

Allah said:

(فَإِذَا أَفْضَيْتُمْ مِّنْ عَرَفَاتٍ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ
الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ)

(Then when you leave `Arafat, remember Allah (by glorifying His praises, i.e., prayers and invocations) at the Mash`ar-il-Haram.)

`Arafat is the place where one stands during the Hajj and it is a pillar of the rituals of Hajj. Imam Ahmad and the Sunan compilers recorded that `Abdur-Rahman bin Ya`mar Ad-Diyli said that he heard Allah's Messenger saying:

«الْحَجُّ عَرَفَاتٌ ثَلَاثًا فَمَنْ أَدْرَكَ عَرَفَةَ قَبْلَ أَنْ
يَطْلُعَ الْفَجْرُ فَقَدْ أَدْرَكَ، وَأَيَّامٌ مِنِّي ثَلَاثَةٌ، فَمَنْ
تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ، وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِثْمَ
عَلَيْهِ»

(Hajj is `Arafat, (thrice). Hence, those who have stood at `Arafat before dawn will have performed (the rituals of the Hajj). The days of Mina are three, and there is no sin for those who move on after two days, or for those who stay.)

The time to stand on `Arafat starts from noon on the day of `Arafah until dawn the next day, which is the day of the Sacrifice (the tenth day of Dhul-Hijjah). The Prophet stood at `Arafat during the Farewell Hajj, after he had offered the Zuhr (noon) prayer, until sunset. He said, "Learn your rituals from me." In this Hadith (i. e., in the previous paragraph) he said, "Whoever stood at `Arafat before dawn, will have performed (the rituals of Hajj)." c`Urwah bin Mudarris bin Harithah bin Lam At-Ta'i said, "I came to Allah's Messenger at Al-Muzdalifah when it was time to pray. I said, `O Messenger of Allah! I came from the two mountains of Tays', and my animal became tired and I became tired. I have not left any mountain, but stood on it. Do I have a valid Hajj' Allah's Messenger said:

«مَنْ شَهِدَ صَلَاتِنَا هَذِهِ، فَوَقَّفَ مَعَنَا حَتَّى نَدْفَعَ،
وَقَدْ وَقَّفَ بِعَرَفَةَ قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَقَدْ تَمَّ
حَجُّهُ وَقَضَى تَقَاتَهُ»

(Whoever performed this prayer with us, stood with us until we moved forth, and had stood at `Arafat before that, day or night, will have performed the Hajj and completed its rituals)."

This Hadith was collected by Imam Ahmad and the compilers of the Sunan, and At-Tirmidhi graded it Sahih. It was reported that the mount was called `Arafat because, as `Abdur-Razzaq reported that `Ali bin Abu Talib said, "Allah sent Jibril to Prophet Ibrahim and he performed Hajj for him (to teach him its rituals). When Ibrahim reached `Arafat he said, `I have `Araftu (I know this place).' He had come to that area before. Thereafter, it was called `Arafat." Ibn Al-Mubarak said that `Ata' said, "It was called `Arafat because Jibril used to teach Ibrahim the rituals of Hajj. Ibrahim would say, `I have `Araftu, I have `Araftu.' It was thereafter called `Arafat." Similar statements were attributed to Ibn `Abbas, Ibn `Umar and Abu Mijlaz. Allah knows best.

`Arafat is also called Al-Mash`ar Al-Haram, Al-Mash`ar Al-Aqsa and Ilal, while the mount that is in the middle of `Arafat is called Jabal Ar-Rahmah (Mount of Mercy).

The Time to leave `Arafat and Al-Muzdalifah

Ibn Abu Hatim reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "During the time of Jahiliyyah, the people used to stand at `Arafat. When the sun would be on top of the mountains, just as the turban is on top of a man's head, they would move on. Allah's Messenger delayed moving from `Arafat until sunset." Ibn Marduwyah related this Hadith and added, "He then stood at Al-Muzdalifah and offered the Fajr (Dawn) prayer at an early time. When the light of dawn broke, he moved on." This Hadith has a Hasan chain of narrators. The long Hadith that Jabir bin `Abdullah narrated, which Muslim collected, stated, "The Prophet kept standing there (meaning at `Arafat) until sunset, when the yellow light had somewhat gone and the disc of the sun had disappeared. Then, the Prophet made Usamah sit behind him, and in order to keep her under control, pulled the nose string of Al-Qaswa' so hard, that its head touched the saddle. He gestured with his right hand and said, "Proceed calmly people, calmly!" Whenever he happened to pass over an elevated tract of sand, he lightly loosened the nose string of his camel till she climbed up and this is how they reached Al-Muzdalifah. There, he led the Maghrib (Evening) and `Isha' (Night) prayers with one Adhan and two Iqamah (which announces the imminent start of the acts of the prayer) and did not glorify Allah in between them (i.e., he did not perform voluntary Rak`ah). Allah's Messenger then laid down till dawn and offered the Fajr (Dawn) prayer with Adhan and Iqamah, when the morning light was clear. He again mounted Al-Qaswa', and when he came to Al-Mash`ar Al-Haram, he faced towards Qiblah, supplicated to Allah, glorifying Him and saying, La ilaha illallah, and he continued standing until the daylight was very clear. He then went quickly before the sun rose."

It is reported in the Two Sahih's that Usamah bin Zayd was asked, "How was the Prophet's pace when he moved" He said, "Slow, unless he found space, then he would go a little faster."

Al-Mash`ar Al-Haram

Abdur-Razzaq reported that Ibn `Umar said that all of Al-Muzdalifah is Al-Mash`ar Al-Haram. It was reported that Ibn `Umar was asked about Allah's statement:

(فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ)

(...remember Allah (by glorifying His praises, i.e., prayers and invocations) at the Mash`ar-il-Haram.) He said, "It is the Mount and the surrounding area." It was reported that Al-Mash`ar Al-Haram is what is between the two Mounts (refer to the following Hadith), as Ibn `Abbas, Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Ikrimah, Mujahid, As-Suddi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Al-Hasan and Qatadah have stated.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Jubayr bin Mut`im narrated that the Prophet said:

«كُلُّ عَرَقاتٍ مَوْقِفٌ، وَارْقَعُوا عَنْ عُرْنَةِ، وَكُلُّ مُزْدَلِفَةٍ مَوْقِفٌ، وَارْقَعُوا عَنْ مُحَسَّرٍ، وَكُلُّ فِجَاجٍ مَكَّةَ مَنْحَرٌ، وَكُلُّ أَيَّامِ التَّشْرِيقِ ذَبْحٌ»

(All of `Arafat is a place of standing, and keep away from `Uranah. All of Al-Muzdalifah is a place for standing, and keep away from the bottom of Muhassir. All of the areas of Makkah are a place for sacrifice, and all of the days of Tashriq are days of sacrifice.)

Allah then said:

(وَإِذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَمَا هَدَاكُمْ)

(And remember Him (by invoking Allah for all good) as He has guided you.)

This Ayah reminds Muslims of Allah's bounty on them that He has directed and taught them the rituals of Hajj according to the guidance of Prophet Ibrahim Al-Khalil. This is why Allah said:

(وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمِنَ الضَّالِّينَ)

(...and verily, you were, before, of those who were astray.)

It was said that this Ayah refers to the condition before the guidance or the Qur'an or the Messenger , all of which are correct meanings.

(ثُمَّ أَفِيضُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ)

(199. Then depart from the place whence all the people depart and ask Allah for His forgiveness. Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Merciful.

The Order to stand on `Arafat and to depart from it

This Ayah contains Allah's order to those who stand at `Arafat to also move on to Al-Muzdalifah, so that they remember Allah at Al-Mash`ar Al-Haram. Allah commands the Muslim to stand with the rest of the pilgrims at `Arafat, unlike Quraysh who (before Islam) used to remain in the sanctuary, near Al-Muzdalifah, saying that they are the people of Allah's Town and the servants of His House. Al-Bukhari reported that `A'ishah said, "Quraysh and their allies, who used to be called Al-Hums, used to stay in Al-Muzdalifah while the rest of the Arabs would stand at `Arafat. When Islam came, Allah commanded His Prophet to stand at `Arafat and then proceed from there. Hence Allah's statement:

(مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ)

(...from the place whence all the people depart.)

This was also said by Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Ata', Qatadah and As-Suddi and others. Ibn Jarir chose this opinion and said that there is Ijma` (a consensus among the scholars) for it.

Imam Ahmad reported that Jubayr bin Mut`im said, "My camel was lost and I went out in search of it on the day of `Arafah, and I saw the Prophet standing in `Arafat. I said to myself, `By Allah he is from the Hums. What has brought him here'" This Hadith is also reported in the Sahihayn. Al-Bukhari reported that Ibn `Abbas said that `depart' mentioned in the Ayah refers to proceeding from Al-Muzdalifah to Mina to stone the pillars. Allah knows best.

Asking Allah for His Forgiveness

Allah said:

(وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ)

(...and ask Allah for His forgiveness. Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Merciful.)

Allah frequently orders remembrance of Him after acts of worship are finished. Muslim reported that Allah's Messenger used to ask Allah for His forgiveness thrice after the prayer is finished. It is reported in the Two Sahihs that the Prophet encouraged Tasbih (saying Subhan Allah, i.e., Glorified is Allah), Tahmid (saying Al-Hamdu Lillah, i.e., praise be to Allah) and Takbir (saying Allahu Akbar, i.e., Allah is the Most Great) thirty-three times each (after prayer).

Ibn Marduwyah collected the Hadith that Al-Bukhari reported from Shaddad bin Aws, who stated that Allah's Messenger said:

«سَيِّدُ الْإِسْتِعْفَارِ أَنْ يَقُولَ الْعَبْدُ: اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ رَبِّي،
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، خَلَقْتَنِي وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ، وَأَنَا عَلَى
عَهْدِكَ وَوَعْدِكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ، أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ
مَا صَنَعْتُ، أَبُوءُ لَكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ عَلَيَّ، وَأَبُوءُ
بِذُنُوبِي، فَاعْفِرْ لِي فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ،
مَنْ قَالَهَا فِي لَيْلَةٍ فَمَاتَ فِي لَيْلَتِهِ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ،
وَمَنْ قَالَهَا فِي يَوْمِهِ فَمَاتَ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ»

(The master of supplication for forgiveness, is for the servant to say: `O Allah! You are my Lord, there is no deity worthy of worship except You. You have created me and I am Your servant. I am on Your covenant, as much as I can be, and awaiting Your promise. I seek refuge with You from the evil that I have committed. I admit Your favor on me and admit my faults. So forgive me, for none except You forgives the sins.' Whoever said these words at night and died that same night will enter Paradise. Whoever said it during the day and died will enter Paradise.)

Furthermore, it is reported in the Two Sahihs that `Abdullah bin `Amr said that Abu Bakr said, "O Messenger of Allah! Teach me an invocation so that I may invoke (Allah) with it in my prayer. He told me to say:

«قُلْ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي ظُلْمًا كَثِيرًا وَلَا
يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ فَاعْفِرْ لِي مَغْفِرَةً مِنْ
عِنْدِكَ، وَارْحَمْنِي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ»

(Allahumma inni zalamtun nafsī zulman kathīran, wa la yaghfirudh-dhunuba illa Anta faghfirli maghfiratan min `indika, war-hamni innaka Antal-Ghafur-ur-Rahim (O Allah! I have done great injustice to myself and none except You forgives sins, so please forgive me and be merciful to me as You are the Forgiver, the Merciful).)

There are many other Hadiths on this subject.

(فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مَنَسِكَكُمْ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ
 ءَابَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا
 ءَاتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِن خَلْقٍ -
 وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا ءَاتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي
 الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ - أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ
 نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ)

(200. So when you have accomplished your Manasik, remember Allah as you remember your forefathers or with far more remembrance. But of mankind there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us (Your bounties) in this world!" and for such there will be no portion in the Hereafter.) (201. And of them there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!") (202. For them there will be allotted a share for what they have earned. And Allah is swift at reckoning.)

The Order for Remembrance of Allah and seeking Good in this Life and the Hereafter upon completing the Rites of Hajj

Allah commands that He be remembered after the rituals are performed.

(كَذِكْرِكُمْ ءَابَاءَكُمْ)

(...as you remember your forefathers)

Sa`id bin Jubayr said that Ibn `Abbas said, "During the time of Jahiliyyah, people used to stand during the (Hajj) season, and one of them would say, 'My father used to feed (the poor), help others (end their disputes, with his money), pay the Diyah (i.e., blood money),' and so forth. The only Dhikr that they had was that they would remember the deeds of their fathers. Allah then revealed to Muhammad :

(فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ ءَابَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا)

(Remember Allah as you remember your forefathers or with far more remembrance.)

Therefore, remembering Allah the Exalted and Ever High is always encouraged. We should mention that when Allah used "or" in the Ayah, He meant to encourage the people to remember Him more than they remember their forefathers, not that the word entails a doubt (as to which is larger or bigger). This statement is similar to the Ayat:

(فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً)

(...as stones or even worse in hardness) (2:74) and,

(يَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً)

(...fear men as they fear Allah or even more) (4:77) and,

(وَأَرْسَلْنَاهُ إِلَى مِائَةِ أَلْفٍ أَوْ يَزِيدُونَ)

(And We sent him to a hundred thousand (people) or even more) (37:147) and,

(فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَى)

(And was at a distance of two bows' length or (even) nearer.) (53:9)

Allah encourages calling Him in supplication after remembering Him, because this will make it more likely that the supplication will be accepted. Allah also criticizes those who only supplicate to Him about the affairs of this life, while ignoring the affairs of the Hereafter. Allah said:

(فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ
فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلْقٍ)

(But of mankind there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us (Your bounties) in this world!" and for such there will be no portion in the Hereafter.) meaning, they have no share in the Hereafter. This criticism serves to discourage other people from imitating those mentioned.

Sa`id bin Jubayr said that Ibn `Abbas said, "Some bedouins used to come to the standing area (Arafat) and supplicate saying, 'O Allah! Make it a rainy year, a fertile year and a year of good child bearing.' They would not mention any of the affairs of the Hereafter. Thus, Allah revealed about them:

(فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ
فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلْقٍ)

(But of mankind there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us (Your bounties) in this world!" and for such there will be no portion in the Hereafter.)

The believers who came after them used to say:

(رَبَّنَا ءَاتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً
وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ)

(Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!")

Next, Allah revealed:

(أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ
الْحِسَابِ)

(For them there will be allotted a share for what they have earned. And Allah is swift at reckoning.)

Hence, Allah praised those who ask for the affairs of both this life and the Hereafter. He said:

(وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا ءَاتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي
الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ)

(And of them there are some who say: "Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!")

The supplication mentioned and praised in the Ayah includes all good aspects of this life and seeks refuge from all types of evil. The good of this life concerns every material request of well-being, spacious dwelling, pleasing mates, sufficient provision, beneficial knowledge, good profession or deeds, comfortable means of transportation and good praise, all of which the scholars of Tafsir have mentioned regarding this subject. All of these are but a part of the good that is sought in this life. As for the good of the Hereafter, the best of this includes acquiring Paradise, which also means acquiring safety from the greatest horror at the gathering place. It also refers to being questioned lightly and the other favors in the Hereafter.

As for acquiring safety from the Fire, it includes being directed to what leads to this good end in this world, such as avoiding the prohibitions, sins of all kinds and doubtful matters.

Al-Qasim bin `Abdur-Rahman said, "Whoever is gifted with a grateful heart, a remembering tongue and a patient body, will have been endowed with a good deed in this life, a good deed in the Hereafter and saved from the torment of the Fire."

This is why the Sunnah encourages reciting this Du`a' (i.e., in the Ayah about gaining a good deed in this life and the Hereafter). Al-Bukhari reported that Anas bin Malik narrated that the Prophet used to say:

«اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً، وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً، وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ»

(O Allah, our Lord! Give us that which is good in this life, that which is good in the Hereafter and save us from the torment of the Fire.)

Imam Ahmad reported that Anas said, "Allah's Messenger visited a Muslim man who had become as weak as a sick small bird. Allah's Messenger said to him, `Were you asking or supplicating to Allah about something' He said, `Yes. I used to say: O Allah! Whatever punishment you saved for me in the Hereafter, give it to me in this life.' Allah's Messenger said:

«سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ لَا تُطِيقُهُ أَوْ لَا تَسْتَطِيعُهُ، فَهَلَّا قُلْتَ:
(رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً
وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ)

(

All praise is due to Allah! You cannot bear it -or stand it-. You should have said: (Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!))

The man began reciting this Du`a and he was cured." Muslim also recorded it.

Al-Hakim reported that Sa`id bin Jubayr said, "A man came to Ibn `Abbas and said, `I worked for some people and settled for a part of my compensation in return for their taking me to perform Hajj with them. Is this acceptable' Ibn `Abbas said, `You are among those whom Allah described:

(أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ
الْحِسَابِ)

(For them there will be allotted a share for what they have earned. And Allah is swift at reckoning.)

Al-Hakim then commented; "This Hadith is authentic according to the criteria of the Two Shaykhs (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) although they did not record it."

(وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ لِمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ)

(203. And remember Allah during the Appointed Days. But whosoever hastens to leave in two days, there is no sin on him and whosoever stays on, there is no sin on him, if his aim is to do good and obey Allah (fear Him), and know that you will surely be gathered unto Him.)

Remembering Allah during the Days of Tashriq - Days of Eating and Drinking

Ibn ` Abbas said, ` The Appointed Days are the Days of Tashriq (11-12-13th of Dhul-Hijjah) while the Known Days are the (first) ten (days of Dhul-Hijjah). "` Ikrimah said that:

(وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُودَاتٍ)

(And remember Allah during the Appointed Days.) means reciting the Takbir -- Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar, during the days of Tashriq after the compulsory prayers.

Imam Ahmad reported that `Uqbah bin `Amr said that Allah's Messenger said:

«يَوْمُ عَرَفَةَ، وَيَوْمُ النَّحْرِ، وَأَيَّامُ التَّشْرِيقِ، عِيدُنَا أَهْلَ الْإِسْلَامِ، وَهِيَ أَيَّامُ أَكْلِ وَشُرْبِ»

(The day of `Arafah (9th of Dhul-Hijjah), the day of the Sacrifice (10th) and the days of the Tashriq (11-12-13th) are our `Id (festival) for we people of Islam. These are days of eating and drinking.)

Imam Ahmad reported that Nubayshah Al-Hudhali said that Allah's Messenger said:

«أَيَّامُ التَّشْرِيقِ أَيَّامُ أَكْلِ وَشُرْبِ وَذِكْرِ اللَّهِ»

(The days of Tashriq are days of eating, drinking and Dhikr (remembering) of Allah.)

Muslim also recorded this Haith

We also mentioned the Hadith of Jubayr bin Mut`im:

«عَرَفَةُ كُلُّهَا مَوْقِفٌ، وَأَيَّامُ التَّشْرِيقِ كُلُّهَا ذَبْحٌ»

(All of `Arafat is a standing place and all of the days of Tashriq are days of Sacrifice.)

We also mentioned the Hadith by `Abdur-Rahman bin Ya`mar Ad-Diyli:

«وَأَيَّامُ مِنَى ثَلَاثَةٌ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ»

(The days of Mina (Tashriq) are three. Those who hasten in two days then there is no sin in it, and those who delay (i.e., remain in Mina for a third day) then there is no sin in it.)

Ibn Jarir reported that Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«أَيَّامُ التَّشْرِيقِ أَيَّامُ طَعْمٍ وَذِكْرِ اللَّهِ»

(The days of Tashriq are days of eating and remembering Allah.)

Ibn Jarir reported that Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah's Messenger sent `Abdullah bin Hudhafah to Mina proclaiming:

«لَا تَصُومُوا هَذِهِ الْأَيَّامَ، فَإِنَّهَا أَيَّامُ أَكْلِ وَشُرْبٍ وَذِكْرِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ»

(Do not fast these days (i.e., Tashriq days), for they are days of eating, drinking and remembering Allah the Exalted and Most Honored.)

The Appointed Days

Miqsam said that Ibn `Abbas said that the Appointed Days are the days of Tashriq, four days: the day of the Sacrifice (10th of Dhul-Hijjah) and three days after that.

This opinion was also reported of Ibn `Umar, Ibn Az-Zubayr, Abu Musa, `Ata', Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Abu Malik, Ibrahim An-Nakha'i, Yahya bin Abu Kathir, Al-Hasan,

Qatadah, As-Suddi, Az-Zuhri, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Ad-Dahhak, Muqatil bin Hayyan, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, Malik bin Anas, and others. In addition, the apparent meaning of the following Ayah supports this opinion:

(فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ
فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ)

(But whosoever hastens to leave in two days, there is no sin on him and whosoever stays on, there is no sin on him.)

So the Ayah hints to the three days after the day of Sacrifice.

