

49. Al-Hujurat (the Dwellings)

The Tafsīr of Sūrat Al-Ḥujurāt

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The Tafsīr of Sūrat Al-Hujurāt (Chapter - 49)

Which was revealed in Al-Madīnah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْدِمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاعِرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝١﴾
 يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَن تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ ۝٢﴾
 إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُغَضِّبُونَ اللَّهَ بِغَضَبِهِمْ عِندَ رَسُولِهِ ۖ إِنَّ أُولَٰئِكَ عِندَ اللَّهِ لَسَاءُونَ ۝٣﴾
 آمَنَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبُهُم لِلنَّقْوَىٰ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝٤﴾

﴿1. O you who believe! Make not (a decision) in advance before Allāh and His Messenger, and have Taqwā of Allāh. Verily, Allāh is Hearing, Knowing.﴾

﴿2. O you who believe! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak aloud to him in talk as you speak aloud to one another, lest your deeds should be thwarted while you perceive not.﴾

﴿3. Verily, those who lower their voices in the presence of Allāh's Messenger, they are the ones whose hearts Allāh has tested for Taqwā. For them is forgiveness and a great reward.﴾

The Prohibition of making a Decision in advance of Allāh and His Messenger; ordering Respect towards the Prophet ﷺ

In these Āyāt, Allāh the Exalted teaches His faithful servants the good manners they should observe with the Messenger ﷺ, which are respect, honor and esteem. Allāh the Exalted and Most Honored said,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْدِمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ﴾

﴿O you who believe! Make not (a decision) in advance before Allāh and His Messenger,﴾

meaning, do not rush in making decisions before him, rather, follow his lead in all matters. 'Ali bin Abi Ṭalḥah reported that Ibn 'Abbās, may Allāh be pleased with him, commented;

﴿لَا تَقْدِمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ﴾

﴿Make not (a decision) in advance before Allāh and His Messenger,﴾

"Do not say anything that contradicts the Qur'ān and Sunnah."^[1] Qatādah commented, "We were told that some people used to say, 'Revelation should be sent down about such and such matters,' and, 'such and such practices should be rendered allowed.' Allāh the Exalted disliked this attitude."^[2] Allāh said,

﴿وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ﴾

﴿and have Taqwā of Allāh.﴾ meaning, 'in what He has ordered you;'

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ﴾

﴿Verily, Allāh is Hearing.﴾ 'your statements,'

﴿عَلِيمٌ﴾

﴿Knowing.﴾ 'your intentions.'

Allāh said,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ﴾

﴿O you who believe! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet,﴾

This contains another kind of favorable behavior. Allāh the Exalted is teaching the believers that they should not raise their voices above the voice of the Prophet ﷺ. It was stated that this *Āyah* was revealed about Abu Bakr and 'Umar.

Al-Bukhārī recorded that Ibn Abi Mulaykah said, "The two righteous ones, Abu Bakr and 'Umar, almost earned destruction when they raised their voices before the Prophet ﷺ who was receiving the delegation of Bani Tamīm. One of them

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 22 :275.

[2] Aṭ-Ṭabari 22 :276.

recommended Al-Aqra' bin Hābis the member of the Banu Mujāshi' while the other recommended another man. Nafi' (a subnarrator) said: "I don't remember his name." Abu Bakr said to 'Umar, 'You only wanted to contradict me,' while 'Umar said, 'I did not intend to contradict you.' Their voices then became loud, thereupon Allāh the Exalted sent down this Āyah,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَن تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ﴾

﴿O you who believe! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak aloud to him in talk as you speak aloud to one another, lest your deeds should be thwarted while you perceive not.﴾

'Abdullāh bin Az-Zubayr said, "After that, 'Umar's voice was so low that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ had to ask him to repeat what he said so that he could understand what he was saying to him." 'Abdullāh bin Az-Zubayr did not mention the same regarding his father, Abu Bakr,^[1] may Allāh be pleased with him.^[2] Muslim did not collect this *Hadīth*.

In another narration collected by Al-Bukhārī, he said that a delegation from the tribe of Banu Tamīm came to the Prophet ﷺ and that Abu Bakr recommended Al-Qa'qā' bin Ma'bad to be appointed as their leader, while 'Umar recommended Al-Aqra' bin Hābis.^[3] Muslim did not collect this narration.

Al-Bukhārī recorded that Anas bin Mālik said, "The Prophet ﷺ missed Thābit bin Qays and a man said, 'O Allāh's Messenger! I will find out about his news.' That man went to Thābit and found him sitting at home with his head lowered and asked him, 'What is the matter?' Thābit said, 'An evil matter!' And he said that he used to raise his voice above the voice of the Prophet ﷺ. He feared that his good deeds would be useless and he would be among the people of the Fire. The man went back to the Prophet ﷺ and conveyed Thābit's statement and returned to Thābit with a wonderfully good

[1] Meaning his grandfather.

[2] *Fath Al-Bārī* 8:454.

[3] *Fath Al-Bārī* 8:457.

news. The Prophet ﷺ said,

«اذْهَبْ إِلَيْهِ فَقُلْ لَهُ: إِنَّكَ لَسْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ، وَلَكِنَّكَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ»

«Go back to him and tell him this news; you are not among the people of the Fire. Rather, you are among the dwellers of Paradise.»

Al-Bukhārī collected this Ḥadīth with this wording.^[1]

Imām Aḥmad recorded that Anas bin Mālik said, "When this Āyah was revealed,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ﴾

«O you who believe! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet», until,

﴿وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ﴾

«while you perceive not», Thābit bin Qays bin Ash-Shammās, whose voice was loud, said, 'I was the one who raised his voice above the voice of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ. I am among the dwellers of the Fire. My good deeds have been done in vain.' He remained in his house feeling distressed, and the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ noticed his absence. So some men went to Thābit and said to him, 'The Prophet ﷺ noticed your absence. What is the matter with you?' Thābit said, 'I used to raise my voice above the voice of the Prophet ﷺ and speak loudly in front of him. My deeds have been rendered useless and I am among the people of the Fire.' They went to the Prophet ﷺ and told him what Thābit said and the Prophet ﷺ said,

«لَا، بَلْ هُوَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ»

«Nay, he is among the dwellers of Paradise.»

Anas commented, "We used to see Thābit walk among us knowing that he was (to be) among the dwellers of Paradise. During the battle of Yamamah, our forces suffered retreat. Suddenly, Thābit bin Qays bin Shāmmas came, having put on his Ḥanūṭ^[2] and shrouds, and said, 'The worst habit is the one you acquire from your enemy and do not set a bad

^[1] *Fath Al-Bārī* 8:454.

