."

3. The third group are mentioned those who followed them from the point of goodness, and by their good deeds and embracing Islam, Emigration, and helping the Prophet's religion, they joined them.

"...and those who followed them in goodness..."

It is interesting that all the Islamic scholars have unanimously said that the first person of women who embraced Islam was Khadijah, the faithful and devoted wife of the Prophet (S).

And, as for men, all the scholars and commentators of the Shi'ites together, and a large number of the Sunnite scholars have confirmed that Ali-ibn-Abi Talib (as) was the first one who accepted the invitation of the Prophet of Islam (S) 1

After mentioning these three groups, the Qur'an says:

"...Allah is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him..."

The pleasure of Allah from them is for their Faith and the good deeds they have done; and that they are well-pleased with Allah is for the extraordinary various important rewards He has bestowed upon them.

This sentence contains all the devine merits, (the material and spiritual merits of body and soul) yet, as an emphasis and statement of expansion after epitome, it adds:

"...and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow..."

Among the privileges of this Divine bounty is that it is eternal, as the verse itself says:

"...wherein shall they abide forever..."

This condition is a great triumph for a person. The holy verse continues saying:

"...That is the great success."

What a success can be better than this that man, a mortal, feels that his Lord, the Exalted, his worshiped, and his Master is well-pleased with him and has accepted the whole deeds he has done?

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 101

وَمِمَّنْ حَوْلَكُم مِنَ الاَعْرَابِ مُنَافِقُونَ وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ مَرَدُوا عَلَى النِّفَاقِ لا
تَعْلَمُهُمْ نَحْنُ نَعْلَمُهُمْ سَنُعَذِّبُهُم مَرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَى عَذَابٍ عَظِيمٍ

101. ***"And among the Bedouins around you there are hypocrites, and from among the people of Medina (there are also some who) have grown bold in hypocrisy. You do not know them, (but) We know them. Soon We will punish them twice, then they will be turned back to a grievous chastisement."***

The Qur'ān turns the discussion again unto the deeds of the hypocrites and their mischievous groups. It says:

"And among the Bedouins around you there are hypocrites..."

This phrase means that you should be aware and watch the hypocrites who are outside your city and be careful of their dangerous activities.

Then, it adds that, in Medina itself, and from among the people of this city, there are also some persons who have stretched hypocrisy as far as the limit of disobedience, and they are severely steadfast unto it so that they are experienced in it. The verse says:

"...and from among the people of Medina* (*there are also some who*) *have grown bold in hypocrisy..."

This meaning, which is seen in the abovementioned verse about the hypocrites of 'inside' and those of 'outside', maybe refers to this aspect that the inside hypocrites are more experienced, and naturally more dangerous, in their job than the outside hypocrites. Therefore, the Muslims must intensively be careful of them, although they should not neglect the outside hypocrites either.

That is why, immediately after that, Allah says:

"...You do not know them,* (*but*) *We know them..."

This indication, of course, is to the ordinary and common knowledge of the Prophet (S), but there is no contrust that he (S) becomes utterly aware of their secrets through Divine revelation and by His teaching.

At the end of the verse, the Qurān announces the grievous punishment of this group as follows:

"...Soon We will punish them twice, then they will be turned back to grievous chastisement..."

Twice in punishment is, at first, their disgraces among people, and the other is to give up their lives with hardship which includes both their spiritual and bodily chastisements.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 102

وَءَاخَرُونَ اعْتَرَفُوا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ خَلَطُوا عَمَلاً صَالِحاً وَءَاخَرَ سَيِّئاً عَسَى اللّهُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللّهَ غَفُورٌرَحِيمٌ

102. ***"And* (*there are*) *othes who have confessed to their sins. They have mixed a righteous deed***

and an evil one. Maybe Allah will turn (mercifully) to them (and accept their repentance). Verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

Several persons from among the companions of the Prophet (S) refrained from taking part in the Battle of Tab□k, not hypocritically, of course, but for the sake of loving life.