Allah's statement :

(وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُودَاتٍ)

(And remember Allah during the Appointed Days) directs remembering Allah upon slaughtering the animals, after the prayers, and by Dhikr (supplication) in general. It also includes Takbir and remembering Allah while throwing the pebbles every day during the Tashriq days. A Hadith that Abu Dawud and several others collected states:

(Tawaf around the House, Sa`i between As-Safa and Al-Marwah and throwing the pebbles were legislated so that Allah is remembered in Dhikr.)

When mentioning the first procession (refer to 2:199) and the second procession of the people upon the end of the Hajj season, when they start to return to their areas, after they had gathered during the rituals and at the standing places, Allah said,

(وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ)

(and obey Allah (fear Him), and know that you will surely be gathered unto Him.)

Similarly, Allah said:

(وَهُوَ الَّذِي ذَرَأَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ)

(And it is He Who has created you on the earth, and to Him you shall be gathered back.)
(23:79)

(وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهَدُ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ وَهُوَ أَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ - وَإِذَا تَوَلَّىٰ سَعَىٰ فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ - وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْإِثْمِ فَحَسْبُهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَيْسَ الْمِهَادُ - وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ)

(204. And of mankind there is he whose speech may please you (O Muhammad), in this worldly life, and he calls Allah to witness as to that which is in his heart, yet he is the most quarrelsome of the opponents.) (205. And when he turns away (from you O Muhammad), his effort in the land is to make mischief therein and to destroy the crops and the cattle, and Allah likes not mischief). (206. And when it is said to him, "Fear Allah", he is led by arrogance to (more) crime. So enough for him is Hell, and worst indeed is that place to rest!) (207. And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah. And Allah is full of kindness to (His) servants.)

The Characteristics of the Hypocrites

As-Suddi said that these Ayat were revealed about Al-Akhnas bin Shariq Ath-Thaqafi who came to Allah's Messenger and announced his Islam although his heart concealed otherwise.

Ibn `Abbas narrated that these Ayat were revealed about some of the hypocrites who criticized Khubayb and his companions who were killed during the Raji` incident. Thereafter, Allah sent down His condemnation of the hypocrites and His praise for Khubayb and his companions:

(وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ)

(And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah.)

It was also said that they refer to the hypocrites and the believers in general. This is the opinion of Qatadah, Mujahid, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and several others, and it is correct.

Ibn Jarir related that Al-Qurazi said that Nawf Al-Bikali, who used to read (previous Divine) Books said, "I find the description of some members of this Ummah in the previously revealed Books of Allah: they (hypocrites) are people who use the religion to gain material benefit. Their tongues are sweeter than honey, but their hearts are more bitter than Sabir (a bitter plant, aloe). They show the people the appearance of sheep while their hearts hide the viciousness of wolves. Allah said, `They dare challenge Me, but they are deceived by Me. I swear by Myself that I will send a Fitnah (trial, calamity) on them that will make the wise man bewildered.' I contemplated about these statements and found them in the Qur'an describing the hypocrites:

(وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا
وَيُشْهَدُ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ)

(And of mankind there is he whose speech may please you (O Muhammad), in this worldly life, and he calls Allah to witness as to that which is in his heart,)

This statement by Al-Qurazi is Hasan Sahih. Allah said:

(وَيُشْهَدُ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ)

(...and he calls Allah to witness as to that which is in his heart,)

This Ayah indicates that such people pretend to be Muslims, but defy Allah by the disbelief and hypocrisy that their hearts conceal. Similarly Allah said:

(يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ)

(They may hide (their crimes) from men, but they cannot hide (them) from Allah.) (4:108)

This Tafsir was reported from Ibn `Abbas by Ibn Ishaq. It was also said that the Ayah means that when such people announce their Islam, they swear by Allah that what is in their hearts is the same of what their tongues are pronouncing. This is also a correct meaning for the Ayah that was chosen by `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam. It is also the choice of Ibn Jarir who related it to Ibn `Abbas and Mujahid. Allah knows best.

Allah said:

(وَهُوَ أَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ)

(Yet he is the most Aladd of the opponents.) (2:204) |The Ayah used the word Aladd here, which literally means `wicked' (here it means `quarrelsome'). A variation of the word Ludda was also used in another Ayah:

﴿وَتُنذِرَ بِهِ قَوْمًا لُدًّا﴾

(So that you (Muhammad) warn with it (the Qur'an) a Ludda people.) (19:97)

Hence, a hypocrite lies, alters the truth when he quarrels and does not care for the truth. Rather, he deviates from the truth, deceives and becomes most quarrelsome. It is reported in Sahih that Allah's Messenger said:

«آيَةُ الْمُنَافِقِ ثَلَاثٌ: إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ، وَإِذَا عَاهَدَ غَدَرَ، وَإِذَا خَاصَمَ فَجَرَ»

(The signs of a hypocrite are three: Whenever he speaks, he tells a lie. Whenever he promises, he always breaks it (his promise). If you have a dispute with him, he is most quarrelsome.)

Imam Bukhari reported that `Aishah narrated that the Prophet said:

«إِنَّ أَبْغَضَ الرَّجَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ الْاَلْدُّ الْخَصِيمَ»

(The most hated person to Allah is he who is Aladd and Khasim (meaning most quarrelsome).)

Allah then said:

﴿وَإِذَا تَوَلَّى سَعَى فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ
الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ﴾

(And when he turns away (from you O Muhammad), he struggles in the land to make mischief therein and to destroy the crops and the cattle, and Allah likes not mischief.)

This Ayah indicates that such persons are deviant in the tongue, evil in the deeds, their words are fabricated, their belief is wicked and their works are immoral. The Ayah used the (Arabic word) Sa`a (literally, `tries' or `intends'). This word was also used to describe Pharaoh:

﴿ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ يَسْعَى - فَحَشَرَ فَنَادَى - فَقَالَ أَنَا رَبُّكُمُ
الْأَعْلَى - فَأَخَذَهُ اللَّهُ نَكَالَ الْآخِرَةِ وَالْأُولَى - إِنَّ
فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِمَن يَخْشَى﴾

(Then he turned his back, Yas`a (striving hard against Allah). Then he gathered (his people) and cried aloud saying, `I am your lord, most high.' So Allah, seized him with a punishing example for his last and first transgression. Verily, in this is an instructive admonition for whosoever fears Allah.) (79:22-26)

Sa`a was also used in the Ayah :

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ
الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

(O you who believe (Muslims)! When the call is proclaimed for the Salah (prayer) on the day of Friday (Jumu`ah prayer), As`aw come to the remembrance of Allah.) (62:9)

This Ayah means, `(when the call to the Friday prayer is announced) intend and then proceed to attend the Friday prayer.' We should mention that hastening to the mosque is condemned by the Sunnah (as this is another meaning for the word Sa`a):

«إِذَا أَتَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَلَا تَأْتُوهَا وَأَنْتُمْ تَسْعَوْنَ،
وَأْتُوهَا وَعَلَيْكُمْ السَّكِينَةُ وَالْوَقَارُ»

(When you come to attend the prayer, do not come in a Sa`i (haste). Rather, come to it while walking at ease and in peace (or grace).)

The hypocrite has no motive in this life but to cause mischief and to destroy the crops and the offspring, including what the animals produce and what the people depend on for their livelihood. Mujahid said, "If the hypocrite strives for mischief in the land, Allah prevents the rain from falling and thus the crops and the offspring perish." The Ayah continues:

وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ

(...and Allah likes not mischief.) that is, Allah does not like those who possess these characteristics, or those who act like this.

Rejecting Advice is Characteristic of the Hypocrites

Allah said:

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْإِثْمِ

(And when it is said to him, "Fear Allah", he is led by arrogance to (more) crime.)

This Ayah indicates that when the hypocrite, who deviates in his speech and deeds, is advised and commanded to fear Allah, refrain from his evil deeds and adhere to the truth, he refuses and becomes angry and outraged, as he is used to doing evil. This Ayah is similar to what Allah said:

(وَإِذَا تُلِيٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايٰتُنَا بَيِّنٰتٍ تَعْرِفُ فِي وُجُوهِ
الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا الْمُنْكَرَ يَكْذُوْنَ يَسْطُوْنَ بِالَّذِيْنَ
يَتْلُوْنَ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايٰتُنَا قُلْ اَفَاَنْبِئُكُمْ بِشَرٍّ مِّنْ ذٰلِكُمْ
النَّارُ وَعَدَهَا اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَيَسَّ الْمَصِيْرُ)

(And when Our clear verses are recited to them, you will notice a denial on the faces of the disbelievers! They are nearly ready to attack with violence those who recite Our verses to them. Say: "Shall I tell you of something worse than that The Fire (of Hell) which Allah has promised to those who disbelieved, and worst indeed is that destination!) (22:72)

This is why in this Ayah, Allah said:

(فَحَسْبُهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَيْسَ الْمِهَادُ)

(So enough for him is Hell, and worst indeed is that place to rest) meaning, the Fire is enough punishment for the hypocrite.

The Sincere Believer prefers pleasing Allah

Allah said:

(وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ
اللّٰهِ)

(And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah.)

After Allah described the evil characteristics of the hypocrites, He mentioned the good qualities of the believers. Allah said:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ
اللَّهِ

(And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah.)

Ibn `Abbas, Anas, Sa`id bin Musayyib, Abu `Uthman An-Nahdi, `Ikrimah and several other scholars said that this Ayah was revealed about Suhayb bin Snan Ar-Rumi. When Suhayb became a Muslim in Makkah and intended to migrate (to Al-Madinah), the people (Quraysh) prevented him from migrating with his money. They said that if he forfeits his property, he is free to migrate. He abandoned his money and preferred to migrate, and Allah revealed this Ayah about him. `Umar bin Khattab and several other Companions met Suhayb close to the outskirts of Al-Madinah at Al-Harrah (flat lands with black stones). They said to him, "The trade has indeed been successful." He answered them, "You too, may Allah never allow your trade to fail. What is the matter" `Umar told him that Allah has revealed this Ayah (2:207) about him. It was also reported that Allah's Messenger said, "The trade has been successful, O Suhayb!"

The meaning of the Ayah (2:207) includes every Mujahid in the way of Allah. Allah said in another Ayah:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ
بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ
وَيُقْتَلُونَ وَعَدًّا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ
وَالْقُرْآنِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَى بِعَهْدِهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَاسْتَبْشِرُوا
بِبَيْعِكُمُ الَّذِي بَايَعْتُمْ بِهِ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ)

(Verily, Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their properties for (the price) that theirs shall be the Paradise. They fight in Allah's cause, so they kill (others) and are killed. It is a promise in truth which is binding on Him in the Tawrah and the Injil and the Qur'an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded. That is the supreme success.) (9:111)

When Hisham bin `Amr penetrated the lines of the enemy, some people criticized him. `Umar bin Al-Khattab and Abu Hurayrah refuted them and recited this Ayah:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ
اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ)

(And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah. And Allah is full of kindness to (His) servants.)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السَّلَامِ كَآفَّةً وَلَا
تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ)

(فَإِنْ زَلَلْتُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْكُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَاعْلَمُوا
أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ)

(208. O you who believe! Enter Islam perfectly, and follow not the footsteps of Shaytan (Satan). Verily, he is to you a plain enemy.) (209. Then if you slide back after the clear signs (Prophet Muhammad , and this Qur'an and Islam) have come to you, then know that Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise).

Entering Islam in its Entirety is obligated

Allah commands His servants who believe in Him and have faith in His Messenger to implement all of Islam's legislation and law, to adhere to all of its commandments, as much as they can, and to refrain from all of its prohibitions. `Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said, and also Mujahid, Tawus, Ad-Dahhak, `Ikrimah, Qatadah, As-Suddi and Ibn Zayd said that Allah's statement:

(ادْخُلُوا فِي السَّلَامِ)

(Enter Islam) means Islam. Allah's statement:

(كَآفَّةً)

(...perfectly) means, in its entirety. This is the Tafsir of Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Abu Al-`Aliyah, `Ikrimah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, As-Suddi, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Qatadah and Ad-Dahhak. Mujahid said that the Ayah means, `Perform all the good works and the various pious deeds, this is especially addressed to those from among the People of the Scripture who embraced the faith.'

Ibn Abu Hatim reported that Ibn `Abbas said that:

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السَّلَامِ كَآفَّةً)

(O you who believe! Enter Islam perfectly) refers to the believers among the People of the Scripture. This is because they believed in Allah, some of them still followed some parts of the Tawrah and the previous revelations. So Allah said:

(ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً)

(Enter Islam perfectly.) Allah thus commanded them to embrace the legislation of the religion of Muhammad in its entirety and to avoid abandoning any part of it. They should no longer adhere to the Tawrah.

Allah then said:

(وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ)

(...and follow not the footsteps of Shaytan) meaning, perform the acts of worship and avoid what Satan commands you to do. This is because:

(إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالسُّوءِ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(He (Shaytan) commands you only what is evil and Fahsha' (sinful), and that you should say about Allah what you know not.) (2:169) and:

(إِنَّمَا يَدْعُو حِزْبَهُ لِيَكُونُوا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ)

(He only invites his Hizb (followers) that they may become the dwellers of the blazing Fire.) (35:6) Hence, Allah said:

(إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ)

(Verily, he is to you an open enemy.)

Allah said:

(فَإِنْ زَلَلْتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْكُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ)

(Then if you slide back after the clear signs have come to you) meaning, if you deviate from the Truth after clear proofs have been established against you,

(فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ)

(...then know that Allah is All-Mighty) in His punishment, and no one can escape His vengeance or defeat Him.

(حَكِيمٌ)

(All-Wise) in His decisions, actions and rulings. Hence Abu Al-`Aliyah, Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said, "He is Mighty in His vengeance, Wise in His decision."

(هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظُلَلٍ مِّنَ
الْغَمَامِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ
الْأُمُورُ)

(210. Do they then wait for anything other than that Allah should come to them over the shadows of the clouds and the angels (Then) the case would be already judged. And to Allah return all matters (for decision).)

Do not delay embracing the Faith

(هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظُلَلٍ مِّنَ
الْغَمَامِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ)

(Do they then wait for anything other than that Allah should come to them over the shadows of the clouds and the angels) on the Day of Resurrection to judge the early and the latter creations. Allah shall then reward each according to his or her deeds; and whoever does good shall see it, and whoever does evil shall see it. This is why Allah said:

(وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ)

((Then) the case would be already judged. And to Allah return all matters (for decision).)

Similarly, Allah said:

كَلَّا إِذَا دُكَّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا - وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ صَفًّا صَفًّا - وَجِيءَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ
يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنْسَانُ وَأَنَّى لَهُ الذِّكْرَى)

(Nay! When the earth is ground to powder. And your Lord comes with the angels in rows. And Hell will be brought near that Day. On that Day will man remember, but how will that remembrance (then) avail him) (89:21-23) and:

هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ
رَبُّكَ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ)

(Do they then wait for anything other than that the angels should come to them, or that your Lord (Allah) should come, or that some of the signs of your Lord should come (i. e., portents of the Hour, e.g., rising of the sun from the west)!) (6:158)

Abu Ja`far Razi reported that Abu Al-`Aliyah narrated that:

هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظِلِّ مَنْ
الْغَمَامِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ)

(Do they then wait for anything other than that Allah should come to them over the shadows of the clouds and the angels) means, the angels will descend on the shadows of clouds, while Allah comes as He wills. Some of the reciters read it,

هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ فِي ظِلِّ
مَنْ الْغَمَامِ)

Do they then wait for anything other than that Allah should come to them and also the angels over the shadows of the clouds. This is similar to Allah's other statement:

وَيَوْمَ تَشَقَّقُ السَّمَاءُ بِالْغَمَمِ وَنُزِّلَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ
تَنْزِيلًا)

(And (remember) the Day when the heaven shall be rent asunder with clouds, and the angels will be sent down, with a grand descending.) (25:25)

(سَلِّ بْنِ إِسْرَائِيلَ كَمْ آتَيْنَهُمْ مِنْ آيَةٍ بَيِّنَةٍ وَمَنْ
يُبَدِّلْ نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ
الْعِقَابِ - زِينِ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا
وَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا فَوْقَهُمْ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَاللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ)

(211. Ask the Children of Israel how many clear Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) We gave them. And whoever changes Allah's favor after it has come to him, e.g., renounces the religion of Allah (Islam) and accepts Kufr (disbelief) then surely, Allah is severe in punishment.) (212. Beautified is the life of this world for those who disbelieve, and they mock at those who believe. But those who have Taqwa, will be above them on the Day of Resurrection. And Allah gives (of His bounty, blessings, favors, and honors on the Day of Resurrection) to whom He wills without limit.)

The Punishment for changing Allah's Favor and mocking the Believers

Allah mentioned that the Children of Israel, were witnesses to many clear signs that attest to the truth of Moses regarding what he was sent with for them. They witnessed his hand (when it became lit with light), his parting the sea, his striking the rock (and water flowed from the rock), the clouds that shaded them during the intense heat, the manna and the quails, and so forth. These signs attested to the existence of the Creator and the truth of Moses by whose hand these signs appeared. Yet, so many among them changed Allah's favor, by preferring disbelief to faith and by ignoring Allah's favors,

(وَمَنْ يُبَدِّلْ نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ
شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ)

(And whoever changes Allah's favor after it had come to him, then surely, Allah is severe in punishment.)

Similarly, Allah said about the disbelievers of Quraysh:

(أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ بَدَّلُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ كُفْرًا وَأَحَلُّوا قَوْمَهُمْ دَارَ الْبَوَارِ - جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَوْنَهَا وَيُسَّ الْقَرَارُ)

(Have you not seen those who have changed the blessings of Allah into disbelief, and caused their people to dwell in the house of destruction Hell, in which they will burn, and what an evil place to settle in!) (14:28, 29)

Then Allah states that He has made the life of this world beautiful for the disbelievers who are satisfied with it, who collect wealth, but refrain from spending it on what they have been commanded, which could earn them Allah's pleasure. Instead, they ridicule the believers who ignore this life and who spend whatever they earn on what pleases their Lord. The believers spend seeking Allah's Face, and this is why they have gained the ultimate happiness and the best share on the Day of the Return. Therefore, they will be exalted above the disbelievers at the Gathering Place, when they are gathered, during the resurrection and in their final destination. The believers will reside in the highest grades in the utmost highs, while the disbelievers will reside in the lowest of lows (in the Fire).

This is why Allah said:

(وَاللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ)

(And Allah gives to whom He wills without limit.)

This Ayah indicates that Allah gives sustenance to whomever He wills of His servants without count or limit in this and the Hereafter. A Hadith has stated (that Allah said):

«ابْنَ آدَمَ أَنْفِقْ أَنْفِقْ عَلَيْكَ»

(O son of Adam! Spend (in Allah's cause) and I (Allah) will spend on you.) The Prophet said:

«أَنْفِقْ بِلَالُ وَلَا تَخَشَ مِنْ ذِي الْعَرْشِ إِقْلَالًا»

(O Bilal! Spend and do not fear deprivation from the Owner of the Throne.)

Allah said:

(وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُ)

(...and whatsoever you spend of anything (in Allah's cause), He will replace it.) (34:39) In addition, it is reported in the Sahih (that the Prophet said):

«أَنَّ مَلَكَيْنِ يَنْزِلَانِ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ صَبِيحَةَ كُلِّ يَوْمٍ
فَيَقُولُ أَحَدُهُمَا: اللَّهُمَّ أَعْطِ مُنْفِقًا خَلْقًا، وَيَقُولُ
الْآخَرُ: اللَّهُمَّ أَعْطِ مُمْسِكًا تَلْقًا»

(Every day two angels come down from heavens and one of them says, 'O Allah! Compensate every person who spends in Your cause,' and the other (angel) says, 'O Allah! Destroy every miser.')

Also in the Sahih:

«يَقُولُ ابْنُ آدَمَ: مَالِي مَالِي. وَهَلْ لَكَ مِنْ مَالِكَ
إِلَّا مَا أَكَلْتَ فَأَفْنَيْتَ، وَمَا لَيْسَتْ فَأَبْلَيْتَ، وَمَا
تَصَدَّقْتَ فَأَمْضَيْتَ، وَمَا سِوَى ذَلِكَ فَذَاهِبٌ
وَتَارِكُهُ لِلنَّاسِ»

(The son of Adam says, 'My money, my money!' Yet, what is your money except that which you eat and use up, wear and tear, and spend in charity and thus keep (in your record). Other than that, it will go away and will be left for the people (the inheritors).)

In addition, Imam Ahmad reported that the Prophet said:

«الدُّنْيَا دَارُ مَنْ لَّا دَارَ لَهُ، وَمَالُ مَنْ لَّا مَالَ لَهُ،
وَلَهَا يَجْمَعُ مَنْ لَّا عَقْلَ لَهُ»

(The Dunya (life of this world) is the residence of those who have no residence, the wealth of those who have no wealth, and it is harvested by those who have no sense of reason.)

(كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ
مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ

لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِيمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ فِيهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ فَهَدَى اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ وَاللَّهُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ)

(213. Mankind was one community and Allah sent Prophets with glad tidings and warnings, and with them He sent down the Scripture in truth to judge between people in matters wherein they differed. And only those to whom (the Scripture) was given differed concerning it, after clear proofs had come unto them, through hatred, one to another. Then Allah by His leave guided those who believed to the truth of that wherein they differed. And Allah guides whom He wills to the straight path).