^[2] Fragrance used when shrouding the dead for burial.

example for your companions.' And he went on fighting until he was martyred, may Allāh be pleased with him.^[1]

Allāh then prohibited speaking to the Prophet ﷺ in a loud voice, just as one speaks loudly to another in a way that offends him. Instead, they were required to speak to him in terms of respect, honor and calmness. This is why Allāh the Exalted and Most Honored said,

﴿وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ﴾

«nor speak aloud to him in talk as you speak aloud to one another,»

just as He said in another Āyah,

﴿لَا تَجْعَلُوا دُعَاءَ الرَّسُولِ بَيْنَكُمْ كَدُعَاءِ بَعْضِكُمْ بَعْضًا﴾

«Make not the calling of the Messenger among you as your calling one of another.» (24:63)

Allāh's statement,

﴿أَنْ تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ﴾

«lest your deeds should be thwarted while you perceive not.»

means, 'We ordered you to refrain from raising your voices to the Prophet ﷺ, so that he will not get angry with you, because in doing so, you will also anger Allāh.' The good deeds of he who caused the Prophet's anger will become useless without him even knowing. In the Ṣaḥīḥ, there is a Ḥadīth that states,

«إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَتَكَلَّمُ بِالْكَلِمَةِ مِنْ رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى لَا يُلْقِي لَهَا بَالًا، يُكْتَبُ لَهُ بِهَا الْجَنَّةُ، وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَتَكَلَّمُ بِالْكَلِمَةِ مِنْ سَخَطِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى لَا يُلْقِي لَهَا بَالًا، يَهْوِي بِهَا فِي النَّارِ أَبَدًا مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ»

«Verily, a man might utter a word that pleases Allāh the Exalted, even though he does not recognize the significance of his word, and on its account Paradise is written for him. Verily, a man might utter a word carelessly that angers Allāh the Exalted, and on its account, he is cast in the Fire farther than the distance between the heavens and earth.»^[2]

[1] Aḥmad 3:137. Similar was recorded by Muslim no. 119.

[2] Faṭḥ Al-Bāri 11:314.

Allāh then ordains lowering one's voice before the Messenger and encourages, directs and recommends this better behavior.

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُعْمَلُونَ أَسْوَأَ مَا فِي الْأَلْبَابِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ لَفُتِحَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ لَفَتَحُوا قُلُوبَهُمْ لِلنَّبِيِّ﴾

﴿Verily, those who lower their voices in the presence of Allāh's Messenger, they are the ones whose hearts Allāh has tested for Taqwā.﴾

whose hearts have been purified by Allāh and made as a residence and dwelling for the Taqwā,

﴿لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

﴿For them is forgiveness and a great reward.﴾

Imām Aḥmad recorded in the Book of Az-Zuhd that Mujāhid said, "Someone wrote to 'Umar, 'O Leader of the faithful! Who is better, a man who does not feel the desire to commit a sin and does not commit it, or a man who feels desire to commit a sin, but does not commit it?' 'Umar replied, 'He who feels desire to commit a sin, but does not commit it,

﴿أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُلُوبُهُمْ لِلنَّبِيِّ لَهْم مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

﴿they are the ones whose hearts Allāh has tested for Taqwā. For them is forgiveness and a great reward.﴾ "

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَكَ مِنْ وَرَاءِ الْحُجُرَاتِ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ۚ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوا حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ إِلَيْهِمْ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾

﴿4. Verily, those who call you from behind the dwellings, most of them have no sense.﴾

﴿5. And if they had patience till you could come out to them, it would have been better for them. And Allāh is Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴾

Admonishing Those Who call the Prophet ﷺ from behind Dwellings

Allāh the Exalted and Most Blessed admonished those, such as the uncivilized bedouins, who used to call to the Prophet ﷺ from behind the dwellings which belong to his wives,

﴿أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ﴾

﴿most of them have no sense.﴾ Allāh the Exalted and Most Honored then ordains the better behavior in this regard,

﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوا حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ إِلَيْهِمْ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ﴾

﴿And if they had patience till you could come out to them, it would have been better for them.﴾

it would have earned them the better benefit of this life and the Hereafter. Allāh, Worthy of all praise, then encourages them to turn to Him in repentance.

﴿وَاللَّهُ عَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾

﴿And Allāh is Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴾

It was reported that this *Āyah* was revealed about Al-Aqra' bin Hābis At-Tamīmi, may Allāh be pleased with him, according to more than one source. Imām Aḥmad recorded that Al-Aqra' bin Hābis said that he called the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ from behind his dwellings, saying, "O Muḥammad! O Muḥammad!" "O Allāh's Messenger!" according to another narration, but the Messenger ﷺ did not answer him, Al-Aqra' said, "O Allāh's Messenger. My praise (of others) is worthwhile and my admonishment (of others) is degrading." The Prophet ﷺ replied,

«ذَاكَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ»

«It is Allāh the Exalted (Who is worthy of this description).»^[1]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ فَبَيِّنُوا أَن تُبَيِّنُوا قَوْمًا يَهْتَدُوا فَنُصِصُوا عَلَى مَا
فَعَلْتُمْ نَدِيمِينَ ﴿٦﴾ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ إِلَيْكُمْ رُسُلُ اللَّهِ لَوْ يُطِيعُكُمْ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ لَنُرْسِلَنَّ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ
حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْيَمِينَاتِ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ
الرَّاشِدُونَ ﴿٧﴾ فَضَلَّ مَنَ اللَّهُ وَيَعْمَهُ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٨﴾﴾

﴿6. O you who believe! If a Fāsiq comes to you with any news, verify it, lest you should harm people in ignorance, and afterwards you become regretful for what you have done.﴾

﴿7. And know that among you there is the Messenger of Allāh. If he were to obey you in much of the matter, you would surely

[1] Aḥmad 3:488.

be in trouble. But Allāh has endeared the faith to you and has beautified it in your hearts, and has made disbelief, *Fusūq* and 'Isyān hateful to you. Such are they who are the rightly guided.﴾

﴿8. (This is) a grace from Allāh and His favor. And Allāh is All-Knowing, All-Wise.﴾

Investigating the Reliability of the News conveyed by Wicked People

Allāh the Exalted ordered investigating the news that sinners and the wicked bring, to make sure of its authenticity. Otherwise, if the sinner's word is taken for granted and a decision is based on it, regardless of whether the information is true or not, the authorities will be taking the lead of the sinners. Allāh the Exalted and Most Honored forbade taking the path of the corrupted and sinners. This is why groups of the scholars of *Ḥadīth* refuse to accept narrations from narrators whose reliability is unknown, for they might be from among the wicked people, in reality.

The Prophet's Decision is Better

Allāh said,

﴿وَاعْلَمُوا أَنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ﴾

﴿And know that among you there is the Messenger of Allāh.﴾

'know that among you is the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. Therefore, honor and respect him, be polite with him and obey his orders. For he is more knowledgeable about what benefits you and is more concerned with you than you yourselves are. His opinions in such matters are more complete than your own.' Allāh the Exalted and Most Blessed said in another *Āyah*,

﴿النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ﴾

﴿The Prophet is closer to the believers than themselves﴾ (33:6).

Then He clarifies that they fall short in overseeing their own benefit;

﴿لَا يُطِيعُكُمْ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ لَعَنَ اللَّهُ﴾

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﴿If he were to obey you in much of the matter, you would surely be in trouble.﴾

‘if he obeys all of your opinions and desires, you will earn trouble and hardship.’ Allāh the Exalted and Most Honored said,

﴿وَلَوْ أَتَّبَعَ الْحَقُّ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ لَفَسَدَتِ السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ بَلْ أَتَيْنَهُمْ بِذِكْرِهِمْ فَهُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِهِمْ مُعْرِضُونَ﴾

﴿And if the truth had been in accordance with their desires, verily, the heavens and the earth, and whosoever is therein would have been corrupted! Nay, We have brought them their reminder, but they turn away from their reminder.﴾ (23:71)
Allāh’s statement,

﴿وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ﴾

﴿But Allāh has endeared the faith to you and has beautified it in your hearts.﴾

‘made faith dear to your souls and beautified it in your hearts.’

Allāh said,

﴿وَكَرِهَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْإِصْيَانَ﴾

﴿and has made disbelief, Fusūq and ‘Iṣyān hateful to you.﴾ ‘He has made disbelief, sins, whether major or minor, and ‘Iṣyān – all types of sins, hateful to you.’ This statement transfers us from one level to a better level, to perfect Allāh’s bounty. Allāh’s statement next,

﴿أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الرَّاغِبُونَ﴾

﴿Such are they who are the rightly guided.﴾ those who have these qualities are the rightly guided ones whom Allāh has granted guidance and correctness.