When the concerning critical verses were revealed, they regreted and, as a sign of repentance, they had fastened themselves on a pillar in the Prophet's Mosque.

They kept on being in that state until when Allah accepted their repentance and the Messenger of Allah (S) unfastened the ropes from them and they were forgiven. The verse says:

"And (there are) othes who have confessed to their sins. They have mixed a righteous deed and an evil one. Maybe Allah will turn (mercifully) to them (and accept their repentance). Verily Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."

After that, as gratitude for this matter, they offered all their properties to the Prophet (S), but he took a part of the properties to spend upon the expediencies of the Muslims, and returned the rest to them.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 103

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِم بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ صَلاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَهُمْ
وَاللّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

103. ***"Take alms out of their possessions to cleanse them and purify them thereby, and pray for them, surely your prayers are a comfort for them, and Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing."***

This holy verse points to one of the important Islamic ordinances, viz. alms. As a general rule, it tells the Prophet (S) to take alms tax from their properties. The verse says:

"Take alms out of their possessions..."

The Divine command is a clear evidence for that the chief of the Islamic government can take 'the alms tax' from people. It is not in a manner that he must wait until if they wish they pay it by themselves, and, otherwise, they do not pay it.

Then, the Qur'□n refers to two parts of the psychological, ethical, and social philosophy of almsgiving. It says:

"...to cleanse them and purify them thereby..."

Almsgiving cleanse them from the bad qualities, purifies them from mammunism and stinginess, and grows the plant of philanthropy, generosity and attentiveness to people's rights in them.

Moreover, by the fulfilment of this divine commandment, you may wipe out the imputies and mischieves which come into being inside the society because of poverty, class division, and the deprivation of some groups therein. Thus, you may clean the scene of the society from these vices.

Then, it implies that when they pay alms tax, you do pray for them and send blessing unto them. The verse says:

"...and pray for them..."

This situation indicates that even for the fulfilment of the obligatory duties, people should be thanked and admired. They should be specially encouraged mentally and spiritually. Some Islamic traditions denote that when people brought alms tax to the presence of the Prophet (S), he used to pray for them by saying:

"O' Allah! Give them peace."

Then the Qur'ān adds:

"...surely your prayers are a comfort for them..."

It is by the glow of this prayer that the grace and blessing of Allah will be sent down over their selves and spirits, in a form that they may feel it. So, at the end of the verse, the Qur'ān says:

"...and Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing."

That is, Allah both hears the prayers of the Prophet (S) and is aware of the intentions of the givers of alms tax.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 104

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللّهَ هُوَ يَقْبَلُ التَّوبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَأْخُذُ الْصَّدَقَاتِ وَأَنَّ اللّهَ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

104. ***"Do they not know that Allah is He Who accepts the repentance from His servants and takes the alms and that Allah is He Who is Oft-Pardoning, Merciful?"***

In view of the fact that some sinners, like the hypocrites concerning the Battle of Tabūk, urged the Prophet (pbuh) to accept their repentance, in this verse the Qur'ān points to this subject indicating that

the acceptance of repentance is not something that the Prophet (S) does by himself. The verse says:

"Do they not know that Allah is He Who accepts the repentance from His servants..."

Allah not only accepts the repentances but also takes the alms or the charities which are given to Allah as the atonement of sins and for nearness to Him. The verse continues saying:

"...and takes the alms..."

There is no doubt that the takers of alms and charities are either the Prophet (S) and the immaculate Imams (as), who are the leaders of the Muslims, or the needy and deserving persons.

But, since the hands of the Prophet (S) and those of the true leaders and the hands of deserving persons are counted as the hand of Allah (s.w.t), it seems that Allah (s.w.t) takes these alms.