Disputing, after the Clear Signs have come, indicates Deviation

Ibn Jarir reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "There were ten generations between Adam and Nuh, all of them on the religion of Truth. They later disputed so Allah sent the Prophets as warners and bringers of glad tidings." He then said that this is how `Abdullah read the Ayah:

كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَاخْتَلَفُوا

The people were one Ummah and they then disputed.

Al-Hakim recorded this in his Mustadrak and said, "Its chain of narrators is Sahih, but they (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) did not record it." Abu Ja`far Razi reported that Abu Al-`Aliyah said that Ubayy bin Ka`b read the Ayah as:

كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَاخْتَلَفُوا فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ

The people were one Ummah and they then disputed and Allah sent the Prophets as warners and bringers of glad tidings.

`Abdur-Razzaq said that Ma`mar said that Qatadah said that Allah's statement:

(كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً)

(Mankind was one community) means; "They all had the guidance. Then:

فَاخْتَلَفُوا فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ

They disputed and Allah sent Prophets.

The first to be sent was Nuh."

`Abdur-Razzaq reported that Abu Hurayrah commented on:

فَهَدَى اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ مِنْ
الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ)

(Then Allah by His leave guided those who believed to the truth of that wherein they differed.
) saying that the Prophet said:

«نَحْنُ الْآخِرُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، نَحْنُ أَوْلُ
النَّاسِ دُخُولًا الْجَنَّةِ، بَيِّدَ أَنَّهُمْ أَوْثُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ
قَبْلِنَا وَأُوتِينَاهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ، فَهَدَانَا اللَّهُ لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوا
فِيهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ، فَهَذَا الْيَوْمُ الَّذِي اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ
فَهَدَانَا اللَّهُ لَهُ، قَالَ النَّاسُ لَنَا فِيهِ تَبَعٌ، فَعَدَا لِلْيَهُودِ،
وَبَعْدَ غَدٍ لِلنَّصَارَى»

(We are the last (nation), but the first (foremost) on the Day of Resurrection. We are the first people to enter Paradise, although they (Jews and Christians) have been given the Book before us and we after them. Allah has guided us to the truth wherever they disputed over it. This is the day (Friday) that they disputed about, Allah guided us to it. So, the people follow us, as tomorrow is for the Jews and the day after is for the Christians.)

Ibn Wahb related that `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said that his father said about the Ayah:

فَهَدَى اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ مِنْ
الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ)

(Then Allah by His leave guided those who believed to the truth of that wherein they differed.)

They disputed about the day of Congregation (Friday). The Jews made it Saturday while the Christians chose Sunday. Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad to Friday. They also disputed about the true Qiblah. The Christians faced the east while the Jews faced Bayt Al-Maqdis. Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad to the true Qiblah (Ka`bah in Makkah). They also disputed about the prayer, as some of them bow down, but do not prostrate, while others prostrate, but do not bow down. Some of them pray while talking and some while walking. Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad to the truth. They also disputed about the fast; some of them fast during a part of the day, while others fast from certain types of foods. Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad to the truth. They also disputed about Ibrahim. The Jews said, 'He was a Jew,' while the Christians considered him Christian. Allah has made him a Haniyfan Musliman. Allah has guided the Ummah of Muhammad to the truth.

They also disputed about `Isa. The Jews rejected him and accused his mother of a grave sin, while the Christians made him a god and the son of God. Allah made him by His Word and a spirit from (those He created) Him. Allah guided the Ummah of Muhammad to the truth."

Allah then said:

(بِإِذْنِهِ)

(...by His leave) meaning, 'By His knowledge of them and by what He has directed and guided them to,' according to Ibn Jarir. Also:

(وَاللَّهُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ)

(And Allah guides whom He wills) means from among His creation. (Allah said:)

(إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ)

(...to the straight way) meaning, He commands the decision and the clear proof. Al-Bukhari and Muslim reported that `Aishah narrated that when Allah's Messenger used to wake up at night to pray, he would say:

«اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ جِبْرَائِيلَ وَمِيكَائِيلَ وَإِسْرَافِيلَ، فَاطِرَ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ، عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ، أَنْتَ
تَحْكُمُ بَيْنَ عِبَادِكَ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ، اهْدِنِي

لَمَّا اخْتُلِفَ فِيهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِكَ، إِنَّكَ تَهْدِي مَنْ
تَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ»

(O Allah, the Lord of (angels) Jibril, Mika'il and Israfil, Creator of the heavens and earth and Knower of the seen and the unseen. You judge between Your servants regarding what they have disputed in, so guide me to what have been the subject of dispute of the truth by Your leave. Indeed, You guide whom You will to the straight path.)

A Du`a reads:

«اللَّهُمَّ أَرِنَا الْحَقَّ حَقًّا، وَارْزُقْنَا اتِّبَاعَهُ، وَأَرِنَا
الْبَاطِلَ بَاطِلًا، وَارْزُقْنَا اجْتِنَابَهُ، وَلَا تَجْعَلْهُ
مُلْتَبِسًا عَلَيْنَا فَفَنضِلَّ، وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا»

(O Allah! Show us the truth as truth, and bestow adherence to it on us. Show us the evil as evil, and make us stay away from it, and do not confuse us regarding the reality of evil so that we will not be led astray by it, and make us leaders for the believers.)

(أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ
خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَّاءُ
وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَعَهُ
مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ)

(214. Or think you that you will enter Paradise without such (trials) as came to those who passed away before you They were afflicted with severe poverty and ailments and were so shaken that even the Messenger and those who believed along with him said, "When (will come) the help of Allah" Yes! Certainly, the help of Allah is near!)

Victory only comes after succeeding in the Trials

Allah said:

(أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ)

(Or think you that you will enter Paradise) before you are tested and tried just like the nations that came before you This is why Allah said:

وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِن قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّهُم
الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَّاءُ

(...without such (trials) as came to those who passed away before you They were afflicted with severe poverty and ailments) meaning, illnesses, pain, disasters and hardships. Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Murrah Al-Hamdani, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi`, As-Suddi and Muqatil bin Hayyan said that

(الْبَأْسَاءُ)

(Al-Ba'sa') means poverty. Ibn `Abbas said that

(وَالضَّرَّاءُ)

(...and Ad-Darra') means ailments.

(وَزُلْزِلُوا)

(and were so shaken) for fear of the enemy, and were tested, and put to a tremendous trial. An authentic Hadith narrated that Khabbab bin Al-Aratt said, "We said, `O Messenger of Allah! Why do you not invoke Allah to support us Why do you not supplicate to Allah for us' He said:

«إِنَّ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ كَانَ أَحَدُهُمْ يُوضَعُ الْمِشَارُ
عَلَى مَفْرَقِ رَأْسِهِ فَيَخْلُصُ إِلَى قَدَمَيْهِ لَا يَصْرِفُهُ
ذَلِكَ عَنْ دِينِهِ، وَيُمَشَطُ بِأَمْشَاطِ الْحَدِيدِ مَا بَيْنَ
لَحْمِهِ وَعَظْمِهِ، لَا يَصْرِفُهُ ذَلِكَ عَنْ دِينِهِ».

(The saw would be placed on the middle of the head of one of those who were before you (believers) and he would be sawn until his feet, and he would be combed with iron combs between his skin and bones, yet that would not make him change his religion.)

He then said:

«وَاللَّهِ لَيُتِمَّنَّ اللَّهُ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ حَتَّى يَسِيرَ الرَّكِيبُ
مِنْ صَنْعَاءَ إِلَى حَضْرَمَوْتَ، لَا يَخَافُ إِلَّا اللَّهَ
وَالذُّبَّ عَلَى غَنَمِهِ، وَلَكِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ»

(By Allah! This matter (religion) will spread (or expand) by Allah until the traveler leaves San`a' to Hadramawt (both in Yemen, but at a great distance from each other) fearing only Allah and then the wolf for the sake of his sheep. You are just a hasty people.)

And Allah said:

(الم - ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ -
الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا
رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ)

(Alif-Lam-Mim. Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: "We believe," and will not be tested And We indeed tested those who were before them. And Allah will certainly make (it) known (the truth of) those who are true, and will certainly make (it) known (the falsehood of) those who are liars.) (29:1-3)

The Companions experienced tremendous trials during the battle of Al-Ahzab (the Confederates). Allah said:

(إِذْ جَاءُوكُم مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ وَمِنْ أَسْفَلَ مِنكُمْ وَإِذْ
زَاغَتِ الْأَبْصَارُ وَبَلَغَتِ الْقُلُوبُ الْحَنَاجِرَ
وَتَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ الظُّنُونًا - هُنَالِكَ ابْتُلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ
وَزُلْزِلُوا زَلْزَالًا شَدِيدًا - وَإِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ
وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ مَّا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ
إِلَّا غُرُورًا)

(When they came upon you from above you and from below you, and when the eyes grew wild and the hearts reached to the throats, and you were harboring doubts about Allah. There, the believers were tried and shaken with a mighty shaking. And when the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a disease (of doubts) said: "Allah and His Messenger promised us nothing but delusion!") (33:10-12)

When Heraclius asked Abu Sufyan, "Did you fight him (Prophet Muhammad)" He said, "Yes." Heraclius said, "What was the outcome of warfare between you" Abu Sufyan said, "Sometimes we lose and sometimes he loses." He said, "Such is the case with Prophets, they are tested, but the final victory is theirs."

Allah's statement :

(مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ)

(...without (such) (trials) as came to those who passed away before you) meaning, their way of life. Similarly, Allah said:

(فَأَهْلَكْنَا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ بَطْشًا وَمَضَى مَثَلُ الْأَوَّلِينَ)

(Then We destroyed men stronger (in power) than these and the example of the ancients has passed away (before them)) (43: 8) and:

(وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا
مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ)

(...were so shaken that even the Messenger and those who believed along with him said, "When (will come) the help of Allah.")

They pleaded (to Allah) for victory against their enemies and invoked Him for aid and deliverance from their hardships and trials. Allah said:

(أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ)

(Yes! Certainly, the help of Allah is near!)

Allah said:

(فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا - إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا)

(Verily, along with every hardship is relief. Verily, along with every hardship is relief.) (94:5, 6)

So just as there is hardship, its equal of relief will soon arrive. This is why Allah said:

(أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ)

(Yes! Certainly, the help of Allah is near!)

(يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ
فَلِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ
السَّبِيلِ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ)

(215. They ask you (O Muhammad) what they should spend. Say: "Whatever you spend of good must be for parents and kindred and orphans and Al-Masakin (the poor) and the wayfarer, and whatever you do of good deeds, truly, Allah knows it well.")

Who deserves the Nafaqah (Spending or Charity)

Muqatil bin Hayyan said that this Ayah was revealed about the voluntary charity. The Ayah means, 'They ask you (O Muhammad) how they should spend,' as Ibn `Abbas and Mujahid have stated. So, Allah explained it for them, saying:

(قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ
وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ)

(Say: "Whatever you spend of good must be for parents and kindred and orphans and Al-Masakin and the wayfarer,") meaning, spend it on these categories or areas. Similarly, a Hadith states (that those who deserve one's generosity the most, are):

«أُمَّكَ وَأَبَاكَ وَأُخْتَكَ وَأَخَاكَ ثُمَّ أَدْنَاكَ أَدْنَاكَ»

(Your mother, father, sister, brother, the closest and then the farthest (relatives).)

Maymun bin Mihran once recited this Ayah (2:215) and commented, "These are the areas of spending. Allah did not mention among them the drums, pipe, wooden pictures, or the curtains that cover the walls."

Next, Allah said:

(وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ)

(...and whatever you do of good deeds, truly, Allah knows it well.) meaning, whatever you perform of good works, Allah knows them and He will reward you for them in the best manner, no one will be dealt with unjustly, even the weight of an atom.

(كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(216. Fighting is ordained for you (Muslims) though you dislike it, and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows but you do not know.)

Jihad is made Obligatory

In this Ayah, Allah made it obligatory for the Muslims to fight in Jihad against the evil of the enemy who transgress against Islam. Az-Zuhri said, "Jihad is required from every person, whether he actually joins the fighting or remains behind. Whoever remains behind is required to give support, if support is warranted; to provide aid, if aid is needed; and to march forth, if he is commanded to do so. If he is not needed, then he remains behind." It is reported in the Sahih:

«مَنْ مَاتَ وَلَمْ يَغْزُ وَلَمْ يُحَدِّثْ نَفْسَهُ بِالْغَزْوِ،
مَاتَ مِيتَةً جَاهِلِيَّةً»

(Whoever dies but neither fought (i.e., in Allah's cause), nor sincerely considered fighting, will die a death of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic era of ignorance).)

On the day of Al-Fath (when he conquered Makkah), the Prophet said:

«لَا هِجْرَةَ بَعْدَ الْفَتْحِ وَلَكِنْ جِهَادٌ وَنِيَّةٌ، وَإِذَا
اسْتُنْفِرْتُمْ فَانْفِرُوا»

(There is no Hijrah (migration from Makkah to Al-Madinah) after the victory, but only Jihad and good intention. If you were required to march forth, then march forth.)

Allah's statement :

(وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ)

(...though you dislike it) means, 'Fighting is difficult and heavy on your hearts.' Indeed, fighting is as the Ayah describes it, as it includes being killed, wounded, striving against the enemies and enduring the hardship of travel. Allah then said:

(وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ)

(. ..and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you) meaning, fighting is followed by victory, dominance over the enemy, taking over their lands, money and offspring. Allah continues:

(وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ)

(...and that you like a thing which is bad for you.)

This Ayah is general in meaning. Hence, one might covet something, yet in reality it is not good or beneficial for him, such as refraining from joining the Jihad, for it might lead to the enemy taking over the land and the government. Then, Allah said:

(وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(Allah knows, but you do not know.) meaning, He has better knowledge than you of how things will turn out to be in the end, and of what benefits you in this earthly life and the Hereafter. Hence, obey Him and adhere to His commands, so that you may acquire the true guidance.

(يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ وَصَدٌّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِندَ اللَّهِ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يُقْتَلُونَكُمْ حَتَّى

يُرُدُّوكُمْ عَنْ دِينِكُمْ إِنْ اسْتَطَاعُوا وَمَنْ يَرْتَدِدْ
 مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَيَمُتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ
 أَعْمَلُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ
 النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ - إِنْ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ
 هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ يَرْجُونَ
 رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ)

(217. They ask you concerning fighting in the Sacred Months. Say, "Fighting therein is a great (transgression) but a greater (transgression) with Allah is to prevent mankind from following the way of Allah, to disbelieve in Him, to prevent access to Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah), and to drive out its inhabitants, and Al-Fitnah is worse than killing." And they will never cease fighting you until they turn you back from your religion (Islamic Monotheism) if they can. And whosoever of you turns back from his religion and dies as a disbeliever, then his deeds will be lost in this life and in the Hereafter, and they will be the dwellers of the Fire. They will abide therein forever.) (218. Verily, those who have believed, and those who have emigrated (for Allah's religion) and have striven hard in the way of Allah, all these hope for Allah's mercy. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Merciful.)

The Nakhlah Military Maneuvers, and the Ruling on Fighting during the Sacred Months

Ibn Abu Hatim reported that Jundub bin `Abdullah said: Allah's Messenger assembled a group of men under the command of Abu `Ubaydah bin Jarrah. When he was about to march, he started crying for the thought of missing Allah's Messenger . Consequently, the Messenger relieved Abu `Ubaydah from command, appointed `Abdullah bin Jahsh instead, gave him some written instructions and commanded him not to read the instructions until he reached such and such area. He also said to `Abdullah:

«لَا تُكْرِهَنَّ أَحَدًا عَلَى السَّيْرِ مَعَكَ مِنْ
 أَصْحَابِكَ».

(Do not compel any of your men to continue marching with you thereafter.)

When `Abdullah read the instructions, he recited Istirja` saying, `Truly! to Allah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return'; and refer to (2:156) and said, "I hear and obey Allah and His

Messenger." He then told his companions the story and read the instructions to them, and two men went back while the rest remained. Soon after, they found Ibn Hadrami (one of the disbelievers of Quraysh) and killed him not knowing that that day was in Rajab or Jumadi (where Rajab is the Sacred Month). The polytheists said to the Muslims, "You have committed murder in the Sacred Month." Allah then revealed:

(يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ)

(They ask you concerning fighting in the Sacred Months. Say, "Fighting therein is a great (transgression)...")

Abdul-Malik bin Hisham, who compiled the Srah (life story of the Prophet), related that Ziyad bin `Abdullah Bakka'i said that Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar Al-Madani wrote in his book on the Srah, "Allah's Messenger sent `Abdullah bin Jahsh bin Riyab Al-Asadi in Rajab, after he (the Prophet) came back from the first battle of Badr. The Prophet sent eight people with him, all from among the Muhajirun and none from the Ansar. He also gave him some written instructions and ordered him not to read them until he marched for two days. `Abdullah should then read the instructions and march to implement them, but should not force any of those who were with him to accompany him.

The companions of `Abdullah bin Jahsh were all from the Muhajirun, from the tribe of Banu `Abd Shams bin `Abd Manaf, there was Abu Hudhayfah bin `Utbah bin Rabi`ah bin `Abd Shams bin `Abd Manaf. From their allies, there was `Abdullah bin Jahsh, who was the commander of the army unit, and `Ukkashah bin Mihsan from the tribe of Banu Asad bin Khuzaymah. From the tribe of Banu Nawfal bin `Abd Manaf, there was `Utbah bin Ghazwan bin Jabir, one of their allies. From the tribe of Banu Zuhrah bin Kilab, there was Sa`d bin Abu Waqqas. From Banu Ka`b, there were their allies: `Adi bin `Amr bin Ar-Rabi`ah not from the tribe of Ibn Wa'il; Waqid bin `Abdullah bin `Abd Manaf bin `Arin bin Tha`labah bin Yambu` from Banu Tamim; and Khalid bin Bukair from the tribe of Banu Sa`d bin Layth, Suhayl bin Bayda' from Banu Al-Harith bin Fihri was also among them. When `Abdullah bin Jahsh marched for two days, he opened and read the (Prophet's) instructions, "When you read these instructions, march until you set camp at Nakhlah between Makkah and At-Ta'if. There, watch the movements of the caravan of Quraysh and collect news about them for us." When `Abdullah bin Jahsh read the document, he said, "I hear and obey." He then said to his companions, "Allah's Messenger has commanded me to march forth to Nakhlah to watch the movements of the caravan of Quraysh and to inform him about their news. He has prohibited me from forcing any of you (to go with me). So, those who seek martyrdom, they should march with me. Those who dislike the idea of martyrdom, let them turn back. Surely, I will implement the command of Allah's Messenger ." He and his companions continued without any of them turning back.

`Abdullah entered the Hijaz area (western Arabia) until he reached an area called Buhran, close to Furu`. There, Sa`d bin Abu Waqqas and `Utbah bin Ghazwan lost the camel that they were riding in turns, and they went back to search for it while `Abdullah bin Jahsh and the rest of his companions continued until they reached Nakhlah. Then, a caravan belonging to the Quraysh passed by carrying raisins, food stuff and some trade items for the Quraysh. `Amr bin Hadrami, whose name was `Abdullah bin `Abbad, was in the caravan, as well as `Uthman bin `Abdullah bin Al-Mughirah and his brother Nawfal bin `Abdullah from the tribe of Makhzum, and Al-Hakam bin Kaysan, a freed slave of Hisham bin Al-Mughirah. When they saw the Companions they were frightened, but when they saw `Ukkashah bin Mihsan their fears

subsided, since his head was shaved. They said, "These people seek the `Umrah, so there is no need to fear them."

The Companions conferred among themselves. That day was the last day in the (sacred) month of Rajab. They said to each other, "By Allah! If you let them pass, they will soon enter the Sacred Area and take refuge in it from you. If you kill them, you will kill them during the Sacred Month." They at first hesitated and did not like to attack them. They then began encouraging themselves and decided to kill whomever they could among the disbelievers and to confiscate whatever they had. Hence, Waqid bin `Abdullah At-Tamimi shot an arrow at `Amr bin Al-Hadrami and killed him. `Uthman bin `Abdullah and Al-Hakam bin Kaysan gave themselves up, while Nawfal bin `Abdullah was able to outrun them in flight. Later on, `Abdullah bin Jahsh and his companions went back to Allah's Messenger in Al-Madinah with the caravan and the two prisoners. Ibn Ishaq went on: I was told that some members of the family of `Abdullah bin Jahsh said that `Abdullah said to his companions: "Allah's Messenger will have one-fifth of what we have confiscated." This occurred before Allah required one-fifth for His Messenger from the war booty. So, `Abdullah designated one-fifth of the caravan for Allah's Messenger and divided the rest among his companions. Ibn Ishaq also stated that at first, when the Sariyah came back to Allah's Messenger, he said to them:

«مَا أَمَرْتُكُمْ بِقِتَالٍ فِي الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ»

(I have not commanded you to conduct warfare during the Sacred Month.)