Imām Aḥmad recorded that Abu Rifā‘ah Az-Zuraqi said that his father said, “During the battle of Uḥud, when the idolaters retreated, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«اسْتَوُوا حَتَّى أَثْنِيَ عَلَى رَبِّي عَزَّ وَجَلَّ»

«Stay in straight lines so that I praise my Lord, the Exalted

and Most Honored.»

They stood behind him in lines and he ﷺ said,

«اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ كُلُّهُ، اللَّهُمَّ لَا قَائِمَ لِمَا بَسَطْتَ وَلَا بَاسِطَ لِمَا قَبَضْتَ، وَلَا هَادِيَ لِمَنْ أَضَلَلْتَ، وَلَا مُضِلَّ لِمَنْ هَدَيْتَ، وَلَا مُعْطِيَ لِمَا مَنَعْتَ وَلَا مَانِعَ لِمَا أَعْطَيْتَ، وَلَا مُقَرَّبَ لِمَا بَاعَدْتَ، وَلَا مُبَاعِدَ لِمَا قَرَّبْتَ. اللَّهُمَّ ابْسُطْ عَلَيْنَا مِنْ بَرَكَاتِكَ وَرَحْمَتِكَ وَفَضْلِكَ وَرِزْقِكَ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ النَّعِيمَ الْمُقِيمَ الَّذِي لَا يَحُولُ وَلَا يَزُولُ. اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ النَّعِيمَ يَوْمَ الْغَيْلَةِ وَالْأَمْنَ يَوْمَ الْخَوْفِ. اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي عَائِدُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا أَعْطَيْتَنَا وَمِنْ شَرِّ مَا مَنَعْتَنَا. اللَّهُمَّ حَبِّبْ إِلَيْنَا الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيِّنْهُ فِي قُلُوبِنَا وَكَرِّهْ إِلَيْنَا الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ وَاجْعَلْنَا مِنَ الرَّاشِدِينَ. اللَّهُمَّ تَوَقَّنَا مُسْلِمِينَ وَأَخِينَا مُسْلِمِينَ وَأَلْحِقْنَا بِالصَّالِحِينَ غَيْرَ خَرَايَا وَلَا مَقْتُونِينَ، اللَّهُمَّ قَاتِلِ الْكُفْرَةَ الَّذِينَ يَكْذِبُونَ رُسُلَكَ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِكَ وَاجْعَلْ عَلَيْهِمْ رِجْزَكَ وَعَذَابَكَ، اللَّهُمَّ قَاتِلِ الْكُفْرَةَ الَّذِينَ أَوْتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَهَ الْحَقِّ»

«O Allāh! Your is the praise. O Allāh! There is none who can withhold what You send, or send what You withhold, or guide whom You send astray, or misguide whomever You guide, or give what You deprive, or deprive whom You give, or draw closer whom You cast or cast whom You draw closer. O Allāh! Bestow on us from Your blessings, mercy, grace and provisions. O Allāh! I ask You for the eternal delight that never ends or fades away. O Allāh! I ask You for provisions on the Day of deprivation and safety on the Day of fear. O Allāh! I seek refuge with You from the evil repercussions of what You have given us and from the evil of what You have deprived us of. O Allāh! Make faith dear to us and beatify it in our hearts and make disbelief, *Fusūq* and *'Isyān* hateful to us, and make us among the rightly guided. O Allāh! Allow us to die as Muslims, live as Muslims and join us with the ranks of the righteous ones, without tasting humiliation or turmoil. O Allāh! Fight the disbelievers who deny Your Messengers and hinder others from Your path; send on them Your torment and punishment. O Allāh! Fight the disbelievers who were given the Scriptures, the True God.»^[1]

[1] Aḥmad 3:424.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

٥١٦

الْحُجُرَاتِ

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوا حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ إِلَيْهِمْ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَفُورٌ
 رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٩﴾ يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا جَاءَ كُرَّ فَاسِقٌ يَنْبَأُ فَيَسْتَبِشِرُوا
 أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِمِثْلِهِ فَنُصِيحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَدِمِينَ ﴿١٠﴾
 وَاعْلَمُوا أَن فِيكُمْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لَوْ يُطِيعُكُمْ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ لَعَنِتُمْ
 وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ
 الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الرَّاشِدُونَ ﴿١١﴾
 فَضَلَا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَنِعْمَةً وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾ وَإِن طَائِفَتَانِ
 مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِن بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا
 عَلَى الْأُخْرَىٰ فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي تَبَغَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَأْتِيَ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِن فَاءَتْ
 فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿١٣﴾
 إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
 لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَاسْتَخْرَقُوا مِن قَوْمٍ
 عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِّن نِّسَاءِ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا
 مِنْهُنَّ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ بِئْسَ الِاسْمُ
 الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ وَمَن لَّمْ يَتُبْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

An-Nasa'ī collected this Ḥadīth in 'Amal Al-Yawm wal-Laylah'.^[1] Allāh said,

﴿فَضَلَا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَنِعْمَةً﴾

﴿(This is) a grace from Allāh and His favor.﴾ meaning, this favor that He has bestowed on you is a favor and a bounty from Him to you,

﴿وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾

﴿And Allāh is All-Knowing, All-Wise.﴾

All-Knower in those who deserve guidance and those who deserve misguidance, All-Wise in His statements, actions, legislation and the destiny He appoints.

﴿وَإِن طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِن بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَىٰ فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي تَبَغَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَأْتِيَ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِن فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٤﴾﴾

﴿9. And if two parties among the believers fall to fighting, then make peace between them both. But if one of them outrages against the other, then fight you (all) against the one that which outrages till it complies with the command of Allāh. Then if it complies, then make reconciliation between them justly, and be equitable. Verily, Allāh loves those who are the equitable.﴾

﴿10. The believers are but a brotherhood. So make reconciliation

^[1] An-Nasa'ī in Al-Kubrā 6:156.

between your brothers, and have Taqwā of Allāh that you may receive mercy.﴾

Making Peace between Disputing Muslims

Allāh commands making peace between Muslims that fight each other,

﴿وَلَا يَغْنَأَنَّ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَقْتُلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا﴾

﴿And if two parties among the believers fall to fighting, then make peace between them both.﴾

Therefore, Allāh calls both opposing groups among Muslims, believers, although they are fighting each other. Al-Bukhārī and other scholars relied on this *Ḥadīth* as evidence that committing a sin does not nullify faith, no matter how major the sin is. This creed contradicts the creed of the Khawārij sect and those who accepted their idea, such as the Mu'tazilah sect. Al-Bukhārī narrated that Al-Ḥasan said that Abu Bakrah said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ gave a speech on the *Minbar* while Al-Ḥasan bin 'Ali was with him. He was repeatedly looking at Al-Ḥasan and then at the people; then said,

﴿إِنَّ ابْنِي هَذَا سَيِّدٌ وَلَعَلَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى أَنْ يُصْلِحَ بِهِ بَيْنَ فِئَتَيْنِ عَظِيمَتَيْنِ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾

«Verily, this son of mine is a Sayyid (chief or master), and may Allāh make peace between two great groups of Muslims through him.»^[1]

What the Prophet ﷺ said, occurred. Al-Ḥasan brought peace between the people of Ash-Shām and 'Irāq, after they fought tremendous wars and frightening battles. Allāh's statement,

﴿فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَىٰ فَقَاتِلُوا آلَئِي تَبَغَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَقِيعَ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ﴾

﴿But if one of them outrages against the other, then fight you (all) against the one that which outrages till it complies with the command of Allāh.﴾

means, until the rebellious group refers to the commands of Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ for judgement and they listen to and obey the truth. There is a *Ḥadīth* in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* in which

^[1] *Fath Al-Bāri* 5:361.