In a tradition narrated from the Prophet (S), we recite:

"*Verily the alms will reach to the hand of Allah before it reaches to the beggar's hand."* 2

Moreover, in an Islamic tradition, it has been announced that the angels receive all the deeds of man, except alms which directly reach to the hand of Allah.

At the end of the verse, as an emphasis, the Qur□n says:

"...and that Allah is He Who is Oft-Pardoning, Merciful?"

From the content of this holy verse, it is so understood that the forgiveness of the faults and accepting the repentance is only up to Allah (s.w.t.). Thus, even the Prophet (S) is not rightful to accept repentances, much less are the monks and the authorities of churches. This rank belongs only to Allah (s.w.t.).

"...Allah is He Who accepts the repentance..."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 105

وَقُلِ اعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَى اللّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَسَتُرَدُّونَ إِلَى عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ
وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

105*. "And say: 'Act you* (*as you will*)*! Allah will see your work and* (*so will*) *His Messenger and the believers, then soon you will be returned to the Knower of the Unseen and the visible, and He will inform you of what you used to do'."*

This verse announces that Allah, His Messenger and the believers are cognizant of what we do. It states the very belief of the Shi‘ite in ‘presenting deeds’ to the saints of Allah. This presentation may be performed daily, weekly, or monthly.

So, if our deeds are good, the saints of Allah will be happy with us; and if they are bad, they will become worried and sad. Belief in this ‘presentation of deeds’ is effective in creating piety and modesty in us, and contains an extraordinary educative role.

The verse says:

“And say: ‘Act you (as you will)! Allah will see your work and (so will) His Messenger and the believers, then soon you will be returned to the Knower of the Unseen and the visible, and He will inform you of what you used to do’.”

Imam S□diq (as) said:

“O people! Do not annoy the Messenger of Allah by your sin! ”

As some Islamic traditions indicate the objective meaning of /mu’m‘n□n/ (the believers), mentioned in this verse, is the Immacate Imams whom Allah makes aware of our deeds. 3

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 106

وءَاخَرُونَ مُرْجَوْنَ لأَمْرِ اللّهِ إِمَّا يُعَذِّبُهُمْ وإِمَّا يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَاللّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

106. ***“And (there are) others expecting Allah’s decree: either He shall chastise them, or turn to them (mercifully), and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.”***

The Qur’□nic term /murj□n/ is derived from /’irj□’/ in the sense of ‘delay and stop’, a delay which is acompanied with ‘hope and expectation’. The verse says:

“And (there are) others expecting Allah’s decree…”

According to the Islamic literature, the verse is concerning to the murderers of Hadrat-i-Hamzah, or Ja‘far-i-Tayy□r, who were remorsed from their actions against these two. Or it refers to those persons who did not participate in the Battle of Tab□k and simply regretted and did not confess it by their tongues.

However, Allah is capable to either forgive the sinners or punish them. The verse continues saying:

“…either He shall chastise them, or turn to them (mercifully)…”

The wrath or grace of Allah is based on knowledge and wisdom, not upon vengeance. The verse concludes:

"...and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 107

وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مَسْجِداً ضِرَاراً وَكُفْراً وَتَفْرِيقاً بَيْنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وإِرْصَاداً لِمَنْ حَارَبَ اللّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ مِن قَبْلُ وَلَيَحْلِفُنَّ إِنْ أَرَدْنَآ إِلاَّ الْحُسْنَى وَاللّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ

107*. "And those who built a mosque to cause harm* (*to Islam*) *and for unbelief, and to divide the believers, and* (*as*) *an ambush for those who fought Allah and His Messenger aforetime; and they will surely swear: 'We purposed naught save good,' but Allah testifies that verily they are liars."*

In this verse, the Qur'ān has made manifest one of the great plots of the hypocrites of Medina. The event was as follows:

Twelve persons from among those hypocrites built a place under the title of 'a mosque'. They built it with the recommendation of Abū-'āmir-Rāhib who was a harsh enemy of Islam from before. He lived in Syria.