He left the caravan and the two prisoners alone and did not take any share of the war booty.

When Allah's Messenger did that, the soldiers from the attack were concerned and felt that they were destroyed, and their Muslim brethren criticized them for what they did. The Quraysh said that Muhammad and his Companions violated the sanctity of the Sacred Month and shed blood, confiscated property and took prisoners during it. Those who refuted them among the Muslims who remained in Makkah replied that the Muslims had done that during the month of Sha'ban (which is not a sacred month). Meanwhile, the Jews were pleased about what happened to Allah's Messenger. They said, `Amr bin Hadrami was killed by Waqid bin `Abdullah: `Amr, means the war has started, Hadrami means the war has come, as for Waqid (bin `Abdullah): the war has raged (using some of the literal meanings of these names to support their fortune-telling!)." But, Allah made all that turn against them.

The people continued talking about this matter, then Allah revealed to His Messenger :

(يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ وَصَدٌّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِندَ اللَّهِ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ)

(They ask you concerning fighting in the Sacred Months. Say, "Fighting therein is a great (transgression) but a greater (transgression) with Allah is to prevent mankind from following the way of Allah, to disbelieve in Him, to prevent access to Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah), and to drive out its inhabitants, and Al-Fitnah is worse than killing.)

This Ayah means, `If you had killed during the Sacred Month, they (disbelievers of Quraysh) have hindered you from the path of Allah and disbelieved in it. They also prevented you from entering the Sacred Mosque, and expelled you from it, while you are its people,

(أَكْبَرُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ)

(...a greater (transgression) with Allah) than killing whom you killed among them. Also:

(وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ)

(...and Al-Fitnah is worse than killing.) means, trying to force the Muslims to revert from their religion and re-embrace Kufr after they had believed, is worse with Allah than killing.' Allah said:

(وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ حَتَّى يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَن دِينِكُمْ
إِنْ اسْتَطَاعُوا)

(And they will never cease fighting you until they turn you back from your religion (Islamic Monotheism) if they can.)

So, they will go on fighting you with unrelenting viciousness.

Ibn Ishaq went on: When the Qur'an touched this subject and Allah brought relief to the Muslims instead of the sadness that had befallen them, Allah's Messenger took possession of the caravan and the two prisoners. The Quraysh offered to ransom the two prisoners, `Uthman bin `Abdullah and Hakam bin Kaysan. Allah's Messenger said:

«لَا نَقْدِيكُمْوَهُمَا حَتَّى يَقْدَمَ صَاحِبَانَا»

(We will not accept your ransom until our two companions return safely.) meaning Sa`d bin Abu Waqqas and `Utbah bin Ghazwan, "For we fear for their safety with you. If you kill them, we will kill your people." Later on, Sa`d and `Utbah returned safely and Allah's Messenger accepted the Quraysh's ransom for their prisoners. As for Al-Hakam bin Kaysan, he became Muslim and his Islam strengthened. He remained with Allah's Messenger until he was martyred during the incident at Bir Ma`unah (when the Prophet sent seventy Companions to Najd to teach them Islam, but Banu Sulaim killed them all except two). As for `Uthman bin `Abdullah, he went back to Makkah and died there as a disbeliever.

Ibn Ishaq went on: When `Abdullah bin Jahsh and his companions were relieved from their depressing thoughts after the Qur'an was revealed about this subject, they sought the reward of the fighters (in Allah's way). They said, "O Messenger of Allah! We wish that this incident be considered a battle for us, so that we gain the rewards of the Mujahidin." Then, Allah revealed:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

(Verily, those who have believed, and those who have emigrated (for Allah's religion) and have striven hard in the way of Allah, all these hope for Allah's mercy. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.)

Hence, Allah has greatly elevated their hopes of gaining what they had wished for.

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَّفْعِهِمَا وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلِ الْعَفْوَ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَى قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ وَإِنْ تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُقْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَاعْنَتَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

(219. They ask you (O Muhammad) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: "In them is a great sin, and (some) benefits for men, but the sin of them is greater than their benefit." And they ask you what they ought to spend. Say: "That which is (spare) beyond your needs." Thus Allah makes clear to you His Laws in order that you may give thought.) (220. In (to) this worldly life and in the Hereafter. And they ask you concerning orphans. Say: "The best thing is to work honestly in their property, and if you mix your affairs with theirs, then they are your brothers. And Allah knows (the one) who means mischief (e.g., to swallow their property) from (the one) who means good (e.g., to save their property). And if Allah had wished, He could have put you into difficulties. Truly, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.")

The Gradual Prohibition of Khamr (Alcoholic Drink)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Maysarah said that `Umar once said, "O Allah! Give us a clear ruling regarding Al-Khamr!" Allah sent down the Ayah of Surat Al-Baqarah:

(يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ
كَبِيرٌ)

(They ask you (O Muhammad) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: "In them is a great sin...)

`Umar was then summoned and the Ayah was recited to him. Yet, he still said, "O Allah! Give us a clear ruling regarding Al-Khamr." Then, this Ayah that is in Surat An-Nisa' was revealed:

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنتُمْ
سُكْرَىٰ)

(O you who believe! Approach not As-Salah (the prayer) when you are in a drunken state.)
(4:43)

Then, when the prayer was called for, a person used to herald on behalf of Allah's Messenger , "No drunk person should attend the prayer." `Umar was summoned again and the Ayah was recited to him. Yet, he still said, "O Allah! Give us a clear ruling regarding Al-Khamr." Then, the Ayah that is in Surat Al-Ma'idah was revealed, `Umar was again summoned and the Ayah was recited to him. When he reached:

(فَهَلْ أَنتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ)

(So, will you not then abstain) (5:91) he said, "We did abstain, we did abstain." This is also the narration that Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasai collected in their books. `Ali bin Al-Madini and At-Tirmidhi said that the chain of narrators for this Hadith is sound and authentic. We will mention this Hadith again along with what Imam Ahmad collected by Abu Hurayrah Allah's saying in Surat Al-Ma'idah:

إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ
رَجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُفْلِحُونَ

(Intoxicants and gambling, and Al-Ansab, and Al-Azlam are an abomination of Satan's handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful.)
(5:90)

Allah said:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ

(They ask you (O Muhammad) concerning alcoholic drinks and gambling.)

As for Al-Khamr, `Umar bin Khattab, the Leader of the faithful, used to say, "It includes all what intoxicates the mind." We will also mention this statement in the explanation of Surat Al-Ma'idah, along with the topic of gambling.

Allah said:

قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ لِلنَّاسِ

(Say: In them is a great sin, and (some) benefits for men.)

As for the harm that the Khamr and gambling cause, it effects the religion. As for their benefit, it is material, including benefit for the body, digesting the food, getting rid of the excrements, sharpening the mind, bringing about a joyous sensation and financially benefiting from their sale. Also, (their benefit includes) earnings through gambling that one uses to spend on his family and on himself. Yet, these benefits are outweighed by the clear harm that they cause which affects the mind and the religion. This is why Allah said:

وَإِنَّهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَّفْعِهِمَا

(...but the sin of them is greater than their benefit.)

This Ayah was the beginning of the process of prohibiting Khamr, not explicitly, but it only implied this meaning. So when this Ayah was recited to `Umar, he still said, "O Allah! Give us a clear ruling regarding Al-Khamr." Soon after, Allah sent down a clear prohibition of Khamr in Surat Al-Ma'idah:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ
وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رَجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ
فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ - إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ
يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمْ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ
وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ
فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ)

(O you who believe! Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), and gambling, and Al-Ansab, and Al-Azlam are an abomination of Shaytan's handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful. Shaytan wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants (alcoholic drinks) and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah and from As-Salah (the prayer). So, will you not then abstain) (5:90, 91)

We will mention this subject, by the will of Allah, when we explain Surat Al-Ma'idah.

Ibn `Umar, Ash-Sha`bi, Mujahid, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and `Abdur-Rahman bin Aslam stated that the first Ayah revealed about Khamr was:

(يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ
كَبِيرٌ)

(They ask you about Khamr and gambling. Say: "In them there is great sin.") (2:219)

Then, the Ayah in Surat An-Nisa' was revealed (on this subject) and then the Ayah in Surat Al-Ma'idah which prohibited Khamr.

Spending whatever One could spare of his Money on Charity

Allah said:

(وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلِ الْعَفْوُ)

(And they ask you what they ought to spend. Say: "That which is (spare) beyond your needs.")

Al-Hakam said that Miqsam said that Ibn `Abbas said that this Ayah means, whatever you can spare above the needs of your family. This is also the opinion of Ibn `Umar, Mujahid, `Ata', `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Muhammad bin Ka`b, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Al-Qasim, Salim, `Ata' Al-Khurasani and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas.

Ibn Jarir related that Abu Hurayrah said that a man said, "O Messenger of Allah! I have a Dinar (a currency)." The Prophet said:

«أَنْفِقْهُ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ»

(Spend it you on yourself.) He said, "I have another Dinar." He said:

«أَنْفِقْهُ عَلَى أَهْلِكَ»

(Spend it on your wife.) He said, "I have another Dinar." He said:

«أَنْفِقْهُ عَلَى وَاٰلِكَ»

(Spend it on your offspring.) He said, "I have another Dinar." He said:

«فَأَنْتَ أَبْصَرُ»

(You have better knowledge (meaning how and where to spend it in charity).)

Muslim also recorded this Hadith in his Sahih.

Muslim recorded that Jabir said that Allah's Messenger said to a man:

«أَبْدَأْ بِنَفْسِكَ فَتَصَدَّقْ عَلَيْهَا، فَإِنْ فَضَلَ شَيْءٌ
فَلِأَهْلِكَ، فَإِنْ فَضَلَ شَيْءٌ عَنْ أَهْلِكَ فَلِذِي
قَرَابَتِكَ، فَإِنْ فَضَلَ عَنْ ذِي قَرَابَتِكَ شَيْءٌ فَهَكَذَا
وَهَكَذَا»

(Start with yourself and grant it some charity. If anything remains, then spend it on your family. If anything remains, then spend it on your relatives. If anything remains, then spend it like this and like that (i.e., on various charitable purposes).)

A Hadith states:

«ابْنَ آدَمَ إِنَّكَ أَنْ تَبْدُلَ الْفَضْلَ خَيْرٌ لَكَ، وَأَنْ تُمْسِكَ شَرٌّ لَكَ، وَلَا تُلَامُ عَلَى كَفَافٍ»

(O son of Adam! If you spend whatever you can spare, it would be better for you; but if you keep it, it would be worse for you. You shall not be blamed for whatever is barely sufficient.)

Allah said:

(كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي
الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ)

(Thus Allah makes clear to you His Ayat in order that you may give thought. In (to) this worldly life and in the Hereafter.) meaning, just as He stated and explained these commandments for you, He also explains the rest of His Ayat regarding the commandments and His promises and warnings, so that you might give thought in this life and the Hereafter. `Ali bin Abu Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas commented, "Meaning about the imminent demise and the brevity of this life, and the imminent commencement of the Hereafter and its continuity." a

Maintaining the Orphan's Property

Allah said:

(وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَى قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ
وَإِنْ تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ
الْمُصْلِحِ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَعْنَتَكُمْ)

(And they ask you concerning orphans. Say: "The best thing is to work honestly in their property, and if you mix your affairs with theirs, then they are your brothers. And Allah knows him who means mischief (e.g., to swallow their property) from him who means good (e.g., to save their property). And if Allah had wished, He could have put you into difficulties.)

Ibn Jarir reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "When the Ayat:

(وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ)

(And come not near to the orphan's property, except to improve it.) (6:152) and

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا وَسَيَصْلُونَ سَعِيرًا)

(Verily, those who unjustly eat up the property of orphans, they eat up only fire into their bellies, and they will be burnt in the blazing Fire!) (4:10) were revealed, those who took care of some orphans, separated their food and drink from the orphans' food and drink. When some of the orphans' food and drink remained, they would keep it for them until they eat it or otherwise get spoiled. This situation was difficult for them and they mentioned this subject to Allah's Messenger .

(وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَىٰ قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَّهُمْ خَيْرٌ
وَإِنْ تُخَالَطُوا هُمْ فَأِخْوَتَكُمْ)

(And they ask you concerning orphans. Say: "The best thing is to work honestly in their property, and if you mix your affairs with theirs, then they are your brothers.) Hence, they joined their food and drink with the food and drink of the orphans." This Hadith was also collected by Abu Dawud, An-Nasa'i and Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak. Several others said similarly about the circumstances surrounding the revelation of the Ayah (2:220), including Mujahid, `Ata', Ash-Sha`bi, Ibn Abu Layla, Qatadah and others among the Salaf and those after them.

Ibn Jarir reported that `A'ishah said, "I dislike that an orphan's money be under my care, unless I mix my food with his food and my drink with his drink."

Allah said:

(قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَّهُمْ خَيْرٌ)

(Say: The best thing is to work honestly in their property.) meaning, on the one hand (i.e., this is required in any case). Allah then said:

(وَإِنْ تُخَالَطُوا هُمْ فَأِخْوَتَكُمْ)

(...and if you mix your affairs with theirs, then they are your brothers.) meaning, there is no harm if you mix your food and drink with their food and drink, since they are your brothers in the religion. This is why Allah said afterwards:

(وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ)

(And Allah knows (the one) who means mischief (e.g., to swallow their property) from (the one) who means good (e.g., to save their property).) meaning, He knows those whose intent is to cause mischief or righteousness. He also said:

(وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَعْتَبْتُمْ إِنْ اللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ)

(And if Allah had wished, He could have put you into difficulties. Truly, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise) meaning, if Allah wills, He will make this matter difficult for you. But, He made it easy for you, and allowed you to mix your affairs with the orphans' affairs in a way that is better. Similarly, Allah said:

(وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ)

(And come not near to the orphan's property, except to improve it.) (6:152)

Allah has thus allowed spending from the orphan's estate by its executor, in reasonable proportions, on the condition that he has the intention to compensate the orphan later on, when he can afford it. We will mention about it in detail in Surat An-Nisa' by Allah's will.

(وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكَاتِ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنَ وَلِأُمَّةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ وَلَا تُنكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنُوا وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكُمْ أُولَئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُوا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيُبَيِّنُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ)

(221. And do not marry Al-Mushrikat (idolatresses) till they believe (worship Allah Alone). And indeed a slave woman who believes is better than a (free) Mushrikah (idolatress), even though she pleases you. And give not (your daughters) in marriage to Al-Mushrikin till they believe (in Allah Alone) and verily, a believing servant is better than a (free) Mushrik (idolator), even though he pleases you. Those (Mushrikin) invite you to the Fire, but Allah invites (you) to Paradise and forgiveness by His leave, and makes His Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) clear to mankind that they may remember.)

The Prohibition of marrying Mushrik Men and Women

Allah prohibited the believers from marrying Mushrik women who worship idols. Although the meaning is general and includes every Mushrik woman from among the idol worshippers and the People of the Scripture, Allah excluded the People of the Scripture from this ruling. Allah stated:

(مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ
أُجُورَهُنَّ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحِينَ)

((Lawful to you in marriage) are chaste women from those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) before your time when you have given their due dowry, desiring chastity (i.e., taking them in legal wedlock) not committing illegal sexual intercourse.) (5:5)

`Ali bin Abu Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas said about what Allah said:

(وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكَاتِ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنَنَّ)

(And do not marry Al-Mushrikat (female idolators) till they believe (worship Allah Alone).) "Allah has excluded the women of the People of the Scripture." This is also the explanation of Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Makhul, Al-Hasan, Ad-Dahhak, Zayd bin Aslam and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and others. Some scholars said that the Ayah is exclusively talking about idol worshippers and not the People of the Scripture, and this meaning is similar to the first meaning we mentioned. Allah knows best.

Abu Ja`far bin Jarir (At-Tabari) said, after mentioning that there is Ijma` that marrying women from the People of the Scripture is allowed, "Umar disliked this practice so that the Muslims do not refrain from marrying Muslim women, or for similar reasons." An authentic chain of narrators stated that Shaiq said: Once Hudhayfah married a Jewish woman and `Umar wrote to him, "Divorce her." He wrote back, "Do you claim that she is not allowed for me so that I divorce her" He said, "No. But, I fear that you might marry the whores from among them." Ibn Jarir related that Zayd bin Wahb said that `Umar bin Khattab said, "The Muslim man marries the Christian woman, but the Christian man does not marry the Muslim woman." This Hadith has a stronger, authentic chain of narrators than the previous Hadith.

Ibn Abu Hatim said that Ibn `Umar disliked marrying the women from the People of the Scripture. He relied on his own explanation for the Ayah:

(وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكَاتِ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنَنَّ)

(And do not marry Al-Mushrikat (female idolators) till they believe (worship Allah Alone).)

Al-Bukhari also reported that Ibn `Umar said, "I do not know of a bigger Shirk than her saying that Jesus is her Lord!"

Allah said:

﴿وَلَا أُمَّةٌ مُّؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ﴾

(And indeed a slave woman who believes is better than a (free) Mushrikah (female idolators), even though she pleases you.)

It is recorded in the Two Sahihs that Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet said:

﴿تُنكَحُ الْمَرْأَةُ لِأَرْبَعٍ: لِمَالِهَا وَلِحَسَبِهَا وَلِجَمَالِهَا
وَلِدِينِهَا، فَأَظْفَرُ بِذَاتِ الدِّينِ، تَرَبَّتْ يَدَاكَ﴾

(A woman is chosen for marriage for four reasons: her wealth, social status, beauty, and religion. So, marry the religious woman, may your hands be filled with sand (a statement of encouragement).)

Muslim reported this Hadith from Jabir. Muslim also reported that Ibn `Amr said that Allah's Messenger said:

﴿الدُّنْيَا مَتَاعٌ، وَخَيْرُ مَتَاعِ الدُّنْيَا الْمَرْأَةُ
الصَّالِحَةُ﴾

(The life of this world is but a delight, and the best of the delights of this earthly life is the righteous wife.)

Allah then said:

﴿وَلَا تُنكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنُوا﴾

(And give not (your daughters) in marriage to Al-Mushrikin till they believe (in Allah Alone).) meaning, do not marry Mushrik men to believing women. This statement is similar to Allah's statement:

﴿لَا هُنَّ حِلٌّ لَّهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحِلُّونَ لَهُنَّ﴾

(They are not lawful (wives) for them, nor are they lawful (husbands) for them.) (60:10)

Next, Allah said:

(وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكُمْ)

(. .and verily, a believing servant is better than a (free) Mushrik (idolator), even though he pleases you.)

This Ayah indicates that a believing man, even an Abyssinian servant, is better than a Mushrik man, even if he was a rich master.

(أُولَئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ)

(Those (Al-Mushrikun) invite you to the Fire) meaning, associating and mingling with the disbelievers makes one love this life and prefer it over the Hereafter, leading to the severest repercussions. Allah said:

(وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُوا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ)

(...but Allah invites (you) to Paradise and forgiveness by His leave) meaning, by His Law, commandments and prohibitions. Allah said:

(وَيُبَيِّنُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ)

(...and makes His Ayat clear to mankind that they may remember.)

(وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ قُلْ هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ فَاعْتَزِلُوا
النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّىٰ يَطْهَرْنَ
فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ - نِسَاءُكُمْ
حَرَّتْ لَكُمْ فَأْتُوا حُرَّتَكُمْ أَنَّىٰ شِئْتُمْ وَقَدِّمُوا
لَأَنفُسِكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ مُّلْقَوُهُ وَبَشِّرِ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(222. They ask you concerning menstruation. Say: "That is an Adha, therefore, keep away from women during menses and go not in unto them till they are purified." And when they have purified themselves, then go in unto them as Allah has ordained for you. Truly, Allah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance and loves those who purify themselves.) (223. Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will, and send (good deeds, or ask Allah to bestow upon you pious offspring) for your own selves beforehand. And fear Allah, and know that you are to meet Him (in the Hereafter), and give good tidings to the believers (O Muhammad).)

Sexual Intercourse with Menstruating Women is prohibited

Imam Ahmad recorded that Anas said that the Jews used to avoid their menstruating women, they would not eat, or even mingle with them in the house. The Companions of the Prophet asked about this matter and Allah revealed:

(وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ قُلْ هُوَ أَدَىٰ فَأَعْتَزَلُوا
النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّىٰ
يَطْهَرْنَ)

(They ask you concerning menstruation. Say: "That is an Adha, therefore, keep away from women during menses and go not in unto them till they are purified.)

Allah's Messenger said:

«اصْنَعُوا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا النِّكَاحَ»

(Do everything you wish, except having sexual intercourse.)