Anas states that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«نُصْرُ أَخَاكَ ظَالِمًا أَوْ مَظْلُومًا»

«Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or he is oppressed.»

“I asked, ‘O Allāh’s Messenger! It is right that I help him if he is oppressed, but how should I help him if he is an oppressor?’ He ﷺ said,

«تَمْنَعُهُ مِنَ الظُّلْمِ فَذَاكَ نُصْرُكَ يَا أَعْلَى»

«By preventing him from oppressing others; this is how you help him in this case.»^[1]

Sa‘īd bin Jubayr said that tribes of Aws and Khazraj once got in a scuffle using date tree branches and slippers. Allāh revealed this honorable Āyah commanding them to make peace between them.^[2]

As-Suddi said, “A man from Al-Anṣār, whose name was ‘Imrān, had a wife called Umm Zayd. She wanted to visit her family, but her husband prevented her from visiting them by locking her in an upper room. So, none of her family could visit or see her. She sent someone to her family. They came, took her down from the room and wanted to take her away. Her husband was absent at the time, so his family called on their people. Their cousins came to help prevent the wife from going with her family. A push and shove situation occurred that led to them fighting using slippers. This Āyah was then revealed in their case, and the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ sent someone to bring peace between them, and they both agreed to resort to the decision of Allāh the Exalted.”^[3] The statement of Allāh the Exalted, next,

﴿فَإِنْ مَاءَنَ فَاصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ﴾

«Then if it complies, then make reconciliation between them justly, and be equitable. Verily, Allāh loves those who are the

[1] *Faṭḥ Al-Bārī* 5:118.

[2] *Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr* 7:560.

[3] *Aṭ-Ṭabari* 22:294. This and the previous statement fall under the category of those narrations mentioned in the beginning of the book.

equitable.﴾

means, be fair in your judgement regarding the dispute that occurred between them,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ﴾

﴿Verily, Allāh loves those who are the equitable.﴾

Ibn Abi Ḥātim recorded, that ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Amr said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«إِنَّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ فِي الدُّنْيَا عَلَى مَنَابِرَ مِنْ لَوْلُؤٍ بَيْنَ يَدَيِ الرَّحْمَنِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ بِمَا أَقْسَطُوا فِي الدُّنْيَا»

«Verily, those who are equitable in this life, will be on podiums made of pearls before Ar-Raḥmān, the Exalted and Most Honored, on account of their fairness in this life.»

An-Nasaʿī collected this Ḥadīth.^[1] Allāh's statement,

﴿إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ﴾

﴿The believers are but a brotherhood.﴾ means, all of them are brothers in Islām. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«الْمُسْلِمُ أَخُو الْمُسْلِمِ لَا يَظْلِمُهُ وَلَا يُسْلِمُهُ»

«The Muslim is the brother of the Muslim, he is not unjust with him nor does he forsake him.»^[2]

In the Ṣaḥīḥ,

«وَاللَّهُ فِي عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِي عَوْنِ أَخِيهِ»

«Allāh helps the servant as long as the servant helps his brother.»^[3] Also in the Ṣaḥīḥ:

«إِذَا دَعَا الْمُسْلِمُ لِأَخِيهِ بِظَهْرِ الْغَيْبِ قَالَ الْمَلَكُ: آمِينَ وَلَكَ بِمِثْلِهِ»

«If the Muslim invokes Allāh for the benefit of his absent brother, the angel says afterwards, "Āmīn, and for you the same."»^[4]

[1] An-Nasāʿī in *Al-Kubrā* 5917.

[2] *Faṭḥ Al-Bārī* 5:116.

[3] Muslim 4:2074.

[4] Muslim 4:2094.

There are many *Ḥadīths* with this meaning, such as, in the *Ṣaḥīḥ*,

«مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي تَوَادُّهِمْ وَتَرَاحُمِهِمْ وَتَوَاضُعِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ الْجَسَدِ الْوَاحِدِ، إِذَا اشْتَكَى مِنْهُ عُضْوٌ تَدَاعَى لَهُ سَائِرُ الْجَسَدِ بِالْحُمَّى وَالشَّهْرِ»

«The parable of the believers in relation to the kindness, mercy and compassion they have for each other, is that of the body: when an organ of it falls ill, the rest of the body responds with fever and sleeplessness.»^[1] And also in *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

«الْمُؤْمِنُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ كَالْبَيْتَانِ يَشُدُّ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا»

«A believer to another believer is like a building whose different parts enforce each other.»

The Prophet ﷺ then clasped his hands with the fingers interlaced.^[2]

Allāh's statement,

﴿فَاَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ﴾

﴿So make reconciliation between your brothers,﴾ refers to the two groups that fight each other,

﴿وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ﴾

﴿and have Taqwā of Allāh﴾ in all of your affairs,

﴿لَعَلَّكُمْ تَرْحَمُونَ﴾

﴿that you may receive mercy.﴾ and this is a promise from Allāh that He will grant mercy to those who fear and obey Him.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَخْرَ قَوْمٌ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَى أَنْ يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا يَسَاءَ عَسَى أَنْ يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَرُوا بِالْأَلْفَبْ يَسْ أَلَسُمُ الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَتُبْ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ﴾

«11. O you who believe! Let not a group scoff at another group, it may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor let (some) women scoff at other women, it may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor defame yourselves, nor insult

[1] Muslim 4:1999.

[2] *Faṭḥ Al-Bārī* 5:119.

one another by nicknames. Evil is the name of wickedness after faith. And whosoever does not repent, then such are indeed wrongdoers.﴾

The Prohibition of mocking and ridiculing One Another

Allāh the Exalted forbids scoffing at people, which implies humiliating and belittling them. In the *Ṣaḥīḥ*, it is recorded that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«الْكِبْرُ بَطَرُ الْحَقِّ وَغَمْصُ النَّاسِ»

«Arrogance is refusing the truth and belittling people.»^[1]

And in another Version

«غَمْطُ النَّاسِ»

«And despising people»

It is forbidden to scoff at and belittle people, for the injured party could be more honored and dearer to Allāh the Exalted than those who ridicule and belittle them. This is why Allāh the Exalted said,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِنْ نِسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهُنَّ﴾

﴿O you who believe! Let not a group scoff at another group, it may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor let (some) women scoff at other women, it may be that the latter are better than the former.﴾

thus, stating this prohibition for men and then women. The statement of Allāh the Exalted,

﴿وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ﴾

﴿Nor defame yourselves,﴾ forbids defaming each other. He among men who is a slanderer, and a backbiter, is cursed and condemned as Allāh states

﴿وَلَيْلِكُلٍ لَمَزَةٍ لِكُلِّ﴾

﴿Woe to every Humazah, Lumazah﴾(104:1) Hamz is defamation by

^[1] Muslim 1:93.

action, while *Lamz* is by words. Allāh the Exalted and Most Honored said,

﴿هَٰذَا نَقَمُ الَّذِي﴾

﴿*Hammāz (defaming), going about with slander.*﴾ (68:11)

meaning, he belittles and defames people, transgressing and spreading slander among them, which is the *Lamz* that uses words as its tool. Allāh's statement here,

﴿وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ﴾

﴿*Nor defame yourselves,*﴾ just as He said in another *Āyah*,

﴿وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ﴾

﴿*Nor kill yourselves*﴾ (4:29), meaning, nor kill one another.