In order to make that mosque formal, the hypocrites went to the Prophet (S) and asked him to come into that mosque and pray therein. They said that they had built the mosque for those Muslims who were weak and could not attend the Prophet's Mosque or Quba Mosque from some far places to pray; so they could pray in that mosque.

At that time, the Prophet (S) was going to travel for the Battle of Tabūk and had not time enough to go there. Therefore, he told them to wait until he would come back from his journey and then he might establish prayer in that mosque.

When the Prophet (S) returned from the Battle of Tabūk, they had made that mosque ready. So, they came to the Prophet (S) and asked him to pray in that mosque. It was at the same time that these very holy verses were sent down and made their plot manifest.

The revelations made it evident that those hypocrites aimed to harm the religion of Islam under the name of the mosque. That was why the Prophet of Allah (S) sent several of his companions to ruin and burn that mosque.

They were Mālik-ibn-Dikhsham, Mu'an-ibn-'āmir-ibn-Sakn, and Wahshi. The command of the Prophet (S) was obeyed, and later the site of that mosque was used as a place of rubbishes in that locality.

In this verse, the Qur'ān indicates that the hypocrites pursued four aims by building that mosque:

1. To cause harm to Islam and the Muslims.

2. To create disbelief in Allah and His Messenger (S) among people, and that the foundations of infidelity to be strengthened in that mosque.

3. To disperse the Muslims. The Muslims usually attended in one mosque, and there was a unity among them.

4. To supply a lurking-place for the one who was fighting against Allah and His Prophet, viz. 'Abū-'āmir-i-Rāhib. 4 He was a man who became a Christian in the Age of Ignorance and obtained a high rank there.

When the Prophet of Islam (S) migrated to Medina, as a result of his envy,'Abū-'āmir always applied his hostility against him (S), and finally he ran away toward the polytheists of Mecca.

He accompanied them in the Battle of'Uhud, and, at last, he escaped to Syria in order to attract the help of Roman army and to fight against the Prophet of Islam (S).

The hypocrites of Medina had built that mosque with Abū-'āmir's recommendation and were waiting for him to come with the Roman troops and to use that mosque as his station for invadiny the Muslims. The verse says:

"And those who built a mosque to cause harm (to Islam) and for unbelief, and to divide the believers, and (as) an ambush for those who fought Allah and His Messenger aforetime..."

In order to deceive the Muslims, the hypocrites swore that they desired nothing but good for them, and that their aim was to help and serve the Muslims. But, by narrating their saying, the Qur'ān says:

"...and they will surely swear: 'We purposed naught save good,' but Allah testifies that verily they are liars."

In this way and by sending down these verses, Allah made their great plot manifest, and futiled the evil plan of those hypocrites.

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 108

لاَتَقُمْ فِيهِ أَبَداً لَمَسْجِدٌ أُسِّسَ عَلَى التَّقْوَى مِنْ أَوَّلِ يَوْمٍ أَحَقُّ أَن تَقُومَ فِيهِ فِيهِ
رِجَالٌ يُحِبُّونَ أَن يَتَطَهَّرُوا وَاللّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُطَّهِّرِينَ

108. ***"Never do stand therein (to pray). Certainly a mosque founded on piety from the first day is worthier that you stand in it (for prayer). Therein are men who love to purify themselves, and Allah loves the purified ones."***

The Prophet (S) is commanded in this holy verse not to stand in that mosque at all, i.e. he should not establish prayer there. The holy verse says:

"Never do stand therein (to pray)..."

Then the Qur'ān compares this mosque with the Prophet's Mosque or Qubā Mosque, and says:

"...Certainly a mosque founded on piety from the first day is worthier that you stand in it (for prayer)..."

The objective meaning of this mosque was either Qubā Mosque, or the Prophet's Mosque, or any mosque which had been founded on the basis of piety and belief in Allah (s.w.t.); and the purpose of the phrase '***the first day***' was that, from the first day, the aim of its founders had been Allah.