When the Jews were told about the Prophet's statement, they said, "What is the matter with this man He would not hear of any of our practices, but would defy it." Then, Usayd bin Hudayr and `Abbad bin Bishr came and said, "O Messenger of Allah! The Jews said this and that, should we have sex with our women (meaning, during the menstruation period)" The face of Allah's Messenger changed color, until the Companions thought that he was angry with them. They left. Soon after, some milk was brought to Allah's Messenger as a gift, and he sent some of it for them to drink. They knew then that Allah's Messenger was not angry with them. Muslim also reported this Hadith. Allah said:

(فَاعْتَزَلُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ)

(. ..therefore, keep away from women during menses.) meaning, avoid the sexual organ. The Prophet said:

«اصْنَعُوا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا النِّكَاحَ»

(Do anything you wish except having sexual intercourse.)

This is why most of the scholars said that it is allowed to fondle the wife, except for having sexual intercourse (when she is having her menses). Abu Dawud reported that `Ikrimah related to one of the Prophet's wives that she said that whenever the Prophet wanted to fondle (one of his wives) during her menses, he would cover her sexual organ with something.

Abu Ja`far bin Jarir related that Masruq went to `A'ishah and greeted her, and `A'ishah greeted him in return. Masruq said, "I wish to ask you about a matter, but I am shy." She replied, "I am your mother and you are my son." He said, "What can the man enjoy of his wife when she is having her menses" She said, "Everything except her sexual organ." This is also the opinion of Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Al-Hasan and `Ikrimah.

One is allowed to sleep next to his wife and to eat with her (when she is having her menses). `A'ishah said, "Allah's Messenger used to ask me to wash his hair while I was having the menses. He would lay on my lap and read the Qur'an while I was having the period." It is also reported in the Sahih that `A'ishah said, "While having the menses, I used to eat from a piece of meat and give it to the Prophet who would eat from the same place I ate from. I used to have sips of a drink and would then give the cup to the Prophet who would place his mouth where I placed my mouth."

It is also reported in the Two Sahihs that Maymunah bint Al-Harith Al-Hilaliyah said, "Whenever the Prophet wanted to fondle any of his wives during the periods (menses), he used to ask her to wear an Izar (a sheet covering the lower-half of the body)." These are the wordings collected by Al-Bukhari. Similar was reported from `A'ishah. In addition, Imam Ahmad, Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah reported that `Abdullah bin Sa`d Al-Ansari asked Allah's Messenger, "What am I allowed of my wife while she is having her menses" He said, "What is above the Izar (a sheet covering the lower-half of the body)." Hence, Allah's statement: h

(وَلَا تَقْرُبُوهُنَّ حَتَّىٰ يَطْهُرْنَ)

(...and go not in unto them till they are purified.) explains His statement:

(فَاعْتَرِزُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ)

(...therefore, keep away from women during menses.)

Allah prohibited having sexual intercourse with the wife during menstruation, indicating that sexual intercourse is allowed otherwise.

Allah's statement:

(فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ)

(And when they have purified themselves, then go in unto them as Allah has ordained for you.) indicates that men should have sexual intercourse with their wives after they take a bath. The scholars agree that the woman is obliged to take a bath, or to perform Tayammum with sand, if she is unable to use water, before she is allowed to have sexual intercourse with her husband, after the monthly period ends. Ibn ` Abbas said:

(حَتَّى يَطْهَرْنَ)

"(till they are purified) means from blood, and,

(فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ)

(And when they have purified themselves) means with water." This is also the Tafsir of Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Al-Hasan, Muqatil bin Hayyan and Al-Layth bin Sa`d and others.

Anal Sex is prohibited

Allah said:

(مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكَ اللَّهُ)

(...as Allah has ordained for you.) this refers to Al-Farj (the vagina), as Ibn ` Abbas, Mujahid and other scholars have stated. Therefore, anal sex is prohibited, as we will further emphasize afterwards, Allah willing. Abu Razin, `Ikrimah and Ad-Dahhak and others said that:

(فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكَ اللَّهُ)

(...then go in unto them as Allah has ordained for you.) means when they are pure, and not during the menses. Allah said afterwards:

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ)

(Truly, Allah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance) from the sin even if it was repeated,

(وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ)

(and loves those who purify themselves.) meaning, those who purify themselves from the impurity and the filth that include having sexual intercourse with the wife during the menses and anal sex.

The Reason behind revealing Allah's Statement: "Your Wives are a Tilth for You.

Allah said:

(نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ)

(Your wives are a tilth for you,)

Ibn `Abbas commented, "Meaning the place of pregnancy." Allah then said:

(فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَيَّ شَيْتُمْ)

(...so go to your tilth, when or how you will,) meaning, wherever you wish from the front or from behind, as long as sex takes place in one valve (the female sexual organ), as the authentic Hadiths have indicated.

For instance, Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn Al-Munkadir said that he heard Jabir say that the Jews used to claim that if one has sex with his wife from behind (in the vagina) the offspring would become cross-eyed. Then, this Ayah was revealed:

(نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَيَّ شَيْتُمْ)

(Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will,)

Muslim and Abu Dawud also reported this Hadith.

Ibn Abu Hatim said that Muhammad bin Al-Munkadir narrated that Jabir bin `Abdullah told him that the Jews claimed to the Muslims that if one has sex with their wife from behind (in the vagina) their offspring will become cross-eyed. Allah revealed afterwards:

(نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَيَّ شَيْتُمْ)

(Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will,)

Ibn Jurayj (one of the reporters of the Hadith) said that Allah's Messenger said:

«مُقْبِلَةً وَمُذْبِرَةً إِذَا كَانَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْفَرْجِ»

(From the front or from behind, as long as that occurs in the Farj (vagina).)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Ibn ` Abbas said, "The Ayah,

(نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ)

(Your wives are a tilth for you) was revealed about some people from the Ansar who came to the Prophet and asked him (about having sex with the wife from behind). He said to them:

«انْتِهَاهَا عَلَى كُلِّ حَالٍ إِذَا كَانَ فِي الْفَرْجِ»

(Have sex with her as you like as long as that occurs in the vagina.)

Imam Ahmad recorded that ` Abdullah bin Sabit said: I went to Hafsa bint ` Abdur-Rahman bin Abu Bakr and said, "I wish to ask you about something, but I am shy." She said, "Do not be shy, O my nephew." He said, "About having sex from behind with women." She said, "Umm Salamah told me that the Ansar used to refrain from having sex from behind (in the vagina). The Jews claimed that those who have sex with their women from behind would have offspring with crossed-eyes. When the Muhajirun came to Al-Madinah, they married Ansar women and had sex with them from behind. One of these women would not obey her husband and said, ` You will not do that until I go to Allah's Messenger (and ask him about this matter). ' She went to Umm Salamah and told her the story. Umm Salamah said, ` Wait until Allah's Messenger comes.' When Allah's Messenger came, the Ansari woman was shy to ask him about this matter, so she left. Umm Salamah told Allah's Messenger the story and he said:

«ادْعِي الْأَنْصَارِيَّةَ»

(Summon the Ansari woman.)"

She was summoned and he recited this Ayah to her:

(نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ)

(Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will.) He added:

«صِمَامًا وَاحِدًا»

(Only in one valve (the vagina).)"

This Hadith was also collected by At-Tirmidhi who said, "Hasan."

An-Nasa'i reported that Ka`b bin `Alqamah said that Abu An-Nadr said that he asked Nafi`, "The people are repeating the statement that you relate from Ibn `Umar that he allowed sex with women in their rear (anus)." He said, "They have said a lie about me. But let me tell you what really happened. Ibn `Umar was once reciting the Qur'an while I was with him and he reached the Ayah:

(نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ)

(Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will,) He then said, `O Nafi! Do you know the story behind this Ayah' I said, `No.' He said, `We, the people of Quraysh, used to have sexual intercourse with our wives from the back (in the vagina). When we migrated to Al-Madinah and married some Ansari women, we wanted to do the same with them. They disliked it and made a big issue out of it. The Ansari women had followed the practice of the Jews who have sex with their women while they lay on their sides. Then, Allah revealed:

(نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ)

(Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will,)"

This has an authentic chain of narrators.

Imam Ahmad reported that Khuzaymah bin Thabit Al-Khatami narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«لَا يَسْتَحْيِي اللَّهُ مِنَ الْحَقِّ ثَلَاثًا لَا تَأْتُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي أَعْجَازِهِنَّ»

(Allah does not shy from the truth - he said it thrice-, do not have anal sex with women.)

This Hadith was collected by An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah.

Abu `Isa At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i reported that Ibn `Abbas narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«لَا يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ إِلَى رَجُلٍ أَتَى رَجُلًا أَوْ امْرَأَةً فِي الدُّبْرِ»

(Allah does not look at a man who had anal sex with another man or a woman.)

At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Gharib." This is also the narration that Ibn Hibban collected in his Sahih, while Ibn Hazm stated that this is an authentic Hadith.

In addition, Imam Ahmad reported that `Ali bin Talaq said, "Allah's Messenger forbade anal sex with women, for Allah does not shy away from truth." Abu `Isa At-Tirmidhi also reported this Hadith and said, "Hasan".

Abu Muhammad `Abdullah bin `Abdur-Rahman Darimi reported in his Musnad that Sa`id bin Yasar Abu Hubab said: I said to Ibn `Umar, "What do you say about having sex with women in the rear" He said, "What does it mean" I said, "Anal sex." He said, "Does a Muslim do that" This Hadith has an authentic chain of narrators and is an explicit rejection of anal sex from Ibn `Umar.

Abu Bakr bin Ziyad Naysaburi reported that Isma`il bin Ruh said that he asked Malik bin Anas, "What do you say about having sex with women in the anus" He said, "You are not an Arab Does sex occur but in the place of pregnancy Do it only in the Farj (vagina)." I said, "O Abu `Abdullah! They say that you allow that practice." He said, "They utter a lie about me, they lie about me." This is Malik's firm stance on this subject. It is also the view of Sa`id bin Musayyib, Abu Salamah, `Ikrimah, Tawus, `Ata , Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Urwah bin Az-Zubayr, Mujahid bin Jabr, Al-Hasan and other scholars of the Salaf (the Companions and the following two generations after them). They all, along with the majority of the scholars, harshly rebuked the practice of anal sex and many of them called this practice a Kufr.

Allah said:

(وَقَدِّمُوا لَأَنْفُسِكُمْ)

(. ..and send for your own selves beforehand.) meaning, by performing the acts of worship while refraining from whatever Allah has prohibited for you. This is why Allah said afterwards:

(وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ مُلْقَوُهُ)

(And fear Allah, and know that you are to meet Him (in the Hereafter),.)

meaning, He will hold you accountable for all of your deeds,

(وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(...and give good tidings to the believers (O Muhammad).) meaning, those who obey what Allah has commanded and refrain from what He has prohibited. Ibn Jarir reported that `Ata' said, or related it to Ibn `Abbas,

(وَقَدِّمُوا لَأَنْفُسِكُمْ)

(...and send for your own selves beforehand.) means, mention Allah's Name, by saying, 'Bismillah', before having sexual intercourse." Al-Bukhari also reported that Ibn `Abbas narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«لَوْ أَنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ إِذَا أَرَادَ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ أَهْلَهُ قَالَ: بِاسْمِ
اللَّهِ، اللَّهُمَّ جَنِّبْنَا الشَّيْطَانَ وَجَنِّبِ الشَّيْطَانَ مَا
رَزَقْتَنَا، فَإِنَّهُ إِنْ يُقَدَّرَ بَيْنَهُمَا وَلَدٌ فِي ذَلِكَ، لَمْ
يُضِرَّهُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَبَدًا»

(If anyone of you on having sexual relations with his wife said: 'In the Name of Allah. O Allah! Protect us from Satan and also protect what you bestow upon us (i.e., the coming offspring) from Satan,' and if it is destined that they should have a child then, Satan will never be able to harm him.)

(وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْضَةً لِأَيْمَانِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوا
وَتَتَّقُوا وَتُصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ -
لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ
يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ)

(224. And make not Allah's (Name) an excuse in your oaths against doing good and acting piously, and making peace among mankind. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower (i.e., do not swear much and if you have sworn against doing something good then give an expiation for the oath and do good).) (225. Allah will not call you to account for that which is unintentional in your oaths, but He will call you to account for that which your hearts have earned. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Forbearing.)

The Prohibition of swearing to abandon a Good Deed

Allah commands, 'You should not implement your vows in Allah's Name to refrain from pious acts and severing the relations with the relatives, if you swear to abandon such causes.' Allah said in another Ayah:

(وَلَا يَأْتَلِ أُولُوا الْفَضْلَ مِنْكُمْ وَالسَّعَةَ أَنْ يُؤْتُوا
أُولَى الْقُرْبَى وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ
لَكُمْ)

(And let not those among you who are blessed with graces and wealth swear not to give (any sort of help) to their kinsmen, Al-Masakin (the poor), and those who left their homes for Allah's cause. Let them pardon and forgive. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you) (24:22)

Continuity in a sinful vow is more sinful than breaking it by expiation. Allah's Messenger said:

«وَاللَّهِ لَأَنْ يَلْجَأَ أَحَدُكُمْ بِيَمِينِهِ فِي أَهْلِهِ آتَمُّ لَهُ عِنْدَ
اللَّهِ مِنْ أَنْ يُعْطِيَ كَفَّارَتَهُ الَّتِي افْتَرَضَ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ»

(By Allah! It is more sinful to Allah that one of you implements his vow regarding (severing the relations with) his relatives than (breaking his promise and) paying the Kaffarah that Allah has required in such cases.)

This is how Muslim reported this Hadith and also Imam Ahmad.

`Ali bin Abu Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said that what Allah said:

(وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْضَةً لِأَيْمَانِكُمْ)

(And make not Allah's (Name) an excuse in your oaths) means, "Do not vow to refrain from doing good works. (If you make such vow then) break it, pay the Kaffarah and do the good work." This was also said by Masruq, Ash-Sha`bi, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Mujahid, Tawus, Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Ata', `Ikrimah, Makhul, Az-Zuhri, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Ad-Dahhak, `Ata' Al-Khurasani and As-Suddi.

Supporting this view, which is the majority view, is what is reported in the Two Sahihs that Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari narrated that Allah's Messenger said: .

«إِنِّي وَاللَّهِ إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ، لَأُحْلِفُ عَلَى يَمِينٍ
فَأَرَى غَيْرَهَا خَيْرًا مِنْهَا إِلَّا أَتَيْتُ الَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ
وَتَحَلَّلْتُهَا»

(By Allah! Allah willing, I will not vow to do a thing and then see a better act, but I would do what is better and break my vow.) Muslim reported that Abu Hurayrah said that Allah's Messenger said:

«مَنْ حَلَفَ عَلَى يَمِينٍ فَرَأَى غَيْرَهَا خَيْرًا مِنْهَا
فَلْيُكْفِرْ عَنْ يَمِينِهِ، وَلْيَفْعَلِ الَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ»

(Whoever makes a vow and then finds what is better than his vow (should break his vow,) pay the Kaffarah and perform the better deed.)

The Laghw (Unintentional) Vows

Allah said:

(لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ)

(Allah will not call you to account for that which is unintentional in your oaths.)

This Ayah means, 'Allah does not punish or hold you accountable for the Laghw (unintentional) vows that you make.' The Laghw vows are unintentional and are just like the habitual statements that the tongue repeats, without really intending them. For instance, it is reported in the Two Sahihs that Abu Hurayrah narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«مَنْ حَلَفَ فَقَالَ فِي حَلْفِهِ بِاللَّاتِ وَالْعُزَّى، فَلْيَقُلْ
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ»

(Whoever swore and (unintentionally) mentioned Al-Lat and Al-`Uzza (two idols) in his vow, should then say, 'There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah'.)

The Messenger said this statement to some new Muslims whose tongues were, before Islam, used to vowing by their idol Al-Lat. Therefore, the Prophet ordered them to intentionally recite the slogan of Ikhlas, just as they mentioned these words by mistake, so that it (the word of Ikhlas) may eradicate the word (of Shirk). This is why Allah said:

وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ)

(...but He will call you to account for that which your hearts have earned.) and in another Ayah:

(بِمَا عَقَدْتُمُ الْأَيْمَانَ)

(...for your deliberate oaths) (5:89)

Abu Dawud reported under Chapter: `The Laghw Vows' that `Ata' said that `A'ishah said that Allah's Messenger said:

«اللَّعْوُ فِي الْيَمِينِ هُوَ كَلَامُ الرَّجُلِ فِي بَيْتِهِ: كَلَّا
وَاللَّهِ، وَبَلَى وَاللَّهِ»

(The Laghw in the vows includes what the man says in his house, such as, `No, by Allah,' and, `Yes, by Allah'.)

Ibn Abu Hatim reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "The Laghw vow includes vowing while angry."

He also reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "The Laghw vow includes vowing to prohibit what Allah has allowed, and this type does not require a Kaffarah (expiation)." Similar was said by Sa`id bin Jubayr.

In addition, Abu Dawud related under Chapter: `Vowing while Angry' that Sa`id bin Musayyib said that two Ansari brothers both received inheritance and one of them asked that the inheritance be divided. His brother said, "If you ask me about dividing the inheritance again, then all of what I have will be spent on the Ka`bah's door." `Umar said to him, "The Ka`bah does not need your money. So break your vow, pay the Kaffarah and come to terms with your brother. I heard Allah's Messenger saying:

«لَا يَمِينَ عَلَيْكَ وَلَا نَذْرَ فِي مَعْصِيَةِ الرَّبِّ عَزَّ
وَجَلَّ، وَفِي قَطِيعَةِ الرَّحِمِ، وَفِيمَا لَا تَمْلِكُ»

(Do not make a vow against yourself, nor to disobey the Lord, cut the relations of the womb or dispose of what you do not own.)"

Allah said:

(وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ)

(...but He will call you to account for that which your hearts have earned,)

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid and several others said that this Ayah means swearing about a matter while knowing that he is lying. Mujahid and others said this Ayah is similar to what Allah said:

(وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا عَقَدْتُمُ الْأَيْمَانَ)

(...but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths.) (5:89) Allah said (2:225 above):

(وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ)

(And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Forbearing.) meaning, He is Oft-Forgiving to His servants and Most Forbearing with them.

(لَّذِينَ يُؤْلُونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ تَرَبُّصُ أَرْبَعَةِ أَشْهُرٍ
فَإِنْ فَأَعُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ - وَإِنْ عَزَمُوا
الطَّلَاقَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ)

(226. Those who take an oath not to have sexual relation with their wives must wait for four months, then if they return, verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) (227. And if they decide upon divorce, then Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.)

The Ila' and its Rulings

Ila' is a type of vow where a man swears not to sleep with his wife for a certain period, whether less or more than four months. If the vow of Ila' was for less than four months, the man has to wait for the vow's period to end and then is allowed to have sexual intercourse with his wife. She has to be patient and she cannot ask her husband, in this case, to end his vow before the end of its term. It is reported in the Two Sahihs that `A'ishah said that Allah's Messenger swore he would stay away from with his wives for a month. He then came down after twenty-nine days saying:

«الشَّهْرُ تِسْعٌ وَعِشْرُونَ»

(The (lunar) month is twenty-nine days.)

Similar was narrated by `Umar bin Al-Khattab and reported in the Two Sahihs. If the period of Ila' is for more than four months, the wife is allowed in this case to ask her husband, upon the end of the four months, to end the Ila' and have sexual relations with her. Otherwise, he should divorce her, by being forced to do so by the authorities if necessary, so that the wife is not harmed. Allah said:

(لَّذِينَ يُؤْلُونَ مِن نِّسَائِهِمْ)

(Those who take an oath not to have sexual relations with their wives) meaning, swear not to have sexual relations with the wife. This Ayah indicates that the Ila' involves the wife and not a slave-women, as the majority of the scholars have agreed,

(تَرَبُّصُ أَرْبَعَةِ أَشْهُرٍ)

(...must wait for four months,) meaning, the husband waits for four months from the time of the vow and then ends the Ila' (if the vow was for four or more months) and is required to either return to his wife or divorce her. This is why Allah said next:

(فَإِن فَاءُوا)

(...then if they return,) meaning, to a normal relationship, having sexual intercourse with the wife. This is the Tafsir of Ibn `Abbas, Masruq, Ash-Sha' bi, Sa' id bin Jubayr and Ibn Jarir.

(فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ)

(...verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) with any shortcomings that occurred in the rights of the wife because of the vow of Ila'.

Allah said:

(وَإِنْ عَزَمُوا الطَّلَاقَ)

(And if they decide upon divorce,) indicating that divorce does not occur by merely passing the four month mark (during the Ila'). Malik reported from Nafi` that `Abdullah bin `Umar said, "If the man swears to Ila' from his wife, then divorce does not occur automatically even after the four months have passed. When he stops at the four months mark, he should either divorce or return." Al-Bukhari also reported this Hadith. Ibn Jarir reported that Suhayl bin Abu Salih said that his father said, "I asked twelve Companions about the man who does Ila' with his wife. They all stated that he does not have to do anything until the four months have passed and then has to either retain or divorce her." Ad-Daraqutni also reported this from Suhayl.