'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās, Mujāhid, Sa'īd bin Jubayr, Qatādah and Muqātil bin Ḥayyan said that the *Āyah*,

﴿وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ﴾

﴿*Nor defame yourselves,*﴾ means, none of you should defame each other,' while,

﴿وَلَا تَنَابَرُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ﴾

﴿*nor insult one another by nicknames.*﴾ means, 'you should not address people by nick names that people dislike.' Imām Aḥmad recorded that Abu Jabīrah bin Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk said, "This *Āyah* was revealed about us, Banu Salamah;

﴿وَلَا تَنَابَرُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ﴾

﴿*nor insult one another by nicknames.*﴾

When the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ migrated to Al-Madīnah, every man among us had two or three nicknames. When the Prophet ﷺ called a man by one of these nicknames, people would say, 'O Allāh's Messenger! He hates that nickname.' Then this *Āyah*,

﴿وَلَا تَنَابَرُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ﴾

﴿*nor insult one another by nicknames.*﴾ was revealed."^[1] Abu

[1] Aḥmad 4:460.

Dāwud also collected this *Ḥadīth*.^[1] The statement of Allāh the Exalted and Most Honored,

﴿يَسِّرْ إِلَانِمَ الْفُسُوقِ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ﴾

﴿Evil is the name of wickedness after faith﴾, means, the names and descriptions of wickedness are evil; meaning, 'to use the nicknames that were used by the people of *Jāhiliyyah*, after you embraced Islām and understood it,'

﴿وَمَنْ لَمْ يُتُبْ﴾

﴿And whosoever does not repent﴾, means, from this sin,

﴿فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ﴾

﴿then such are indeed wrongdoers﴾.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبِ بَعْضُكُم مِّمَّا أَكَلَ بَعْضٌ مِّنْكُمْ أَن يَأْكَلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾

﴿12. O you who believe! Avoid much suspicion; indeed some suspicion is sin. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it. And have Taqwā of Allāh. Verily, Allāh is the One Who forgives and accepts repentance, Most Merciful﴾.

The Prohibition of Unfounded Suspicion

Allāh the Exalted forbids His faithful servants from being suspicious, which includes having doubts and suspicions about the conduct of one's family, relatives and other people in general. Therefore, Muslims are to avoid suspicion without foundation. The Leader of the faithful 'Umar bin Al-Khaṭṭāb said, "Never think ill of the word that comes out of your believing brother's mouth, as long as you can find a good excuse for it."^[2]

Mālik recorded that Abu Hurayrah, may Allāh be pleased with him, said that Allāh's Messenger ﷺ said,

^[1] Abu Dāwud 5:246.

^[2] *Az-Zuhd* by Imām Aḥmad, *Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr* 6:99.

«إِيَّاكُمْ وَالظَّنَّ فَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ أَكْذَبُ الْحَدِيثِ، وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا تَحَسَّسُوا، وَلَا تَنَافَسُوا وَلَا تَحَاسَدُوا، وَلَا تَبَاغَضُوا وَلَا تَدَابَرُوا، وَكُونُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ إِخْوَانًا»

«Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the worst of false tales; do not spy on one another; do not look for other's faults; do not be jealous of one another; do not envy one another; do not hate one another; and do not desert (shun) one another. And O Allāh's servants! Be brothers!»^[1]

The Two Ṣaḥīḥs and Abu Dāwud recorded this Ḥadīth.^[2] Anas said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«لَا تَقَاطَعُوا وَلَا تَدَابَرُوا وَلَا تَبَاغَضُوا وَلَا تَحَاسَدُوا، وَكُونُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ إِخْوَانًا، وَلَا يَجِلُّ لِمُسْلِمٍ أَنْ يَهْجُرَ أَخَاهُ فَوْقَ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ»

«Do not shun each other; do not ignore one another; do not hate one another, and do not envy one another, and be brothers, O servants of Allāh. No Muslim is allowed to shun his brother for more than three days.»

Muslim and At-Tirmidhi collected this Ḥadīth, who considered it Ṣaḥīḥ.^[3] Allāh said,

﴿وَلَا جَسَّسُوا﴾

«And spy not», on each other. *Tajassus*, usually harbors ill intentions, and the spy is called a *Jāsūs*. As for *Taḥassus* (inquiring) it is usually done for a good reason. Allāh the Exalted and Most Honored said that Prophet Ya'qūb said,

﴿يَبْنَیْ أَذْهَبُوا فَتَحَسَّسُوا مِنْ یُوسُفَ وَأَخِیهِ وَلَا تَأْسُوا مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ﴾

«“O my sons! Go you and inquire (*Taḥassasū*) about Yūsuf and his brother, and never give up hope of Allāh's mercy.”» (12:87)

Both of these terms, '*Tajassus*' and '*Taḥassus*' could have evil connotations. In the Ṣaḥīḥ it is recorded that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«لَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا تَحَسَّسُوا، وَلَا تَبَاغَضُوا وَلَا تَدَابَرُوا، وَكُونُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ إِخْوَانًا»

[1] *Al-Muwatta'a* 2:907.

[2] *Faṭḥ Al-Bāri* 10:499.

[3] Muslim 4:1983, *Tuḥfat Al-Aḥwadhī* 6:46.

«Neither commit *Tajassus* nor *Tahassus* nor hate each other nor commit *Tadābur*. And be brothers, O servants of Allāh.»^[1]

Al-Awzā'ī said, "*Tajassus* means, to search for something, while *Tahassus* means, listening to people when they are talking without their permission, or eavesdropping at their doors. *Tadābur* refers to shunning each other." Ibn Abi Ḥātim recorded this statement.

Allāh the Exalted said about backbiting;

﴿وَلَا يَنْتَبِ بِمَعْصُكُم مِّمَّكُمْ﴾

«neither backbite one another», thus prohibiting it, which was explained in a *Ḥadīth* collected by Abu Dāwud that Abu Hurayrah said, "It was asked, 'O Allāh's Messenger! What is backbiting?' He ﷺ said,

﴿ذِكْرُكَ أَخَاكَ بِمَا يَكْرَهُ﴾

«Mentioning about your brother in a manner that he dislikes.»

He was asked, 'What if my brother was as I mentioned?' He ﷺ said,

﴿إِنْ كَانَ فِيهِ مَا تَقُولُ فَقَدْ اغْتَبْتَهُ، وَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِيهِ مَا تَقُولُ فَقَدْ بَهْتَهُ﴾

«If he was as you mentioned, you will have committed backbiting. But if he was not as you say about him, you will have falsely accused him.»^[2]

At-Tirmidhi collected this *Ḥadīth* and said "*Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ*."^[3] Backbiting was sternly warned against, and this is why Allāh the Exalted and Most Blessed compared it to eating the flesh of a dead human being,

﴿أَيُّبُ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مِمَّا فُكِّرْتُمُوهُ﴾

«Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it.»

Just as you hate eating the flesh of a dead person, on account of your nature; so hate backbiting, on account of your religion. The latter carries a punishment that is worse than the former. This *Āyah* seeks to discourage people from backbiting and

[1] *Fath Al-Bāri* 10:496.

[2] Abu Dāwud 5:191.