The Qur'ān adds that, in this mosque, which has been established on the basis of piety, there are some men who desire to purify themselves, and Allah likes the purified ones.

The purpose of this purification is a spiritual purification which has been rendered into being far from sins and being studious in doing divine obligations. It also envelops the purification of both clothes and body.

The verse continues saying:

"...Therein are men who love to purify themselves, and Allah loves the purified ones."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 109

أَفَمَنْ أَسَّسَ بُنْيَانَهُ عَلَى تَقْوَى مِنَ اللّهِ وَرِضْوَانٍ خَيْرٌ أَم مَنْ أَسَّسَ بُنْيَانَهُ عَلَى
شَفَا جُرُفٍ هَارٍ فَانْهَارَ بِهِ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ وَاللّهُ لايَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

109. ***"Is he, therefore, better who has laid his foundation on fear of Allah and (His) good pleasure, or he who has laid his foundation on the brink of a crumbling hollowed bank that tumbles with him into the Fire of Hell? And Allah does not guide the unjust people."***

After explaining the story of the mosque of dissension, the Qur'ān compares between those two groups: a group who built Qubā Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque, and the group who built the mosque of dissension.

The foundation of the work of the first group was on piety and the pleasure of Allah, while the result of the work of the second group was blazing Fire and falling into Hell.

The basis of the work of the first group is piety and obtaining the pleasure of Allah, and they have no other aim from it. Are these people better or the second group whose basis of work is upon the brink of a crumbling hollowed bank?

They will fall into the Fire of Hell by the building they have built. In other words, the building, which they have established, is at the edge of the precipice of the Fire of Hell which will suddenly ruins into it.

The verse says:

"Is he, therefore, better who has laid his foundation on fear of Allah and (His) good pleasure, or he who has laid his foundation on the brink of a crumbling hollowed bank that tumbles with him into the Fire of Hell? And Allah does not guide the unjust people."

Surah At-Tawbah – Verse 110

لا يَزَالُ بُنْيَانُهُمُ الَّذِي بَنَوْا رِيبَةً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ إِلاَّ أَن تَقَطَّعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَاللّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

110*. "The building which they built will not cease to be (a source of) disquiet in their hearts unless their hearts be cut into pieces, and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise."*

By this holy verse, the Qur'ān implies that the building which the hypocrites have built is always a source of suspicion in their hearts. This suspicion is with them until their hearts be cut into pieces, viz. when they die.

The purpose is that the instruction of the Prophet (S) that the mosque of dissension to be ruined has increased in the hatred of their hearts. This hatred or rancoure and disquiet towards the ordinances of Islam will be with them until the time they die and their hearts be cut into pieces.

This meaning denotes that they will never believe in the Truth and will die with the same state of hypocrisy and disbelief.

The verse says:

"The building which they built will not cease to be (a source of) disquiet in their hearts unless their hearts be cut into pieces..."

Then, at the end of the verse, the Qur'ān mentions two attributes of Allah. They are: All-Knowing, All-Wise, which means Allah is aware of their status and the command He has ordained about the mosque

of dissension has been done wisely. The verse says:

"...and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise."

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1. Al-Qadir, vol. 3, pp. 220 to 243; Ihq□q-ul-Haqq, vol. 3, pp. 114 to 120; Tafsir-ul-Qurtubi, vol. 5, p. 3075 (narrated from Mustadrak-I-H□kim), and some other books.
2. Tafsir-us_S□fi and Tafsir-ul-Burh□n (under the holy verse).
3. Tafsir-ul-Burh□n, and Tafsir-us-S□fi (under the holy verse), 'Us□l-i-K□fi, vol. 1, p. 171, and Bih□r-ul-'Anw□r, by 'All□mah Majlisi.
4. 'Ab□-'□mir was the father of Hanzalah

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