It is also reported from `Umar, `Uthman, `Ali, Abu Ad-Darda', `A'ishah, Ibn `Umar and Ibn `Abbas. This is also the opinion of Sa`id bin Musayyib, `Umar bin `Abdul-`Aziz, Mujahid, Tawus, Muhammad bin Ka`b and Al-Qasim.

(وَالْمُطَلَّقَاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنْنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَبَعُولَتْهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوا إِصْلَاحًا وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ)

(228. And divorced women shall wait (as regards their marriage) for three menstrual periods, and it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs, if they believe in Allah and the Last Day. And their husbands have the better right to take them back in that period, if they wish for reconciliation. And they (women) have rights (over their husbands as regards living expenses) similar (to those of their husbands) over them (as regards obedience and respect) to what is reasonable, but men have a degree (of responsibility) over them. And Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.)

The `Iddah (Waiting Period) of the Divorced Woman

This Ayah contains a command from Allah that the divorced woman, whose marriage was consummated and who still has menstruation periods, should wait for three (menstrual) periods (Quru') after the divorce and then remarry if she wishes.

The Meaning of Al-Quru

Ibn Jarir related that `Alqamah said: We were with `Umar bin Al-Khattab when a woman came and said, "My husband divorced me one or two periods ago. He then came back to me while I had prepared my water for taking a bath, took off my clothes and closed my door." `Umar asked `Abdullah bin Mas`ud, "What do you think" He said, "I think that she is still his wife, as long as she is not allowed to resume praying (i.e., until the third period ends before he takes her back)." `Umar said, "This is my opinion too." This is also the opinion of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq, `Umar, `Uthman, `Ali, Abu Ad-Darda', `Ubadah bin As-Samit, Anas bin Malik, Ibn Mas`ud, Mu`adh, Ubayy bin Ka`b, Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari and Ibn `Abbas. Furthermore, this is the opinion of Sa`id bin Musayyib, `Alqamah, Aswad, Ibrahim, Mujahid, `Ata', Tawus, Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Ikrimah, Muhammad bin Srin, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ash-Sha`bi, Ar-Rabi`, Muqatil bin Hayyan,

As-Suddi, Makhul, Ad-Dahhak and `Ata' Al-Khurasani. They all stated that the Quru' is the menstruation period. What testifies to this is the Hadith that Abu Dawud and An-Nasa'i reported that Fatimah bint Abu Hubaiysh said that Allah's Messenger said to her:

«دَعِيَ الصَّلَاةَ أَيَّامَ أَقْرَائِكَ»

(Do not pray during your Aqra' (pl. for Quru', the menstruation period).)

If this Hadith was authentic, it would have been a clear proof that the Quru' is the menstruation period. However, one of the narrators of this Hadith, Al-Mundhir, is an unknown person (in Hadith terminology), as Abu Hatim has stated, although Ibn Hibban has mentioned Al-Mundhir in his book Ath-Thiqat.

A Woman's Statement about Menses and Purity is to be accepted

Allah said:

وَلَا يَحِلُّ لِهِنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي
أَرْحَامِهِنَّ

(...and it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs,) meaning, of pregnancy or menstruation periods. This is the Tafsir of Ibn `Abbas, Ibn `Umar, Mujahid, Ash-Sha`bi, Al-Hakam bin `Utaybah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Ad-Dahhak and others.

Allah then said:

إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَنَّ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ

(...if they believe in Allah and the Last Day.)

This Ayah warns women against hiding the truth (if they were pregnant or on their menses), indicating that they are the authority in such matters as they alone know such facts about themselves. Since verifying such matters is difficult, Allah left this decision with them. Yet, women were warned not to hide the truth in case they wish to end the `Iddah sooner, or later, according to their desires. Women were thus commanded to say the truth (if they were pregnant or on their menses), no more and no less.

The Husband has the Right to take back his Divorced Wife during the `Iddah (Waiting Period)

Allah said:

وَبُعُولَتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوا
إِصْلَاحًا

(And their husbands have the better right to take them back in that period, if they wish for reconciliation.)

Hence, the husband who divorces his wife can take her back, providing she is still in her `Iddah (time spent before a divorced woman or a widow can remarry) and that his aim, by taking her back, is righteous and for the purpose of bringing things back to normal. However, this ruling applies where the husband is eligible to take his divorced wife back. We should mention that (when this Ayah 2:228 was revealed), the ruling that made the divorce thrice and specified when the husband is ineligible to take his divorced wife back, had not been revealed yet. Previously, the man used to divorce his wife and then take her back even if he had divorced her a hundred separate times. Thereafter, Allah revealed the following Ayah (2:229) that made the divorce only thrice. So there was now a reversible divorce and an irreversible final divorce.

The Rights the Spouses have over Each Other

Allah said:

وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

(And they (women) have rights (over their husbands as regards living expenses) similar (to those of their husbands) over them (as regards obedience and respect) to what is reasonable,)

This Ayah indicates that the wife has certain rights on her husband, just as he has certain rights on her, and each is obliged to give the other spouse his due rights. Muslim reported that Jabir said that Allah's Messenger said:

«فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ فِي النِّسَاءِ، فَإِنَّكُمْ أَخَذْتُمُوهُنَّ بِأَمَانَةٍ
اللَّهِ، وَاسْتَحْلَلْتُمْ فُرُوجَهُنَّ بِكَلِمَةِ اللَّهِ، وَلَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ
أَنْ لَا يُوطِئَنَّ فُرُشَكُمْ أَحَدًا تَكَرَّهُونَهُ، فَإِنْ فَعَلْنَ
ذَلِكَ فَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ ضَرْبًا غَيْرَ مُبْرِحٍ، وَلَهُنَّ
رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ»

a(Fear Allah regarding your women, for you have taken them by Allah's covenant and were allowed to enjoy with them sexually by Allah's Words. You have the right on them that they do not allow anyone you dislike to sit on your mat. If they do that, then discipline them leniently. They have the right to be spent on and to be bought clothes in what is reasonable.)

Bahz bin Hakim said that Mu`awiyah bin Haydah Al-Qushayri related that his grandfather said, "O Messenger of Allah! What is the right the wife of one of us has" The Prophet said:

«أَنْ تُطْعِمَهَا إِذَا طَعِمْتَ، وَتَكْسُوَهَا إِذَا اكْتَسَيْتَ،
وَلَا تَضْرِبَ الْوَجْهَ، وَلَا تُقَبِّحَ، وَلَا تَهْجُرَ إِلَّا فِي
الْبَيْتِ»

(To feed her when you eat, buy her clothes when you buy for yourself and to refrain from striking her on the face, cursing her or staying away from her except in the house.)

Waki` related that Ibn `Abbas said, "I like to take care of my appearance for my wife just as I like for her to take care of her appearance for me. This is because Allah says:

(وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ)

(And they (women) have rights similar (to those of their husbands) over them to what is reasonable.)" This statement is reported by Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abu Hatim.

The Virtue Men have over Women

Allah said:

(وَالرِّجَالُ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ
بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ)

(but men have a degree (of responsibility) over them.)

This Ayah indicates that men are in a more advantageous position than women physically as well as in their mannerism, status, obedience (of women to them), spending, taking care of the affairs and in general, in this life and in the Hereafter. Allah said (in another Ayah):

(الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ
بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ)

(Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means.) (4:34)

Allah's statement :

(وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ)

(And Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise) means, He is Mighty in His punishment of those who disobey and defy His commands. He is Wise in what He commands, destines and legislates.

(الطَّلُقُ مَرَّتَانٍ فَاِمْسَاكٌ بِمَعْرُوفٍ اَوْ تَسْرِيحٌ
بِاِحْسَنِ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ اَنْ تَاْخُذُوْا مِمَّا ءَاتَيْتُمُوْهُنَّ
شَيْئًا اِلَّا اَنْ يَخَافَاْ اَلَّا يُقِيْمَاْ حُدُوْدَ اللّٰهِ فَاِنْ خِفْتُمْ
اَلَّا يُقِيْمَاْ حُدُوْدَ اللّٰهِ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ
بِهِنَّ تِلْكَ حُدُوْدُ اللّٰهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوْهَا وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُوْدَ
اللّٰهِ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ - فَاِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ
لَهٗ مِنْ بَعْدِ حَتّٰى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهٗ فَاِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا
جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا اَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَاْ اِنْ ظَنَّاْ اَنْ يُقِيْمَاْ حُدُوْدَ
اللّٰهِ وَتِلْكَ حُدُوْدُ اللّٰهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُوْنَ)

(229. The divorce is twice, after that either you retain her on reasonable terms or release her with kindness. And it is not lawful for you (men) to take back (from your wives) any of what you gave them (the Mahr, bridal-money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage), except when both parties fear that they would be unable to keep the limits ordained by Allah (e.g., to deal with each other on a fair basis). Then if you fear that they would not be able to keep the limits ordained by Allah, then there is no sin on either of them if she gives back (the Mahr or a part of it). These are the limits ordained by Allah, so do not transgress them. And whoever transgresses the limits ordained by Allah, then such are the wrongdoers.) (230. And if he has divorced her (the third time), then she is not lawful unto him thereafter until she has married another husband. Then, if the other husband divorces her, it is no sin on both of them that they reunite, provided they feel that they can keep the limits ordained by Allah. These are the limits of Allah, which He makes plain for the people who have knowledge.)

Divorce is Thrice

This honorable Ayah abrogated the previous practice in the beginning of Islam, when the man had the right to take back his divorced wife even if he had divorced her a hundred times, as long as she was still in her `Iddah (waiting period). This situation was harmful for the wife, and this is why Allah made the divorce thrice, where the husband is allowed to take back his wife after the first and the second divorce (as long as she is still in her `Iddah). The divorce becomes irrevocable after the third divorce, as Allah said:

(الطَّلُقُ مَرَّتَانِ فَإِمْسَاكَ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌ
بِإِحْسَانٍ)

(The divorce is twice, after that, either you retain her on reasonable terms or release her with kindness.)

In his Sunan, Abu Dawud reported in Chapter: "Taking the Wife back after the third (Divorce) is an abrogated practice," that Ibn `Abbas commented on the Ayah:

(وَالْمُطَلَّاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ وَلَا
يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ)

(And divorced women shall wait (as regards their marriage) for three menstrual periods, and it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs,) (2:228) The man used to have the right to take back his wife even if he had divorced her thrice. Allah abrogated this and said:

(الطَّلُقُ مَرَّتَانِ)

(The divorce is twice.)

This Hadith was also collected by An-Nasa'i. Ibn Abu Hatim reported that `Urwah said that a man said to his wife, "I will neither divorce you nor take you back." She said, "How" He said, "I will divorce you and when your term of `Iddah nears its end, I will take you back." She went to Allah's Messenger and told him what happened, and Allah revealed:

(الطَّلُقُ مَرَّتَانِ)

(The divorce is twice.)

Ibn Jarir (At-Tabari) also reported this Hadith in his Tafsir.

Allah said:

(فَأَمْسَاكُ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحُ بِإِحْسَانٍ)

(...after that, either you retain her on reasonable terms or release her with kindness.) meaning, `If you divorce her once or twice, you have the choice to take her back, as long as she is still in her `Iddah, intending to be kind to her and to mend differences. Otherwise, await the end of her term of `Iddah, when the divorce becomes final, and let her go her own way in peace, without committing any harm or injustice against her.' `Ali bin Abu Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "When the man divorces his wife twice, let him fear Allah, regarding the third time. He should either keep her with him and treat her with kindness, or let her go her own way with kindness, without infringing upon any of her rights."

Taking back the Mahr (Dowry)

Allah said:

(وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا)

(And it is not lawful for you (men) to take back (from your wives) any of (the dowry) what you gave them,) meaning, you are not allowed to bother or pressure your wives to end this situation by giving you back the Mahr and any gifts that you have given them (in return for divorce). Similarly, Allah said:

(وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ)

(...and you should not treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of what you have given them, unless they commit open illegal sexual intercourse.) (4:19)

However, if the wife willingly gives back anything with a good heart, then Allah said regarding this situation:

(فَإِنْ طِبَّنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَّرِيئًا)

(...but if they, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it, and enjoy it without fear of any harm.) (4:4)

Allowing Khul` and the Return of the Mahr in that Case

When the spouses have irreconcilable differences wherein the wife ignores the rights of the husband, dislikes him and becomes unable to live with him any longer, she is allowed to free herself (from married life) by giving him back what he had given her (in gifts and Mahr). There is no sin on her in this case nor on him if he accepts such offer. This is why Allah said:

﴿وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا إِلَّا أَنْ يَخَافَا أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ بِهِ﴾

(And it is not lawful for you (men) to take back (from your wives) any of what you gave them, except when both parties fear that they would be unable to keep the limits ordained by Allah (e.g., to deal with each other on a fair basis). Then if you fear that they would not be able to keep the limits ordained by Allah, then there is no sin on either of them if she gives back.)

Sometimes, the woman has no valid reason and she still asks for her marriage to be ended. In this case, Ibn Jarir reported that Thawban said that Allah's Messenger said:

«أَيُّمَا امْرَأَةٍ سَأَلَتْ زَوْجَهَا طَلَاقًا فِي غَيْرِ مَا بَأْسٍ، فَحَرَامٌ عَلَيْهَا رَائِحَةُ الْجَنَّةِ»

(Any woman who asks her husband for divorce without justification, then the scent of Paradise will be forbidden for her.)

At-Tirmidhi recorded this Hadith and stated that it is Hasan.

Ibn Jarir said that the Ayah (2:229) was revealed about Thabit bin Qays bin Shammas and his wife Habibah bint `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul. In his Muwatta', Imam Malik reported that Habibah bint Sahl Al-Ansariyah was married to Thabit bin Qays bin Shammas and that Allah's Messenger once went to the Fajr (Dawn) prayer and found Habibah bint Sahl by his door in the dark. Allah's Messenger said, "Who is this" She said, "I am Habibah bint Sahl, O Messenger of Allah!" He said, "What is the matter" She said, "I and Thabit bin Qays", meaning, (she can no longer be with) her husband. When her husband Thabit bin Qays came, Allah's Messenger said to him:

«هَذِهِ حَبِيبَةُ بِنْتُ سَهْلٍ قَدْ ذَكَرْتَ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ
تَذَكَّرَ»

(This is Habibah bint Sahl, she said what Allah has permitted her to say.)

Habibah also said, "O Messenger of Allah! I still have everything he gave me." Allah's Messenger said:

«خُذْ مِنْهَا»

(Take it from her.) So, he took it from her and she remained in her family's house."

This was reported by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and An-Nasai.

Al-Bukhari reported that Ibn `Abbas said that the wife of Thabit bin Qays bin Shammās came to the Prophet and said, "O Messenger of Allah! I do not criticize his religion or mannerism. But I hate committing Kufir in Islam (by ignoring his rights on her)." Allah's Messenger said:

«أَتَرُدِّينَ عَلَيْهِ حَدِيقَتَهُ»

(Will you give him back his garden)

She said, "Yes." Allah's Messenger said:

«أَقْبِلِ الْحَدِيقَةَ وَطَلِّقْهَا تَطْلِيقَةً»

(Take back the garden and divorce her once.)

An-Nasa'i also recorded it.

The `Iddah (Waiting Period) for the Khul"

At-Tirmidhi reported that Rubayy` bint Mu`awwidh bin `Afra' got a Khul` during the time of Allah's Messenger and the Prophet ordered her to wait for one menstruation period for `Iddah.

Transgressing the set limits of Allah is an Injustice

Allah said:

(تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ
اللَّهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ)

(These are the limits ordained by Allah, so do not transgress them. And whoever transgresses the limits ordained by Allah, then such are the wrongdoers.)

This means that the laws that Allah has legislated are His set limits, so do not transgress them. An authentic Hadith states:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَدَّ حُدُودًا فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا، وَفَرَضَ
فَرَائِضَ فَلَا تُضَيِّعُوهَا، وَحَرَّمَ مَحَارِمَ فَلَا
تَنْتَهِكُوهَا، وَسَكَتَ عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ رَحْمَةً لَكُمْ مِنْ غَيْرِ
نِسْيَانٍ فَلَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنْهَا»

(Allah has set some limits, so do not transgress them; and commanded some commands, so do not ignore them; and made some things unlawful, so do not commit them. He has also left some matters (without rulings) as a mercy with you, not because He has forgotten them, so do not ask about them.)

Pronouncing Three Divorces at the same Time is Unlawful

The last Ayah we mentioned was used as evidence to prove that it is not allowed to pronounce three divorces at one time. What further proves this ruling is that Mahmud bin Labid has stated - as An-Nasa'i recorded - that Allah's Messenger was told about a man who pronounced three divorces on his wife at one time, so the Prophet stood up while angry and said:

«أُيْلَعَبُ بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَأَنَا بَيْنَ أَظْهُرِكُمْ»

(The Book of Allah is being made the subject of jest while I am still amongst you)

A man then stood up and said, "Should I kill that man, O Messenger of Allah"

The Wife cannot be taken back after the Third Divorce

Allah said:

(فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدُ حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا
غَيْرَهُ)

(And if he has divorced her (the third time), then she is not lawful for him thereafter until she has married another husband.)

This Ayah indicates that if the man divorces his wife for the third time after he divorced her twice, then she will no longer be allowed for marriage to him. Allah said:

(حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ)

(...until she has married another husband.) meaning, until she legally marries another man. For instance, if she has sexual intercourse with any man, even her master (if she was a servant), she would still be ineligible for marriage for her ex-husband (who divorced her thrice), because whomever she had sexual relations with was not her legal husband. If she marries a man without consummating the marriage, she will not be eligible for her ex-husband. Muslim reported that `A'ishah said that Allah's Messenger was asked about a woman who marries a man who thereafter divorces her (thrice). She then marries another man and he divorces her before he has sexual relations with her, would she be allowed for her first husband Allah's Messenger said:

«لَا، حَتَّى يَذُوقَ عُسَيْلَتَهَا»

(No, until he enjoys her `Usaylah (sexual relation).) Al-Bukhari also reported this Hadith.

Imam Ahmad recorded that `A'ishah said, "The wife of Rifa`ah Al-Qurazi came while I and Abu Bakr were with the Prophet and she said, `I was Rifa`ah's wife, but he divorced me and it was an irrevocable divorce. Then I married `Abdur-Rahman bin Az-Zubayr, but his sexual organ is minute like a string.' She then took a small string of her garment (to resemble how small his sexual organ was). Khalid bin Sa`id bin Al-`As, who was next to the door and was not yet allowed in, said, `O Abu Bakr! Why do you not forbid this (woman) from what she is revealing frankly before the Prophet' The Prophet merely smiled. Then, Allah's Messenger asked her: c

«كَأَنَّكَ تُرِيدِينَ أَنْ تَرْجِعِي إِلَى رِفَاعَةَ، لَا، حَتَّى
تَذُوقِي عُسَيْلَتَهُ، وَيَذُوقَ عُسَيْلَتَكَ»

(Do you want to remarry Rifa`ah You cannot unless you experience his `Usaylah and he experiences your `Usaylah (i.e., had a complete sexual relation with your present husband).)"

Al-Bukhari, Muslim, and An-Nasa'i also recorded this Hadith. Muslim's wording is "Rifa`ah divorced his wife for the third and final time."

The word `Usaylah mentioned in the Hadith means sexual intercourse. Imam Ahmad and An-Nasa'i reported that `A'ishah said that Allah's Messenger said:

«أَلَا إِنَّ الْعُسَيْلَةَ الْجِمَاعُ»

(`Usaylah is sexual intercourse.)

The Curse on the Participants of Tahlil/Halalah

The reason for the woman (who was divorced thrice) to marry another man must be that the man desires her and has the intention of having an extended married life with her. These are the legal goals and aims behind marriage. If the reason behind the second marriage was to make the woman eligible for her ex-husband again, then this is the Tahlil that the Hadiths have cursed and criticized. In addition, when the reason behind this marriage (if it was Tahlil) is announced in the contract, it would make the contract invalid according to the majority of the scholars.

Imam Ahmad reported that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said, "Allah's Messenger cursed the one who does Tahlil, the one in whose favor it is done, those who eat Riba (usury) and those who feed it (pay the usury)." At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i reported this Hadith and At-Tirmidhi said, "This Hadith is Hasan." He said, "This is what is acted upon according to people of knowledge among the Companions, among whom are `Umar, `Uthman and Ibn `Umar. It was also the saying of the scholars of Fiqh among the Tabi`in (second generation of Islam). And it has been reported from `Ali, Ibn Mas`ud and Ibn `Abbas".

In his Mustadrak, Al-Hakim reported that Nafi` said: "A man came to Ibn `Umar and asked him about a man who divorced his wife three times. Then, his brother married her to make Tahlil for his brother, without the brother knowing this fact. He then asked, "Is she allowed for the first (husband)" He said, "No, unless it is a marriage that involves desire. We used to consider this an act of adultery during the time of Allah's Messenger ." Al-Hakim said, "This Hadith has a Sahih chain although they (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) did not record it." The wording of this Hadith indicates that the ruling came from the Prophet . Abu Bakr bin Abu Shaybah, Al-Jawzjani, Harb Al-Kirmani and Abu Bakr Al-Athram said that Qabisah bin Jabir said that `Umar said, "If the participants to Tahlil are brought to me, I will have them stoned."