[3] Muslim no. 2589, *Tuḥfat Al-Aḥwadhī* 6:63.

warns against it. The Prophet ﷺ used these words to discourage taking back a gift that one gives to someone,

«كَأَنَّهُ يَلْعَبُ بِقَيْءِهِ ثُمَّ يَرْجِعُ فِي قَيْءِهِ»

«He is just like the dog that eats its vomit.» after saying,

«لَيْسَ لَنَا مَثَلُ السَّوءِ»

«Ours is not an evil parable.»^[1]

Using various chains of narration, the *Ṣaḥīḥs* and *Musnads* record that the Prophet ﷺ said during the Farewell *Hajj*:

«إِنَّ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ وَأَعْرَاضَكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ حَرَامٌ كَحُرْمَةِ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا، فِي شَهْرِكُمْ هَذَا، فِي بَلَدِكُمْ هَذَا»

«Verily, your blood, wealth and honor are as sacred among you as the sanctity of this day of yours, in this month of yours, in this town of yours.»^[2]

Abu Dāwud recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«كُلُّ الْمُسْلِمِ عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِ حَرَامٌ مَالُهُ وَعِرْضُهُ وَدَمُهُ، حَسْبُ امْرِئٍ مِنَ الشَّرِّ أَنْ يَحْقِرَ أَخَاهُ الْمُسْلِمَ»

«All of the Muslim is sacred to the Muslim, his wealth, honor and his blood. It is evil enough for someone to belittle his Muslim brother.»^[3]

At-Tirmidhi collected this *Ḥadīth* and said “*Ḥasan Gharīb*.”^[4] Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abu Ya‘lā recorded that a cousin of Abu Hurayrah said, “Mā‘iz came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and said, ‘O Allāh’s Messenger! I have committed adultery,’ and the Messenger ﷺ turned away from him until Mā‘iz repeated his statement four times. The fifth time, the Prophet ﷺ asked him,

«رَأَيْتَ؟»

[1] *Faṭḥ Al-Bāri* 5:278.

[2] *Faṭḥ Al-Bāri* 3:670, *Muslim* 3:1306, *Tuḥfat Al-Aḥwadhī* 8:481 and *Aḥmad* 1:230.

[3] *Abu Dāwud* 5:195.

[4] *Tuḥfat Al-Aḥwadhī* 6:54.

«Have you committed adultery?» Mā'iz said, 'Yes.' The Prophet ﷺ asked,

«وَتَذَرِي مَا الرِّثَا؟»

«Do you know what adultery means?» Mā'iz said, 'Yes. I have illegally done with her what a husband legally does with his wife.' The Prophet ﷺ said,

«مَا تُرِيدُ إِلَى هَذَا الْقَوْلِ؟»

«What do you seek to accomplish by this statement?» Mā'iz said, 'I intend that you purify me.' The Prophet ﷺ asked,

«أَدْخَلْتَ ذَلِكَ مِنْكَ فِي ذَلِكَ مِنْهَا كَمَا يَغِيبُ الْبَيْلُ فِي الْمُكْحَلَةِ وَالرِّثَا فِي الْبُئْرِ؟»

«Have you gone into her just as the stick goes into the kohl container and the rope goes into the well?»

Mā'iz said, 'Yes, O Allāh's Messenger!' The Prophet ﷺ commanded that Mā'iz be stoned to death and his order was carried out. The Prophet ﷺ heard two men saying to one another, 'Have you not seen the man who had Allāh cover his secret, but his heart could not let him rest until he was stoned to death, just as the dog is stoned?' The Prophet ﷺ continued on and when he passed by the corpse of a donkey, he asked,

«أَيُّنَ فُلَانٌ وَفُلَانٌ؟ انْزِلَا فَكُلَا مِنْ جِيفَةِ هَذَا الْحِمَارِ»

«Where are so-and-so? Dismount and eat from this donkey.»

They said, 'May Allāh forgive you, O Allāh's Messenger! Would anyone eat this meat?' The Prophet ﷺ said;

«مَا نَلْتَمِا مِنْ أَخِيكُمَا أَتَمَّا أَشَدُّ أَكْلًا مِنْهُ، وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ! إِنَّهُ الْآنَ لَفِي أَنْهَارِ الْجَنَّةِ يَتَغَمَّسُ فِيهَا»

«The backbiting you committed against your brother is worse as a meal than this meal. By He in Whose Hand is my soul! He is now swimming in the rivers of Paradise.» This Ḥadīth has an authentic chain of narration.^[1]

Imām Aḥmad recorded that Jābir bin 'Abdullāh said, "We

[1] Musnad Abu Ya'la 6:524, similar was recorded by Abu Dāwud, no. 4428.

were with the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ when a rotten odor was carried by the wind. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«تَذَرُونَ مَا هَذِهِ الرِّيحُ؟ هَذِهِ رِيحُ الَّذِينَ يَغْتَابُونَ النَّاسَ»

«Do you know what this odor is? It is the odor of those who backbite people.»^[1]

Accepted Repentance from Backbiting and Slander

Allāh the Exalted and Most Honored said,

﴿وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ﴾

﴿And have Taqwā of Allāh﴾, that is, regarding what He has commanded you and forbidden for you. Fear Him and beware of Him,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾

﴿Verily, Allāh is the One Who forgives and accepts repentance, Most Merciful.﴾

He forgives those who repent to Him, is merciful with those who go back to Him and trust in Him. The majority of scholars have stated that repentance for committing the sin of backbiting is that one refrains from backbiting intending not to repeat it again. There is a difference of opinion if whether feeling remorse is required in this case, and also if one should apologize to those who he has backbitten. Some scholars stated that it is not necessary for one to ask those whom he has backbitten to forgive him, because if they knew what was said about them, they could be hurt more than if they were not told about it. It is better, they said, that one should praise those whom he has backbitten in audiences in which he has committed the act. It is also better if one defends the injured party against any further backbiting, as much as one can, as recompense for his earlier backbiting.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ﴾

[1] Ahmad 3:351.

﴿13. O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you with Allāh is that (believer) who has At-Taqwā. Verily, Allāh is All-Knowing, All-Aware.﴾

All of Mankind are the Children of 'Ādam and Ḥawwā'

Allāh the Exalted declares to mankind that He has created them all from a single person, 'Ādam, and from that person He created his mate, Ḥawwā'. From their offspring He made nations, comprised of tribe, which include subtribes of all sizes. It was also said that 'nations refers to non-Arabs, while 'tribes refers to Arabs. Various statements about this were collected in an individual introduction from the book, *Al-Inbāh*, by Abu 'Amr Ibn 'Abdul-Barr, and from the book, *Al-Qaṣad wal-Amam fī Ma'rifah Ansāb Al-Arab wal-'Ajam*.

Therefore, all people are the descendants of 'Ādam and Ḥawwā' and share this honor equally. The only difference between them is in the religion that revolves around their obedience to Allāh the Exalted and their following of His Messenger ﷺ. After He forbade backbiting and belittling other people, alerting mankind that they are all equal in their humanity. Allāh said,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا﴾

﴿O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another.﴾

so that they get to know each other by their nation or tribe. Mujāhid said that Allāh's statement,

﴿لِتَعَارَفُوا﴾

﴿that you may know one another.﴾ refers to one's saying, "So-and-so the son of so-and-so, from the tribe of so-and-so."^[1] Sufyān Ath-Thawri said, "The Ḥimyar (who resided in Yemen) dealt with each other according to their provinces, while the Arabs in the Ḥijāz (Western Arabia) dealt with each other according to their tribes."

[1] Aṭ-Ṭabari 22 :312.

Honor is earned through Taqwā of Allāh

Allāh the Exalted said,

﴿إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَوَّهُ﴾

«Verily, the most honorable of you with Allāh is that (believer) who has At-Taqwā.»

meaning, 'you earn honor with Allāh the Exalted on account of Taqwā, not family lineage.' There are many Ḥadīths from the Prophet ﷺ that support this meaning. Al-Bukhārī narrated that Abu Hurayrah said, "Some people asked the Prophet ﷺ, 'Who is the most honorable among people?' He replied,

«أَكْرَمُهُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَاهُمْ»

«The most honorable among them with Allāh is the one who has the most Taqwā.»

They said, 'We did not ask you about this.' He said,

«فَأَكْرَمُ النَّاسِ يُوسُفُ نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ، ابْنُ نَبِيِّ اللَّهِ، ابْنُ نَبِيِّ اللَّهِ ابْنِ خَلِيلِ اللَّهِ»

«Then the most honorable person is Yūsuf, Allāh's Prophet, the son of Allāh's Prophet, the son of Allāh's Prophet, the son of Allāh's Khalīl.»

They said, 'We did not ask you about this.' He said,

«فَعَنْ مَعَادِنِ الْعَرَبِ تَسْأَلُونِي؟»

«Then you want to ask me about the Arab lineage?» They said, 'Yes.' He said,

«فَخَيْرُكُمْ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ خَيْرُكُمْ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ إِذَا فَهَمُوا»

«Those among you who were best in Jāhiliyyah, are the best among you in Islām, if they attain religious understanding.»^[1]

Al-Bukhārī collected this Ḥadīth in several places of his Ṣaḥīḥ,^[2] An-Nasā'ī did as well in the Tafsīr section of his Sunan.^[3] Muslim recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَى صُورَتِكُمْ وَأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يَنْظُرُ إِلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ﴾

[1] Faḥ Al-Bārī:8:212.

[2] Faḥ Al-Bārī 6:477 and 481.

[3] An-Nasā'ī in Al-Kubrā 6:367.

«Verily, Allāh does not look at your shapes or wealth, but he looks at your hearts and actions.»^[1]

Ibn Mājah also collected this Ḥadīth.^[2]

Ibn Abi Ḥātim recorded that ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Umar said, “On the day Makkah was conquered, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ performed Ṭawāf around the Ka’bah while riding his camel, Al-Qaṣwā’, and was touching the corners with a stick he had in his hand. He did not find a place in the Masjid where his camel could sit and had to dismount on men’s hands. He led his camel to the bottom of the valley, where he had her sit down. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ later gave a speech while riding Al-Qaṣwā’ and said, after thanking Allāh the Exalted and praising Him as He should be praised,

«يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى قَدْ أَذْهَبَ عَنْكُمْ عُبْيَةَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ وَنَعَطَهَا بِأَبَائِهَا،
فَالنَّاسُ رَجُلَانِ: رَجُلٌ بَرٌّ تَقِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ عَلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى، وَرَجُلٌ فَاجِرٌ شَقِيٌّ هَيْنَ عَلَى
اللَّهِ تَعَالَى، إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَقُولُ: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْتُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَى وَجَعَلَكُمْ
شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ﴾»

«O people! Allāh the Exalted has removed from you the slogans of Jāhiliyyah and its tradition of honoring forefathers. Men are of two types, a man who is righteous, fearful of Allāh and honorable to Allāh, or a man who is vicious, miserable and little to Allāh the Exalted. Verily, Allāh the Exalted and Most Honored said, ﴿O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you with Allāh is that (believer) who has At-Taqwā. Verily, Allāh is All-Knowing, All-Aware.﴾»

The Prophet ﷺ said,

«أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ»

«I say this and invoke Allāh for forgiveness for me and for you.»

This was recorded by ‘Abd bin Ḥumayd.^[3] Allāh the Exalted said,

[1] Muslim 4:1987.

[2] Ibn Mājah 2:1388.

[3] Al-Muntakhab by ‘Abd bin Ḥumayd 793.

سُورَةُ الْحُجُرَاتِ

٥١٧

الْحُجُرَاتِ

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ﴾

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ
وَلَا تَحْسَبُوا أَنَّهُ يَغْفِرُ بَعْضًا أَيَحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن
يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ
رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٤﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْتُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَى وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ
شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقْوَاهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٥﴾ قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ ءَمَّا قُلْنَا لَمْ تَزِمُوا وَلَكِن
قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوا اللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُ لَا يَلَيْسَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ شَيْءٌ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٦﴾
إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا
وَجَنَّهُدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
الصَّادِقُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ قُلْ أَتَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِدِينِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ
يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ
﴿١٨﴾ يَمُنُّونَ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ أَسْلَمُوا قُلْ لَا تَمُنُّوا عَلَيَّ إِسْلَمَ بِلِ اللَّهِ
يَعْنُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ هَدَيْتُكُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
يَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ بِصِيرٍ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

﴿Verily, Allāh is All-Knowing, All-Aware.﴾

means, 'He is All-Knowing of you and All-Aware of all of your affairs.' Allāh guides whom He wills, misguides whom He wills, grants mercy to whom He wills, torments whom He wills, elevates whom He wills above whom He wills. He is the All-Wise, the All-Knowing, the All-Aware in all this.

Several scholars relied on this honorable Āyah and the honorable Ḥadīths we mentioned as evidence that compatibility in marriage^[1] is not a

condition of marriage contracts. They said that the only condition required in this regard is the adherence to the religion, as in the statement of Allāh, the Exalted,

﴿إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقْوَاهُ﴾

﴿Verily, the most honorable of you with Allāh is the one with the most Taqwā.﴾

﴿قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ ءَمَّا قُلْنَا لَمْ تَزِمُوا وَلَكِن قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَإِنْ
تُطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَا يَلَيْسَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ شَيْءٌ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٤﴾ إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا وَجَنَّهُدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
الصَّادِقُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ قُلْ أَتَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِدِينِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ

[1] With regards to social status, wealth, family lineage, etc.

يَكْفُرُ عَنْهُ عَلَيْهِ ۖ يَتُوبُ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ أَسْلَمُوا قُلْ لَا تَتُوبُوا عَلَيَّ إِنَّمَا تُتُوبُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يُغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ ۚ

﴿14. The bedouins say: "We believe." Say: "You do not believe. But say, 'We have submitted,' for Faith has not yet entered your hearts. But if you obey Allāh and His Messenger, He will not decrease anything in reward for your deeds. Verily, Allāh is Forgiving, Most Merciful."﴾

﴿15. Only those are the believers who have believed in Allāh and His Messenger, and afterward doubt not but strive with their wealth and their lives for the cause of Allāh. Those! They are the truthful.﴾

﴿16. Say: "Will you inform Allāh of your religion while Allāh knows all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth, and Allāh is All-Aware of everything."﴾

﴿17. They regard as a favor to you that they have embraced Islām. Say: "Do not count your Islām as a favor to me. Nay, but Allāh has conferred a favor upon you that He has guided you to the Faith if you indeed are true."﴾

﴿18. "Verily, Allāh knows the Unseen of the heavens and the earth. And Allāh is the All-Seer of what you do."﴾

There is a Difference between a Believer and a Muslim

Allāh chastises the bedouins who, when they embraced Islām, claimed for themselves the grade of faithful believers. However, Faith had not yet firmly entered their hearts,

﴿قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ مَآءًا قُلْ لَمْ تَزِمُوا وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ﴾

﴿The bedouins say: "We believe." Say: "You do not believe, but say, 'We have submitted,' for Faith has not yet entered your hearts..."﴾

This honorable Āyah provides proof that Faith is a higher grade than Islām, according to the scholars of the *Ahl us-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah*. This is also demonstrated in the Ḥadīth of Jibrīl, peace be upon him, when he questioned the Prophet ﷺ about Islām, then Īmān then Ih̄sān. Thus moving the

general matter to one more specific, then even more specific.