When does a Woman who was divorced Three Times become Eligible for Her First Husband

Allah said:

(فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا)

(And if he has divorced her) meaning, the second husband after he had complete sexual relations with her,

(فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا)

(it is no sin on both of them that they reunite) meaning, the wife and her first husband,

(إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ)

(provided they feel that they can keep the limits ordained by Allah.) meaning, they live together honorably. Mujahid said, "If they are convinced that the aim behind their marriage is honorable." Next, Allah said:

(وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ)

(These are the limits of Allah,) His commandments and legislation,

(يُبَيِّنُهَا)

(He makes plain)

(لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(for the people who have knowledge.)

(وَإِذَا طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَّغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأُمْسِكُوهُنَّ
بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ
ضِرَارًا لَتَعْتَدُوا وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ
وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَةَ اللَّهِ هُزُوعًا وَادْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ
عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ

يَعْظُمُ بِهِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
عَلِيمٌ

(231. And when you have divorced women and they have fulfilled the term of their prescribed period, either take them back on a reasonable basis or set them free on a reasonable basis. But do not take them back to hurt them, and whoever does that, then he has wronged himself. And treat not the verses (Laws) of Allah in jest, but remember Allah's favors on you (i.e., Islam), and that which He has sent down to you of the Book (i.e., the Qur'an) and Al-Hikmah (the Prophet's Sunnah legal ways Islamic jurisprudence) whereby He instructs you. And fear Allah, and know that Allah is All-Aware of everything).

Being Kind to the Divorced Wife

This is a command from Allah to men that when one of them divorces his wife with a reversible divorce, he should treat her kindly. So when her term of `Iddah (waiting period) nears its end, he either takes her back in a way that is better, including having witnesses that he has taken her back, and he lives with her with kindness. Or, he should release her after her `Iddah finishes and then kindly asks her to depart from his house, without disputing, fighting with her or using foul words. Allah then said:

(وَلَا تُمَسِّكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لِّتَعْتَدُوا)

(But do not take them back to hurt them,)

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Masruq, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi` and Muqatil bin Hayyan said that a man used to divorce his wife, and when her `Iddah came near its end, he would take her back to harm her and to stop her from marrying someone else. He then divorced her and she would begin her `Iddah and when her `Iddah term neared its end, he would take her back again, so that the term of `Iddah would be prolonged for her. After that, Allah prohibited this practice. Allah has also threatened those who indulge in such practices, when He said;

(وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ)

(...and whoever does that, then he has wronged himself.) meaning, by defying Allah's commandments. Allah then said:

(وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوًا)

(And treat not the verses (Laws) of Allah in a jest,)

Ibn Jarir said that Abu Musa (Al-Ash`ari) narrated that Allah's Messenger once became angry at the Ash`ari tribe. Abu Musa went to him and said, "O Messenger of Allah! Are you angry with the Ash`ariyyin" The Prophet said:

«يَقُولُ أَحَدُكُمْ: قَدْ طَلَّقْتُ، قَدْ رَاجَعْتُ، لَيْسَ هَذَا
طَلَّاقُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، طَلَّقُوا الْمَرْأَةَ فِي قُبُلِ عِدَّتِهَا»

(One of you says, 'I divorced her' -then says- 'I took her back!' This is not the appropriate way Muslims conduct divorce. Divorce the woman when she has fulfilled the term of the prescribed period.)

Masruq said that the Ayah refers to the man who harms his wife by divorcing her and then taking her back, so that the `Iddah term is prolonged for her. Al-Hasan, Qatadah, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, Ar-Rabi` and Muqatil bin Hayyan said, "He is the man who divorces his wife and says, 'I was joking.' Or he frees a servant or gets married and says, 'I was only joking.' Allah revealed:

(وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوًا)

(And treat not the verses (Laws) of Allah in a jest,)

Then such men were made to bear the consequences of their actions.

Allah then said:

(وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(...but remember Allah's favors on you,) meaning, by His sending His Messenger with the right guidance and clear signs to you:

(وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ)

(...and that which He has sent down to you of the Book (i.e., the Qur'an) and Al-Hikmah) meaning the Sunnah,

(يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ)

(...whereby He instructs you.) meaning, commands you, forbids you and threatens you for transgressing His prohibitions. Allah said:

(وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ)

(And fear Allah) meaning, concerning what you perform and what you avoid,

(وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ)

(and know that Allah is All-Aware of everything.) none of your secret or public affairs ever escapes His knowledge, and He will treat you accordingly.

(وَإِذَا طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ إِذَا تَرَضَوْا بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ذَلِكَ يُوعِظُ بِهِ مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَمْ أَزْكَى لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا
تَعْلَمُونَ)

(232. And when you have divorced women and they have fulfilled the term of their prescribed period, do not prevent them from marrying their (former) husbands, if they mutually agree on reasonable basis. This (instruction) is an admonition for him among you who believes in Allah and the Last Day. That is more virtuous and purer for you. Allah knows and you know not.)

The Wali (Guardian) of the Divorced Woman should not prevent Her from going back to Her Husband

Ali bin Abu Talhah reported that Ibn ` Abbas said, "This Ayah was revealed about the man who divorces his wife once or twice and her `Iddah finishes. He later thinks about taking her back in marriage and the woman also wishes that, yet, her family prevents her from remarrying him. Hence, Allah prohibited her family from preventing her." Masruq, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Az-Zuhri and Ad-Dahhak stated that this is the reason behind revealing the Ayah (2:232). These statements clearly conform to the apparent meaning of the Ayah. **There is no Marriage without a Wali (for the Woman)**

The Ayah (2:232) also indicates that the woman is not permitted to give herself in marriage. Rather, she requires a Wali (guardian such as her father, brother, adult son, and so forth) to give her away in marriage, as Ibn Jarir and At-Tirmidhi have stated when they mentioned this Ayah. Also, a Hadith states that:

«لَا تُزَوِّجُ الْمَرْأَةَ الْمَرْأَةَ، وَلَا تُزَوِّجُ الْمَرْأَةَ
نَفْسَهَا، فَإِنَّ الزَّانِيَةَ هِيَ الَّتِي تُزَوِّجُ نَفْسَهَا»

(The woman does not give another woman away for marriage and the woman does not give herself away in marriage, for only the adulteress gives herself away for marriage.)

Another Hadith states:

«لَا نِكَاحَ إِلَّا بِوَلِيِّ مُرْشِدٍ وَشَاهِدَيْ عَدْلٍ»

(No marriage is valid except with the participation of a mature Wali and two trustworthy witnesses.)

The Reason behind revealing the Ayah (2:232)

It was reported that this Ayah was revealed about Ma`qil bin Yasar Al-Muzani and his sister. Al-Bukhari reported in his Sahih, when he mentioned the Tafsir of this Ayah (2:232), that the husband of the sister of Ma`qil bin Yasar divorced her. He waited until her `Iddah finished and then asked to remarry her, but Ma`qil refused. Then, this Ayah was sent down:

(فَلَا تَعْضَلُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ)

(...do not prevent them from marrying their (former) husbands.)

Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, Ibn Abu Hatim, Ibn Jarir and Ibn Marduwyah and Al-Bayhaqi reported this Hadith from Al-Hasan from Ma`qil bin Yasar. At-Tirmidhi rendered this Hadith authentic and in his narration, Ma`qil bin Yasar gave his sister in marriage for a Muslim man during the time of Allah's Messenger . She remained with him for a while and he divorced her once and did not take her back until her `Iddah finished. They then wanted to get back with each other and he came to ask her for marriage. Ma`qil said to him, "O ungrateful one! I honored you and married her to you but you divorced her. By Allah! She will never be returned to you." But Allah knew his need for his wife and her need for her husband and He revealed:

(وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ)

(And when you have divorced women and they have fulfilled the term of their prescribed period,) until He said:

(وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(...and you know not.)

When Ma`qil heard the Ayah, he said, "I hear and obey my Lord." He then summoned the man and said, "I will honor you and let you remarry (my sister)." Ibn Marduwyah added (that Ma`qil said), "And will pay (the expiation) for breaking my vow."

Allah said:

ذَلِكَ يُوعَظُ بِهِ مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ)

(This (instruction) is an admonition for him among you who believes in Allah and the Last Day.) meaning, prohibiting you from preventing the women from marrying their ex-husbands, if they both agree to it,

(مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ)

(among you) O people,

(يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ)

(who believes in Allah and the Last Day.) meaning, believes in Allah's commandments and fears His warnings and the torment in the Hereafter. Allah said:

(ذَلِكَمُ أَزْكَى لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ)

(That is more virtuous and purer for you.) meaning, obeying Allah's Law by returning the women to their ex-husbands, and abandoning your displeasure, is purer and cleaner for your hearts,

(وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ)

(Allah knows) the benefits you gain from what He commands and what He forbids.

(وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(and you know not) the benefits in what you do or what you refrain from doing.

(وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنَّ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ
أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ
وَكَسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

لَا تُضَارَّ وِلْدَةٌ بِوَالِدِيهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بِوَالِدِهِ وَعَلَى
الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ
مِنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ
تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ
مَّا ءَاتَيْتُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ)

n(233. The mothers should suckle their children for two whole years, (that is) for those (parents) who desire to complete the term of suckling, but the father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother's food and clothing on a reasonable basis. No person shall have a burden laid on him greater than he can bear. No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child, nor father on account of his child. And on the (father's) heir is incumbent the like of that (which was incumbent on the father). If they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent, and after due consultation, there is no sin on them. And if you decide on a foster suckling-mother for your children, there is no sin on you, provided you pay (the mother) what you agreed (to give her) on a reasonable basis. And fear Allah and know that Allah is All-Seer of what you do.)

The Suckling Period is only Two Years

This is a direction from Allah to the mothers to suckle their infants through the complete term of suckling, which is two years. Hence, suckling after two years is not included in this address. Allah said:

(لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ)

(...who desire to complete the term of suckling.)

Therefore, the suckling that establishes Tahrim (prohibition, i.e., one cannot marry his mother or sister from suckling) is what occurs before the two years end. If the infant is suckled only after two years of age, then no Tahrim will be established. At-Tirmidhi under Chapter: `Suckling establishes Tahrim within the first two years,' reported that Umm Salamah narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«لَا يَحْرُمُ مِنَ الرَّضَاعِ إِلَّا مَا فَتَقَ الْأُمْعَاءَ فِي
النَّذِي وَكَانَ قَبْلَ الْفِطَامِ»

(Suckling establishes Tahrim if it is on the breast and before Fitam (before weaning, i.e., before the end of the first two years).)

At-Tirmidhi said, "This Hadith is Hasan Sahih. The majority of the people of knowledge among the Companions of Allah's Messenger and others acted upon this, that is that suckling establishes Tahrim (prohibition in marriage) before the end of the two years and that whatever occurs after that does not establish Tahrim". At-Tirmidhi is alone in recording this Hadith and the narrators in its chain meet the criteria of the Sahihayn. The Prophet's statement:

«إِلَّا مَا كَانَ فِي النَّدْيِ»

(On the breast) refers to the organ of suckling before the two years. Imam Ahmad reported a Hadith in which Al-Bara' bin `Azib narrated, "When Ibrahim, the Prophet's son, died, the Prophet said:

«إِنَّ ابْنِي مَاتَ فِي النَّدْيِ، إِنَّ لَهُ مُرْضِعًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ»

(My son has died on the breast and he has someone to suckle him in Paradise.)

Furthermore, Ad-Daraqutni related that Ibn `Abbas said that Allah's Messenger said:

«لَا يَحْرُمُ مِنَ الرَّضَاعِ إِلَّا مَا كَانَ فِي الْحَوْلَيْنِ»

(Suckling establishes Tahrim only within the (first) two years.)

Imam Malik reported this Hadith from Thawr bin Zayd who narrated that Ibn `Abbas related it to the Prophet . Ad-Darawardi reported this Hadith from Thawr who narrated it from `Ikrimah who narrated it from Ibn `Abbas. In this narration, which is more authentic, he added:

«وَمَا كَانَ بَعْدَ الْحَوْلَيْنِ فَلَيْسَ بِشَيْءٍ»

(Whatever occurs after the two years is not considered.)

Suckling beyond the Two Years

It is reported in the Sahih that `A'ishah thought that if a woman gives her milk to an older person (meaning beyond the age of two years) then this will establish Tahrim. This is also the opinion of `Ata' bin Abu Rabah and Layth bin Sa`d. Hence, `A'ishah thought that it is permissible to suckle the man whom the woman needs to be allowed in her house. She used as evidence the Hadith of Salim, the freed slave of Abu Hudhayfah, where the Prophet ordered Abu Hudhayfah's wife to give some of her milk to Salim, although he was a man, and ever since

then, he used to enter her house freely. However, the rest of the Prophet's wives did not agree with this opinion and thought that this was only a special case. This is also the opinion of the majority of the scholars.

Suckling for Monetary Compensation

Allah said:

(وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ)

(...but the father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother's food and clothing on a reasonable basis.) meaning, the father of the baby is obliged to provide for the expenses of the mother and to buy her clothes, in reasonable amounts usually used by similar women in that area, without extravagance or stinginess. The father spends within his means in this case. Allah said in another Ayah:

(الْيُنْفِقْ دُونَ سَعَةٍ مِّنْ سَعَتِهِ وَمَنْ قَدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُ فَلْيُنْفِقْ مِمَّا آتَاهُ اللَّهُ لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَا آتَاهَا سَيَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْرًا)

(Let the rich man spend according to his means; and the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what Allah has given him. Allah puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him. Allah will grant after hardship, ease.) (65:7)

Ad-Dahhak commented, "If the husband divorces his wife, with whom he had a child, and she suckles that child, he is required to provide for the mother's expenses and clothes within reason."

No Darar (Harm) or Dirar (Revenge)

Allah said:

(لَا تُضَارُّ وَوَالِدَةٌ يَوْلِدُهَا)

(No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child,) meaning, the mother should not decline to rear her child to harm its father. The mother does not have the right to refrain from suckling the child after giving birth, unless she suckles him/ her the milk that is necessary for

his/ her survival. Later on, she is allowed to give up custody of the child as long as she does not do that intending to harm the father. In addition, the father is not allowed to take the child from his mother to harm the mother. This is why Allah said:

(وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ يُولَدِهِ)

(...nor father on account of his child.) meaning, by taking the child from its mother intending to harm the mother. This is the Tafsir of Mujahid, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Az-Zuhri, As-Suddi, Ath-Thawri and Ibn Zayd, and others on this Ayah.

Allah then said:

(وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ)

(And on the (father's) heir is incumbent the like of that (which was incumbent on the father).) meaning, by refraining from harming the relative (of the father, i.e., his infant), as Mujahid, Ash-Sha'bi and Ad-Dahhak stated. It was also reported that (the Ayah requires) the inheritor (of the father) to spend on the mother of the child, just as the father was spending, and to preserve her rights and refrain from harming her, according to the Tafsir of the majority of the scholars. We should state that Ibn Jarir has explained this subject in detail in his Tafsir and that he also stated that suckling the child after the second year might harm the child's body and mind. Sufyan Ath-Thawri narrated that `Alqamah asked a woman who was suckling her child after the second year ended, not to do that.

Fitam (weaning) occurs by Mutual Consent

Allah said:

(فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا)

(If they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent, and after due consultation, there is no sin on them.)

This Ayah indicates that if the father and the mother decide on the Fitam (weaning) before the two years (of suckling) end, and for a benefit that they duly discuss and agree upon, then there is no sin in this case. So, the Ayah indicates that one parent is not allowed to make this kind of decision without duly consulting the other parent, as stated by Ath-Thawri. The method of mutual consultation protects the child's interests. It is also a mercy from Allah to His servants, for He has legislated the best method for parents to rear their children, and His legislation guides and directs the parents and the children to success. Similarly, Allah said in Surat At-Talaq (chapter 65 in the Qur'an):

فَإِنْ أَرْضَعْنَ لَكُمْ فَآوِهْنَ أَجُورَهُنَّ وَأْتَمِرُوا
بَيْنَكُمْ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَإِنْ تَعَاسَرْتُمْ فَسْتَزْعُ لَهُ
أُخْرَى

(Then if they give suck to the children for you, give them their due payment, and let each of you accept the advice of the other in a just way. But if you make difficulties for one another, then some other woman may give suck for him (the father of the child).) (65:6)

Allah then said:

وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ
عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

(And if you decide on a foster suckling-mother for your children, there is no sin on you, provided you pay (the mother) what you agreed (to give her) on a reasonable basis.) meaning, if the mother and the father both agree that the father assumes custody of the child due to a circumstance that compels her or allows him to do so, then there is no sin in this case. Hence, the mother is allowed to give up the child and the father is allowed to assume custody of the child. The father should kindly give the mother her expenses for the previous period (during which she reared and suckled the child), and he should seek other women to suckle his child for monetary compensation. Thereafter, Allah said:

(وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ)

(And fear Allah) meaning, in all of your affairs,

(وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ)

(And know that Allah is All-Seer of what you do.) meaning, none of your affairs or speech escapes His perfect Watch.

(وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَقَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ
بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ

فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ)

(234. And those of you who die and leave wives behind them, they (the wives) shall wait (as regards their marriage) for four months and ten days, then when they have fulfilled their term, there is no sin on you if they (the wives) dispose of themselves in a (just and) honorable manner (i.e., they can marry). And Allah is well-acquainted with what you do.)

The `Iddah (Waiting Period) of the Widow

This Ayah contains a command from Allah to the wives whose husbands die, that they should observe a period of `Iddah of four months and ten nights, including the cases where the marriage was consummated or otherwise, according to the consensus (of the scholars).

The proof that this ruling includes the case where the marriage was not consummated is included in the general meaning of the Ayah. In a narration recorded by Imam Ahmad and the compilers of the Sunan, which At-Tirmidhi graded Sahih, Ibn Mas`ud was asked about a man who married a woman, but he died before consummating the marriage. He also did not appoint a Mahr (dowry) for her. They kept asking Ibn Mas`ud about this subject until he said, "I shall give you my own opinion, and if it is correct then it is from Allah, while if it is wrong it is because of my error and because of (the evil efforts of) Satan. In this case, Allah and His Messenger are innocent of my opinion. She has her full Mahr." In another narration, Ibn Mas`ud said, "She has a similar Mahr to that of the women of her status, without stinginess or extravagance." He then continued, "She has to spend the `Iddah and has a right to the inheritance." Ma`qil bin Yasar Ashja`i then stood up and said, "I heard Allah's Messenger issue a similar judgment for the benefit of Barwa` bint Washiq." `Abdullah bin Mas`ud became very delighted upon hearing this statement. In another narration, several men from Ashja` (tribe) stood up and said, "We testify that Allah's Messenger issued a similar ruling for the benefit of Barwa` bint Washiq."

As for the case of the widow whose husband dies while she is pregnant, her term of `Iddah ends when she gives birth, even if it occurs an instant (after her husband dies). This ruling is taken from Allah's statement :

(وَأُولَاتُ الْأَحْمَالِ أَجَلُهُنَّ أَنْ يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ)

(And for those who are pregnant, their `Iddah is until they lay down their burden.) (65:4)

There is also a Hadith from Subay`ah Al-Aslamiyah in the Two Sahihs, through various chains of narration. Her husband, Sa`d bin Khawlah, died while she was pregnant and she gave birth only a few nights after his death. When she finished her Nifas (postnatal period), she beautified herself for those who might seek to engage her (for marriage). Then, Abu Sanabil bin Ba`kak came to her and said, "Why do I see you beautified yourself, do you wish to marry By Allah! You will not marry until the four months and ten nights have passed." Subay`ah said, "When he said that to me, I collected my garments when night fell and went to Allah's Messenger and asked him about this matter. He said that my `Iddah had finished when I gave birth and allowed me to get married if I wished."

The Wisdom behind legislating the `Iddah

Sa`id bin Musayyib and Abu Al-`Aliyah stated that the wisdom behind making the `Iddah of the widow four months and ten nights is that the womb might contain a fetus. When the woman waits for this period, it will become evident if she is pregnant. Similarly, there is a Hadith in the Two Sahih's narrated by Ibn Mas'ud stating:

«إِنَّ خَلْقَ أَحَدِكُمْ يُجْمَعُ فِي بَطْنِ أُمِّهِ أَرْبَعِينَ
يَوْمًا نُطْقَةً، ثُمَّ يَكُونُ عَلَقَةً مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ، ثُمَّ يَكُونُ
مُضْغَةً مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ، ثُمَّ يُبْعَثُ إِلَيْهِ الْمَلَكُ فَيَنْفُخُ فِيهِ
الرُّوحَ»

((The creation of) a human being is put together in the womb of his mother in forty days in the form of a seed, and next he becomes a clot of thick blood for a similar period, and next a morsel of flesh for a similar period. Then, Allah sends an angel who is ordered to breathe life into the fetus.)

So, these are four months and ten more days to be sure, as some months are less (than thirty days), and the fetus will then start to show signs of life after the soul has been breathed into it. Allah knows best.