Imām Aḥmad recorded that 'Amir bin Sa'd bin Abi Waqqās said, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ gave (something to) some men and did not give one of them. Sa'd said, 'O Allāh's Messenger, you gave to so-and-so and so-and-so. However, you gave nothing to so-and-so, even though he is a believer.' The Prophet ﷺ said,

«أَوْ مُسْلِمٌ؟»

«Or say, a Muslim.»

Sa'd repeated his statement thrice each time the Prophet ﷺ answered,

«أَوْ مُسْلِمٌ؟»

«Or say, a Muslim.» The Prophet ﷺ then said,

«إِنِّي لَأُعْطِي رَجُلًا وَأَدْعُ مَنْ هُوَ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْهُمْ، فَلَمْ أُعْطِهِ شَيْئًا مَخَافَةَ أَنْ يُكْبَرُوا فِي النَّارِ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ»

«I might give some men and give nothing to others, even though the latter are dearer to me than the former. I do not give them things for fear that they might be thrown on their faces in the Fire.»^[1]

This *Ḥadīth* is recorded in the Two *Ṣaḥīḥs*.^[2] Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ made a distinction between the grade of believer and the grade of Muslim, indicating that *Īmān* is a more exclusive grade than *Islām*. I mentioned this subject in detail supported by evidence, in the beginning of the explanation of the chapter on *Īmān* in *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī*, all praise is due to Allāh and all the favors are from Him.

So this proves that the bedouins whom the *Āyah* mentioned were not hypocrites, rather they were Muslims in whose hearts Faith was not yet firmly established. They claimed a higher grade for themselves than the grade that they earned, and they were taught a lesson as a consequence. This meaning agrees with the meaning given by Ibn 'Abbās, Ibrāhīm An-Nakha'ī, Qatādah and that preferred by Ibn Jarīr. These

[1] Aḥmad 1:176.

[2] *Faṭḥ Al-Bārī* 1:99, Muslim 1:132.

bedouins were taught a lesson,

﴿قُلْ لَمْ تَزِمُوا وَلَكِنْ قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ﴾

﴿Say: "You do not believe, but say 'We are Muslims,' for Faith has not yet entered your hearts..."﴾

meaning, 'you have not yet achieved the reality of Faith.' Allāh the Exalted said,

﴿وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَا يَلِفْكُمْ مِنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ شَيْئًا﴾

﴿But if you obey Allāh and His Messenger, He will not decrease anything in reward for your deeds...﴾

'He will not decrease any of your rewards,' as Allāh said;

﴿وَمَا أَلْفَتْهُمْ مِنْ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ﴾

﴿We shall not decrease the reward of their deeds in anything.﴾
(52:21)

Allāh said:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾

﴿Verily, Allāh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴾ for those who repent and return to Him. Allāh's statement,

﴿إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

﴿Only those are the believers﴾, who have perfect Faith,

﴿الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ. ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا﴾

﴿who have believed in Allāh and His Messenger, and afterward doubt not﴾

They do not have doubts and their Faith was not shaken. Rather, their Faith remained on conviction,

﴿وَجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ﴾

﴿but strive for the cause of Allāh with their wealth and their lives﴾

meaning, they gladly gave away their life and the most precious of their wealth in obedience to Allāh as a means of seeking His pleasure,

﴿أَوَّلِيكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ﴾

﴿Those! They are the truthful.﴾ 'in their statement if they say that they are believers, unlike some bedouins who are faithful only by words outwardly!'

Allāh said,

﴿قُلْ أَتَسْلِمُونَ اللَّهَ بِرَبِّكُمْ﴾

﴿Say: "Will you inform Allāh of your religion..."﴾ 'will you inform Allāh of what is in your hearts,'

﴿وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ﴾

﴿while Allāh knows all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth,﴾

Nothing in the heavens and earth, even the weight of a speck of dust, all that is bigger or smaller, ever escapes His observation,

﴿وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ﴾

﴿and Allāh is All-Aware of everything.﴾ Allāh said,

﴿يَتُوبُونَ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ أَسْلَمُوا قُلْ لَا تَنْفَعُ عَنْ إِيْسَانِكُمْ﴾

﴿They regard as a favor to you that they have embraced Islām.

Say: "Do not count your Islām as a favor to me..."﴾

meaning the bedouins who considered embracing Islām, following and supporting the Messenger ﷺ as a favor to him. Allāh the Exalted refuted their false statement,

﴿قُلْ لَا تَنْفَعُ عَنْ إِيْسَانِكُمْ﴾

﴿Say: "Do not count your Islām as a favor to me..."﴾ 'for the benefit of your Islām will only be yours, and this is a favor from Allāh to you,'

﴿بَلِ اللَّهُ يَمُنُّ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ هَدَيْكُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

﴿Nay, but Allāh has conferred a favor upon you that He has guided you to the Faith if you indeed are true.﴾

'in your claim that you are believers.' The Prophet ﷺ said to the Anṣār on the day of the battle of Hunayn,

يَا مَعْشَرَ الْأَنْصَارِ! أَلَمْ أَجِدْكُمْ ضَلَالًا فَهَدَاكُمْ اللَّهُ يَبِي؟ وَكُنْتُمْ مُتَفَرِّقِينَ فَأَلْتَمَعَكُمْ اللَّهُ يَبِي؟ وَكُنْتُمْ عَالَةً فَأَغْنَاكُمْ اللَّهُ يَبِي؟

«O Anṣār! Have I not found you astray and Allāh guided you through me? Were you not divided and Allāh united you around me? Were you not poor and Allāh gave you riches through me?»

Whenever the Prophet ﷺ asked them any of these questions, they would reply, "Allāh and His Messenger have most favored us."^[1]

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abu Bakr Al-Bazzār recorded that Ibn 'Abbās said, "Banu Asad came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and said, 'O Allāh's Messenger! We embraced Islām, and before that, the Arabs fought against you, yet we did not fight against you.' The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«إِنَّ فِيهِمْ قَلِيلًا وَإِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَنْطِقُ عَلَى أَلْسِنِهِمْ»

«Verily, they understand but little and the Shaytān speaks through their words.»

This Āyah was later revealed,

﴿يَسْتَوُونَ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ أَسْلَمُوا قُلْ لَا تَمُنُوا عَلَيَّ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ بَلِ اللَّهُ يَمُنُّ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ هَدَيْتُكُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٧﴾﴾

«They regard as a favor to you that they have embraced Islām. Say: "Do not count your Islām as a favor to me." Nay, but Allāh has conferred a favor upon you that He has guided you to the Faith if you indeed are true."^[2]

Then Allāh reminds that He has complete knowledge of all creations and that He sees them all;

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٠﴾﴾

«Verily, Allāh knows the Unseen of the heavens and the earth. And Allāh is the All-Seer of what you do.»

This is the end of the Tafsīr of Sūrat Al-Ḥujurāt. Verily, all praise is due to Allāh, all the favors are from Him, and from Him comes the success and protection from error.

[1] Faḥḥ Al-Bārī 7:644.

[2] An-Nasā'ī in Al-Kubrā 11519.