The `Iddah of the Slave Mother whose Master dies

We should state here that the `Iddah of the slave mother is the same in the case of death, as the `Iddah of the free woman. Imam Ahmad reported that `Amr bin Al-`As said, "Do not confuse the Sunnah of our Prophet for us. The `Iddah of the mother, who is also a servant, when her master dies, is four months and ten nights."

Mourning is required during the `Iddah of Death

Allah said:

(فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي
أَنْفُسِهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ)

(...then when they have fulfilled their term, there is no sin on you if they (the wives) dispose of themselves in a (just and) honorable manner (i.e., they can marry). And Allah is well-acquainted with what you do.)

This Ayah indicates that mourning for the dead husband is required until the `Iddah is finished. It is also reported in the Two Sahihs that Umm Habibah and Zaynab bint Jahsh narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«لَا يَحِلُّ لِامْرَأَةٍ تُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أَنْ تُحِدَّ عَلَى مَيِّتٍ فَوْقَ ثَلَاثٍ، إِلَّا عَلَى زَوْجِ أَرْبَعَةٍ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا»

(It is not lawful for a woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day to mourn for more than three days for any dead person except her husband, for whom she mourns for four months and ten days.)

It is reported in the Two Sahihs that Umm Salamah said that a woman said, "O Messenger of Allah! My daughter's husband died and she is complaining about her eye, should we administer kohl in her eye" He said, "No," several times upon repeating this question. He then said:

«إِنَّمَا هِيَ أَرْبَعَةٌ أَشْهُرٌ وَعَشْرٌ، وَقَدْ كَانَتْ إِحْدَاكُنَّ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ تَمْكُتُ سَنَةً»

(It is four months and ten (nights)! During the Jahiliyyah, one of you would mourn for an entire year.)

Zaynab the daughter of Umm Salamah said (about the pre-Islamic era of ignorance), "When the woman's husband died, she would go into seclusion and would wear the worst clothes she has. She would refrain from wearing perfume or any adornments until a year passed. She would then come out of seclusion and would be given dung that she would throw. Then an animal would be brought out, a donkey, a sheep, or a bird. Then some blood would be drained from it, usually resulting in its death."

In short, the mourning required from a wife whose husband dies, includes not using beautification aids, such as wearing perfume and the clothes and jewelry that encourage the men to seek marriage from the woman. All widows must observe this period of mourning whether they are young, old, free, servant, Muslim or disbeliever, as the general meaning of the Ayah indicates.

Allah also said:

(فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ)

(...then when they have fulfilled their term) meaning, when the `Iddah finishes, according to Ad-Dahhak and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas.

(فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(there is no sin on you) Az-Zuhri said, "Meaning her Wali (guardian)."

(فِيْمَا فَعَلْنَ)

(if they (the wives) dispose) meaning, the women whose `Iddah has finished. Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said, "If the woman is divorced or if her husband dies and then her `Iddah term ends, there is no sin that she beautifies herself, so that she becomes ready for marriage proposals. This is the way `that is just and honorable'." It was reported that Muqatil bin Hayyan gave the same explanation. Ibn Jurayj related that Mujahid said:

(فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيْمَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ)

(...there is no sin on you if they (the wives) dispose of themselves in a just and honorable manner.) "refers to allowed and pure (honorable) marriage." It was also reported that Al-Hasan, Az-Zuhri and As-Suddi said the same.

(وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيْمَا عَرَّضْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ
النِّسَاءِ أَوْ أَكْنَنْتُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ
سَتَذْكُرُونَهُنَّ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُؤَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا إِلَّا أَنْ
تَقُولُوا قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا وَلَا تَعْزَمُوا عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ
حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجَلَهُ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا

فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ فَأَحْذَرُوهُ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ
(

(235. And there is no sin on you if you make a hint of betrothal or conceal it in yourself, Allah knows that you will remember them, but do not make a promise (of contract) with them in secret except that you speak an honorable saying. And do not be determined on the marriage bond until the term prescribed is fulfilled. And know that Allah knows what is in your minds, so fear Him. And know that Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing.)

Mentioning Marriage indirectly during the `Iddah

Allah said:

(وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(And there is no sin on you) meaning, to indirectly mention marriage to the widow during the term of `Iddah for her deceased husband. Ath-Thawri, Shu`bah and Jarir stated that Ibn `Abbas said:

(وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا عَرَّضْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ
النِّسَاءِ)

(And there is no sin on you if you make a hint of betrothal) "means saying, 'I want to marry and I am looking for a woman whose qualities are such and such,' thus talking to her in general terms in a way that is better." In another narration (by Ibn `Abbas), "Saying, 'I wish that Allah endows me with a wife,' but he should not make a direct marriage proposal." Al-Bukhari reported that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah:

(وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا عَرَّضْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ
النِّسَاءِ)

(And there is no sin on you if you make a hint of betrothal) means, "The man could say, 'I wish to marry,' 'I desire a wife,' or, 'I wish I could find a good wife.'" Mujahid, Tawus, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Ash-Sha`bi, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Az-Zuhri, Yazid bin Qusayt, Muqatil bin Hayyan and Al-Qasim bin Muhammad and several others among the Salaf and the Imams said that one is allowed to mention marriage indirectly to the woman whose husband died. It is also allowed to indirectly mention marriage to a woman who had gone through final, irrevocable divorce. The Prophet ordered Fatimah bint Qays to remain in the

house of Ibn Umm Maktum for `Iddah when her husband Abu `Amr bin Hafs divorced her for the third time. He said to her:

«فَإِذَا حَلَّتِ فَأَذِنِّي»

(Inform me when your `Iddah term ends.)

When she finished the `Iddah, Usamah bin Zayd, the Prophet's freed slave asked to marry her, and the Prophet married her to him. As for the divorced wife (not irrevocably divorced), there is no disagreement that it is not allowed for other than her husband to mention marriage proposals to her directly or indirectly (before the `Iddah finishes). Allah knows best.

Allah said:

(أَوْ أَكْنَنْتُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ)

(...or conceal it in yourself,) meaning, if you hide the intention of seeking marriage with them. Similarly, Allah said:

(وَرَبُّكَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ)

(And your Lord knows what their breasts conceal, and what they reveal) (28:69) and:

(وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ بِمَا أَخْفَيْتُمْ وَمَا أَعْلَنْتُمْ)

(...while I am All-Aware of what you conceal and what you reveal.) (60: 1) So, Allah said here:

(عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ سَتَذْكُرُونَهُنَّ)

(Allah knows that you will remember them) meaning, in your hearts, so He made it easy for you. Allah then said:

(وَلَكِنْ لَا تُوَاْعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا)

(...but do not make a promise (of contract) with them in secret)

`Ali bin Abu Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said that

(وَلَكِنْ لَا تُوَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا)

(but do not make a promise (of contract) with them in secret) means do not say to her, "I am in love (with you)," or, "Promise me you will not marry someone else (after the `Iddah finishes)," and so forth. Sa`id bin Jubayr, Ash-Sha`bi, `Ikrimah, Abu Ad-Duha, Ad-Dahhak, Az-Zuhri, Mujahid and Ath-Thawri said that it (meaning of the Ayah) means taking the woman's promise not to marry someone else.

Afterwards, Allah said:

(إِلَّا أَنْ تَقُولُوا قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا)

(...except that you speak an honorable saying.)

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, As-Suddi, Ath-Thawri and Ibn Zayd said that the Ayah means to indirectly refer to marriage, such as saying, "I desire someone like you." Muhammad bin Srin said: I asked `Ubaydah about the meaning of Allah's statement:

(إِلَّا أَنْ تَقُولُوا قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا)

(...except that you speak an honorable saying.) He said, "He says to her Wali, `Do not give her away (in marriage) until you inform me first.'" This statement was narrated by Ibn Abu Hatim.

Allah then said:

(وَلَا تَعْزِمُوا عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجَلَهُ)

(And do not be determined on the marriage bond until the term prescribed is fulfilled.) meaning, do not make marriage contracts before the `Iddah finishes. Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Ash-Sha`bi, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Abu Malik, Zayd bin Aslam, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Az-Zuhri, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, As-Suddi, Ath-Thawri and Ad-Dahhak said that:

(حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجَلَهُ)

(until the term prescribed is fulfilled.) means, `Do not consummate the marriage before the `Iddah term finishes.' The scholars agree that marriage contracts during the `Iddah are invalid.

Allah then said:

(وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُ)

(And know that Allah knows what is in your minds, so fear Him.) warning the men against the ideas they conceal in their hearts about women, directing them to think good about them rather than the evil, and Allah would not let them despair of His mercy, as He said:

(وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ)

(And know that Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing.)

(لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ
أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً وَمَتَّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى الْمَوْسِعِ
قَدْرُهُ وَعَلَى الْمَقْتِرِ قَدْرُهُ مَتَّعًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا
عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ)

(236. There is no sin on you, if you divorce women while yet you have not touched them, nor appointed for them their due (dowry). But give them a Mut`ah (a suitable gift, the rich according to his means, and the poor according to his means, a gift of reasonable amount is a duty on the doers of good.)

Divorce before consummating the Marriage

Allah allowed divorce after the marriage contract and before consummating the marriage. Ibn `Abbas, Tawus, Ibrahim and Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that `touched' (mentioned in the Ayah) means sexual intercourse. The husband is allowed to divorce his wife before consummating the marriage or giving the dowry if it was deferred.

The Mut` ah (Gift) at the time of Divorce

Allah commands the husband to give the wife (whom he divorces before consummating the marriage) a gift of a reasonable amount, the rich according to his means and the poor according to his means, to compensate her for her loss. Al-Bukhari reported in his Sahih that Sahl bin Sa`d and Abu Usayd said that Allah's Messenger married Umaymah bint Sharahil. When she was brought to the Prophet he extended his hand to her, but she did not like that. The Prophet then ordered Abu Usayd to provide provisions for her along with a gift of two garments.

وَإِنْ طَلَقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ وَقَدْ
 فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ
 يَعْفُونَ أَوْ يَعْفُوا الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ عُقْدَةُ النِّكَاحِ وَأَنْ
 تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى وَلَا تَنْسُوا الْفَضْلَ
 بَيْنَكُمْ (raster=)p,%30"Rrgjim=)ت ج ح
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(237. And if you divorce them before you have touched (had a sexual relation with) them, and you have appointed for them their due (dowry), then pay half of that, unless they (the women) agree to remit it, or he (the husband), in whose hands is the marriage tie, agrees to remit it. And to remit is nearer to At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness). And do not forget liberality between yourselves. Truly, Allah is All-Seer of what you do.)

The Wife gets half of Her Mahr if She is divorced before the Marriage is consummated

This honorable Ayah is not a continuation of the Mut`ah (gift) that was mentioned in the previous Ayah (i.e., divorce before the marriage is consummated). This Ayah (2:237) requires the husband to relinquish half of the appointed Mahr if he divorces his wife before the marriage is consummated. If it was discussing any other type of gift, then it would have been mentioned that way, especially when this Ayah follows the previous Ayah related to this subject. Allah knows best. Giving away half of the bridal-money in this case is the agreed practice according to the scholars. So, the husband pays half of the appointed Mahr if he divorces his wife before consummating the marriage.

Allah then said:

(إِلَّا أَنْ يَعْفُونَ)

(unless they (the women) agree to remit it,) meaning, the wife forfeits the dowry and relieves the husband from further financial responsibility. As-Suddi said that Abu Salih mentioned that Ibn `Abbas commented on Allah's statement:

(إِلَّا أَنْ يَعْفُونَ)

(unless they (the women) agree to remit it,) "Unless the wife forfeits her right."Furthermore, Imam Abu Muhammad bin Abu Hatim said that it was reported that Shurayh, Sa`id bin

Musayyib, `Ikrimah, Mujahid, Ash-Sha`bi, Al-Hasan, Nafi`, Qatadah, Jabir bin Zayd, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, Ad-Dahhak, Az-Zuhri, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Ibn Srin, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and As-Suddi said similarly.

Allah then said:

(أَوْ يَعْفُوا الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ عُقْدَةُ النِّكَاحِ)

(...or he (the husband), in whose hands is the marriage tie, agrees to remit it.)

Ibn Abu Hatim reported that `Amr bin Shu`ayb said that his grandfather narrated that the Prophet said:

«وَالِيُّ عُقْدَةِ النِّكَاحِ الزَّوْجُ»

(The husband is he who has the marriage tie.)

Ibn Marduwyah also reported this Hadith, and it is the view chosen by Ibn Jarir. The Hadith states that the husband is the person who really holds the marriage tie in his hand, as it is up to him to go on with the marriage or end it. On the other hand, the Wali of the wife is not allowed to give away any of her rightful dues without her permission, especially the dowry.

Allah then stated:

(وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى)

(And to remit it is nearer to At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness).)

Ibn Jarir said, "Some scholars said that this statement is directed at both men and women." Ibn `Abbas said:

(وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى)

(And to remit it is nearer to At-Taqwa (piety, righteousness).) indicates that the one who forgives, is nearer to At-Taqwa (piety)." A similar statement was made by Ash-Sha`bi and several other scholars.

Mujahid, An-Nakha`i, Ad-Dahhak, Muqatil bin Hayyan, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Thawri stated that `liberality' mentioned in the Ayah refers to the woman giving away her half Mahr, or the man giving away the full Mahr. This is why Allah said here:

(وَلَا تَنْسَوُا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ)

(And do not forget liberality between yourselves.) meaning, kindness (or generosity), as Sa`id has stated. Allah said:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ﴾

(Truly, Allah is All-Seer of what you do.) meaning, none of your affairs ever escapes His perfect Watch, and He will reward each according to his deeds.

﴿حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى
وَقَوْمُوا لِلَّهِ قَنِينًا﴾

﴿فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرَجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَأَذْكُرُوا
اللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُمْ مَا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

(238. Guard strictly (five obligatory) As-Salawat (the prayers) especially the Middle Salah. And stand before Allah with obedience.) (239. And if you fear (an enemy), (perform Salah) on foot or riding. And when you are in safety, then remember Allah (pray) in the manner He has taught you, which you knew not (before).)

Allah commands that the prayer should be performed properly and on time. It is reported in the Two Sahihs that Ibn Mas`ud said, "I asked the Prophet , `Which deed is the dearest (to Allah)' He replied:

﴿الصَّلَاةُ عَلَى وَقْتِهَا﴾

(To offer the prayers at their fixed times.) I asked, `What is the next (in goodness)' He replied:

﴿الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ﴾

(To participate in Jihad (religious fighting) in Allah's cause.)" I again asked, `What is the next (in goodness)' He replied:

﴿بِرُّ الْوَالِدَيْنِ﴾

(To be good and dutiful to your parents.) `Abdullah then added, "The Prophet told me these words, and had I asked more, the Prophet would have told me more."

The Middle Prayer

Furthermore, Allah has specifically mentioned the Middle prayer, which is the `Asr prayer according to the majority of the scholars among the Companions, as At-Tirmidhi and Al-Baghawi have stated. Al-Qadi Al-Mawardi added that the majority of the scholars of the Tabi`in also held this view. Al-Hafiz Abu `Umar bin `Abdul-Barr said that this is also the opinion of the majority of the scholars of the Athar (i.e., the Hadith and the statements of the Salaf). In addition, Abu Muhammad bin `Atiyah said that this is the Tafsir (of the Middle prayer) of the majority of scholars. Al-Hafiz Abu Muhammad `Abdul-Mu'min bin Khalaf Ad-Dumyati stated in his book on the Middle prayer that it is the `Asr prayer and mentioned that this is the Tafsir of `Umar, `Ali, Ibn Mas`ud, Abu Ayyub, `Abdullah bin `Amr, Samurah bin Jundub, Abu Hurayrah, Abu Sa`id, Hafsa, Umm Habibah, Umm Salamah, Ibn `Abbas and `A'ishah. This is also the Tafsir of `Ubaydah, Ibrahim An-Nakha'i, Razin, Zirr bin Hubaysh, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Ibn Srin, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, Al-Kalbi, Muqatil, `Ubayd bin Abu Maryam, and others.

The Proof that the `Asr Prayer is the Middle Prayer

Imam Ahmad reported that `Ali narrated that Allah's Messenger said during the battle of Al-Ahzab (the Confederates):

«شَغَلُونَا عَنِ الصَّلَاةِ الْوَسْطَى، صَلَاةِ الْعَصْرِ،
مَلَأَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ وَبُيُوتَهُمْ نَارًا»

(They (the disbelievers) busied us from performing the Middle prayer, the `Ar prayer, may Allah fill their hearts and houses with fire.)

He performed the `Asr prayer between Maghrib and `Isha'. Muslim and An-Nasa'i recorded this Hadith. In addition, the Two Shaykhs, Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi An-Nasa'i and several other collectors of the Sunan recorded this Hadith using different chains of narrators to `Ali. The Hadith about the battle of Al-Ahzab, when the Mushriks prevented Allah's Messenger and his Companions from performing the `Asr prayer, has been narrated by several other Companions. We only mentioned the narrations that stated that the Middle prayer is the `Asr prayer. Furthermore, Muslim reported similar wordings for this Hadith from Ibn Mas`ud and Al-Bara' bin `Azib.

In addition, Imam Ahmad reported that Samurah bin Jundub said that Allah's Messenger said:

«صَلَاةُ الْوَسْطَى صَلَاةُ الْعَصْرِ»

(The Middle prayer is the `Asr prayer.)

In another narration, Allah's Messenger mentioned:

(حَفِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى)

(Guard strictly (five obligatory) As-Salawat (the prayers) especially the Middle Salah) and stated that it is the `Asr prayer. In another narration, Allah's Messenger said:

«هِيَ الْعَصْرُ»

(It is the `Asr prayer.) and Ibn Ja`far mentioned that the Prophet was then being asked about the Middle prayer. At-Tirmidhi reported this Hadith and said, "Hasan, Sahih." In addition, Abu Hatim bin Hibban reported in his Sahih that `Abdullah said that Allah's Messenger said:

«صَلَاةُ الْوُسْطَى صَلَاةُ الْعَصْرِ»

(The Middle prayer is the `Asr prayer.)

At-Tirmidhi reported that Ibn Mas`ud narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«صَلَاةُ الْوُسْطَى صَلَاةُ الْعَصْرِ»

(The `Asr prayer is the Middle prayer.)

At-Tirmidhi then stated that this Hadith is of a Hasan, Sahih type. Muslim reported the Hadith in his Sahih and his wordings are:

«شَغَلُونَا عَنِ الصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى صَلَاةِ الْعَصْرِ»

(They (disbelievers) busied us from performing the Middle prayer, the `Asr prayer.)

These texts emphasize the fact (that the `Asr prayer is the Middle prayer). What further proves this fact is that, in an authentic Hadith, Allah's Messenger emphasized the necessity of preserving the `Asr prayer, when he said, as Ibn `Umar narrated:

«مَنْ قَاتَهُ صَلَاةُ الْعَصْرِ فَكَأَنَّمَا وُتِرَ أَهْلُهُ
وَمَالُهُ»

(Whoever misses the `Asr prayer will be like who has lost his family and money.)

It is reported in the Sahih that Buraydah bin Al-Husayb said that the Prophet said:

«بَكَّرُوا بِالصَّلَاةِ فِي يَوْمِ الْغَيْمِ، فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ تَرَكَ
صَلَاةَ الْعَصْرِ، فَقَدْ حَبَطَ عَمَلُهُ»

(On a cloudy day, perform the (ʿAsr) prayer early, for whoever misses the ʿAsr prayer, will have his (good) deeds annulled.)

The Prohibition of speaking during the Prayer

Allah said:

(وَقَوْمُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ)

(And stand before Allah with obedience.) meaning, with humbleness and humility before Him (i.e., during the prayer). This command indicates that it is not allowed to speak during the prayer, as speaking contradicts the nature of the prayer. This is why the Prophet refused to answer Ibn Mas`ud when he greeted him while he was praying and said afterwards:

«إِنَّ فِي الصَّلَاةِ لَشُغْلًا»

(The prayer makes one sufficiently busy.) (i.e., by the various actions of the body, tongue and heart involved during the prayer.)

Muslim reported that the Prophet said to Mu`awiyah bin Hakam As-Sulami when he spoke during the prayer:

«إِنَّ هَذِهِ الصَّلَاةَ لَا يَصْلِحُ فِيهَا شَيْءٌ مِنْ كَلَامِ
النَّاسِ، إِنَّمَا هِيَ التَّسْبِيحُ وَالتَّكْبِيرُ وَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ»

(The ordinary speech people indulge in is not appropriate during the prayer. The prayer involves only Tasbih (praising Allah), Takbir (saying Allahu Akbar, i.e., Allah is the Most Great) and remembering Allah.)

Imam Ahmad reported that Zayd bin Arqam said, "One used to address his friend about various affairs during the prayer. Then when this Ayah was revealed:

(وَقَوْمُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ)