(وَلَقَدْ زَيَّنَّا السَّمَآءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَـٰبِيحَ)

(And indeed We have adorned the nearest heaven with lamps) It is well-known that the stars that were made as lamps in the sky are not the same as the shooting missiles that are thrown at the devils mentioned later in the Ayah . There are similar instances in the Qur'an. Allah knows best.

(أَيُشْرِكُونَ مَا لاَ يَخْلُقُ شَيْئاً وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ - وَلاَ يَسْتَطِيعُونَ لَهُمْ نَصْرًا وَلاَ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَنصُرُونَ - وَإِن تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَى لاَ يَتَّبِعُوكُمْ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْكُمْ أَدَعَوْتُمُوهُمْ أَمْ أَنتُمْ صَـٰمِتُونَ - إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ عِبَادٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ فَادْعُوهُمْ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُواْ لَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَـٰدِقِينَ - أَلَهُمْ أَرْجُلٌ يَمْشُونَ بِهَآ أَمْ لَهُمْ أَيْدٍ يَبْطِشُونَ بِهَآ أَمْ لَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَآ أَمْ لَهُمْ ءَاذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا قُلِ ادْعُواْ شُرَكَآءَكُمْ ثُمَّ كِيدُونِ فَلاَ تُنظِرُونِ - إِنَّ وَلِيِّيَ اللَّهُ الَّذِى نَزَّلَ الْكِتَـٰبَ وَهُوَ يَتَوَلَّى الصَّـٰلِحِينَ - وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ لاَ يَسْتَطِيعُونَ نَصْرَكُمْ وَلاَ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَنصُرُونَ - وَإِن تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَى لاَ يَسْمَعُواْ وَتَرَاهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ لاَ يُبْصِرُونَ)

(191. Do they attribute as partners to Allah those who created nothing but they themselves are created) (192. No help can they give them, nor can they help themselves.) (193. And if you call them to guidance, they follow you not. It is the same for you whether you call them or you keep silent.) (194. Verily, those whom you call upon besides Allah are servants like you. So call upon them and let them answer you if you are truthful.) (195. Have they feet wherewith they walk Or have they hands wherewith they hold Or have they eyes wherewith they see Or have

they ears wherewith they hear Say: "Call your (so-called) partners (of Allah) and then plot against me, and give me no respite!) (196. Verily, my protector is Allah Who has revealed the Book (the Qur'an), and He protects the righteous.) (197. And those whom you call upon besides Him (Allah) cannot help you nor can they help themselves.) (198. And if you call them to guidance, they hear not and you will see them looking at you, yet they see not.")

Idols do not create, help, or have Power over Anything

Allah admonishes the idolators who worshipped idols, rivals and images besides Him, although these objects were created by Allah, and neither own anything nor can they bring harm or benefit. These objects do not see or give aid to those who worship them. They are inanimate objects that neither move, hear, or see. Those who worship these objects are better than they are, for they hear see and have strength of their own. Allah said,

(أَيُشْرِكُونَ مَا لاَ يَخْلُقُ شَيْئاً وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ)

(Do they attribute as partners to Allah those who created nothing but they themselves are created) meaning, `Do you associate with Allah others that neither create, nor have power to create anything' Allah said in another Ayah,

(يأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ضُرِبَ مَثَلٌ فَاسْتَمِعُواْ لَهُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ لَن يَخْلُقُواْ ذُبَاباً وَلَوِ اجْتَمَعُواْ لَهُ وَإِن يَسْلُبْهُمُ الذُّبَابُ شَيْئاً لاَّ يَسْتَنقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ضَعُفَ الطَّالِبُ وَالْمَطْلُوبُ - مَا قَدَرُواْ اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ)

(O mankind! A similitude has been coined, so listen to it (carefully): Verily, those on whom you call besides Allah, cannot create (even) a fly, even though they combine together for the purpose. And if the fly snatches away a thing from them, they will have no power to release it from the fly. So weak are (both) the seeker and the sought. They have not estimated Allah His rightful estimate. Verily, Allah is All-Strong, Almighty) 22:73-74 . Allah states that if all false gods of the disbelievers gather their strength, they would not be able to create a fly. Rather, if the fly steals anything from them, no matter how insignificant, and flew away, they would not be able to retrieve it. Therefore, if an object is this weak, how can it be worshipped and invoked for provisions and aid This is why Allah said,

(لاَ يَخْلُقُ شَيْئاً وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ)

(... who created nothing but they themselves are created) these worshipped objects themselves were created and made. Prophet Ibrahim Al-Khalil proclaimed,

(أَتَعْبُدُونَ مَا تَنْحِتُونَ)

("Worship you that which you (yourselves) carve") 37:95 Allah said next,

(وَلاَ يَسْتَطِيعُونَ لَهُمْ نَصْرًا)

(No help can they give them) those who worship them,

(وَلاَ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَنصُرُونَ)

(nor can they help themselves) nor are they able to aid themselves against those who seek to harm them. For instance, Allah's Khalil, peace be upon him, broke and disgraced the idols of his people, just as Allah said he did,

(فَرَاغَ عَلَيْهِمْ ضَرْباً بِالْيَمِينِ)

(Then he turned upon them, striking (them) with (his) right hand,) 37:93 and,

(فَجَعَلَهُمْ جُذَاذاً إِلاَّ كَبِيراً لَّهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ يَرْجِعُونَ)

(So he broke them to pieces, (all) except the biggest of them, that they might turn to it.) 21:58 Mu`adh bin `Amr ibn Al-Jamuh and Mu`adh bin Jabal, may Allah be pleased with both of them, were still young when they embraced Islam after the Messenger of Allah came to Al-Madinah. So they were attacking the idols of the idolators at night, breaking, disfiguring them and using them as fuel for needy widows. They sought to give a lesson to their people to make them aware of their error. `Amr bin Al-Jamuh, who was one of the chiefs of his people, had an idol that he used to worship and perfume. The two Mu`adhs used to go to that idol, turn it on its head and tarnish it with animal waste. When `Amr bin Al-Jamuh would see what happened to his idol, he would clean it, perfume it and leave a sword next to it, saying, "Defend yourself." However, the two young men would repeat their actions, and he would do the same as before. Once, they took the idol, tied it to a dead dog and threw it in a well while tied to a rope! When `Amr bin Al-Jamuh saw this, he knew that his religion was false and said, "By Allah! Had you been a god who has might, you would not end up tied to a dog on a rope!" `Amr bin Al-Jamuh embraced Islam, and he was strong in his Islam. He was later martyred during the battle of Uhud, may Allah be pleased with him, give him pleasure. and grant him Paradise as his dwelling. Allah said,

(وَإِن تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَى لاَ يَتَّبِعُوكُمْ)

(And if you call them to guidance, they follow you not.) Allah says, these idols do not hear the calls of those who worship them. Therefore, the result is the same, whether calling the idols or shunning them. Ibrahim, peace be upon said,

(يأَبَتِ لِمَ تَعْبُدُ مَا لاَ يَسْمَعُ وَلاَ يَبْصِرُ وَلاَ يُغْنِى عَنكَ شَيْئاً)

("O my father! Why do you worship that which hears not, sees not and cannot avail you in anything") 19:42 Next, Allah states that the idols were created, just as those who worship them. Rather, the people are better than the idols, because they are able to hear, see and exert harm. The idols, on the other hand, have no such powers. Allah said next,

(قُلِ ادْعُواْ شُرَكَآءَكُمْ)

(Say: "Call your (so-called) partners (of Allah)) invoke the idols for aid against me and do not give me respite, even for an instant, and give it your best effort,

(إِنَّ وَلِيِّىَ اللَّهُ الَّذِى نَزَّلَ الْكِتَـبَ وَهُوَ يَتَوَلَّى الصَّـلِحِينَ)

(Verily, my protector is Allah Who has revealed the Book (the Qur'an), and He protects the righteous.) Allah's support is sufficient and He will suffice for me, He is My supporter, I trust in Him and take refuge with Him. He is my protector, in this life and the Hereafter, and the protector of every righteous believer after me. Similarly, the people of Hud said,

(إِن نَّقُولُ إِلاَّ اعْتَرَاكَ بَعْضُ ءَالِهَتِنَا بِسُوءٍ قَالَ إِنِّى أُشْهِدُ اللَّهِ وَاشْهَدُواْ أَنِّى بَرِىءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ - مِن دُونِهِ فَكِيدُونِى جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ لاَ تُنظِرُونِ - إِنِّى تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ رَبِّى وَرَبِّكُمْ مَّا مِن دَآبَّةٍ إِلاَّ هُوَ ءاخِذٌ بِنَاصِيَتِهَآ إِنَّ رَبِّى عَلَى صِرَطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ)

("All that we say is that some of our gods have seized you with evil (madness). " Hud replied: "I call Allah to witness, and bear you witness that I am free from that which you ascribe as partners in worship, with Him (Allah) . So plot against me, all of you, and give me no respite. I put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord! There is not a moving (living) creature but He has the grasp of its forelock. Verily, my Lord is on a path that is straight) 11:54-56 . Ibrahim Al-Khalil proclaimed (to his people),

(قَالَ أَفَرَءَيْتُمْ مَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ - أَنتُمْ وَءَابَآؤُكُمُ الأَقْدَمُونَ - فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِى إِلاَّ رَبَّ الْعَـلَمِينَ - الَّذِى خَلَقَنِى فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ)

(Do you observe that which you have been wershipping, You and your ancient fathers. Verily, they are enemies to me, save the Lord of all that exists. Who has created me, and it is He Who guides me.") 26:75-78 He also said to his father and his people,

(وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَهِيمُ لاَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ إِنَّنِى بَرَآءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ - إِلاَّ الَّذِى فَطَرَنِى فَإِنَّهُ سَيَهْدِينِ - وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةً بَـقِيَةً فِى عَقِبِهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ)

("Verily, I am innocent of what you warship. Except Him Who did create me; and verily, He will guide me." And he made it a legacy lasting among his offspring, that they may turn back (to Allah).) 43:26-28 Allah said here,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ)

(Verily, those whom you call upon besides Allah) until the end of the Ayah, reiterating what has been said earlier, but He uses direct speech this time,

(لاَ يَسْتَطِيعُونَ نَصْرَكُمْ وَلاَ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَنصُرُونَ)

(cannot help you nor can they help themselves.) The Ayah,

(وَإِن تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَى لاَ يَسْمَعُواْ وَتَرَاهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ لاَ يُبْصِرُونَ)

(And if you call them to guidance, they hear not and you will see them looking at you, yet they see not.) is similar to another Ayah,

(إِن تَدْعُوهُمْ لاَ يَسْمَعُواْ دُعَآءَكُمْ)

(If you invoke (or call upon) them, they hear not your call.) 35:14 . Allah said next,

(وَتَرَاهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ لاَ يُبْصِرُونَ)

(and you will see them looking at you, yet they see not.) meaning, they have eyes that stare as if they see, although they are solid. Therefore, the Ayah treated them as if they had a mind saying, Tarahum, instead of Taraha , since they are made in the shape of humans with eyes drawn on them.

(خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَـهِلِينَ - وَإِمَّا يَنَزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَـنِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ)

(199. Show forgiveness, enjoin Al-'Urf (the good), and turn away from the foolish (don't punish them).) (200. And if an evil whisper comes to you from Shaytan, then seek refuge with Allah. Verily, He is All-Hearer, All-Knower.)

Showing Forgiveness

Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam commented on Allah's statement,

(خُذِ الْعَفْوَ)

(Show forgiveness) "Allah commanded Prophet Muhammad to show forgiveness and turn away from the idolators for ten years. Afterwards Allah ordered him to be harsh with them." And more than one narration from Mujahid says, "From the bad behavior and actions of the people, of those who have not committed espionage." And Hashim bin `Urwah said that his father said, "Allah ordered Allah's Messenger to pardon the people for their behavior." And in one narration, "pardon what I have allowed you of their behavior. In Sahih Al-Bukhari it is recorded that Hisham reported from his father `Urwah from his brother `Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr who said; " The Ayah ;

(خُذِ الْعَفْوَ)

(Show forgiveness) was only revealed about the peoples bad character." There is a narration from Mughirah from Hisham from his father from Ibn `Umar; and another from Hisham from his father from `A'ishah, both of whom said similarly. And Allah knows best. Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Yunus said that Sufyan bin `Uyaynah narrated that Umay said, "When Allah, the Exalted and Most Honored, revealed this Ayah,

(خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَـهِلِينَ)

(Show forgiveness, enjoin Al-`Urf (what is good), and turn away from the foolish) to His Prophet, the Messenger of Allah asked,

«مَا هَذَا يَا جِبْرِيل»

(`What does it mean, O Jibril) Jibril said, `Allah commands you to forgive those who wronged you, give to those who deprived you, and keep relations with those who cut theirs with you.'" Al-Bukhari said, "Allah said,

(خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَـهِلِينَ)

(Show forgiveness, enjoin Al-`Urf and turn away from the ignorant). `Al-`Urf', means, righteousness." Al-Bukhari next recorded from Ibn `Abbas that he said, "`Uyaynah bin Hisn bin Hudhayfah stayed with his nephew Al-Hur bin Qays, who was among the people whom `Umar used to have near him, for `Umar used to like to have the reciters of the Qur'an (who memorized it) near him and would listen to their opinion, regardless of whether they were old or young men. `Uyaynah said to his nephew, `O my nephew! You are close to this chief (`Umar), so ask for permission for me to see him.' Al-Hur said `I will ask him for you,' and he asked `Umar for permission for `Uyaynah to meet him, and `Umar gave him permission. When `Uyaynah entered on `Umar, he said, `O Ibn Al-Khattab! You neither give to us sufficiently nor rule with justice between us.' `Umar became so angry that he almost punished `Uyaynah. However, Al-Hur said, `O Chief of he Faithful! Allah, the Exalted, said to His Prophet ,

(خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَـهِلِينَ)

(Show forgiveness, enjoin Al-`Urf, and turn away from the foolish) Verily this man (`Uyaynah) is one of the fools!' By Allah, `Umar did not do anything after he heard that Ayah being recited, and indeed, he was one who adhered to the Book of Allah, the Exalted and Most Honored." Al-Bukhari recorded this Hadith. Some scholars said that people are of two kinds, a good-doer, so

accept his good doing and neither ask him more than he can bear nor what causes him hardship. The other kind is the one who falls in shortcomings, so enjoin righteousness on him. If he still insists on evil, becomes difficult and continues in his ignorance, then turn away from him, so that your ignoring him might avert his evilness. Allah said in other instances,

(ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ السَّيِّئَةَ نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَصِفُونَ - وَقُلْ رَّبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيَـطِينِ - وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَن يَحْضُرُونِ)

(Repel evil with that which is better. We are best-acquainted with the things they utter. And say: "My Lord! I seek refuge with You from the whisperings (suggestions) of the Shayatin (devils). And I seek refuge with You, My Lord! lest they should come near me.") 23:96-98 and,

(وَلاَ تَسْتَوِى الْحَسَنَةُ وَلاَ السَّيِّئَةُ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِى بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِىٌّ حَمِيمٌ - وَمَا يُلَقَّاهَا إِلاَّ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُواْ وَمَا يُلَقَّاهَآ إِلاَّ ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ)

(The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better, then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend. But none is granted it (the above quality) except those who are patient -- and none is granted it except the owner of the great portion in this world.) 41:34-35 in reference to the advice contained in these Ayat,

(وَإِمَّا يَنزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَـنِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ)

(And if an evil whisper from Shaytan tries to turn you away (from doing good), then seek refuge in Allah. Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower) 41:36 . Allah said in this honorable Suah,

(وَإِمَّا يَنَزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَـنِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ)

(And if an evil whisper comes to you from Shaytan, then seek refuge with Allah. Verily, He is All-Hearer, All-Knower.) 7:200 These three instances in the Qur'an, in Surahs Al-A`raf, Al-Mu'minun and As-Sajdah, are uinque in the Qur'an. Allah encourages lenient treatment of evil doers, for this might deter them from persistence in their evil, Allah willing,

(فَإِذَا الَّذِى بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِىٌّ حَمِيمٌ)

(then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend) 41:34 . Allah also encourages seeking refuge with Him from the devils of the Jinns. The devil will not be deterred if one is lenient with him, because he seeks your destruction and total demise. The devil to you, O mankind, is an open enemy, just as he was for your father before you. Ibn Jarir said, while explaining Allah's statement,

(وَإِمَّا يَنَزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَـنِ نَزْغٌ)

(And if an evil whisper comes to you from Shaytan), "If the devil lures you to get angry, thus directing you away from forgiving the ignorant and towards punishing him

(فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ)

(then seek refuge with Allah.) Allah commands here to seek refuge with Him from the devil's whispers,

(إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ)

(Verily, He is All-Hearer, All-Knower.) Allah hears the ignorance that the fools subject you to, your seeking refuge with Him from the devil's whispers, and the rest of the speech of His creation; none of it escapes His knowledge. He knows what drives the lures of the devil away from you, as well as, the rest of what His creatures do." We mentioned the Hadiths concerning Isti`adhah (seeking refuge with Allah) in the beginning of this Tafsir, so we do not need to repeat them here.

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْاْ إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَـئِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَـنِ تَذَكَّرُواْ فَإِذَا هُم مُّبْصِرُونَ - وَإِخْوَنُهُمْ يَمُدُّونَهُمْ فِى الْغَىِّ ثُمَّ لاَ يُقْصِرُونَ)

(201. Verily, those who have Taqwa, when an evil thought comes to them from Shaytan, they remember (Allah), and (indeed) they then see (aright).) (202. But (as for) their brothers (the devils' brothers) they (the devils) plunge them deeper into error, and they never stop short.)

The Whispering of Shaytan and the People of Taqwa

Allah mentions His servants who have Taqwa, obeying His orders, and avoid what He forbade:

(إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ)

(when comes to them) an evil thought, or anger, or the whispers of Shaytan cross their mind, or intend to err, or commit an error,

(تَذَكَّرُواْ)

(they remember) Allah's punishment, as well as, His tremendous reward. They remember Allah's promises and threats, then repent, go back to Him, seek refuge with Him and ask for forgiveness before death,

(فَإِذَا هُم مُّبْصِرُونَ)

(and (indeed) they then see (aright)) they become aright and aware of the error of their ways.

A Brethren of Devils among Mankind lure to Falsehood

Allah said next,

(وَإِخْوَنُهُمْ يَمُدُّونَهُمْ)

(But (as for) their brothers they plunge them deeper) in reference to the devils' brothers among mankind. Allah said in another Ayah,

(إِنَّ الْمُبَذِرِينَ كَانُواْ إِخْوَنَ الشَّيَـطِينِ)

(Verily, the spendthrifts are brothers of the Shayatin) 17:27 for they are followers of the Shayatin, who listen to them and obey their orders.

(يَمُدُّونَـهُمْ فِى الْغَىِّ)

(They plunge them deeper into error) the devils help them commit sins, making this path easy and appealing to them

(ثُمَّ لاَ يُقْصِرُونَ)

(and they never stop short) for the devils never cease inciting mankind to commit errors. `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas commented on Allah's statement,

(وَإِخْوَنُهُمْ يَمُدُّونَـهُمْ فِى الْغَىِّ ثُمَّ لاَ يُقْصِرُونَ)

(But (as for) their brothers they plunge them deeper into error, and they never stop short.) "Neither mankind stop short of the evil that they are doing nor the devils stop short of luring them. " Therefore,

(لاَ يُقْصِرُونَ)

(they never stop short) refers to the devils getting tired or stopping their whispering. Allah said in another Ayah,

(أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَا الشَّيَـطِينَ عَلَى الْكَـفِرِينَ تَؤُزُّهُمْ أَزّاً)

(See you not that We have sent Shayatin against the disbelievers to push them to do evil) 19:83 persistently luring the disbelievers to commit evil, according to Ibn `Abbas and others.

(وَإِذَا لَمْ تَأْتِهِم بِـَايَةٍ قَالُواْ لَوْلاَ اجْتَبَيْتَهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَتَّبِعُ مَا يوحَى إِلَىَّ مِن رَّبِّى هَـذَا بَصَآئِرُ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(203. And if you do not bring them a miracle, they say: "Why have you not brought it" Say: "I but follow what is revealed to me from my Lord. This (the Qur'an) is nothing but evidences from your Lord, and a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe.")

Idolators ask to witness Miracles

Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas commented on Allah's statement,

(قَالُواْ لَوْلاَ اجْتَبَيْتَهَا)

(they say, "Why have you not brought it") "They say, `Why have you not received a miracle'", or, "Why have you not initiated or made it" Ibn Jarir reported that, `Abdullah bin Kathir said that Mujahid said about Allah's statement,

(وَإِذَا لَمْ تَأْتِهِم بِـَايَةٍ قَالُواْ لَوْلاَ اجْتَبَيْتَهَا)

(And if you do not bring them a miracle, they say: "Why have you not brought it") "They say, `Produce a miracle of your own.'" Qatadah, As-Suddi, `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam and Ibn Jarir agreed with this. Allah said next,

(وَإِذَا لَمْ تَأْتِهِم بِـَايَةٍ)

(And if you do not bring them an Ayah) a miracle or a sign. Similarly, Allah said,

(إِن نَّشَأْ نُنَزِّلْ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ ءَايَةً فَظَلَّتْ أَعْنَـقُهُمْ لَهَا خَـضِعِينَ)

(If We will, We could send down to them from the heaven a sign, to which they would bend their necks in humility.) 26:4 The pagans asked the Prophet, why did you not strive hard to bring us an Ayah (miracle) from Allah so that we witness it and believe in it. Allah said to him,

(قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَتَّبِعُ مَا يوحَى إِلَىَّ مِن رَّبِّى)

(Say: "I but follow what is revealed to me from my Lord.") I do not ask such things of my Lord. I only follow what He reveals and commands me. Therefore, if Allah sends a miracle, I will accept it. Otherwise, I will not ask for it unless He allows me. Certainly, Allah is Most Wise, the All-Knower. Allah next directs the servants to the fact that this Qur'an is the most powerful miracle, clearest evidence and most true proof and explanation, saying,

(هَـذَا بَصَآئِرُ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(This (the Qur'an) is nothing but evidences from your Lord, and a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe.)

(وَإِذَا قُرِىءَ الْقُرْءَانُ فَاسْتَمِعُواْ لَهُ وَأَنصِتُواْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ)

(204. So, when the Qur'an is recited, listen to it, and be silent that you may receive mercy.)

The Order to listen to the Qur'an

After Allah mentioned that this Qur'an is a clear evidence, guidance and mercy for mankind, He commanded that one listen to the Qur'an when it is recited, in respect and honor of the Qur'an. This is to the contrary of the practice of the pagans of Quraysh, who said,

(لاَ تَسْمَعُواْ لِهَـذَا الْقُرْءَانِ وَالْغَوْاْ فِيهِ)

("Listen not to this Qur'an, and make noise in the midst of its (recitation)") 41:26 . Ibn Jarir reported that Ibn Mas`ud said; "We would give Salams to each other during Salah. So the Ayah of Qur'an was revealed;

(وَإِذَا قُرِىءَ الْقُرْءَانُ فَاسْتَمِعُواْ لَهُ)

(When the Qur'an is recited, then listen to it.)

(وَاذْكُر رَّبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالآصَالِ وَلاَ تَكُنْ مِّنَ الْغَـفِلِينَ - إِنَّ الَّذِينَ عِندَ رَبِّكَ لاَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَيُسَبِّحُونَهُ وَلَهُ يَسْجُدُونَ)

(205. And remember your Lord within yourself, humbly and with fear and without loudness in words in the mornings and in the afternoons, and be not of those who are neglectful). (206. Surely, those who are with your Lord (angels) are never too proud to perform acts of worship to Him, but they glorify His praise and prostrate themselves before Him.)

Remembering Allah in the Mornings and Afternoons

Allah ordains that He be remembered more often in the mornings and the afternoons. Just as He ordered that He be worshipped during these two times when He said,

(وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ)

(And glorify the praises of your Lord, before the rising of the sun and before (its) setting.) 50:39 Before the night of Isra', when the five daily prayers were ordained, this Ayah was revealed in Makkah ordering that Allah be worshipped at these times, Allah said next,

(تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً)

(humbly and with fear) meaning, remember your Lord in secret, not loudly, with eagerness and fear. This is why Allah said next,

(وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ)

(and without loudness in words). Therefore, it is recommended that remembering Allah in Dhikr is not performed in a loud voice. When the Companions asked the Messenger of Allah, "Is our Lord close, so that we call Him in secret, or far, so that we raise our voices" Allah sent down the verse,

(وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ)

h(And when My servants ask you concerning Me, then (answer them), I am indeed near (to them by My knowledge). I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me (without any mediator or intercessor).) 2:186 In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari said, "The people raised their voices with Du`a' (invoking Allah) while travelling. The Prophet said to them,

«يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ارْبَعُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ، فَإِنَّكُمْ لَا تَدْعُونَ أَصَمَّ وَلَا غَائِبًا إِنَّ الَّذِي تَدْعُونَهُ سَمِيعٌ قَرِيبٌ أَقْرَبُ إِلَى أَحَدِكُمْ مِنْ عُنُقِ رَاحِلَتِه»

(O people! Take it easy on yourselves, for He Whom you are calling is not deaf or absent. Verily, He Whom you are calling is the All-Hearer, close (by His knowledge), closer to one of you than the neck of his animal.)" These texts encourage the servants to invoke Allah in Dhikr often, especially in the mornings and afternoons, so that they are not among those who neglect remembering Him. This is why Allah praised the angels who praise Him night and day without tiring,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ عِندَ رَبِّكَ لاَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ)

(Surely, those who are with your Lord (i.e., angels) are never too proud to perform acts of worship to Him) Allah reminded the servants of this fact so that they imitate the angels in their tireless worship and obedience of Allah. Prostration, here, upon the mention that the angels prostrate to Allah is legitimate. A Hadith reads;

«أَلَا تَصُفُّونَ كَمَا تَصُفُّ الْمَلَائِكَةُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهَا يُتِمُّونَ الصُّفُوفَ الْأُوَلَ فَالْأُوَلَ وَيَتَرَاصُّونَ فِي الصَّفِّ»

(Why not you stand in line (for the prayer) like the angels stand in line before their Lord They continue the first then the next lines and they stand close to each other in line.) This is the first place in the Qur'an where it has been legitimized -- according to the agreement of the scholars -- for the readers of the Qur'an, and those listening to its recitation, to perform prostration.

The Tafsir of Surat Al-Anfal

(Chapter - 8)

Which was revealed in Al-Madinah

There are seventy-five Ayat in this Surah. The word count of this Surah is one thousand, six hundred and thirty-one words and its letters number five thousand, two hundred and ninety-four.

(بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَـنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

(يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الانفَالِ قُلِ الانفَالُ لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ فَاتَّقُواْ اللَّهَ وَأَصْلِحُواْ ذَاتَ بِيْنِكُمْ وَأَطِيعُواْ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ-)

(1. They ask you about Al-Anfal (the spoils of war). Say: "Al-Anfal are for Allah and the Messenger." So have Taqwa of Allah and settle all matters of difference among you, and obey Allah and His Messenger, if you are believers.)

Meaning of Anfal

Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Al-Anfal are the spoils of war." Al-Bukhari also recorded that Sa`id bin Jubayr said, "I said to Ibn `Abbas, `Surat Al-Anfal' He said, `It was revealed concerning (the battle of) Badr.'" `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported, as Al-Bukhari recorded from Ibn `Abbas without a chain of narration, that Ibn `Abbas said, "Al-Anfal are the spoils of war; they were for the Messenger of Allah , and none had a share in them." Similar was said by Mujahid, `Ikrimah, `Ata', Ad-Dahhak, Qatadah, `Ata' Al-Khurasani, Muqatil bin Hayyan, `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam and several others. It was also said that the Nafl (singular for Anfal) refers to the portion of the spoils of war that the commander gives to some of the fighters after dividing the bulk of the spoils. It was also said that Anfal refers to the Khumus; one-fifth of the captured goods after four-fifths are divided between the fighters . It was also said that the Anfal refers to the Fay', the possessions taken from the disbelievers without fighting, and the animals, servants or whatever other possessions escape from the disbelievers to Muslims.

Ibn Jarir recorded that `Ali bin Salih bin Hay said: "It has reached me that,

(يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الأَنفَالِ)

(They ask you about Al-Anfal) is about the divisions. This refer to what the Imam gives to some squads in addition to what is divided among the rest of the soldiers."

The Reason behind revealing Ayah 8:1

Imam Ahmad recorded that Sa`d bin Malik said, "I said, `O Allah's Messenger, Allah has brought comfort to me today over the idolators, so grant me this sword.' He said,

«إِنَّ هَذَا السَّيْفَ لَا لَكَ وَلَا لِي، ضَعْه»

(This sword is neither yours nor mine; put it down.) So I put it down, but said to myself, `The Prophet might give this sword to another man who did not fight as fiercely as I did.' I heard a man calling me from behind and I said, `Has Allah revealed something in my case' The Prophet said,

«كُنْتَ سَأَلْتَنِي السَّيْفَ وَلَيْسَ هُوَ لِي، وَإِنَّهُ قَدْ وُهِبَ لِي، فَهُوَ لَك»

(You asked me to give you the sword, but it is not for me to decide about. However, it has been granted to me (by Allah), and I give it to you.) So Allah sent down this Ayah,

(يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الأَنفَالِ قُلِ الأَنفَالُ لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ)

(They ask you about Al-Anfal. Say: "Al-Anfal are for Allah and the Messenger").

Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i collected this Hadith, At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih".

Another Reason behind revealing the Ayah 8:1

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Umamah said, "I asked `Ubadah about Al-Anfal and he said, `It was revealed about us, those who participated in (the battle of) Badr, when we disputed about An-Nafl and our dispute was not appealing. So Allah took Al-Anfal from us and gave it to the Messenger of Allah . The Messenger divided it equally among Muslims.'"

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Umamah said that `Ubadah bin As-Samit said, "We went with the Messenger of Allah to the battle of Badr. When the two armies met, Allah defeated the enemy and some of us pursued them inflicting utter defeat and casualties. Another group of us came to the battlefield collecting the spoils of war. Another group surrounded the Messenger of Allah , so that the enemy could not attack him suddenly. When it was night and the various army groups went back to our camp, some of those who collected the spoils said, `We collected it, so none else will have a share in it.' Those who went in pursuit of the enemy said, `No, you have no more right to it than us. We kept the enemy away from the war spoils and

defeated them.' Those who surrounded the Messenger of Allah to protect him said, `You have no more right to it than us, we surrounded the Messenger of Allah for fear that the enemy might conduct a surprise attack against him, so we were busy.' The Ayah,

(يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الأَنفَالِ قُلِ الأَنفَالُ لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ فَاتَّقُواْ اللَّهَ وَأَصْلِحُواْ ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ)

(They ask you about Al-Anfal (the spoils of war). Say: "Al-Anfal are for Allah and the Messenger." So fear Allah and settle all matters of difference among you.) was revealed and the Messenger of Allah divided the Anfal equally between Muslims.'"

«وَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِذَا أَغَارَ فِي أَرْضِ الْعَدُوِّ نَفَلَ الرُّبُعَ، فَإِذَا أَقْبَلَ وَكُلّ النَّاسِ رَاجِعًا نَفَلَ الثُّلُث»

(And Allah's Messenger would give a fourth for Anfal when there was a surprise attack in the land of the enemy, and when there was a confrontation then a third to the people who returned).

The Prophet used to dislike the Anfal and encouraged strong fighters to give some of their share to weak Muslim fighters. At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah collected a similar narration for this Hadith, and At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan".

Allah said,

(فَاتَّقُواْ اللَّهَ وَأَصْلِحُواْ ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ)

(So have Taqwa of Allah and settle all matters of difference among you,)

The Ayah commands, have Taqwa of Allah in all your affairs, settle matters of differences between you, do not wrong each other, do not dispute, and do not differ. Certainly, the guidance and knowledge that Allah has granted you is better than what you are disputing about such as Al-Anfal ,

(وَأَطِيعُواْ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ)

(and obey Allah and His Messenger,) in the division that the Messenger makes according to Allah's order. The Prophet only divided according to what Allah ordained, which is perfectly just and fair. Ibn `Abbas commented on this Ayah, "This is a command from Allah and His

Messenger to the believers, that they should have Taqwa of Allah and settle all matters of differences between them." A similar statement was reported from Mujahid. As-Suddi also commented on Allah's statement,

(فَاتَّقُواْ اللَّهَ وَأَصْلِحُواْ ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ)

(So have Taqwa of Allah and settle all matters of difference among you), meaning "Do not curse each other."

(إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَـتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَـناً وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ - الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَوةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَـهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ - أُوْلَـئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقّاً لَّهُمْ دَرَجَـتٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ)

(2. The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His Ayat are recited unto them, they increase their faith; and they put their trust in their Lord;) (3. Who perform the Salah and spend out of what We have provided them.) (4. It is they who are the believers in truth. For them are grades of dignity with their Lord, and forgiveness and a generous provision (Paradise).)

Qualities of the Faithful and Truthful Believers

`Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said about the Ayah,

(إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ)

(The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts)

"None of Allah's remembrance enters the hearts of the hypocrites upon performing what He has ordained. They neither believe in any of Allah's Ayat nor trust (in Allah) nor pray if they are alone nor pay the Zakah due on their wealth. Allah stated that they are not believers. He then described the believers by saying,

(إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ)

(The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts) and they perform what He has ordained,

(وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَـتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَـناً)

(and when His Ayat are recited unto them, they increase their faith) and conviction,

(وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ)

(and they put their trust in their Lord), having hope in none except Him. " Mujahid commented on,

(وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ)

(their hearts Wajilat), "Their hearts become afraid and fearful." Similar was said by As-Suddi and several others. The quality of a true believer is that when Allah is mentioned, he feels a fear in his heart, and thus implements His orders and abstains from His prohibitions. Allah said in a similar Ayah,

(وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُواْ فَـحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُواْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُواْ اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُواْ لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَن يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّواْ عَلَى مَا فَعَلُواْ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(And those who, when they have committed Fahishah (immoral sin) or wronged themselves with evil, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their sins; -- and none can forgive sins but Allah -- and do not persist in what (wrong) they have done, while they know) 3:135 , and,

(وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَى - فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَى)

(But as for him who feared standing before his Lord, and restrained himself from vain desires. Verily, Paradise will be his abode.) 79:40-41

Sufyan Ath-Thawri narrated that As-Suddi commented,

(إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ)

(The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts)

A man might be thinking of committing injustice or a sin. But he abstains when he is told, `Have Taqwa of Allah', and his heart becomes fearful.'"

Faith increases when the Qur'an is recited

Allah's statement,

(وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَـتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَـناً)

(And when His Ayat are recited unto them, they increase their faith;) is similar to His statement,

(وَإِذَا مَآ أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَقُولُ أَيُّكُمْ زَادَتْهُ هَـذِهِ إِيمَـناً فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءامَنُواْ فَزَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَـناً وَهُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ)

(And whenever there comes down a Surah, some of them (hypocrites) say: "Which of you has had his faith increased by it" As for those who believe, it has increased their faith, and they rejoice) 9:124 .

Al-Bukhari and other scholars relied on this Ayah (8:2) and those similar, as evidence that faith increases and varies in strength from heart to heart. This is also the view of the majority of the scholars of Islam, prompting some scholars, such as Ash-Shafi`i, Ahmad bin Hanbal and Abu `Ubayd to declare that this is the consensus of the Ummah, as we mentioned in the beginning of the explanation of Sahih Al-Bukhari. All the thanks and praises are due to Allah.

The Reality of Tawakkul

Allah said,

(وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ)

(And they put their trust in their Lord.)

Therefore, the believers hope in none except Allah, direct their dedication to Him alone, seek refuge with Him alone, invoke Him alone for their various needs and supplicate to Him alone. They know that whatever He wills, occurs and that whatever He does not will never occurs, that He alone is the One Who has the decision in His kingdom, without partners; none can avert the decision of Allah and He is swift in reckoning. Hence the statement of Sa`id bin Jubayr, "Tawakkul of Allah is the essence of faith.

Deeds of Faithful Believers

Allah said next,

(الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَوةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَـهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ)

(Who perform the Salah and spend out of what We have provided them.)

Allah describes the actions of the believers after He mentioned their faith. The acts mentioned here include all types of righteous acts, such as establishing prayer, which is Allah's right. Qatadah said, "Establishing the prayer requires preserving its times, making ablution for it, bowing down and prostrating." Muqatil bin Hayyan said, "Establishing the prayer means to preserve its times, perform perfect purity for it, perform perfect bowings and prostrations, recite the Qur'an during it, sitting for Tashahhud and reciting the Salah (invoking Allah's blessings) for the benefit of the Prophet."

Spending from what Allah has granted includes giving the Zakah and the rest of the what is due from the servant, either what is obligatory or recommended. All of the servants are Allah's dependents, and the most beloved among them to Him are the most beneficial to His creation.

The Reality of Faith

Allah's statement,

(أُوْلَـئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقّاً)

(It is they who are the believers in truth.) means, those who have these qualities are the believers with true faith.

The Fruits of Perfect Faith

Allah said,

(لَّهُمْ دَرَجَـتٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ)

(For them are grades of dignity with their Lord) meaning, they have different grades, ranks and status in Paradise,

(هُمْ دَرَجَـتٌ عِندَ اللَّهِ واللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ)

(They are in varying grades with Allah, and Allah is All-Seer of what they do.) 3:163

Next, Allah said,

(وَمَغْفِرَةٌ)

(and forgiveness), therefore, Allah will forgive them their sins and reward them for their good deeds. In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ أَهْلَ عِلِّيِّينَ لَيَرَاهُمْ مَنْ أَسْفَلَ مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَرَوْنَ الْكَوْكَبَ الْغَابِرَ فِي أُفُقٍ مِنْ آفَاقِ السَّمَاءِ»

(The residents of `Illiyyin (in Paradise) are seen from those below them, just as you see the distant planet in the horizon of the sky.)

They said, "O Allah's Messenger! They are the grades of the Prophets that none except them would attain." The Prophet said,

«بَلَى وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، لِرِجَالٌ آمَنُوا بِاللهِ وَصَدَّقُوا الْمُرْسَلِين»

(Rather, by He in Whose Hand is my soul! They are for men who have faith in Allah and believed in the Messengers.)

In a Hadith recorded by Imam Ahmad and the collectors of Sunan, Abu `Atiyyah said that Ibn Abu Sa`id said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ أَهْلَ الْجَنَّةِ لَيَتَرَاءَونَ أَهْلَ الدَّرَجَاتِ الْعُلَى كَمَا تَرَاءَوْنَ الْكَوْكَبَ الْغَابِرَ فِي أُفُقِ السَّمَاءِ وَإِنَّ أَبَا بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَأَنْعَمَا»

(Residents of Paradise see the residents of the highest grades just as you see the distant planet in the horizon of the sky. Verily, Abu Bakr and `Umar are among them (in the highest grades), and how excellent they are.)

(كَمَآ أَخْرَجَكَ رَبُّكَ مِن بَيْتِكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقاً مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَكَـرِهُونَ - يُجَـدِلُونَكَ فِي الْحَقِّ بَعْدَمَا تَبَيَّنَ كَأَنَّمَا يُسَاقُونَ إِلَى الْمَوْتِ وَهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ - وَإِذْ يَعِدُكُمُ اللَّهُ إِحْدَى الطَّائِفَتَيْنِ أَنَّهَا لَكُمْ وَتَوَدُّونَ أَنَّ غَيْرَ ذَاتِ الشَّوْكَةِ تَكُونُ لَكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَن يُحِقَّ الحَقَّ بِكَلِمَـتِهِ وَيَقْطَعَ دَابِرَ الْكَـفِرِينَ - لِيُحِقَّ الْحَقَّ وَيُبْطِلَ الْبَـطِلَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُجْرِمُونَ)

(5. As your Lord caused you to go out from your home with the truth; and verily, a party among the believers disliked it.) (6. Disputing with you concerning the truth after it was made

manifest, as if they were being driven to death, while they were looking (at it).) (7. And (remember) when Allah promised you (Muslims) one of the two parties, that it should be yours; you wished that the one not armed should be yours, but Allah willed to justify the truth by His Words and to cut off the roots of the disbelievers.) (8. That He might cause the truth to triumph and bring falsehood to nothing, even though the criminals hate it.)

Following the Messenger is Better for the Believers

Allah said,

(كَمَآ أَخْرَجَكَ رَبُّكَ)

(As your Lord caused you to go out...) After Allah described the believers as fearing their Lord, resolving matters of dispute between themselves and obeying Allah and His Messenger , He then said here, "since you disputed about dividing war spoils and differed with each other about them, Allah took them away from you. He and His Messenger then divided them in truth and justice, thus ensuring continued benefit for all of you. Similarly, you disliked meeting the armed enemy in battle, who marched in support of their religion and to protect their caravan. You disliked fighting, so Allah decided that battle should occur and made you meet your enemy, without planning to do so on your part.' This incident carried guidance, light, victory and triumph. Allah said;

(كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَى أَن تَكْرَهُواْ شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَى أَن تُحِبُّواْ شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لاَ تَعْلَمُونَ)

(Jihad is ordained for you 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.) 2:216

As-Suddi commented,

(وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَكَـرِهُونَ)

(And verily, a party among the believers disliked) to meet the armed idolators. "

(يُجَـدِلُونَكَ فِي الْحَقِّ بَعْدَمَا تَبَيَّنَ)

(Disputing with you concerning the truth after it was made manifest,)

Some have commented, "(Allah says:) they ask and argue with you about Al-Anfal just as they argued with you when you went out for the battle of Badr, saying, `You marched with us to confiscate the caravan. You did not inform us that there will be fighting and that we should prepare for it.'"

(وَيُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَن يُحِقَّ الحَقَّ بِكَلِمَـتِهِ)

(but Allah willed to justify the truth by His Words)

Allah says, `He willed for you to meet the armed enemy rather than the caravan so that He makes you prevail above them and gain victory over them, making His religion apparent and Islam victorious and dominant above all religions. He has perfect knowledge of the consequences of all things, you are surrounded by His wise planning, although people only like what appears favorable to them,'

(كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَى أَن تَكْرَهُواْ شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَى أَن تُحِبُّواْ شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ)

(Jihad (fighting in Allah's cause) 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) 2:216 .

Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that `Abdullah bin `Abbas said, "When the Messenger of Allah heard that Abu Sufyan had left the Sham area (headed towards Makkah with Quraysh's caravan), he encouraged the Muslims to march forth to intercept them, saying,

«هَذِهِ عِيرُ قُرَيْشٍ فِيهَا أَمْوَالُهُمْ، فَاخْرُجُوا إِلَيْهَا لَعَلَّ اللهَ أَن يُّنَفِّلَكُمُوهَا»

(This is the caravan of Quraysh carrying their property, so march forth to intercept it, Allah might make it as war spoils for you.)

The people started mobilizing Muslims, although some of them did not mobilize, thinking that the Prophet would not have to fight. Abu Sufyan was cautiously gathering information on the latest news spying on travelers he met, out of fear for the caravan, especially upon entering the area of Hijaz (Western Arabia). Some travelers told him that Muhammad had mobilized his companions for his caravan. He was anxious and hired Damdam bin `Amr Al-Ghifari to go to Makkah and mobilize the Quraysh to protect their caravan, informing them that Muhammad had mobilized his Companions to intercept the caravan. Damdam bin `Amr went in a hurry to Makkah. Meanwhile, the Messenger of Allah marched with his companions until he reached a valley called Dhafiran. When he left the valley, he camped and was informed that the Quraysh

had marched to protect their caravan. The Messenger of Allah consulted the people for advice and conveyed the news about Quraysh to them. Abu Bakr stood up and said something good, and so did `Umar. Al-Miqdad bin `Amr stood up and said, `O Allah's Messenger! March to what Allah has commanded you, for we are with you. By Allah! We will not say to you what the Children of Israel said to Musa,

(فَاذْهَبْ أَنتَ وَرَبُّكَ فَقَاتِلا إِنَّا هَـهُنَا قَـعِدُونَ)

("So go you and your Lord and fight you two, we are sitting right here") 5:24 . Rather, go you and Your Lord and fight, we will be fighting along with you both. By He Who has sent you with Truth! If you decide to take us to Birk-ul-Ghimad, we will fight along with you until you reach it.' The Messenger of Allah said good words to Al-Miqdad and invoked Allah for his benefit. The Messenger of Allah again said,

«أَشِيرُوا عَلَيَّ أَيُّهَا النَّاس»

(Give me your opinion, O people! wanting to hear from the Ansar. This is because the majority of the people with him then were the Ansar. When the Ansar gave the Prophet their pledge of obedience at Al-`Aqabah, they proclaimed, `O Allah's Messenger! We are not bound by this pledge unless, and until, you arrive in our land. When you have arrived in our area, you are under our protection, and we shall protect you in the same manner we protect our children and wives.' The Messenger of Allah feared that the Ansar might think that they are not obliged to support him except from his enemies who attack Al-Madinah, not to march with him to an enemy in other areas. When the Prophet said this, Sa`d bin Mu`adh asked him, `O Allah's Messenger! Is it us whom you meant' The Prophet answered in the positive. Sa`d said, `We have faith and believed in you, testified that what you brought is the truth, and gave you our pledges and promises of allegiance and obedience. Therefore, march, O Allah's Messenger, for what Allah has commanded you. Verily, by He Who has sent you in Truth, if you decided to cross this sea (the Red Sea), we will follow you in it, and none among us would stay behind. We do not dislike that we meet our enemy tomorrow. Verily, we are patient in war, fierce in battle. May Allah make you witness what makes your eyes pleased with us. Therefore, march with us with the blessing of Allah.' The Messenger of Allah was pleased with what Sa`d said and was encouraged by it. He proclaimed,

«سِيرُوا عَلَى بَرَكَةِ اللهِ وَأَبْشِرُوا فَإِنَّ اللهَ قَدْ وَعَدَنِي إِحْدَى الطَّائِفَتَيْنِ وَاللهِ لَكَأَنِّي الْآنَ أَنْظُرُ إِلَى مَصَارِعِ الْقَوم»

(March with the blessing of Allah and receive the good news. For Allah has indeed promised me one of the two camps (confiscating the caravan or defeating the Quraysh army). By Allah! It is as if I am now looking at the demise of the people (the Quraysh).)"

Al-`Awfi reported similar from Ibn `Abbas. As-Suddi, Qatadah, `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam; and several others among the Salaf and later generations mentioned similarly, We have just summarized the story as Muhammad bin Ishaq briefed it.

(إِذْ تَسْتَغِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ فَاسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ أَنِّي مُمِدُّكُمْ بِأَلْفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَـئِكَةِ مُرْدِفِينَ - وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلاَّ بُشْرَى وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ بِهِ قُلُوبُكُمْ وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلاَّ مِنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ)

(9. (Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you (saying): "I will help you with a thousand of the angels Murdifin.") (10. Allah made it only as glad tidings, and that your hearts be at rest therewith. And there is no victory except from Allah. Verily, Allah is Almighty, All-Wise.)

Muslims invoke Allah for Help, Allah sends the Angels to help Them

Al-Bukhari wrote in the book of battles (in his Sahih) under "Chapter; Allah's statement,

(إِذْ تَسْتَغِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ فَاسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ)

((Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you) until,

(فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ)

(then verily, Allah is severe in punishment)" that Ibn Mas`ud said, "I was a witness to something that Al-Miqdad bin Al-Aswad did, that I would like more than almost anything else to have been the one who did it. Al-Miqdad came to the Prophet while he was invoking Allah against the idolators and proclaimed, `We will not say as the people of Musa said, "So go you and your Lord and fight you two."

Rather, we will fight to your right, to your left, before you and behind you.' I saw the Prophet's face beaming with pleasure because of what Al-Miqdad said to him." Al-Bukhari next narrated from Ibn `Abbas that on the day of Badr, the Prophet said,

«اللَّهُمَّ أَنْشُدُكَ عَهْدَكَ وَوَعْدَكَ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ شِئْتَ لَمْ تُعْبَدْ»

(O Allah! I invoke You for Your covenant and promise (victory). O Allah! If You decide so (cause our defeat), You will not be worshipped.)

Abu Bakr held the Prophet's hand and said, "Enough." The Prophet went out proclaiming,

«سَيُهْزَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّونَ الدُّبُر»

(Their multitude will be put to flight, and they will show their backs.)

An-Nasa'i also collected this Hadith. Allah's statement,

(بِأَلْفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَـئِكَةِ مُرْدِفِينَ)

(with a thousand of the angels Murdifin) means, they follow each other in succession, according to Harun bin Hubayrah who narrated this from Ibn `Abbas about,

(مُرْدِفِينَ)

(Murdifin), meaning each behind the other in succession. `Ali bin Abi Talhah Al-Walibi reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "Allah supported His Prophet and the believers with a thousand angels, five hundred under the leadership of Jibril on one side and five hundred under the leadership of Mika'il on another side." Imams Abu Ja`far bin Jarir At-Tabari and Muslim recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that `Umar said, "While a Muslim man was pursuing an idolator (during the battle of Badr), he heard the sound of a whip above him and a rider saying, `Come, O Hayzum!' Then he looked at the idolator, who fell to the ground. When he investigated, he found that the idolator's nose had wound and his face torn apart, just as if he received a strike from a whip on it, and the entire face had turned green. The Ansari man came to the Messenger of Allah and told him what had happened and the Messenger replied,

«صَدَقْتَ، ذَلِكَ مِنْ مَدَدِ السَّمَاءِ الثَّالِثَة»

(You have said the truth, that was from the reinforcements from the third heaven.)

The Muslims killed seventy (pagans) in that battle and captured another seventy.

Al-Bukhari also wrote a chapter in his Sahih about the participation of the angels in Badr. He collected a Hadith from Rifa`h bin Rafi` Az-Zuraqi, who participated in Badr, Jibril came to the Prophet and asked him, "How honored are those who participated in Badr among you" The Prophet said,

«مِنْ أَفْضَلِ الْمُسْلِمِين»

(Among the best Muslims.) Jibril said, "This is the case with the angels who participated in Badr." Al-Bukhari recorded this Hadith. At-Tabarani also collected it in Al-Mu`jam Al-Kabir, but from Rafi` bin Khadij, which is an apparent mistake. The correct narration is from Rifa`h, as Al-Bukhari recorded it. In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that the Messenger of Allah said to `Umar, when `Umar suggested that the Prophet have Hatib bin Abi Balta`ah executed,

«إِنَّهُ قَدْ شَهِدَ بَدْرًا وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّ اللهَ قَدِ اطَّلَعَ عَلَى أَهْلِ بَدْرٍ فَقَالَ: اعْمَلُوا مَا شِئْتُمْ فَقَدْ غَفَرْتُ لَكُم»

(He Hatib participated in Badr. How do you know that Allah has not looked at the people of Badr and proclaimed, `Do whatever you want, for I have forgiven you.')

Allah said next,

(وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلاَّ بُشْرَى)

(Allah made it only as glad tidings. ..)

Allah made sending down the angels and informing you of this fact as glad tidings,

(وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ بِهِ قُلُوبُكُمْ)

(and that your hearts be at rest therewith.)

Surely, Allah is able to give you (O Muslims) victory over your enemies, and victory only comes from Him, without need to send the angels,

(وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلاَّ مِنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ)

(And there is no victory except from Allah.)

Allah said in another Ayah,

(فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ فَضَرْبَ الرِّقَابِ حَتَّى إِذَآ أَثْخَنتُمُوهُمْ فَشُدُّواْ الْوَثَاقَ فَإِمَّا مَنًّا بَعْدُ وَإِمَّا فِدَآءً

حَتَّى تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ذَلِكَ وَلَوْ يَشَآءُ اللَّهُ لاَنْتَصَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَلَـكِن لِّيَبْلُوَ بَعْضَكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ وَالَّذِينَ قُتِلُواْ فِى سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَن يُضِلَّ أَعْمَـلَهُمْ - سَيَهْدِيهِمْ وَيُصْلِحُ بَالَهُمْ - وَيُدْخِلُهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ عَرَّفَهَا لَهُمْ)

(So, when you meet (in fight in Allah's cause) those who disbelieve, smite (their) necks till when you have killed and wounded many of them, then bind a bond firmly (on them, take them as captives). Thereafter (is the time) either for generosity (free them without ransom), or ransom (according to what benefits Islam), until war lays down its burden. Thus, but if it had been Allah's will, He Himself could certainly have punished them (without you). But (He lets you fight) in order to test some of you with others. But those who are killed in the way of Allah, He will never let their deeds be lost. He will guide them and set right their state. And admit them to Paradise which He has made known to them.) 47:4-6

and,

(إِن يَمْسَسْكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ قَرْحٌ مِّثْلُهُ وَتِلْكَ الاٌّيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنكُمْ شُهَدَآءَ وَاللَّهُ لاَ يُحِبُّ الظَّـلِمِينَ - وَلِيُمَحِّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَيَمْحَقَ الْكَـفِرِينَ)

(And so are the days (good and not so good), that We give to men by turns, that Allah may test those who believe, and that He may take martyrs from among you. And Allah likes not the wrongdoers. And that Allah may test (or purify) the believers (from sins) and destroy the disbelievers.) 3:140-141

These are points of wisdom for which Allah has legislated performing Jihad, by the hands of the believers against the disbelievers. Allah used to destroy the previous nations that denied the Prophets, using various disasters that encompassed these rebellious nations. For instance, Allah destroyed the people of Nuh with the flood, `Ad with the wind, Thamud with the scream, the people of Lut with an earthquake and the people of Shu`ayb by the Day of the Shadow. After Allah sent Musa and destroyed his enemy Fir`awn and his soldiers by drowning, He sent down the Tawrah to him in which He legislated fighting against the disbelievers, and this legislation remained in the successive Laws. Allah said,

(وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَـبَ مِن بَعْدِ مَآ أَهْلَكْنَا الْقُرُونَ الأُولَى بَصَآئِرَ)

(And indeed We gave Musa -- after We had destroyed the generations of old -- the Scripture as an enlightenment.) 28:43

It is more humiliating for the disbeliever and more comforting to the hearts of the faithful that the believers kill the disbelievers by their own hands. Allah said to the believers of this Ummah,

(قَـتِلُوهُمْ يُعَذِّبْهُمُ اللَّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ وَيُخْزِهِمْ وَيَنْصُرْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيَشْفِ صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُّؤْمِنِينَ)

(Fight against them so that Allah will punish them by your hands, and disgrace them, and give you victory over them, and heal the breasts of a believing people.) 9:14

This is why killing the disbelievers of Quraysh by the hand of their enemies, whom they used to despise, was more humiliating to the disbelievers and comforting to the hearts of the party of faith. Abu Jahl, for instance, was killed in battle and this was more humiliating for him than dying in his bed, or from lightening, wind, or similar afflictions. Also, Abu Lahab died from a terrible disease that caused him to stink and none of his relatives could bear approaching him. They had to wash him with water by sprinkling it from a distance, then threw stones over his corpse, until it was buried under them! Allah said next,

(أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ)

(Verily, Allah is All-Mighty,), the might is His, His Messengers and the believers, both in this life and the Hereafter. Allah said in another Ayah,

(إِنَّا لَنَنصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ فِى الْحَيَوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ يَقُومُ الأَشْهَـدُ)

(We will indeed make victorious Our Messengers and those who believe, in this world's life and on the Day when the witnesses will stand forth (Day of Resurrection).) 40:51

Allah said next,

(حَكِيمٌ)

(All-Wise.), in that He legislated fighting the disbeliever, even though He is able to destroy them and bring their demise by His will and power, all praise and honor is due to Him.

(إِذْ يُغَشِّيكُمُ النُّعَاسَ أَمَنَةً مِّنْهُ وَيُنَزِّلُ عَلَيْكُم مِّن السَّمَآءِ مَآءً لِّيُطَهِّرَكُمْ بِهِ وَيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمْ رِجْزَ الشَّيْطَـنِ وَلِيَرْبِطَ عَلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتَ بِهِ الأَقْدَامَ - إِذْ يُوحِى رَبُّكَ إِلَى الْمَلَـئِكَةِ أَنِّي مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُواْ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ سَأُلْقِى فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ الرُّعْبَ فَاضْرِبُواْ فَوْقَ الأَعْنَـقِ وَاضْرِبُواْ مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ - ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَآقُّواْ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ - ذَلِكُمْ فَذُوقُوهُ وَأَنَّ لِلْكَـفِرِينَ عَذَابَ النَّارِ)

(11. (Remember) when He covered you with a slumber as a security from Him, and He caused water (rain) to descend on you from the sky, to clean you thereby and to remove from you the Rijz (whispering or dirt) of Shaytan, and to strengthen your hearts, and make your feet firm thereby.) (12. (Remember) when your Lord revealed to the angels, "Verily, I am with you, so keep firm those who have believed. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who have disbelieved, so strike them over the necks, and smite over all their fingers and toes.") (13. This is because they defied and disobeyed Allah and His Messenger. And whoever defies and disobeys Allah and His Messenger, then verily, Allah is severe in punishment.) (14. This is (the torment), so taste it; and surely, for the disbelievers is the torment of the Fire.)

Slumber overcomes Muslims

Allah reminds the believers of the slumber that He sent down on them as security from the fear they suffered from, because of the multitude of their enemy and the sparseness of their forces. They were given the same favor during the battle of Uhud, which Allah described,

(ثُمَّ أَنزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّن بَعْدِ الْغَمِّ أَمَنَةً نُّعَاساً يَغْشَى طَآئِفَةً مِّنْكُمْ وَطَآئِفَةٌ قَدْ أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ)

(Then after the distress, He sent down security for you. Slumber overtook a party of you, while another party was thinking about themselves.) 3:154

Abu Talhah said, "I was among those who were overcome by slumber during (the battle of) Uhud. The sword fell from my hand several times, and I kept picking it up again, several times. I also saw the Companions' heads nodding while in the rear guard." Al-Hafiz Abu Ya`la narrated that `Ali said, "Only Al-Miqdad had a horse during Badr, and at some point, I found that all of us fell asleep, except the Messenger of Allah . He was praying under a tree and crying until dawn." `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said, "Slumber during battle is security from Allah, but during prayer, it is from Shaytan." Qatadah said, "Slumber affects the head, while sleep affects the heart."

Slumber overcame the believers on the day of Uhud, and this incident is very well-known. As for this Ayah (8:11), it is describing the battle of Badr, indicating that slumber also overcame the believers during Badr. Therefore, it appears that this will occur for the believers, whenever they are in distress, so that their hearts feel safe and sure of Allah's aid, rewards, favor and mercy from Allah with them. Allah said in another Ayah,

(فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْراً - إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْراً)

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

In the Sahih, it is recorded that on the day of Badr, while he was in the bunker with Abu Bakr, the Messenger and Abu Bakr were invoking Allah. Suddenly, slumber overcame the Messenger and he woke up smiling and declared,

«أَبْشِرْ يَا أَبَابَكْرٍ هَذَا جِبْرِيلُ عَلَى ثَنَايَاهُ النَّقْع»

("Good news, O Abu Bakr! This is Jibril with dust on his shoulders."

He left the shade while reciting Allah's statement,

(سَيُهْزَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّونَ الدُّبُرَ)

(Their multitude will be put to flight, and they will show their backs.) 54:45

Rain falls on the Eve of Badr

Allah said next,

(وَيُنَزِّلُ عَلَيْكُم مِّن السَّمَآءِ مَآءً)

(and He caused rain to descend on you from the sky.)

`Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "When the Prophet arrived at Badr, he made camp. At the time, there was a sandy piece of land between the idolators and the water (the wells at Badr). Muslims felt weak and the Shaytan cast frustration into their hearts. He whispered to them, `You claim that you are Allah's supporters and that His Messenger is among you! However, the idolators have taken over the water resource from you, while you pray needing purity.' Allah sent down heavy rain, allowing the Muslims to drink and use it for purity. Allah also removed Shaytan's whisper and made the sand firm when rain fell on it, and the Muslims walked on the sand along with their animals, until they reached the enemy. Allah supported His Prophet and the believers with a thousand angels on one side, five hundred under the command of Jibril and another five hundred under the command of Mika'il on another side."

An even a better narration is that collected by Imam Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar, author of Al-Maghazi, may Allah have mercy upon him. Ibn Ishaq narrated that, Yazid bin Ruwman narrated to him that, `Urwah bin Az-Zubayr said, "Allah sent rain down from the sky on a sandy valley. That rain made the area where the Messenger of Allah and his Companions camped firmer so that it did not hinder their movement. Meanwhile, the part that the Quraysh were camping on became difficult to move in." Mujahid said, "Allah sent down the rain on the believers before slumber overtook them, and the rain settled the dust, made the ground firmer, made them feel at ease and their feet firmer." Allah said next,

(لِّيُطَهِّرَكُمْ بِهِ)

(to clean you thereby) using it after answering the call of nature or needing to wash oneself, and this involves cleansing what is on the out side,

(وَيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمْ رِجْزَ الشَّيْطَـنِ)

(and to remove from you the Rijz of Shaytan,) such as his whispers and evil thoughts, this involves sinner purification, whereas Allah's statement about the residents of Paradise,

(عَـلِيَهُمْ ثِيَابُ سُندُسٍ خُضْرٌ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٌ وَحُلُّواْ أَسَاوِرَ مِن فِضَّةٍ)

(Their garments will be of fine green silk, and gold embroidery. They will be adorned with bracelets of silver) 76:21 involves outer appearance,

(وَسَقَـهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَاباً طَهُوراً)

(and their Lord will give them a pure drink.) 76:21 that purifies the anger, envy and hatred that they might have felt. This is the inner purity. Next, Allah said,

(وَلِيَرْبِطَ عَلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ)

(and to strengthen your hearts,) with patience and to encourage you to fight the enemies, and this is inner courage,

(وَيُثَبِّتَ بِهِ الأَقْدَامَ)

(and make your feet firm thereby). this involves outer courage. Allah know best.

Allah commands the Angels to fight and support the Believers

Allah said next,

(إِذْ يُوحِى رَبُّكَ إِلَى الْمَلَـئِكَةِ أَنِّي مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُواْ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ)

((Remember) when your Lord revealed to the angels, "Verily, I am with you, so keep firm those who have believed.")

This is a hidden favor that Allah has made known to the believers, so that they thank Him and are grateful to Him for it. Allah, glorified, exalted, blessed and praised be He, has revealed to the angels -- whom He sent to support His Prophet, religion and believing group -- to make the believers firmer. Allah's statement,

(سَأُلْقِى فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ الرُّعْبَ)

(I will cast terror into the hearts of those who have disbelieved.) means, `you -- angels -- support the believers, strengthen their (battle) front against their enemies, thus, implementing My command to you. I will cast fear, disgrace and humiliation over those who defied My command and denied My Messenger, f

(فَاضْرِبُواْ فَوْقَ الأَعْنَـقِ وَاضْرِبُواْ مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ)

(so strike them over the necks, and smite over all their fingers and toes.) strike them on their foreheads to tear them apart and over the necks to cut them off, and cut off their limbs, hands and feet. It was said that,

(فَوْقَ الأَعْنَـقِ)

(over the necks) refers to striking the forehead, or the neck, according to Ad-Dahhak and `Atiyyah Al-`Awfi. In support of the latter, Allah commanded the believers,

(فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ فَضَرْبَ الرِّقَابِ حَتَّى إِذَآ أَثْخَنتُمُوهُمْ فَشُدُّواْ الْوَثَاقَ)

(So, when you meet (in fight Jihad in Allah's cause) those who disbelieve, smite (their) necks till when you have killed and wounded many of them, then bind a bond firmly (on them, take them as captives).) 47:4

Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said, "In the aftermath of Badr, the people used to recognize whomever the angels killed from those whom they killed, by the wounds over their necks, fingers and toes, because those parts had a mark as if they were branded by fire." Allah said,

(وَاضْرِبُواْ مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ)

(and smite over all their fingers and toes.)

Ibn Jarir commented that this Ayah commands, "O believers! Strike every limb and finger on the hands and feet of your (disbelieving) enemies." Al-`Awfi reported, that Ibn `Abbas said about the battle of Badr that Abu Jahl said, "Do not kill them (the Muslims), but capture them so that you make known to them what they did, their ridiculing your religion and shunning Al-Lat and Al-`Uzza (two idols)." Allah than sent down to the angels,

(أَنِّي مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُواْ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ سَأُلْقِى فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ الرُّعْبَ فَاضْرِبُواْ فَوْقَ الأَعْنَـقِ وَاضْرِبُواْ مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ)

(Verily, I am with you, so keep firm those who have believed. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who have disbelieved, so strike them over the necks, and smite over all their fingers and toes.)

In that battle, Abu Jahl (may Allah curse him) was killed along with sixty-nine men. `Uqbah bin Abu Mua`it was captured and then killed, thus bring the death toll of the pagans to seventy,

(ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَآقُّواْ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ)

(This is because they defied and disobeyed Allah and His Messenger.) joining the camp that defied Allah and His Messenger not including themselves in the camp of Allah's Law and faith in Him. Allah said,

(وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ)

(And whoever defies and disobeys Allah and His Messenger, then verily, Allah is severe in punishment.) for He will crush whoever defies and disobeys Him. Nothing ever escapes Allah's grasp nor can anything ever stand against His anger. Blessed and exalted He is, there is no true deity or Lord except Him.

(ذَلِكُمْ فَذُوقُوهُ وَأَنَّ لِلْكَـفِرِينَ عَذَابَ النَّارِ)

(This is (the torment), so taste it; and surely, for the disbelievers is the torment of the Fire.)

This Ayah addresses the disbeliever, saying, taste this torment and punishment in this life and know that the torment of the Fire in the Hereafter is for the disbelievers.

(يَـأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ إِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ زَحْفاً فَلاَ تُوَلُّوهُمُ الأَدْبَارَ - وَمَن يُوَلِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ دُبُرَهُ إِلاَّ مُتَحَرِّفاً لِّقِتَالٍ أَوْ مُتَحَيِّزاً إِلَى فِئَةٍ فَقَدْ بَآءَ بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَمَأْوَاهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ)

(15. O you who believe! When you meet those who disbelieve, in a battlefield, never turn your backs to them.) (16. And whoever turns his back to them on such a day -- unless it be a stratagem of war, or to retreat to a troop (of his own) -- he indeed has drawn upon himself wrath from Allah. And his abode is Hell, and worst indeed is that destination!)

Fleeing from Battle is prohibited, and its Punishment

Allah said, while warning against fleeing from the battlefield and threatening those who do it with the Fire,

(يَـأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ إِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ زَحْفاً)

(O you who believe! When you meet those who disbelieve, in a battlefield,) when you get near the enemy and march towards them,

(فَلاَ تُوَلُّوهُمُ الأَدْبَارَ)

(never turn your backs to them.) do not run away from battle and leave your fellow Muslims behind,

(وَمَن يُوَلِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ دُبُرَهُ إِلاَّ مُتَحَرِّفاً لِّقِتَالٍ)

(And whoever turns his back to them on such a day -- unless it be a stratagem of war...)

The Ayah says, whoever flees from the enemy by way of planning to pretend that he is afraid of the enemy, so that they follow him and he takes the chance and returns to kill the enemy, then there is no sin on him. This is the explanation of Sa`id bin Jubayr and As-Suddi. Ad-Dahhak also commented, "Whoever went ahead of his fellow Muslims to investigate the strength of the enemy and make use of it,

(أَوْ مُتَحَيِّزاً إِلَى فِئَةٍ)

(or to retreat to a troop (of his own)), meaning he leaves from here to another troop of Muslims to assist them or be assisted by them. So that is allowed for him, or even during the battle if he flees from his brigade to the commander. Or going to the grand Imam, would also fall under this permission."

`Umar bin Al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him, said about Abu `Ubayd when he was fighting on the bridge in the land of the Persians, because of the many Zoroastrian soldiers, "If he retreated to me then I would be as a troop for him."

This is how it was reported by Muhammad bin Sirin from `Umar. In the report of Abu `Uthman An-Nahdi from `Umar, he said: When Abu `Ubayd was fighting, `Umar said, "O people! We are your troop." Mujahid said that `Umar said, "We are the troop of every Muslim." Abdul-Malik bin `Umayr reported from `Umar, "O people! Don't be confused over this Ayah, it was only about the day of Badr, and we are a troop for every Muslim." Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Nafi` questioned Ibn `Umar, "We are people who are not stationary when fighting our enemy, and we may not know where our troop is, be it that of our Imam or our army."

So he replied, "The troop is Allah's Messenger ." I said but Allah said,

(إِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ زَحْفاًالنَّارِ)

(when you meet those who disbelieve in the battlefield) to the end of the Ayah . So he said; "This Ayah was about Badr, not before it nor after it."

Ad-Dahhak commented that Allah's statement,

(أَوْ مُتَحَيِّزاً إِلَى فِئَةٍ)

(or to retreat to a troop), refers to "Those who retreat to the Messenger of Allah and his Companions (when the Messenger was alive), and those who retreat in the present time to his commander or companions." However, if one flees for any other reason than those mentioned here, then it is prohibited and considered a major sin. Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«اِجْتَنِبُوا السَّبْعَ الْمُوبِقَات»

("Shun the seven great destructive sins.")

The people inquired, "O Allah's Messenger! What are they" He said,

«الشِّرْكُ بِاللهِ وَالسِّحْرُ وَقَتْلُ النَّفْسِ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَكْلُ الرِّبَا وَأَكْلُ مَالِ الْيَتِيمِ وَالتَّوَلِّي يَوْمَ الزَّحْفِ وَقَذْفُ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْغَافِلَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَات»

((They are:) Joining others in worship with Allah, magic taking life which Allah has forbidden, except for a just cause (according to Islamic law), consuming Riba, consuming an orphan's wealth, fleeing the battlefield at the time of fighting, and false accusation to chaste women, who never even think of anything touching chastity and are good believers.)

This is why Allah said here,

(فَقَدْ بَآءَ)

(he indeed has drawn upon himself...), and returned with,

(بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَمَأْوَاهُ)

(wrath from Allah. And his abode...), destination, and dwelling place on the Day of Return,

(جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ)

(is Hell, and worst indeed is that destination!)

(فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَـكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَـكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَى وَلِيُبْلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلاَءً حَسَنًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ - ذلِكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مُوهِنُ كَيْدِ الْكَـفِرِينَ)

(17. You killed them not, but Allah killed them. And you threw not when you did throw, but Allah threw, that He might test the believers by a fair trial from Him. Verily, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower). (18. This (is the fact) and surely Allah weakens the deceitful plots of the disbelievers.)

Allah's Signs displayed during Badr, And throwing Sand in the Eyes of the Disbelievers

Allah states that He creates the actions that the servants perform and that whatever good actions they take, it is He Who should be praised for them, for He directed and helped them perform these actions. Allah said,

(فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَـكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ)

(You killed them not, but Allah killed them.) meaning, it is not because of your power and strength that you killed the pagans, who were many while you were few. Rather, it is He Who gave you victory over them, just as He said in another Ayah,

(وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ)

(And Allah has already made you victorious at Badr, when you were a weak little force.) 3:123 , and,

(لَّقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ فِى مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرَةٍ وَيَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ إِذْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ كَثْرَتُكُمْ فَلَمْ تُغْنِ عَنكُمْ شَيْئاً وَضَاقَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ ثُمَّ وَلَّيْتُم مُّدْبِرِينَ)

(Truly, Allah has given you victory on many battlefields, and on the day of Hunayn when you rejoiced at your great number, but it availed you naught and the earth, vast as it is, was straitened for you, then you turned back in flight.) 9:25

Allah, the Exalted and Ever High, states that victory does not depend on numbers or collecting weapons and shields. Rather, victory is from Him, Exalted He is.

(كَم مِّن فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّـبِرِينَ)

(How often has a small group overcome a mighty host by Allah's leave" And Allah is with the patient.) 2:249

Allah then mentioned the handful of sand that His Prophet threw at the disbelievers during the day of Badr, when he went out of his bunker. While in the bunker, the Prophet invoked Allah humbly and expressing his neediness before Allah. He then threw a handful of sand at the disbelievers and said,

«شَاهَتِ الْوُجُوه»

(Humiliated be their faces.) He then commanded his Companions to start fighting with sincerity and they did. Allah made this handful of sand enter the eyes of the idolators, each one of them were struck by some of it and it distracted them making each of them busy. Allah said,

(وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَـكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَى)

(And you threw not when you did throw, but Allah threw.)

Therefore, it is Allah Who made the sand reach their eyes and busied them with it, not you (O Muhammad) .

Muhammad bin Ishaq said that Muhammad bin Ja`far bin Az-Zubayr narrated to him that `Urwah bin Az-Zubayr said about Allah's statement,

(وَلِيُبْلِىَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلاَءً حَسَنًا)

(that He might test the believers by a fair trial from Him.) "So that the believers know Allah's favor for them by giving them victory over their enemy, even though their enemy was numerous, while they were few. They should thus know His right and express gratitude for His favor on them." Similar was said by Ibn Jarir. It is stated in a Hadith,

«وَكُلَّ بَلَاءٍ حَسَنٍ أَبْلَانَا»

(Every trail (from Allah) is a favor for us.)

Allah said next,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ)

(Verily, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.)

Allah hears the supplication and knows those who deserve help and triumph. Allah said,

(ذلِكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مُوهِنُ كَيْدِ الْكَـفِرِينَ)

(This (is the fact) and surely Allah weakens the deceitful plots of the disbelievers.) This is more good news, aside from the victory that the believers gained. Allah informed them that He will weaken the plots of the disbelievers in the future, degrade them and make everything they have perish and be destroyed, all praise and thanks are due to Allah.

(إِن تَسْتَفْتِحُواْ فَقَدْ جَآءَكُمُ الْفَتْحُ وَإِن تَنتَهُواْ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَإِن تَعُودُواْ نَعُدْ وَلَن تُغْنِىَ عَنكُمْ فِئَتُكُمْ شَيْئاً وَلَوْ كَثُرَتْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(19. (O disbelievers) if you ask for a judgement, now has the judgement come unto you; and if you cease (to do wrong), it will be better for you, and if you return (to the attack), so shall We return, and your forces will be of no avail to you, however numerous they be; and verily, Allah is with the believers.)

The Response to the Disbelievers Who ask for a Judgement

Allah says to the disbeliever,

(إِن تَسْتَفْتِحُواْ)

(If you ask for a judgement), you invoked Allah for victory, judgement and a decision between you and your believing nemesis, and you got what you asked for. Muhammad bin Ishaq and several others reported from Az-Zuhri from `Abdullah bin Tha`labah bin Su`ayr who said that Abu Jahl said on the day of Badr, "O Allah! Whichever of the two camps (pagans and Muslims) severed the relation of the womb and brought us what is not familiar, then destroy him this day." This Ayah was later on revealed,

(إِن تَسْتَفْتِحُواْ فَقَدْ جَآءَكُمُ الْفَتْحُ)

(If you ask for a judgement, then now has the judgement come unto you,) until the end of the Ayah. Imam Ahmad recorded that `Abdullah bin Tha`labah said, "Abu Jahl asked for (Allah's judgment) when he said upon facing the Muslims, `O Allah! Those among us who severed the relations of the womb and brought forth what we do not recognize, then destroy him this day.'" This was also recorded by An-Nasa'i in the Book of Tafsir (of his Sunan) and Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak, and he said, "It is Sahih according to the criteria of the Two Shaykhs, and they did not record it. ". Similar statements were reported from Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Ad-Dahhak, Qatadah, Yazid bin Ruwman and several others. As-Suddi commented, "Before the idolators left Makkah for Badr, they clung to the curtains covering the Ka`bah and supplicated to Allah for victory, `O Allah! Give victory to the exalted among the two armies, the most honored among the two groups, and the most righteous among the two tribes.' Allah revealed the Ayah, F

(إِن تَسْتَفْتِحُواْ فَقَدْ جَآءَكُمُ الْفَتْحُ)

(If you ask for a judgement, then now has the judgement come unto you.) Allah says here, `I accepted your supplication and Muhammad gained the victory.'"

`Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said; "This is Allah the Most High's answer to their supplication;

(وَإِذْ قَالُواْ اللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَ هَـذَا هُوَ الْحَقَّ مِنْ عِندِكَ)

(And (remember) when they said: "O Allah! If this is indeed the truth from you..)" 8:32

Allah said next,

(وَإِن تَنتَهُواْ)

(and if you cease...) from your disbelief and rejection of Allah and His Messenger ,

(فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ)

(it will be better for you), in this life and the Hereafter. Allah said,

(وَإِن تَعُودُواْ نَعُدْ)

(and if you return, so shall We return...) This is similar to another Ayah,

(وَإِنْ عُدتُّمْ عُدْنَا)

(but if you return (to sins), We shall return (to Our punishment).) 17:8 meaning, `if you persist in your disbelief and misguidance, We shall repeat the defeat that you suffered,'

(وَلَن تُغْنِىَ عَنكُمْ فِئَتُكُمْ شَيْئاً وَلَوْ كَثُرَتْ)

(and your forces will be of no avail to you, however numerous they be...) for even if you gather whatever forces you can, then know that those whom Allah is with cannot be defeated,

(وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(and verily, Allah is with the believers.) in reference to the Prophet's group, the side of the chosen Messenger .

(يأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ أَطِيعُواْ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلاَ تَوَلَّوْاْ عَنْهُ وَأَنتُمْ تَسْمَعُونَ - وَلاَ تَكُونُواْ كَالَّذِينَ قَالُواْ سَمِعْنَا وَهُمْ لاَ يَسْمَعُونَ - إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِندَ اللَّهِ الصُّمُّ الْبُكْمُ الَّذِينَ لاَ يَعْقِلُونَ - وَلَوْ عَلِمَ

اللَّهُ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا لأَسْمَعَهُمْ وَلَوْ أَسْمَعَهُمْ لَتَوَلَّواْ وَّهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ)

(20. O you who believe! Obey Allah and His Messenger, and turn not away from him while you are hearing.) (21. And be not like those who say: "We have heard," but they hear not.) (22. Verily, the worst of living creatures with Allah are the deaf and the dumb (the disbelievers), who understand not.) (23. Had Allah known of any good in them, He would indeed have made them listen; and even if He had made them listen, they would but have turned away with aversion.)

The Command to obey Allah and His Messenger

Allah commands His believing servants to obey Him and His Messenger and warns them against defying him and imitating the disbelievers who reject him. Allah said,

(وَلاَ تَوَلَّوْاْ عَنْهُ)

(and turn not away from him...), neither refrain from obeying him or following his commands nor indulge in what he forbade,

(وَأَنتُمْ تَسْمَعُونَ)

(while you are hearing.) after you gained knowledge of his Message,

(وَلاَ تَكُونُواْ كَالَّذِينَ قَالُواْ سَمِعْنَا وَهُمْ لاَ يَسْمَعُونَ)

(And be not like those who say: "We have heard," but they hear not.)

Ibn Ishaq said that this Ayah refers to the hypocrites, who pretend to hear and obey, while in fact they do neither. Allah declares that these are the most wicked creatures among the Children of Adam,

(إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِندَ اللَّهِ الصُّمُّ)

(Verily, the worst of living creatures with Allah are the deaf) who do not hear the truth,

(الْبُكْمُ)

(and the dumb) who cannot comprehend it,

(الَّذِينَ لاَ يَعْقِلُونَ)

(who understand not.) These indeed are the most wicked creatures, for every creature except them abide by the way that Allah created in them. These people were created to worship Allah, but instead disbelieved. This is why Allah equated them to animals, when He said,

(وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِى يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لاَ يَسْمَعُ إِلاَّ دُعَآءً وَنِدَآءً)

(And the example of those who disbelieve is as that of him who shouts to those that hear nothing but calls and cries.) 2:171 , and,

(أُوْلَـئِكَ كَالأَنْعَمِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُوْلَـئِكَ هُمُ الْغَـفِلُونَ)

(They are like cattle, nay even more astray; those! They are the heedless ones.) 7:179

It was also said that the Ayah (8:22) refers to some of the pagans of Quraysh from the tribe of Bani `Abd Ad-Dar, according to Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid and Ibn Jarir. Muhammad bin Ishaq said that this Ayah refers to hypocrites, as we stated. There is no contradiction here, because both disbelievers and hypocrites are devoid of sound comprehension, in addition to having lost the intention to do good. Allah states here that such are those who neither have sound understanding nor good intentions, even if they have some type of reason,

(وَلَوْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا لأَسْمَعَهُمْ)

(Had Allah known of any good in them, He would indeed have made them listen.)

He would have helped them understand. However, this did not happen because there is no goodness in such people, for Allah knows that,

(وَلَوْ أَسْمَعَهُمْ)

(even if He had made them listen...) and allowed them to understand,

(لَّتَوَلَّواْ)

(they would but have turned...), intentionally and out of stubbornness, even after they comprehend,

(وَهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ)

(with aversion.), to the truth.

(يأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ اسْتَجِيبُواْ لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ وَاعْلَمُواْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَأَنَّهُ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ)

(24. O you who believe! Answer Allah and (His) Messenger when he (the Messenger) calls you to that which will give you life, and know that Allah comes between a person and his heart. And verily to Him you shall (all) be gathered.)

The Command to answer and obey Allah and His Messenger

Al-Bukhari said,

(اسْتَجِيبُواْ)

"(Answer), obey,

(لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ)

(that which will give you life) that which will make your affairs good." Al-Bukhari went on to narrate that Abu Sa`id bin Al-Mu`alla said, "I was praying when the Prophet passed by and called me, but I did not answer him until I finished the prayer. He said,

«مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تَأْتِيَنِي؟ أَلَمْ يَقُلِ اللَّهُ:

(What prevented you from answering me Has not Allah said:

(يأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ اسْتَجِيبُواْ لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ)

(O you who believe! Answer Allah and (His) Messenger when he calls you to that which will give you life)' He then said:

«لَأُعَلِّمَنَّكَ أَعْظَمَ سُورَةٍ فِي الْقُرآنِ قَبْلَ أَنْ أَخْرُجَ»

(I will teach you the greatest Suah in the Qur'an before I leave.) When he was about to leave, I mentioned what he said to me. He said,

(الْحَمْدُ للَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَـلَمِينَ)

(All the praises and thanks are to Allah, the Lord of all that exists...) 1:1-6 .

«هِيَ السَّبْعُ الْمَثَانِي»

(Surely, it is the seven oft-repeated verses.)'" Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated that Muhammad bin Ja`far bin Az-Zubayr said that `Urwah bin Az-Zubayr explained this Ayah,

(يأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ اسْتَجِيبُواْ لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ)

(O you who believe! Answer Allah and (His) Messenger when he calls you to that which will give you life,) "Answer when called to war (Jihad) with which Allah gives you might after meekness, and strength after weakness, and shields you from the enemy who oppressed you."

Allah comes in between a Person and His Heart

Allah said,

(وَاعْلَمُواْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ)

(and know that Allah comes in between a person and his heart.)

Ibn `Abbas commented, "Allah prevents the believer from disbelief and the disbeliever from faith." Al-Hakim recorded this in his Mustadrak and said, "It is Sahih and they did not record it." . Similar was said by Mujahid, Sa`id, `Ikrimah, Ad-Dahhak, Abu Salih `Atiyyah, Muqatil bin Hayyan and As-Suddi. In another report from Mujahid, he commented;

(يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ)

(...comes in between a person and his heart.) "Leaves him without comprehension," As-Suddi said, "Prevents one self from his own heart, so he will neither believe nor disbelieve except by His leave." There are several Hadiths that conform with the meaning of this Ayah. For instance, Imam Ahmad recorded that Anas bin Malik said, "The Prophet used to often say these words,

«يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِك»

(O You Who changes the hearts, make my heart firm on Your religion.) We said, `O Allah's Messenger! We believed in you and in what you brought us. Are you afraid for us' He said,

«نَعَمْ، إِنَّ الْقُلُوبَ بَيْنَ إِصْبَعَيْنِ مِنْ أَصَابِعِ اللهِ تَعَالَى يُقَلِّبُهَا»

(Yes, for the hearts are between two of Allah's Fingers, He changes them (as He wills).)"

This is the same narration recorded by At-Tirmidhi in the Book of Qadar in his Jami' Sunan , and he said, "Hasan." Imam Ahmad recorded that An-Nawwas bin Sam`an Al-Kilabi said that he heard the Prophet saying,

«مَا مِنْ قَلْبٍ إِلَّا وَهُوَ بَيْنَ أُصْبُعَيْنِ مِنْ أَصَابِعِ الرَّحْمَنِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ إِذَا شَاءَ أَنْ يُقِيمَهُ أَقَامَهُ وَإِذَا شَاءَ أَنْ يُزِيغَهُ أَزَاغَه»

(Every heart is between two of the Fingers of the Most Beneficent (Allah), Lord of all that exists, if He wills, He makes it straight, and if He wills, He makes it stray.)

And he said:

«يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِك»

(O You Who changes the hearts! keep my heart firm on Your religion) And he would say;

«وَالْمِيزَانُ بِيَدِ الرَّحْمنِ يَخْفِضُهُ وَيَرْفَعُه»

(The Balance is in the Hand of Ar-Rahman, He raises and lowers it.)

This was also recorded by An-Nasai and Ibn Majah.

(وَاتَّقُواْ فِتْنَةً لاَّ تُصِيبَنَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ مِنكُمْ خَآصَّةً وَاعْلَمُواْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ)

(25. And fear the Fitnah (affliction and trial) which affects not in particular (only) those of you who do wrong, and know that Allah is severe in punishment.)

Warning against an encompassing Fitnah

Allah warns His believing servants of a Fitnah, trial and test, that encompasses the wicked and those around them. Therefore, such Fitnah will not be restricted to the sinners and evildoers. Rather, it will reach the others if the sins are not stopped and prevented. Imam Ahmad recorded that Mutarrif said, "We asked Az-Zubayr, `O Abu `Abdullah! What brought you here (for the battle of Al-Jamal) You abandoned the Khalifah who was assassinated (`Uthman, may Allah be pleased with him) and then came asking for revenge for his blood' He said, `We recited at the time of the Messenger of Allah , and Abu Bakr, `Umar and `Uthman,

(وَاتَّقُواْ فِتْنَةً لاَّ تُصِيبَنَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ مِنكُمْ خَآصَّةً)

(And fear the Fitnah (affliction and trial) which affects not in particular (only) those of you who do wrong,) We did not think that this Ayah was about us too, until it reached us as it did.'" `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah,

(وَاتَّقُواْ فِتْنَةً لاَّ تُصِيبَنَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ مِنكُمْ خَآصَّةً)

(And fear the Fitnah (affliction and trial) which affects not in particular (only) those of you who do wrong,) refers to the Companions of the Prophet in particular. In another narration from Ibn `Abbas, he said, "Allah commanded the believers to stop evil from flourishing among them, so

that Allah does not encompass them all in the torment (Fitnah). " This, indeed, is a very good explanation, prompting Mujahid to comment about Allah's statement,

(وَاتَّقُواْ فِتْنَةً لاَّ تُصِيبَنَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ مِنكُمْ خَآصَّةً)

(And fear the Fitnah (affliction and trial) which affects not in particular (only) those of you who do wrong,)

"Is for you too!" Several said similarly, such as Ad-Dahhak and Yazid bin Abi Habib and several others. Ibn Mas`ud said, "There is none among you but there is something that represents a Fitnah for him, for Allah said,

(إِنَّمَآ أَمْوَلُكُمْ وَأَوْلَـدُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ)

(Your wealth and your children are only a trial (Fitnah)...) 64:15 . Therefore, when you seek refuge, seek it with Allah from the Fitnah that causes misguidance." Ibn Jarir collected this Hadith. The view that the warning in this Ayah addresses the Companions and all others is true, even though the speech in the Ayah was directed at the Companions. There are Hadiths that warn against Fitnah in general, thus providing the correctness of this explanation. Similarly there will be a separate book in which this subject will be discussed, Allah willing, as also is the case with the Imams, there being a number of writings about this. Of the most precise things that have been mentioned under this topic, is what was recorded by Imam Ahmad from Hudhayfah bin Al-Yaman that the Messenger of Allah said,

«وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَتَأْمُرُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلَتَنْهَوُنَّ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ أَوْ لَيُوشِكَنَّ اللهُ أَنْ يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عِقَابًا مِنْ عِنْدِهِ ثُمَّ لَتَدْعُنَّهُ فَلَا يَسْتَجِيبُ لَكُم»

(By He in Whose Hand is my soul! You will enjoin righteousness and forbid evil, or Allah will send a punishment upon you from Him; you will supplicate then to Him, but He will not answer your supplication.)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Ar-Riqad said, "I heard Hudhayfah saying, `A person used to utter one word during the time of the Messenger of Allah and become a hypocrite on account of it. I now hear such words from one of you four times in the same sitting. Surely, you will enjoin good, forbid evil and encourage each other to do good or Allah will surround you all with torment, or make the wicked among you become your leaders. The righteous among you will then supplicate, but their supplication will not be accepted.'" slmam Ahmad recorded that An-Nu`man bin Bashir said that the Prophet gave a speech in which he said, while pointing to his ears with two of his fingers,

«مَثَلُ الْقَائِمِ عَلَى حُدُودِ اللهِ وَالْوَاقِعِ فِيهَا وَالْمُدَاهِنِ فِيهَا كَمَثَلِ قَوْمٍ رَكِبُوا سَفِينَةً فَأَصَابَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَسْفَلَهَا وَأَوْعَرَهَا وَشَرَّهَا وَأَصَابَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَعْلَاهَا فَكَانَ الَّذِينَ فِي أَسْفَلِهَا إِذَا اسْتَقَوُا الْمَاءَ مَرُّوا عَلَى مَنْ فَوقَهُمْ فَآذَوْهُمْ فَقَالُوا: لَوْ خَرَقْنَا فِي نَصِيبِنَا خَرْقًا فَاسْتَقَيْنَا مِنْهُ وَلَمْ نُؤْذِ مَنْ فَوْقَنَا: فَإِنْ تَرَكُوهُمْ وَأَمْرَهُمْ هَلَكُوا جَمِيعًا وَإِنْ أَخَذُوا عَلَى أَيْدِيهِمْ نَجَوْا جَمِيعًا»

(The parable of the person abiding by Allah's order and restrictions in comparison to those who violate them, or sit idle while they are being violated, is that of those who drew lots for their seats in a boat. Some of them got seats in the lower part, which is the most rough and worst part, and the others in the upper. When the former needed water, they had to go up to bring water and that troubled the others, so they said, `Let us make a hole in our share of the ship and get water, saving those who are above us from troubling them, so, if the people in the upper part let the others do what they suggested, all the people of the ship would be destroyed, but if they prevented them, both parties would be safe.)

This was recorded by Al-Bukhari, but not Muslim, in the Book of Partnerships and the Book of Witnesses. It was also recorded by At-Tirmidhi through a different route of narration.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Umm Salamah, the Prophet's wife, said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah saying,

«إِذَا ظَهَرَتِ الْمَعَاصِي فِي أُمَّتِي عَمَّهُمُ اللهُ بِعَذَابٍ مِنْ عِنْدِه»

(If sins become apparent in my Ummah, Allah will surround them with punishment from Him.) I said, `O Allah's Messenger! Will they have righteous people among them then' He said,

«بَلَى»

(Yes.) I asked, `What will happen to them' He said,

«يُصِيبُهُمْ مَا أَصَابَ النَّاسَ ثُمَّ يَصِيرُونَ إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِنَ اللهِ وَرِضْوَان»

(They will be striken as the people, but they will end up with Allah's forgiveness and pleasure.)"

Imam Ahmad recorded that Jarir said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَا مِنْ قَوْمٍ يُعْمَلُ فِيهِمْ بِالْمَعَاصِي هُمْ أَعَزُّ وَأَكْثَرُ مِمَّنْ يَعْمَلُونَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يُغَيِّرُوهُ إِلَّا عَمَّهُمُ اللهُ بِعِقَاب»

(Every people among whom sins are being committed, while they are mightier and more numerous than those who do wrong, yet they did nothing to stop them, then Allah will surround them all with punishment.)

Ibn Majah collected this Hadith.

(وَاذْكُرُواْ إِذْ أَنتُمْ قَلِيلٌ مُّسْتَضْعَفُونَ فِى الأَرْضِ تَخَافُونَ أَن يَتَخَطَّفَكُمُ النَّاسُ فَآوَاكُمْ وَأَيَّدَكُم بِنَصْرِهِ وَرَزَقَكُم مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ)

(26. And remember when you were few and were reckoned weak in the land, and were afraid that men might kidnap you, but He provided a safe place for you, strengthened you with His help, and provided you with good things (for livelihood) so that you might be grateful.)

Reminding Muslims of Their previous State of Weakness and Subjugation which changed into Might and Triumph

Allah, the Exalted, reminds His believing servants of His blessings and favors on them. They were few and He made them many, weak and fearful and He provided them with strength and victory. They were meek and poor, and He granted them sustenance and livelihood. He ordered them to be grateful to Him, and they obeyed Him and implemented what He commanded.

When the believers were still in Makkah they were few, practicing their religion in secret, oppressed, fearing that pagans, fire worshippers or Romans might kidnap them from the various

parts of Allah's earth, for they were all enemies of the Muslims, especially since Muslims were few and weak. Later on, Allah permitted the believers to migrate to Al-Madinah, where He allowed them to settle in a safe resort. Allah made the people of Al-Madinah their allies, giving them refuge and support during Badr and other battles. They helped the Migrants with their wealth and gave up their lives in obedience of Allah and His Messenger . Qatadah bin Di`amah As-Sadusi commented,

(وَاذْكُرُواْ إِذْ أَنتُمْ قَلِيلٌ مُّسْتَضْعَفُونَ فِى الأَرْضِ)

(And remember when you were few and were reckoned weak in the land,)

"Arabs were the weakest of the weak, had the toughest life, the emptiest stomachs, the barest skin and the most obvious misguidance. Those who lived among them lived in misery; those who died went to the Fire. They were being eaten up, but unable to eat up others! By Allah! We do not know of a people on the face of the earth at that time who had a worse life than them. When Allah brought Islam, He made it dominant on the earth, thus bringing provisions and leadership for them over the necks of people. It is through Islam that Allah granted all what you see, so thank Him for His favors, for your Lord is One Who bestows favors and likes praise. Verily, those who thank Allah enjoy even more bounties from Him."

(يأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لاَ تَخُونُواْ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُواْ أَمَـنَـتِكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ - وَاعْلَمُواْ أَنَّمَآ أَمْوَلُكُمْ وَأَوْلَـدُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عِندَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ)

(27. O you who believe! Betray not Allah and His Messenger, nor betray knowingly your Amanat (things entrusted to you)). (28. And know that your possessions and your children are but a trial and that surely, with Allah is a mighty reward.)

Reason behind revealing This Ayah, and the prohibition of Betrayal

The Two Sahihs mention the story of Hatib bin Abi Balta`ah. In the year of the victory of Makkah he wrote to the Quraysh alerting them that the Messenger of Allah intended to march towards them. Allah informed His Messenger of this, and he sent a Companion to retrieve the letter that Hatib sent, and then he summoned him. He admitted to what he did. `Umar bin Al-Khattab stood up and said, "O Allah's Messenger! Should I cut off his head, for he has betrayed Allah, His Messenger and the believers" The Prophet said,

«دَعْهُ فَإِنَّهُ قَدْ شَهِدَ بَدْرًا، وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّ اللهَ اطَّلَعَ عَلَى أَهْلِ بَدْرٍ فَقَالَ: اعْمَلُوا مَا شِئْتُمْ فَقَدْ غَفَرْتُ لَكُم»

(Leave him! He participated in Badr. How do you know that Allah has not looked at those who participated in Badr and said, Do whatever you want, for I have forgiven you.)

However, it appears that this Ayah is more general, even if it was revealed about a specific incident. Such rulings are dealt with by their indications, not the specific reasons behind revealing them, according to the majority of scholars.

Betrayal includes both minor and major sins, as well those that affect others. `Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas commented on the Ayah,

(وَتَخُونُواْ أَمَـنَـتِكُمْ)

(nor betray your Amanat) "The Amanah refers to the actions that Allah has entrusted the servants with, such as and including what He ordained. Therefore, Allah says here,

(لاَ تَخُونُواْ)

(nor betray...), `do not abandon the obligations.'" `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd commented, "Allah forbade you from betraying Him and His Messenger, as hypocrites do."

Allah said,

(وَاعْلَمُواْ أَنَّمَآ أَمْوَلُكُمْ وَأَوْلَـدُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ)

(And know that your possessions and your children are but a trial.) from Him to you. He grants these to you so that He knows which of you will be grateful and obedient to Him, or become busy with and dedicated to them instead of Him. Allah said in another Ayah,

(إِنَّمَآ أَمْوَلُكُمْ وَأَوْلَـدُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ)

(Your wealth and your children are only a trial, whereas Allah! With Him is a great reward.) 64:15 ,

(وَنَبْلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً)

(And We shall make a trial of you with evil and with good.) 21:35 ,

(يأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لاَ تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَلُكُمْ وَلاَ أَوْلَـدُكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَأُوْلَـئِكَ هُمُ الْخَـسِرُونَ)

(O you who believe! Let not your properties or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. And whosoever does that, then they are the losers.) 63:9 , and,

(يأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ إِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَجِكُمْ وَأَوْلَـدِكُمْ عَدُوّاً لَّكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُمْ)

(O you who believe! Verily, among your wives and your children there are enemies for you (who may stop you from the obedience of Allah); therefore beware of them!) 64:14 Allah said next,

(وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عِندَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ)

(And that surely with Allah is a mighty reward.) Therefore, Allah's reward, favor and Paradise are better for you than wealth and children. Certainly, among the wealth and children there might be enemies for you and much of them avail nothing. With Allah alone is the decision and sovereignty in this life and the Hereafter, and He gives tremendous rewards on the Day of Resurrection. In the Sahih, there is a Hadith in which the Messenger of Allah said,

«ثَلَاثٌ مَنْ كُنَّ فِيهِ، وَجَدَ بِهِنَّ حَلَاوَةَ الْإِيمَانِ: مَنْ كَانَ اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِمَّا سِوَاهُمَا، وَمَنْ كَانَ يُحِبُّ الْمَرْءَ لَا يُحِبُّهُ إِلَّا للهِ، وَمَنْ كَانَ أَنْ

يُلْقَى فِي النَّارِ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ أَنْ يَرْجِعَ إِلَى الْكُفْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْقَذَهُ اللهُ مِنْه»

(There are three qualities for which whomever has them, he will have tasted the sweetness of faith. (They are:) whoever Allah and His Messenger are dearer to him than anyone else, whoever loves a person for Allah's sake alone, and whoever prefers to be thrown in fire rather than revert to disbelief, after Allah has saved him from it.)

Therefore, loving the Messenger of Allah comes before loving children, wealth and oneself. In the Sahih, it is confirmed that he said,

«وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى أَكُونَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ وَأَهْلِهِ وَمَالِهِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِين»

(By He in Whose Hand is my soul! None of you will have faith unless I become dearer to him than himself, his family, his wealth and all people.)

(يـأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ إِن تَتَّقُواْ اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّكُمْ فُرْقَانًا وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّئَـتِكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ)

(29. O you who believe! If you obey and fear Allah, He will grant you Furqan, and will expiate for you your sins, and forgive you; and Allah is the Owner of the great bounty.)

Ibn `Abbas, As-Suddi, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Ad-Dahhak, Qatadah, Muqatil bin Hayyan and several others said that,

(فُرْقَانًا)

(Furqan), means, `a way out'; Mujahid added, "In this life and the Hereafter." In another narration, Ibn `Abbas is reported to have said, `Furqan' means `salvation' or -- according to another narration -- `aid'. Muhammad bin Ishaq said that `Furqan' means `criterion between truth and falsehood'. This last explanation from Ibn Ishaq is more general than the rest that we mentioned, and it also includes the other meanings. Certainly, those who have Taqwa of Allah by obeying what He ordained and abstaining from what he forbade, will be guided to

differentiate between the truth and the falsehood. This will be a triumph, safety and a way out for them from the affairs of this life, all the while acquiring happiness in the Hereafter. They will also gain forgiveness, thus having their sins erased, and pardon, thus having their sins covered from other people, as well as, being directed to a way to gain Allah's tremendous rewards,

(يأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ اتَّقُواْ اللَّهَ وَءَامِنُواْ بِرَسُولِهِ يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِن رَّحْمَتِهِ وَيَجْعَل لَّكُمْ نُوراً تَمْشُونَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ)

(O you who believe! Have Taqwa of Allah, and believe in His Messenger, He will give you a double portion of His mercy, and He will give you a light by which you shall walk (straight). And He will forgive you. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) 57:28 .

(وَإِذْ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ لِيُثْبِتُوكَ أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَـكِرِينَ)

(30. And (remember) when the disbelievers plotted against you to imprison you, or to kill you, or to expel you (from your home, Makkah); they were plotting and Allah too was plotting; and Allah is the best of plotters.)

The Makkans plot to kill the Prophet , imprison Him or expel Him from Makkah

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid and Qatadah said,

(لِيُثْبِتُوكَ)

(Liyuthbituka) means "to imprison you." As-Suddi said, "Ithbat is to confine or to shackle."

Imam Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar, the author of Al-Maghazi, reported from `Abdullah bin Abi Najih, from Mujahid, from Ibn `Abbas, "Some of the chiefs of the various tribes of Quraysh gathered in Dar An-Nadwah (their conference area) and Iblis (Shaytan) met them in the shape of an eminent old man. When they saw him, they asked, `Who are you' He said, `An old man from Najd. I heard that you are having a meeting, and I wished to attend your meeting. You will benefit from my opinion and advice.' They said, `Agreed, come in.' He entered with them.

Iblis said, `You have to think about this man (Muhammad)! By Allah, he will soon overwhelm you with his matter (religion).' One of them said, `Imprison him, restrained in chains, until he dies just like the poets before him all died, such as Zuhayr and An-Nabighah! Verily, he is a poet like they were.' The old man from Najd, the enemy of Allah, commented, `By Allah! This is not a good idea. His Lord will release him from his prison to his companions, who will liberate him from your hands. They will protect him from you and they might expel you from your land.' They said, `This old man said the truth. Therefore, seek an opinion other than this one.'

Another one of them said, `Expel him from your land, so that you are free from his trouble! If he leaves your land, you will not be bothered by what he does or where he goes, as long as he is not among you to bring you troubles, he will be with someone else.' The old man from Najd replied, `By Allah! This is not a good opinion. Have you forgotten his sweet talk and eloquency, as well as, how his speech captures the hearts By Allah! This way, he will collect even more followers among Arabs, who will gather against you and attack you in your own land, expel you and kill your chiefs.' They said, `He has said the truth, by Allah! Therefore, seek an opinion other than this one.' hAbu Jahl, may Allah curse him, spoke next, `By Allah! I have an idea that no one else has suggested yet, and I see no better opinion for you. Choose a strong, socially elevated young man from each tribe, and give each one of them a sharp sword. Then they would all strike Muhammad at the same time with their swords and kill him. Hence, his blood would be shed by all tribes. This way, his tribe, Banu Hashim, would realize that they cannot wage war against all of the Quraysh tribes and would be forced to agree to accept the blood money; we would have brought comfort to ourselves and stopped him from bothering us.'

The old man from Najd commented, `By Allah! This man has expressed the best opinion, and I do not support any other opinion.' They quickly ended their meeting and started preparing for the implementation of this plan.

Jibril came to the Prophet and commanded him not to sleep in his bed that night and conveyed to him the news of their plot. The Messenger of Allah did not sleep in his house that night, and Allah gave him permission to migrate. After the Messenger migrated to Al-Madinah, Allah revealed to him Suat Al-Anfal reminding him of His favors and the bounties He gave him,

(وَإِذْ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ لِيُثْبِتُوكَ أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَـكِرِينَ)

(And (remember) when the disbelievers plotted against you to imprison you, or to kill you, or to expel you (from Makkah); they were plotting and Allah too was plotting; and Allah is the best of plotters.)

Allah replied to the pagans' statement that they should await the death of the Prophet , just as the poets before him perished, as they claimed,

(أَمْ يَقُولُونَ شَاعِرٌ نَّتَرَبَّصُ بِهِ رَيْبَ الْمَنُونِ)

(Or do they say: "He is a poet! We await for him some calamity by time!") 52:30

As-Suddi narrated a similar story.

Muhammad bin Ishaq reported from Muhammad bin Ja`far bin Az-Zubayr, from `Urwah bin Az-Zubayr who commented on Allah's statement,

(وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَـكِرِينَ)

(...they were plotting and Allah too was plotting, and Allah is the best of plotters.) "I (Allah) plotted against them with My sure planning, and I saved you (O Muhammad) from them."

(وَإِذَا تُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَـتُنَا قَالُواْ قَدْ سَمِعْنَا لَوْ نَشَآءُ لَقُلْنَا مِثْلَ هَـذَآ إِنْ هَـذَآ إِلاَّ أَسَـطِيرُ الأَوَّلِينَ - وَإِذْ قَالُواْ اللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَ هَـذَا هُوَ الْحَقَّ مِنْ عِندِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ أَوِ ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ - وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنتَ فِيهِمْ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ)

(31. And when Our Ayat are recited to them, they say: "We have heard (the Qur'an); if we wish we can say the like of this. This is nothing but the tales of the ancients.") (32. And (remember) when they said: "O Allah! If this (the Qur'an) is indeed the truth (revealed) from You, then rain down stones on us from the sky or bring on us a painful torment.") (33. And Allah would not punish them while you (Muhammad) are among them, nor will He punish them while they seek (Allah's) forgiveness.)

The Quraysh claimed They can produce Something similar to the Qur'an

Allah describes the disbelief, transgression, rebellion, as well as misguided statements that the pagans of Quraysh used to utter when they heard Allah's Ayat being recited to them,

(قَدْ سَمِعْنَا لَوْ نَشَآءُ لَقُلْنَا مِثْلَ هَـذَآ)

("We have heard (the Qur'an); if we wish we can say the like of this.")

They boasted with their words, but not with their actions. They were challenged several times to bring even one chapter like the Qur'an, and they had no way to meet this challenge. They only boasted in order to deceive themselves and those who followed their falsehood. It was said that An-Nadr bin Al-Harith, may Allah curse him, was the one who said this, according to Sa`id bin Jubayr, As-Suddi, Ibn Jurayj and others. An-Nadr visited Persia and learned the stories of some Persian kings, such as Rustum and Isphandiyar. When he went back to Makkah, He found that the Prophet was sent from Allah and reciting the Qur'an to the people. Whenever the Prophet would leave an audience in which An-Nadr was sitting, An-Nadr began narrating to them the stories that he learned in Persia, proclaiming afterwards, "Who, by Allah, has better tales to narrate, I or Muhammad" When Allah allowed the Muslims to capture An-Nadr in Badr, the Messenger of Allah commanded that his head be cut off before him, and that was done, all thanks are due to Allah. The meaning of,

(أَسَـطِيرُ الأَوَّلِينَ)

(. ..tales of the ancients) meaning that the Prophet has plagiarized and learned books of ancient people, and this is what he narrated to people, as they claimed. This is the pure falsehood that Allah mentioned in another Ayah,

(وَقَالُواْ أَسَـطِيرُ الأَوَّلِينَ اكْتَتَبَهَا فَهِىَ تُمْلَى عَلَيْهِ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلاً ـ قُلْ أَنزَلَهُ الَّذِى يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ فِى السَّمَـوَتِ وَالأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفُوراً رَّحِيماً)

(And they say: "Tales of the ancients, which he has written down:, and they are dictated to him morning and afternoon." Say: "It (this Qur'an) has been sent down by Him (Allah) Who knows the secret of the heavens and the earth. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.") 25:5-6 for those who repent and return to Him, He accepts repentance from them and forgives them.

The Idolators ask for Allah's Judgment and Torment!

Allah said,

(وَإِذْ قَالُواْ اللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَ هَـذَا هُوَ الْحَقَّ مِنْ عِندِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ أَوِ ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ)

(And (remember) when they said: "O Allah! If this (the Qur'an) is indeed the truth (revealed) from You, then rain down stones on us from the sky or bring on us a painful torment.")

This is indicative of the pagans' enormous ignorance, denial, stubbornness and transgression. They should have said, "O Allah! If this is the truth from You, then guide us to it and help us follow it." However, they brought Allah's judgment on themselves and asked for His punishment. Allah said in other Ayat,

(وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِالْعَذَابِ وَلَوْلاَ أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى لَّجَآءَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَلَيَأْتِيَنَّهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لاَ يَشْعُرُونَ)

(And they ask you to hasten on the torment (for them), and had it not been for a term appointed, the torment would certainly have come to them. And surely, it will come upon them suddenly while they perceive not!) 29:53 ,

(وَقَالُواْ رَبَّنَا عَجِّل لَّنَا قِطَّنَا قَبْلَ يَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ)

(They say: "Our Lord! Hasten to us Qittana (our record of good and bad deeds so that we may see it) before the Day of Reckoning!") 38:16 , and,

(سَأَلَ سَآئِلٌ بِعَذَابٍ وَاقِعٍ - لِّلْكَـفِرِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُ دَافِعٌ - مِّنَ اللَّهِ ذِي الْمَعَارِجِ)

(A questioner asked concerning a torment about to befall. Upon the disbelievers, which none can avert. From Allah, the Lord of the ways of ascent.) 70:1-3

The ignorant ones in ancient times said similar things. The people of Shu`ayb said to him,

(فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسَفاً مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ الصَّـدِقِينَ)

("So cause a piece of the heaven to fall on us, if you are of the truthful!") 26:187 while the pagans of Quraysh said,

(اللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَ هَـذَا هُوَ الْحَقَّ مِنْ عِندِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ أَوِ ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ)

("O Allah! If this (the Qur'an) is indeed the truth (revealed) from You, then rain down stones on us from the sky or bring on us a painful torment.")

Shu`bah said from `Abdul-Hamid that Anas bin Malik said that it was Abu Jahl bin Hisham who uttered this statement,

(اللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَ هَـذَا هُوَ الْحَقَّ مِنْ عِندِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ أَوِ ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ)

("O Allah! If this (the Qur'an) is indeed the truth (revealed) from You, then rain down stones on us from the sky or bring on us a painful torment.")

So Allah revealed this Ayah,

(وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنتَ فِيهِمْ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ)

(And Allah would not punish them while you are among them, nor will He punish them while they seek (Allah's) forgiveness.)

Al-Bukhari recorded it.

The Presence of the Prophet , and the Idolators' asking For forgiveness, were the Shelters against receiving Allah's immediate Torment

Allah said,

(وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنتَ فِيهِمْ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ)

(And Allah would not punish them while you are among them, nor will He punish them while they seek (Allah's) forgiveness.)

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Pagans used to go around the House in Tawaf and proclaim, `We rush to Your obedience, O Allah, there is no partner with You,' and the Prophet would tell them,

«قَدِ، قَد»

(Enough, enough.) But they would go on, `We rush to Your obedience, O Allah, there is no partner with You except a partner who is with You, You own Him but he does not own! They also used to say, `O Allah, Your forgiveness, Your forgiveness.' Allah revealed this verse;

(وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنتَ فِيهِمْ)

(And Allah would not punish them while you are among them...)"'

Ibn `Abbas commented, "They had two safety shelters: the Prophet , and their seeking forgiveness (from Allah). The Prophet went away, and only seeking forgiveness remained." At-Tirmidhi recorded that Abu Musa said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«أَنْزَلَ اللهُ عَلَيَّ أَمَانَيْنِ لِأُمَّتِي»

("Allah sent down to me two safe shelters for the benefit of my Ummah)

(وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنتَ فِيهِمْ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ)

(And Allah would not punish them while you are among them, nor will He punish them while they seek (Allah's) forgiveness.)

«فَإِذَا مَضَيْتُ تَرَكْتُ فِيهِمُ الْاسْتِغْفَارَ إِلَى يَومِ الْقِيَامَة»

(When I die, I will leave the seeking of forgiveness with them, until the Day of Resurrection.)

What testifies to this Hadith, is the Hadith that Ahmad recorded in his Musnad and Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak, that Abu Sa`id narrated that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ قَالَ: وَعِزَّتِكَ يَا رَبِّ لَا أَبْرَحُ أُغْوِي عِبَادَكَ مَا دَامَتْ أَرْوَاحُهُمْ فِي أَجْسَادِهِمْ. فَقَالَ الرَّبُّ: وَعِزَّتِي وَجَلَالِي لَا أَزَالُ أَغْفِرُ لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَغْفَرُونِي»

(Shaytan said, `By Your might, O Lord! I will go on luring Your servants as long as their souls are still in their bodies.' The Lord said, `By My might and majesty! I will keep forgiving them, as long as they keep invoking Me for forgiveness.')

Al-Hakim, "Its chain is Sahih and they did not record it."

(وَمَا لَهُمْ أَلاَّ يُعَذِّبَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُمْ يَصُدُّونَ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَمَا كَانُواْ أَوْلِيَآءَهُ إِنْ أَوْلِيَآؤُهُ إِلاَّ الْمُتَّقُونَ وَلَـكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ - وَمَا كَانَ صَلاَتُهُمْ عِندَ الْبَيْتِ إِلاَّ مُكَآءً وَتَصْدِيَةً فَذُوقُواْ الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ)

(34. And why should not Allah punish them while they hinder (men) from Al-Masjid Al-Haram, and they are not its guardians None can be its guardians except those who have Taqwa, but most of them know not.) (35. Their Salah at the House was nothing but Muka' and Tasdiyah. Therefore taste the punishment because you used to disbelieve.)

The Idolators deserved Allah's Torment after Their Atrocities

Allah states that the idolators deserved the torment, but He did not torment them in honor of the Prophet residing among them. After Allah allowed the Prophet to migrate away from them, He sent His torment upon them on the day of Badr. During that battle, the chief pagans were killed, or captured. Allah also directed them to seek forgiveness for the sins, Shirk and wickedness they indulged in. If it was not for the fact that there were some weak Muslims living among the Makkan pagans, those Muslims who invoked Allah for His forgiveness, Allah would have sent down to them the torment that could never be averted. Allah did not do that on account of the weak, ill-treated, and oppressed believers living among them, as He reiterated about the day at Al-Hudaybiyyah,

(هُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَصَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْهَدْىَ مَعْكُوفاً أَن يَبْلُغَ مَحِلَّهُ وَلَوْلاَ رِجَالٌ مُّؤْمِنُونَ وَنِسَآءٌ مُّؤْمِنَـتٌ لَّمْ تَعْلَمُوهُمْ أَن تَطَئُوهُمْ فَتُصِيبَكُمْ مِّنْهُمْ مَّعَرَّةٌ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ لِّيُدْخِلَ اللَّهُ فِى رَحْمَتِهِ مَن يَشَآءُ لَوْ تَزَيَّلُواْ لَعَذَّبْنَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ مِنْهُمْ عَذَاباً أَلِيماً)

(They are the ones who disbelieved and hindered you from Al-Masjid Al-Haram (at Makkah) and detained the sacrificial animals from reaching their place of sacrifice. Had there not been believing men and believing women whom you did not know, that you may kill them and on whose account a sin would have been committed by you without (your) knowledge, that Allah might bring into His mercy whom He wills if they (the believers and the disbelievers) had been apart, We verily, would have punished those of them who disbelieved with painful torment.) 48:25

Allah said here,

(وَمَا لَهُمْ أَلاَّ يُعَذِّبَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُمْ يَصُدُّونَ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَمَا كَانُواْ أَوْلِيَآءَهُ إِنْ أَوْلِيَآؤُهُ إِلاَّ الْمُتَّقُونَ وَلَـكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(And why should not Allah punish them while they hinder (men) from Al-Masjid Al-Haram, and they are not its guardians None can be its guardians except those who have Taqwa, but most of them know not.)

Allah asks, `why would not He torment them while they are stopping Muslims from going to Al-Masjid Al-Haram, thus hindering the believers, its own people, from praying and performing Tawaf in it' Allah said,

(وَمَا كَانُواْ أَوْلِيَآءَهُ إِنْ أَوْلِيَآؤُهُ إِلاَّ الْمُتَّقُونَ)

T(And they are not its guardians None can be its guardians except those who have Taqwa,) meaning, the Prophet and his Companions are the true dwellers (or worthy maintainers) of Al-Masjid Al-Haram, not the pagans. Allah said in other Ayah,

(مَا كَانَ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ أَن يَعْمُرُواْ مَسَاجِدَ اللهِ شَـهِدِينَ عَلَى أَنفُسِهِم بِالْكُفْرِ أُوْلَـئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَـلُهُمْ وَفِى النَّارِ هُمْ خَـلِدُونَ - إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَـجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الاٌّخِرِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَوةَ وَءاتَى الزَّكَوةَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلاَّ اللَّهَ فَعَسَى أُوْلَـئِكَ أَن يَكُونُواْ مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ)

(It is not for the polytheists, to maintain the Masjids of Allah, while they witness disbelief against themselves. The works of such are in vain and in the Fire shall they abide. The Masjids of Allah shall be maintained only by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day; perform the Salah, and give the Zakah and fear none but Allah. It is they who are on true guidance.) 9:17-18 , and,

(وَصَدٌّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِندَ اللَّهِ)

(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,) 2:217 .

`Urwah, As-Suddi and Muhammad bin Ishaq said that Allah's statement,

(إِنْ أَوْلِيَآؤُهُ إِلاَّ الْمُتَّقُونَ)

(None can be its guardians except those who have Taqwa,) refers to Muhammad and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all. Mujahid explained that this Ayah is about the Mujahidin in Allah's cause , whomever and wherever they may be.

Allah then mentioned the practice of the pagans next to Al-Masjid Al-Haram and the respect they observed in its vicinity,

(وَمَا كَانَ صَلاَتُهُمْ عِندَ الْبَيْتِ إِلاَّ مُكَآءً وَتَصْدِيَةً)

(Their Salah (prayer) at the House was nothing but Muka' and Tasdiyah.)

`Abdullah bin `Umar, Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Abu Raja' Al-Utardi, Muhammad bin Ka`b Al-Qurazi, Hujr bin `Anbas, Nubayt bin Sharit, Qatadah and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said that this part of the Ayah refers to whistling. Mujahid added that the pagans used to place their fingers in their mouth (while whistling). Sa`id bin Jubayr said that Ibn `Abbas commented on Allah's statement,

(وَمَا كَانَ صَلَاتُهُمْ عِندَ الْبَيْتِ إِلاَّ مُكَآءً وَتَصْدِيَةً)

(Their Salat at the House was nothing but Muka' and Tasdiyah.)

"The Quraysh used to perform Tawaf (encircling the Ka`bah) while naked, whistling and clapping their hands, for Muka' means `whistling', while, Tasdiyah means `clapping the hands.'" This meaning was also reported from Ibn `Abbas, by `Ali bin Abi Talhah and Al-`Awfi. Similar was recorded from Ibn `Umar, Mujahid, Muhammad bin Ka`b, Abu Salamah bin `Abdur-Rahman, Ad-Dahhak, Qatadah, `Atiyyah Al-`Awfi, Hujr bin `Anbas and Ibn Abza. Ibn Jarir recorded that Ibn `Umar explained the Ayah,

(وَمَا كَانَ صَلَاتُهُمْ عِندَ الْبَيْتِ إِلاَّ مُكَآءً وَتَصْدِيَةً)

(Their Salat at the House was nothing but Muka' and Tasdiyah.) "Muka' means `whistling', while, `Tasdiyah' means `clapping the hands.'" Sa`id bin Jubayr and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd said that,

(وَتَصْدِيَةً)

(and Tasdiyah), means, they hindered from the path of Allah, the Exalted and Most Honored. Allah said,

(فَذُوقُواْ الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ)

(Therefore taste the punishment because you used to disbelieve.)

This refers to the death and capture that they suffered during the battle of Badr, according to Ad-Dahhak, Ibn Jurayj and Muhammad bin Ishaq.

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَلَهُمْ لِيَصُدُّواْ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَسَيُنفِقُونَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً ثُمَّ يُغْلَبُونَ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ إِلَى جَهَنَّمَ يُحْشَرُونَ -

لِيَمِيزَ اللَّهُ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ وَيَجْعَلَ الْخَبِيثَ بَعْضَهُ عَلَى بَعْضٍ فَيَرْكُمَهُ جَمِيعاً فَيَجْعَلَهُ فِى جَهَنَّمَ أُوْلَـئِكَ هُمُ الْخَـسِرُونَ)

(36. Verily, those who disbelieve spend their wealth to hinder (men) from the path of Allah, and so will they continue to spend it; but in the end it will become an anguish for them. Then they will be overcome. And those who disbelieve will be gathered unto Hell.) (37. In order that Allah may distinguish the wicked from the good, and put the wicked one over another, heap them together and cast them into Hell. Those! it is they who are the losers.)

The Disbelievers spend Their Wealth to hinder Others from Allah's Path, but this will only cause Them Grief

Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated that Az-Zuhri, Muhammad bin Yahya bin Hibban, `Asim bin `Umar bin Qatadah, and Al-Husayn bin `Abdur-Rahman bin `Amr bin Sa`id bin Mu`adh said, "The Quraysh suffered defeat at Badr and their forces went back to Makkah, while Abu Sufyan went back with the caravan intact. This is when `Abdullah bin Abi Rabi`ah, `Ikrimah bin Abi Jahl, Safwan bin Umayyah and other men from Quraysh who lost their fathers, sons or brothers in Badr, went to Abu Sufyan bin Harb. They said to him, and to those among the Quraysh who had wealth in that caravan, `O people of Quraysh! Muhammad has grieved you and killed the chiefs among you. Therefore, help us with this wealth so that we can fight him, it may be that we will avenge our losses.' They agreed." Muhammad bin Ishaq said, "This Ayah was revealed about them, according to Ibn `Abbas,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَلَهُمْ)

(Verily, those who disbelieve spend their wealth...) until,

(هُمُ الْخَـسِرُونَ)

(they who are the losers.)" Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Al-Hakam bin `Uyaynah, Qatadah, As-Suddi and Ibn Abza said that this Ayah was revealed about Abu Sufyan and his spending money in Uhud to fight the Messenger of Allah . Ad-Dahhak said that this Ayah was revealed about the idolators of Badr. In any case, the Ayah is general, even though there was a specific incident that accompanied its revelation. Allah states here that the disbelievers spend their wealth to hinder from the path of truth. However, by doing that, their money will be spent and then will become a source of grief and anguish for them, availing them nothing in the least. They seek to extinguish the Light of Allah and make their word higher than the word of truth. However,

Allah will complete His Light, even though the disbelievers hate it. He will give aid to His religion, make His Word dominant, and His religion will prevail above all religions. This is the disgrace that the disbelievers will taste in this life; and in the Hereafter, they will taste the torment of the Fire. Whoever among them lives long, will witness with his eyes and hear with his ears what causes grief to him. Those among them who are killed or die will be returned to eternal disgrace and the everlasting punishment. This is why Allah said,

(فَسَيُنفِقُونَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً ثُمَّ يُغْلَبُونَ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ إِلَى جَهَنَّمَ يُحْشَرُونَ)

(And so will they continue to spend it; but in the end it will become an anguish for them. Then they will be overcome. And those who disbelieve will be gathered unto Hell.)

Allah said,

(لِيَمِيزَ اللَّهُ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ)

(In order that Allah may distinguish the wicked from the good.), meaning recognize the difference between the people of happiness and the people of misery, according to Ibn `Abbas, as `Ali bin Abi Talhah reported from him. Allah distinguishes between those believers who obey Him and fight His disbelieving enemies and those who disobey Him. Allah said in another Ayah,

(مَّا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى مَآ أَنتُمْ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّى يَمِيزَ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُطْلِعَكُمْ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ)

(Allah will not leave the believers in the state in which you are now, until He distinguishes the wicked from the good. Nor will Allah disclose to you the secrets of the Ghayb (Unseen).) 3:179 , and,

(أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَن تَدْخُلُواْ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَـهَدُواْ مِنكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الصَّـبِرِينَ)

(Do you think that you will enter Paradise before Allah (tests) those of you who fought (in His cause) and (also) tests those who are the patient) 3:142 .

Therefore, the Ayah (8:37) means, `We tried you with combatant disbelievers whom We made able to spend money in fighting you,'

(لِيَمِيزَ اللَّهُ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ وَيَجْعَلَ الْخَبِيثَ بَعْضَهُ عَلَى بَعْضٍ فَيَرْكُمَهُ)

(in order that Allah may distinguish the wicked from the good, and put the wicked one over another, heap them together) put in a pile on top of each other,

(فَيَجْعَلَهُ فِى جَهَنَّمَ أُوْلَـئِكَ هُمُ الْخَـسِرُونَ)

(and cast them into Hell. Those! It is they who are the losers.) 8:37 , in this life and the Hereafter.

(قُل لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ إِن يَنتَهُواْ يُغْفَرْ لَهُمْ مَّا قَدْ سَلَفَ وَإِن يَعُودُواْ فَقَدْ مَضَتْ سُنَّتُ الأَوَّلِينَ)

(وَقَـتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لاَ تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلهِ فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْاْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ - وَإِن تَوَلَّوْاْ فَاعْلَمُواْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلاَكُمْ نِعْمَ الْمَوْلَى وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ)

(38. Say to those who have disbelieved, if they cease, their past will be forgiven. But if they return (thereto), then the examples of those (punished) before them have already preceded (as a warning).) (39. And fight them until there is no more Fitnah, and the religion (worship) will all be for Allah alone. But if they cease, then certainly, Allah is All-Seer of what they do.) (40. And if they turn away, then know that Allah is your protector -- (what) an excellent protector and (what) an excellent helper!)

Encouraging the Disbelievers to seek Allah's Forgiveness, warning Them against Disbelief

Allah commands His Prophet Muhammad ,

(قُل لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ إِن يَنتَهُواْ)

(Say to those who have disbelieved, if they cease...) the disbelief, defiance and stubbornness they indulge in, and embrace Islam, obedience and repentance.

(يُغْفَرْ لَهُمْ مَّا قَدْ سَلَفَ)

(their past will be forgiven.) along with their sins and errors. It is recorded in the Sahih Al-Bukhari that Abu Wa'il said that Ibn Mas'ud said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ أَحْسَنَ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ لَمْ يُؤَاخَذْ بِمَا عَمِلَ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ، وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ أُخِذَ بِالْأَوَّلِ وَالْآخِرِ»

(He who becomes good in his Islam, will not be punished for what he has committed during Jahiliyyah (before Islam). He who becomes bad in his Islam, will face a punishment for his previous and latter deeds.)

It is also recorded in the Sahih that the Messenger of Allah said,

«الْإِسْلَامُ يَجُبُّ مَا قَبْلَهُ وَالتَّوْبَةُ تَجُبُّ مَا كَانَ قَبْلَهَا»

("Islam erases what occurred before it, and repentance erases what occurs before it.")

Allah said,

(وَإِن يَعُودُواْ)

(But if they return,) and remain on their ways,

(فَقَدْ مَضَتْ سُنَّتُ الأَوَّلِينَ)

(then the examples of those (punished) before them have already preceded.) 8:38 meaning, Our way with the nations of old is that when they disbelieve and rebel, We send down to them immediate torment and punishment.

The Order to fight to eradicate Shirk and Kufr

Allah said,

(وَقَـتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لاَ تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلّهِ)

(And fight them until there is no more Fitnah, and the religion will all be for Allah alone.)

Al-Bukhari recorded that a man came to Ibn `Umar and said to him, "O Abu `Abdur-Rahman! Why do you not implement what Allah said in His Book,

(وَإِن طَآئِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُواْ)

(And if two parties (or groups) among the believers fall to fighting...) 49:9 . What prevents you from fighting as Allah mentioned in His Book" Ibn `Umar said, "O my nephew! I prefer that I be reminded with this Ayah rather than fighting, for in the latter case, I will be reminded by the Ayah in which Allah, the Exalted and Most Honored, said,

(وَمَن يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِناً مُّتَعَمِّداً)

(And whoever kills a believer intentionally...) 4:93 "

The man said, "Allah, the Exalted, said,

(وَقَـتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لاَ تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ)

(And fight them until there is no more Fitnah...)." Ibn `Umar said, "We did that during the time of the Messenger of Allah, when Islam was weak and the man would be tried in religion, either tormented to death or being imprisoned. When Islam became stronger and widespread, there was no more Fitnah." When the man realized that Ibn `Umar would not agree to what he is saying, he asked him, "What do you say about `Ali and `Uthman" Ibn `Umar replied, "What do I say about `Ali and `Uthman! As for `Uthman, Allah has forgiven him, but you hate that Allah forgives him. As for `Ali, he is the cousin of the Messenger of Allah and his son-in-law," and he pointed with his hand saying, "And this is his house over there." Sa`id bin Jubayr said, "Ibn `Umar came to us and was asked, "What do you say about fighting during Fitnah" Ibn `Umar

said, "Do you know what Fitnah refers to Muhammad was fighting against the idolators, and at that time, attending (or residing with) the idolators was a Fitnah (trial in religion). It is nothing like what you are doing, fighting to gain leadership!" All these narrations were collected by Al-Bukhari, may Allah the Exalted grant him His mercy. Ad-Dahhak reported that Ibn `Abbas said about the Ayah,

(وَقَـتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لاَ تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ)

(And fight them until there is no more Fitnah...) "So that there is no more Shirk." Similar was said by Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, As-Suddi, Muqatil bin Hayyan and Zayd bin Aslam. Muhammad bin Ishaq said that he was informed from Az-Zuhri, from `Urwah bin Az-Zubayr and other scholars that

(حَتَّى لاَ تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ)

(until there is no more Fitnah) the Fitnah mentioned here means, until no Muslim is persecuted so that he abandons his religion. Ad-Dahhak reported that Ibn `Abbas said about Allah's statement,

(وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلهِ)

(and the religion (worship) will all be for Allah alone.) "So that Tawhid is practiced in sincerity with Allah." Al-Hasan, Qatadah and Ibn Jurayj said,

(وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلهِ)

(and the religion will all be for Allah alone) "So that La ilaha illa-llah is proclaimed." Muhammad bin Ishaq also commented on this Ayah, "So that Tawhid is practiced in sincerity towards Allah, without Shirk, all the while shunning all rivals who (are being worshipped) besides Him."

`Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said about,

(وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلهِ)

(and the religion will all be for Allah alone) "So that there is no more Kufr (disbelief) with your religion remains." There is a Hadith collected in the Two Sahihs that testifies to this explanation. The Messenger of Allah said,

«أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أُقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ، حَتَّى يَقُولُوا: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ، فَإِذَا قَالُوهَا عَصَمُوا مِنِّي دِمَاءَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ، إِلَّا بِحَقِّهَا، وَحِسَابُهُمْ عَلَى اللهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَ»

(I was commanded to fight against the people until they proclaim, `There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah.' If and when they say it, they will preserve their blood and wealth from me, except for its right (Islamic penal code), and their reckoning is with Allah, the Exalted and Most Honored.)

Also, in the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari said, "The Messenger of Allah was asked about a man who fights because he is courageous, in prejudice with his people, or to show off. Which of these is for the cause of Allah He said,

«مَنْ قَاتَلَ لِتَكُونَ كَلِمَةُ اللهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا فَهُوَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَ»

(Whoever fights so that Allah's Word is the supreme, is in the cause of Allah, the Exalted and Most Honored.)"

Allah said next,

(فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْاْ)

(But if they cease), and desist from their Kufr as a result of your fighting them, even though you do not know the true reasons why they did so,

(فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ)

(then certainly, Allah is All-Seer of what they do.)

Allah said in similar Ayah,

(فَإِن تَابُواْ وَأَقَامُواْ الصَّلَوةَ وَءاتَوُاْ الزَّكَوةَ فَخَلُّواْ سَبِيلَهُمْ)

(But if they repent and perform the Salah, and give Zakah, then leave their way free.) 9:5 ,

(فَإِخوَانُكُمْ فِى الدِّين)

(...then they are your brethren in religion.) 9:11 , and,

(وَقَـتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لاَ تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ للَّهِ فَإِنِ انتَهَواْ فَلاَ عُدْوَنَ إِلاَّ عَلَى الظَّـلِمِينَ)

(And fight them until there is no more Fitnah and the religion (worship) is for Allah (alone). But if they cease, let there be no transgression except against the wrongdoers.) 2:193

It is recorded in the Sahih that the Messenger of Allah said to Usamah bin Zayd when he overpowered a man with his sword, after that man proclaimed that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah;

«أَقَتَلْتَهُ بَعْدَ مَا قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ؟ وَكَيْفَ تَصْنَعُ بِلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ؟»

(Have you killed him after he proclaimed, `La Ilaha Illallah' What would you do with regard to `La Ilaha Illallah' on the Day of Resurrection.)

Usamah said, "O Allah's Messenger! He only said it to save himself." The Messenger replied,

«هَلَّا شَقَقْتَ عَنْ قَلْبِهِ؟»

(Did you cut his heart open)

The Messenger kept repeating,

«مَنْ لَكَ بِلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ؟»

(What would you do with regard to `La Ilaha Illallah' on the Day of Resurrection) until Usamah said, "I wished I had embraced Islam only that day." Allah said next,

(وَإِن تَوَلَّوْاْ فَاعْلَمُواْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلاكُمْ نِعْمَ الْمَوْلَى وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ)

(And if they turn away, then know that Allah is your protector, an excellent protector, and an excellent helper!)

Allah says, if the disbelievers persist in defying and fighting you, then know that Allah is your protector, master and supporter against your enemies. Verily, what an excellent protector and what an excellent supporter.

(وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُم مِّن شَىْءٍ فَأَنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِى الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَـمَى وَالْمَسَـكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ إِن كُنتُمْ ءَامَنْتُم بِاللَّهِ وَمَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَى عَبْدِنَا يَوْمَ الْفُرْقَانِ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)

(41. And know that whatever of war booty that you may gain, verily, one-fifth of it is assigned to Allah, and to the Messenger, and to the near relatives (of the Messenger), the orphans, the poor, and the wayfarer, if you have believed in Allah and in that which We sent down to Our servant on the Day of Criterion, the Day when the two forces met; and Allah is able to do all things.)

Ruling on the Spoils of War (Ghanimah and Fai)

Allah explains the spoils of war in detail, as He has specifically allowed it for this honorable Ummah over all others. We should mention that the `Ghanimah' refers to war spoils captured from the disbelievers, using armies and instruments of war. As for `Fai', it refers to the property of the disbelievers that they forfeit in return for peace, what they leave behind when they die and have no one to inherit from them, and the Jizyah (tribute tax) and Khiraj (property tax). Allah said,

(وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُم مِّن شَىْءٍ فَأَنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ)

(And know that whatever of war booty that you may gain, verily, one-fifth of it is assigned to Allah) indicating that the one-fifth should be reserved and paid in full to Muslim leaders whether it was little or substantial, even a yarn and needle.

(وَمَن يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَـمَةِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لاَ يُظْلَمُونَ)

(And whosoever deceives (his companions over the booty), he shall bring forth on the Day of Resurrection that which he took (illegally). Then every person shall be paid in full what he has earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.) 3:161

Allah's statement,

(فَأَنَّ للَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ)

(verily, one-fifth of it is assigned to Allah, and to the Messenger,) was explained by Ibn `Abbas, as Ad-Dahhak reported from him, "Whenever the Messenger of Allah sent an army, he used to divide the war booty they collected into five shares, reserving one-fifth and divided it into five shares." Then he recited;

(وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُم مِّن شَىْءٍ فَأَنَّ للَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ)

(And know that whatever of war booty that you may gain, verily, one-fifth of it is assigned to Allah, and to the Messenger,)

Ibn Abbas said, "Allah's statement,

(فَأَنَّ للَّهِ خُمُسَهُ)

(verily, one-fifth of it is assigned to Allah) is inclusive of the Messenger's share , just as the following Ayah is inclusive of Allah owning whatever is on the earth also ,

(للَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَـوتِ وَمَا فِى الأَرْضِ)

(To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on the earth) 2:284 ." So He addressed the share of Allah and the share of His Messenger in the same statement.

Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Al-Hasan bin Muhammad bin Al-Hanifiyyah, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Ash-Sha`bi, `Ata' bin Abi Rabah, `Abdullah bin Buraydah, Qatadah, Mughirah and several others, all said that the share designated for Allah and the Messenger is one and the same. Supporting this is what Imam Al-Hafiz Abu Bakr Al-Bayhaqi recorded, with a Sahih chain of narrators, that `Abdullah bin Shaqiq said that a man from Bilqin said, "I came to the Prophet when he was in

Wadi Al-Qura inspecting a horse. I asked, `O Allah's Messenger! What about the Ghanimah' He said,

«لِلّهِ خُمُسُهَا وَأَرْبَعَةٌ أَخْمَاسِهَا لِلْجَيْش»

(Allah's share is one fifth and four-fifths are for the army.)

I asked, `None of them has more right to it than anyone else' He said,

«لَا، وَلَا السَّهْمُ تَسْتَخْرِجُهُ مِنْ جَنْبِكَ لَيْسَ أَنْتَ أَحَقَّ بِهِ مِنْ أَخِيكَ الْمُسْلِمِ»

(No. Even if you remove an arrow that pierced your flank, you have no more right to it than your Muslim brother.)"

Imam Ahmad recorded that Al-Miqdam bin Ma`dikarib Al-Kindi sat with `Ubadah bin As-Samit, Abu Ad-Darda' and Al-Harith bin Mu`awiyah Al-Kindi, may Allah be pleased with them, reminding each other of the statements of the Messenger of Allah . Abu Ad-Darda' said to `Ubadah, "O `Ubadah! What about the words of the Messenger of Allah during such and such battle, about the fifth (of the war booty)" `Ubadah said, "The Messenger of Allah led them in prayer, facing a camel from the war booty. When he finished the prayer, he stood up, held pelt of a camel between his fingers and said,

«إِنَّ هَذِهِ مِنْ غَنَائِمِكُمْ وَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لِي فِيهَا إِلَّا نَصِيبِي مَعَكُمْ إِلَّا الْخُمُسُ، وَالْخُمُسُ مَرْدُودٌ عَلَيْكُمْ، فَأَدُّوا الْخَيْطَ وَالْمَخِيطَ، وَأَكْبَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَأَصْغَرَ، وَلَا تَغُلُّوا فَإِنَّ الْغُلُولَ نَارٌ وَعَارٌ عَلَى أَصْحَابِهِ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، وَجَاهِدُوا النَّاسَ فِي اللهِ الْقَرِيبَ وَالْبَعِيدَ، وَلَا تُبَالُوا فِي اللهِ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ، وَأَقِيمُوا حُدُودَ اللهِ فِي الْحَضَرِ وَالسَّفَرِ، وَجَاهِدُوا

فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ، فَإِنَّ الْجِهَادَ بَابٌ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ عَظِيمٌ، يُنْجِي بِهِ اللهُ مِنَ الْهَمِّ وَالْغَمِ»

(This is also a part of the war booty you earned. Verily, I have no share in it, except my own share, the fifth designated to me. Even that fifth will be given to you (indicating the Prophet's generosity). Therefore, surrender even the needle and the thread, and whatever is bigger or smaller than that (from the war spoils). Do not cheat with any of it, for stealing from the war booty before its distribution is Fire and a shame on its people in this life and the Hereafter. Perform Jihad against the people in Allah's cause, whether they are near or far, and do not fear the blame of the blamers, as long as you are in Allah's cause. Establish Allah's rules while in your area and while traveling. Perform Jihad in Allah's cause, for Jihad is a tremendous door leading to Paradise. Through it, Allah saves (one) from sadness and grief.)"

This is a tremendous Hadith, but I did not find it in any of the six collections of Hadith through this chain of narration. However, Imam Ahmad, Abu Dawud and An-Nasa'i recorded a Hadith from `Amr bin Shu`ayb, from his father, from his grandfather `Abdullah bin `Amr, from the Messenger of Allah , and this narration is similar to the one above, and a version from `Amr bin `Anbasah was recorded by Abu Dawud and An-Nasa'i. The Prophet used to choose some types of the war booty for himself; a servant, a horse, or a sword, according to the reports from Muhammad bin Sirin, `Amir Ash-Sha`bi and many scholars. For instance, Imam Ahmad and At-Tirmidhi -- who graded it Hasan -- recorded from Ibn `Abbas that the Messenger of Allah chose a sword called `Dhul-Fiqar' on the day of Badr. `A'ishah narrated that Safiyyah was among the captured women, and the Prophet chose and married her (upon his own choice and before distribution of war booty), as Abu Dawud narrated in the Sunan. As for the share of the Prophet's relatives, it is paid to Bani Hashim and Bani Al-Muttalib, because the children of Al-Muttalib supported Bani Hashim in Jahiliyyah after Islam. They also went to the mountain pass of Abu Talib in support of the Messenger of Allah and to protect him (when the Quraysh boycotted Muslims for three years). Those who were Muslims (from Bani Al-Muttalib) did all this in obedience to Allah and His Messenger , while the disbelievers among them did so in support of their tribe and in obedience to Abu Talib, the Messenger's uncle.

Allah said next,

(وَالْيَتَـمَى)

(the orphans), in reference to Muslim orphans,

(وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ)

(and the wayfarer), the traveler and those who intend to travel for a distance during which shortening the prayer is legislated, but do not have resources to spend from. We will explain this subject in Surah Bara'h 9:60 , Allah willing, and our reliance and trust is in Him alone.

Allah said,

(إِن كُنتُمْ ءَامَنتُم بِاللَّهِ وَمَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَى عَبْدِنَا)

(If you have believed in Allah and in that which We sent down to Our servant)

Allah says, `Adhere to what We legislated for you, such as the ruling about one-fifth of the war spoils, if you truly believe in Allah, the Last Day and what We have revealed to Our Messenger .' In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that `Abdullah bin `Abbas said, - while narrating the lengthy Hadith about the delegation of Bani Abdul Qays - that the Messenger of Allah said to them, s

«وآمُرُكُمْ بِأَرْبَعٍ، وَأَنْهَاكُمْ عَنْ أَرْبَعٍ. آمُرُكُمْ بِالْإِيمَانِ بِاللهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ: هَلْ تَدْرُونَ مَا الْإِيمَانُ بِاللهِ؟ شَهَادَةُ أَن لَّا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللهِ، وَإِقَامُ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءُ الزَّكَاةِ، وَأَن تُؤَدُّوا الْخُمُسَ مِنَ الْمَغْنَمِ»

I command you with four and forbid four from you. I command you to believe in Allah. Do you know what it means to believe in Allah Testifying that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing the prayer, giving Zakah and honestly surrendering one-fifth of the war spoils.)

Therefore, the Messenger listed surrendering one-fifth of the war booty as part of faith. This is why Al-Bukhari wrote a chapter in his Sahih entitled, "Chapter: Paying the Khumus (one-fifth) is Part of Faith." He then narrated the above Hadith from Ibn `Abbas. Allah said next,

(يَوْمَ الْفُرْقَانِ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)

(on the Day of Criterion, the Day when the two forces met; and Allah is Able to do all things.) Allah is making His favors and compassion towards His creation known, when He distinguished between truth and falsehood in the battle of Badr. That day was called, `Al-Furqan', because Allah raised the word of faith above the word of falsehood, He made His religion apparent and supported His Prophet and his group. `Ali bin Abi Talhah and Al-`Awfi reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "Badr is YawmAl-Furqan; during it, Allah separated between truth and falsehood." Al-Hakim collected this statement. Similar statements were reported from Mujahid, Miqsam, `Ubaydullah bin `Abdullah, Ad-Dahhak, Qatadah, Muqatil bin Hayyan and several others.

(إِذْ أَنتُم بِالْعُدْوَةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُم بِالْعُدْوَةِ الْقُصْوَى وَالرَّكْبُ أَسْفَلَ مِنكُمْ وَلَوْ تَوَاعَدتُّمْ لاَخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِي الْمِيعَدِ وَلَـكِن لِّيَقْضِيَ اللَّهُ أَمْراً كَانَ مَفْعُولاً لِّيَهْلِكَ مَنْ هَلَكَ عَن بَيِّنَةٍ وَيَحْيَى مَنْ حَيَّ عَن بَيِّنَةٍ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَسَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ)

(42. (And remember) when you (the Muslim army) were on the near side of the valley, and they on the farther side, and the caravan on the ground lower than you. Even if you had made a mutual appointment to meet, you would certainly have failed in the appointment, but (you met) that Allah might accomplish a matter already ordained (in His knowledge), so that those who were to be destroyed (for rejecting the faith) might be destroyed after a clear evidence, and those who were to live (believers) might live after a clear evidence. And surely, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.)

Some Details of the Battle of Badr

Allah describes Yawm Al-Furqan, (i.e. the day of Badr),

(إِذْ أَنتُم بِالْعُدْوَةِ الدُّنْيَا)

((And remember) when you (the Muslim army) were on the near side of the valley,) camping in the closest entrance of the valley towards Al-Madinah,

(وَهُمْ)

(and they), the idolators, who were camped,

(بِالْعُدْوَةِ الْقُصْوَى)

(on the farther side), from Al-Madinah, towards Makkah.

(وَالرَّكْبُ)

(and the caravan), that was under the command of Abu Sufyan, with the wealth that it contained,

(أَسْفَلَ مِنكُمْ)

(on the ground lower than you), closer to the sea,

(وَلَوْ تَوَاعَدتُّمْ)

(even if you had made a mutual appointment to meet,) you and the idolators,

(لاَخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِي الْمِيعَـدِ)

(you would certainly have failed in the appointment)

Muhammad bin Ishaq said, "Yahya bin `Abbad bin `Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr narrated to me from his father about this Ayah "Had there been an appointed meeting set between you and them and you came to know of their superior numbers and your few forces, you would not have met them,

(وَلَـكِن لِّيَقْضِيَ اللَّهُ أَمْراً كَانَ مَفْعُولاً)

(but (you met) that Allah might accomplish a matter already ordained,) Allah had decreed that He would bring glory to Islam and its people, while disgracing Shirk and its people. You the companions had no knowledge this would happen, but it was out of Allah's compassion that He did that." In a Hadith, Ka`b bin Malik said, "The Messenger of Allah and the Muslims marched to intercept the Quraysh caravan, but Allah made them meet their (armed) enemy without appointment." Muhammad bin Ishaq said that Yazid bin Ruwman narrated to him that `Urwah bin Az-Zubayr said, "Upon approaching Badr, the Messenger of Allah sent `Ali bin Abi Talib, Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas, Az-Zubayr bin Al-`Awwam and several other Companions to spy the pagans. They captured two boys, a servant of Bani Sa`id bin Al-`As and a servant of Bani Al-Hajjaj, while they were bringing water for Quraysh. So they brought them to the Messenger of Allah , but found him praying. The Companions started interrogating the boys, asking them to whom they belonged. Both of them said that they were employees bringing water for Quraysh (army). The Componions were upset with that answer, since they thought that the boys belonged to Abu Sufyan (who was commanding the caravan). So they beat the two boys vehemently, who said finally that they belonged to Abu Sufyan. Thereupon companions left them alone. When the Prophet ended the prayer, he said,

«إِذَا صَدَّقَاكُمْ ضَرَبْتُمُوهُمَا، وَإِذَا كَذَّبَاكُمْ تَرَكْتُمُوهُمَا، صَدَقَا وَاللهِ إِنَّهُمَا لِقُرَيْشٍ ، أَخْبِرَانِي عَنْ قُرَيْش»

(When they tell you the truth you beat them, but when they lie you let them go They have said the truth, by Allah! They belong to the Quraysh. (addressing to the boys He said:) Tell me the news about Quraysh.)

The two boys said, `They are behind this hill that you see, on the far side of the valley.' The Messenger of Allah asked,

«كَمِ الْقَوْمُ؟»

(How many are they)

They said, `They are many.' He asked,

«مَا عُدَّتُهُمْ؟»

(How many) They said, `We do not know the precise number.' He asked,

«كَمْ يَنْحَرُونَ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ؟»

(How many camels do they slaughter every day)

They said, `Nine or ten a day.' The Messenger of Allah said,

«الْقَوْمُ مَا بَيْنَ التِّسْعمِائَةِ إِلَى الْأَلْف»

(They are between nine-hundred and a thousand.) He asked again,

«فَمَنْ فِيهِمْ مِنْ أَشْرَافِ قُرَيْشٍ؟»

(Which chiefs of Quraysh are accompanying the army) They said, `Utbah bin Rabi`ah, Shaybah bin Rabi`ah, Abu Al-Bakhtari bin Hisham, Hakim bin Hizam, Nawfal bin Khuwaylid, Al-Harith bin `Amir bin Nawfal, Tu`aymah bin Adi bin Nawfal, An-Nadr bin Al-Harith, Zam`ah bin Al-Aswad,

Abu Jahl bin Hisham, Umayyah bin Khalaf, Nabih and Munabbih sons of Al-Hajjaj, Suhayl bin `Amr and `Amr bin `Abd Wadd.' The Messenger of Allah said to the people,

«هَذِهِ مَكَّةُ قَدْ أَلْقَتْ إِلَيْكُمْ أَفْلَاذَ كَبِدِهَا»

(This is Makkah! She has brought you her most precious sons (its chiefs)!)"

Allah said,

(لِّيَهْلِكَ مَنْ هَلَكَ عَن بَيِّنَةٍ وَيَحْيَى مَنْ حَىَّ عَن بَيِّنَةٍ)

(So that those who were to be destroyed might be destroyed after a clear evidence.) 8:42

Muhammad bin Ishaq commented, "So that those who disbelieve do so after witnessing clear evidence, proof and lessons, and those who believe do so after witnessing the same." This is a sound explanation. Allah says, He made you meet your enemy in one area without appointment, so that He gives you victory over them.' This way, `He will raise the word of truth above falsehood, so that the matter is made clear, the proof unequivocal and the evidence plain. Then there will be no more plea or doubt for anyone. Then, those destined to destruction by persisting in disbelief do so with evidence, aware that they are misguided and that proof has been established against them,

(وَيَحْيَى مَنْ حَىَّ)

(and those who were to live might live), those who wish to believe do so,

(عَن بَيِّنَةٍ)

(after a clear evidence), and proof. Verily, faith is the life of the heart, as Allah said,

(أَوَمَن كَانَ مَيْتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَـهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِى النَّاسِ كَمَن)

(Is he who was dead (without faith by ignorance and disbelief) and We gave him life (by knowledge and faith) and set for him a light (of belief) whereby he can walk among men ...) 6:122 .

Allah said next,

(وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَسَمِيعٌ)

(And surely, Allah is All-Hearer), of your invocation, humility and requests for His help,

(عَلِيمٌ)

(All-Knower) meaning; about you, and you deserve victory over your rebellious, disbelieving enemies.

(إِذْ يُرِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِى مَنَامِكَ قَلِيلاً وَلَوْ أَرَاكَهُمْ كَثِيراً لَّفَشِلْتُمْ وَلَتَنَـزَعْتُمْ فِى الأَمْرِ وَلَـكِنَّ اللَّهَ سَلَّمَ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ - وَإِذْ يُرِيكُمُوهُمْ إِذِ الْتَقَيْتُمْ فِى أَعْيُنِكُمْ قَلِيلاً وَيُقَلِّلُكُمْ فِى أَعْيُنِهِمْ لِيَقْضِىَ اللَّهُ أَمْراً كَانَ مَفْعُولاً وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الأُمُورُ)

(43. (And remember) when Allah showed them to you as few in your dream; if He had shown them to you as many, you would surely have been discouraged, and you would surely have disputed in making a decision. But Allah saved (you). Certainly, He is the All-Knower of that is in the breasts.) (44. And (remember) when you met, He showed them to you as few in your eyes and He made you appear as few in their eyes, so that Allah might accomplish a matter already ordained, and to Allah return all matters (for decision).)

Allah made each Group look few in the Eye of the Other

Mujahid said, "In a dream, Allah showed the Prophet the enemy as few. The Prophet conveyed this news to his Companions and their resolve strengthened." Similar was said by Ibn Ishaq and several others. Allah said,

(وَلَوْ أَرَاكَهُمْ كَثِيراً لَّفَشِلْتُمْ)

(If He had shown them to you as many, you would surely, have been discouraged,) you would have cowardly abstained from meeting them and fell in dispute among yourselves,

(وَلَـكِنَّ اللَّهَ سَلَّمَ)

(But Allah saved), from all this, when He made you see them as few,

(إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ)

(Certainly, He is the All-Knower of that is in the breasts.) 8:43 .

Allah knows what the heart and the inner-self conceal,

(يَعْلَمُ خَآئِنَةَ الأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِى الصُّدُورُ)

(Allah knows the fraud of the eyes, and all that the breasts conceal) 40:19 .

Allah's statement,

(وَإِذْ يُرِيكُمُوهُمْ إِذِ الْتَقَيْتُمْ فِى أَعْيُنِكُمْ قَلِيلاً)

(And (remember) when you met, He showed them to you as few in your eyes) demonstrates Allah's compassion towards the believers. Allah made them see few disbelievers in their eyes, so that they would be encouraged and feel eager to meet them. Abu Ishaq As-Subai`i said, that Abu `Ubaydah said that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said, "They were made to seem few in our eyes during Badr, so that I said to a man who was next to me, `Do you think they are seventy' He said, `Rather, they are a hundred.' However, when we captured one of them, we asked him and he said, `We were a thousand.'" Ibn Abi Hatim and Ibn Jarir recorded it. Allah said next,

(وَيُقَلِّلُكُمْ فِى أَعْيُنِهِمْ)

(and He made you appear as few in their eyes,) Allah said,

(وَإِذْ يُرِيكُمُوهُمْ إِذِ الْتَقَيْتُمْ)

(And (remember) when you met. He showed them to you...), He encouraged each of the two groups against the other, according to `Ikrimah, as recorded by Ibn Abi Hatim. This statement has a Sahih chain of narrators. Muhammad bin Ishaq said that Yahya bin `Abbad bin `Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr narrated to him that his father said about Allah's statement,

(لِّيَقْضِيَ اللَّهُ أَمْراً كَانَ مَفْعُولاً)

(so that Allah might accomplish a matter already ordained,) "In order for the war to start between them, so that He would have revenge against those whom He decided to have revenge (pagans), and grant and complete His favor upon those He decided to grant favor to, His supporters." The meaning of this, is that Allah encouraged each group against the other and made them look few in each other's eyes, so that they were eager to meet them. This occurred before the battle started, but when it started and Allah supported the believers with a thousand angels in succession, the disbelieving group saw the believers double their number. Allah said,

(قَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ ءَايَةٌ فِي فِئَتَيْنِ الْتَقَتَا فِئَةٌ تُقَـتِلُ فِى سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأُخْرَى كَافِرَةٌ يَرَوْنَهُمْ مِّثْلَيْهِمْ رَأْىَ الْعَيْنِ وَاللَّهُ يُؤَيِّدُ بِنَصْرِهِ مَن يَشَآءُ إِنَّ فِى ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لاوْلِى الأَبْصَـرِ)

(There has already been a sign for you (O Jews) in the two armies that met (in combat, the battle of Badr). One was fighting in the cause of Allah, and as for the other, (they) were disbelievers. They (disbelievers) saw them (believers) with their own eyes twice their number. And Allah supports with His aid whom He wills. Verily, in this is a lesson for those who understand.) 3:13

This is how we combine these two Ayat, and certainly, each one of them is true, all the thanks are due to Allah and all the favors are from Him.

(يَـأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ إِذَا لَقِيتُمْ فِئَةً فَاثْبُتُواْ وَاذْكُرُواْ اللَّهَ كَثِيراً لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ - وَأَطِيعُواْ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلاَ تَنَـزَعُواْ فَتَفْشَلُواْ وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ وَاصْبِرُواْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّـبِرِينَ)

(45. O you who believe! When you meet (an enemy) force, take a firm stand against them and remember Allah much, so that you may be successful.) (46. And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength departs, and be patient. Surely, Allah is with the patients.)

Manners of War

Allah instructs His faithful servants in the manners of fighting and methods of courage when meeting the enemy in battle,

(يَـأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ إِذَا لَقِيتُمْ فِئَةً فَاثْبُتُواْ)

(O you who believe! When you meet (an enemy) force, take a firm stand against them) In the Two Sahihs, it is recorded that `Abdullah bin Abi Awfa said that during one battle, Allah's Messenger waited until the sun declined, then stood among the people and said,

«يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ لَا تَتَمَنَّوْا لِقَاءَ الْعَدُوِّ، واسْأَلُوا اللهَ الْعَافِيَةَ فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُوهُمْ فَاصْبِرُوا وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الْجَنَّةَ تَحْتَ ظِلَالِ السُّيُوف»

(O people! Do not wish to face the enemy (in a battle) and ask Allah to save you (from calamities). But if you should face the enemy, then be patient and let it be known to you that Paradise is under the shadows of the swords.)

He then stood and said,

«اللَّهُمَّ مُنْزِلَ الْكِتَابِ، وَمُجْرِيَ السَّحَابِ، وَهَازِمَ الْأَحْزَابِ، اهْزِمْهُمْ وَانْصُرْنَا عَلَيْهِم»

(O Allah! Revealer of the (Holy) Book, Mover of the clouds, and Defeater of the Confederates, defeat them and grant us victory over them.)

The Command for Endurance when the Enemy Engaging

Allah commands endurance upon meeting the enemy in battle and ordains patience while fighting them. Muslims are not allowed to run or shy away, or show cowardice in battle. They are commanded to remember Allah while in that condition and never neglect His remembrance. They should rather invoke Him for support, trust in Him and seek victory over their enemies from Him. They are required to obey Allah and His Messenger in such circumstances adhering to what He commanded them, and abstaining from what He forbade them. They are required to avoid disputing with each other, for this might lead to their defeat and failure,

(وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ)

(lest your strength departs), so that your strength, endurance and courage do not depart from you,

(وَاصْبِرُواْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّـبِرِينَ)

(and be patient. Surely, Allah is with the patients.)

In their courage, and obedience to Allah and His Messenger, the Companions reached a level never seen before by any nation or generation before them, or any nation that will ever come. Through the blessing of the Messenger and their obedience to what he commanded, the Companions were able to open the hearts, as well as, the various eastern and western parts of the world in a rather short time. This occurred even though they were few, compared to the armies of the various nations at that time. For example, the Romans, Persians, Turks, Slavs, Berbers, Ethiopians, Sudanese tribes, the Copts and the rest of the Children of Adam. They defeated all of these nations, until Allah's Word became the highest and His religion became dominant above all religions. The Islamic state spread over the eastern and western parts of the world in less than thirty years. May Allah grant them His pleasure, as well as, be pleased with them all, and may He gather us among them, for He is the Most Generous, and Giving.

(وَلاَ تَكُونُواْ كَالَّذِينَ خَرَجُواْ مِن دِيَـرِهِم بَطَراً وَرِئَآءَ النَّاسِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ - وَإِذْ زَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَـنُ أَعْمَـلَهُمْ وَقَالَ لاَ غَالِبَ لَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَإِنِّي جَارٌ لَّكُمْ فَلَمَّا تَرَآءَتِ الْفِئَتَانِ نَكَصَ عَلَى عَقِبَيْهِ وَقَالَ إِنِّي بَرِىءٌ مِّنْكُمْ إِنِّي أَرَى مَا لاَ تَرَوْنَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ - إِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنَـفِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ غَرَّ هَـؤُلاءِ دِينُـهُمْ وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ)

(47. And be not like those who come out of their homes boastfully and to be seen of men, and hinder (men) from the path of Allah; and Allah is Muhit (eneompassing and thoroughly comprehending) all that they do.) (48. And (remember) when Shaytan made their (evil) deeds

seem fair to them and said, "No one of mankind can overcome you this day (of the battle of Badr) and verily, I am your neighbor (for each and every help)." But when the two forces came in sight of each other, he ran away and said "Verily, I have nothing to do with you. Verily, I see what you see not. Verily, I fear Allah for Allah is severe in punishment.") (49. When the hypocrites and those in whose hearts was a disease (of disbelief) said: "These people (Muslims) are deceived by their religion." But whoever puts his trust in Allah, then surely, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.)

The Idolators leave Makkah, heading for Badr

After Allah commanded the believers to fight in His cause sincerely and to be mindful of Him, He commanded not to imitate the idolators, who went out of their homes

(بَطَراً)

(boastfully) to suppress the truth,

(وَرِئَآءَ النَّاسِ)

(and to be seen of men), boasting arrogantly with people. When Abu Jahl was told that the caravan escaped safely, so they should return to Makkah, he commented, "No, by Allah! We will not go back until we proceed to the well of Badr, slaughter camels, drink alcohol and female singers sing to us. This way, the Arabs will always talk about our stance and what we did on that day." However, all of this came back to haunt Abu Jahl, because when they proceeded to the well of Badr, they brought themselves to death; and in the aftermath of Badr, they were thrown in the well of Badr, dead, disgraced, humiliated, despised and miserable in an everlasting, eternal torment. This is why Allah said here,

(وَاللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ)

(and Allah is Muhit (encompassing and thoroughly comprehending) all that they do.) He knows how and what they came for, and this is why He made them taste the worst punishment. Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak and As-Suddi commented on Allah's statement,

(وَلاَ تَكُونُواْ كَالَّذِينَ خَرَجُواْ مِن دِيَـرِهِم بَطَراً وَرِئَآءَ النَّاسِ)

(And be not like those who come out of their homes boastfully and to be seen of men,) "They were the idolators who fought against the Messenger of Allah at Badr." Muhammad bin Ka`b said, "When the Quraysh left Makkah towards Badr, they brought female singers and drums along. Allah revealed this verse,

(وَلاَ تَكُونُواْ كَالَّذِينَ خَرَجُواْ مِن دِيَـرِهِم بَطَراً وَرِئَآءَ النَّاسِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ)

(And be not like those who come out of their homes boastfully and to be seen of men, and hinder (men) from the path of Allah; and Allah is Muhit (encompassing and thoroughly comprehending) all that they do.)

Shaytan makes Evil seem fair and deceives the Idolators

Allah said next,

(وَإِذْ زَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَـنُ أَعْمَـلَهُمْ وَقَالَ لاَ غَالِبَ لَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَإِنِّي جَارٌ لَّكُمْ)

(And (remember) when Shaytan made their (evil) deeds seem fair to them and said, "No one of mankind can overcome you today and verily, I am your neighbor.")

Shaytan, may Allah curse him, made the idolators' purpose for marching seem fair to them. He made them think that no other people could defeat them that day. He also ruled out the possibility that their enemies, the tribe of Bani Bakr, would attack Makkah, saying, "I am your neighbor." Shaytan appeared to them in the shape of Suraqah bin Malik bin Ju`shum, the chief of Bani Mudlij, so that, as Allah described them,

(يَعِدُهُمْ وَيُمَنِّيهِمْ وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ الشَّيْطَـنُ إِلاَّ غُرُوراً)

(He Shaytan makes promises to them, and arouses in them false desires; and Shaytan's promises are nothing but deceptions) 4:120 .

Ibn Jurayj said that Ibn `Abbas commented on this Ayah, (8:48) "On the day of Badr, Shaytan, as well as, his flag holder and soldiers, accompanied the idolators. He whispered to the hearts of the idolators, `None can defeat you today! I am your neighbor.' When they met the Muslims and Shaytan witnessed the angels coming to their aid,

(نَكَصَ عَلَى عَقِبَيْهِ)

(he ran away), he went away in flight while proclaiming,

(إِنِّي أَرَى مَا لاَ تَرَوْنَ)

(Verily, I see what you see not.)"

`Ali bin Abi Talhah said, that Ibn `Abbas said about this Ayah,

(لاَ غَالِبَ لَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَإِنِّي جَارٌ لَّكُمْ)

("No one of mankind can overcome you today and verily, I am your neighbor')

"Shaytan, as well as, his devil army and flag holders, came on the day of Badr in the shape of a Suraqah bin Malik bin Ju`shum, man from Bani Mudlij, Shaytan said to idolators, `None will defeat you this day, and I will help you.' When the two armies stood face to face, the Messenger of Allah took a handful of sand and threw it at the faces of the idolators, causing them to retreat. Jibril, peace be upon him, came towards Shaytan, but when Shaytan, while holding the hand of a Mushrik man, saw him, he withdrew his hand and ran away with his soldiers. That man asked him, `O Suraqah! You claimed that you are our neighbor' He said,

(إِنِّي أَرَى مَا لاَ تَرَوْنَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ)

(Verily, I see what you see not. Verily, I fear Allah for Allah is severe in punishment)

Shaytan said this when he saw the angels."

The Position of the Hypocrites in Badr

Allah said next,

(إِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنَـفِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ غَرَّ هَـؤُلاءِ دِينُهُمْ)

(When the hypocrites and those in whose hearts was a disease (of disbelief) said: "These people (Muslims) are deceived by their religion.")

`Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas commented, "When the two armies drew closer to each other, Allah made the Muslims look few in the eyes of the idolators and the idolators look few in the eyes of the Muslims. The idolators said,

(غَرَّ هَـؤُلاءِ دِينُـهُمْ)

(These people (Muslims) are deceived by their religion.) because they thought that Muslims were so few. They believed, without doubt, that they would defeat the Muslims. Allah said,

(وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ)

(But whoever puts his trust in Allah, then surely, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.) Qatadah commented, "They saw a group of believers who came in defense of Allah's religion. We were informed that when he saw Muhammad and his Companions, Abu Jahl said, `By Allah! After this day, they will never worship Allah!' He said this in viciousness and transgression." `Amir Ash-Sha`bi said, "Some people from Makkah were considering embracing Islam, but when they went with the idolators to Badr and saw how few the Muslims were, they said,

(غَرَّ هَـؤُلاءِ دِينُـهُمْ)

(These people (Muslims) are deceived by their religion.)

Allah said next,

(وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ)

(But whoever puts his trust in Allah), and relies on His grace,

(فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ)

(then surely, Allah is All-Mighty), and verily, those who take His side in the dispute are never overwhelmed, for His side is mighty, powerful and His authority is All-Great,

(حَكِيمٌ)

(All-Wise) in all His actions, for He places everything in its rightful place, giving victory to those who deserve it and defeat to those who deserve it.

(وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ الْمَلَـئِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَـرَهُمْ وَذُوقُواْ عَذَابَ

الْحَرِيقِ ذَلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّـمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ)

(50. And if you could see when the angels take away the souls of those who disbelieve (at death); they smite their faces and their backs, (saying): "Taste the punishment of the blazing Fire. ") (51. "This is because of that which your hands forwarded. And verily, Allah is not unjust to His servants.")

The Angels smite the Disbelievers upon capturing Their Souls

Allah says, if you witnessed the angels capturing the souls of the disbelievers, you would witness a tremendous, terrible, momentous and awful matter,

(يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَـرَهُمْ)

(they smite their faces and their backs), saying to them,

(وَذُوقُواْ عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ)

("Taste the punishment of the blazing Fire.")

Ibn Jurayj said that Mujahid said that,

(وَأَدْبَـرَهُمْ)

(and their backs), refers to their back sides, as happened on the day of Badr. Ibn Jurayj also reported from Ibn `Abbas, "When the idolators faced the Muslims in Badr , the Muslims smote their faces with swords. When they gave flight, the angels smote their rear ends."

Although these Ayat are describing Badr, they are general in the case of every disbeliever. This is why Allah did not make His statement here restrictive to the disbelievers at Badr,

(وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ الْمَلَـئِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَـرَهُمْ)

(And if you could see when the angels take away the souls of those who disbelieve (at death); they smite their faces and their backs,)

In Surat Al-Qital (or Muhammad chapter 47) there is a similar Ayah, as well as in Surat Al-An`am,

(وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذِ الظَّـلِمُونَ فِى غَمَرَاتِ الْمَوْتِ وَالْمَلَـئِكَةُ بَاسِطُواْ أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرِجُواْ أَنفُسَكُمُ)

(And if you could but see when the wrongdoers are in the agonies of death, while the angels are stretching forth their hands (saying): "Deliver your souls!") 6:93

The angels stretch their hands and smite the disbelievers by Allah's command, since their souls refuse to leave their bodies, so they are taken out by force. This occurs when the angels give them the news of torment and Allah's anger. There is a Hadith narrated from Al-Bara' that when the angel of death attends the disbeliever at the time of death, he comes to him in a terrifying and disgusting shape, saying, "Get out, O wicked soul, to fierce hot wind, boiling water and a shadow of black smoke." The disbeliever's soul then scatters throughout his body, but the angels retrieve it, just as a needle is retrieved from wet wool. In this case, veins and nerve cells will be still attached to the soul. Allah states here that angels bring news of the torment of the Fire to the disbelievers. Allah said next,

(ذلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ)

(This is because of that which your hands forwarded.) meaning, this punishment is the recompense of the evil deeds that you have committed in the life of the world. This is your reckoning from Allah for your deeds,

(وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّـمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ)

a(And verily, Allah is not unjust to His servants.)

Certainly, Allah does not wrong any of His creatures, for He is the Just, who never puts anything in an inappropriate place. Honored, Glorified, Exalted and Praised be He, the All-Rich, Worthy of all praise. Muslim recorded that Abu Dharr said that the Messenger of Allah said;

«إِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى يَقُولُ: يَا عِبَادِي إِنِّي حَرَّمْتُ الظُّلْمَ عَلَى نَفْسِي وَجَعَلْتُهُ بَيْنَكُمْ مُحَرَّمًا فَلَا تَظَالَمُوا، يَا عِبَادِي إِنَّمَا هِيَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ أُحْصِيهَا

لَكُمْ فَمَنْ وَجَدَ خَيْرًا فَلْيَحْمَدِ اللهَ وَمَنْ وَجَدَ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ فَلَا يَلُومَنَّ إِلَّا نَفْسَه»

(Allah, the Exalted, said, `O My servants! I have prohibited injustice for Myself, and made it prohibited to you between each other. Therefore, do not commit injustice against each other. O My servants! It is your deeds that I am keeping count of, so whoever found something good, let him praise Allah for it. Whoever found other than that, has only himself to blame.)

This is why Allah said,

(كَدَأْبِ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ وَالَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ كَفَرُواْ بِآيَـتِ اللَّهِ فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِىٌّ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ)

(52. Similar to the behavior of the people of Fir`awn, and of those before them -- they rejected the Ayat of Allah, so Allah punished them for their sins. Verily, Allah is All-Strong, severe in punishment.)

Allah says, `The behavior of these rebellious disbelievers against what I sent you with, O Muhammad, is similar to the behavior of earlier disbelieving nations. So We behaved with them according to Our Da'b, that is, Our behavior or custom and way, as We did with them with what We often do and decide concerning their likes, the denying people of Fir`awn and the earlier nations who rejected the Messengers and disbelieved in Our Ayat,'

(فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ)

(so Allah punished them for their sins.)

Because of their sins, Allah destroyed them

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِىٌّ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ)

(Verily, Allah is All-Strong, severe in punishment.)

none can resist Him or escape His grasp.

(ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَكُ مُغَيِّراً نِّعْمَةً أَنْعَمَهَا عَلَى قَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُواْ مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ـ كَدَأْبِ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ وَالَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ كَذَّبُواْ بِآيَـتِ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَهْلَكْنَـهُمْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَآ ءَالَ فِرْعَونَ وَكُلٌّ كَانُواْ ظَـلِمِينَ)

(53. That is so because Allah will never change a grace which He has bestowed on a people until they change what is in themselves. And verily, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.) (54. Similar to the behavior of the people of Fir`awn, and those before them. They belied the Ayat of their Lord, so We destroyed them for their sins, and We drowned the people of Fir`awn for they were all wrongdoers.)

Allah affirms His perfect justice and fairness in His decisions, for He decided that He will not change a bounty that He has granted someone, except on account of an evil that they committed. Allah said in another Ayah,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُواْ مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ وَإِذَآ أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوءًا فَلاَ مَرَدَّ لَهُ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّن دُونِهِ مِن وَالٍ)

(Verily, Allah will not change the (good) condition of a people as long as they do not change their state (of goodness) themselves. But when Allah wills a people's punishment, there can be no turning it back, and they will find besides Him no protector.) 13:11

Allah said next,

(كَدَأْبِ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ)

(Similar to the behavior of the people of Fir`awn,) meaning, He punished Fir`awn and his kind, those who denied His Ayat. Allah destroyed them because of their sins, and took away the favors that He granted them, such as gardens, springs, plants, treasures and pleasant dwellings, as well as all of the delights that they enjoyed. Allah did not wrong them, but it is they who wronged themselves.

(إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِندَ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ فَهُمْ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ - الَّذِينَ عَـهَدْتَّ مِنْهُمْ ثُمَّ يَنقُضُونَ عَهْدَهُمْ فِي كُلِّ مَرَّةٍ وَهُمْ لاَ يَتَّقُونَ - فَإِمَّا تَثْقَفَنَّهُمْ فِى الْحَرْبِ فَشَرِّدْ بِهِم مَّنْ خَلْفَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ)

(55. Verily, the worst of living creatures before Allah are those who disbelieve, -- so they shall not believe.) (56. They are those with whom you made a covenant, but they break their covenant every time and they do not have Taqwa.) (57. So if you gain the mastery over them in war, then disperse those who are behind them, so that they may learn a lesson.)

Striking Hard against Those Who disbelieve and break the Covenants

Allah states here that the worst moving creatures on the face of the earth are those who disbelieve, who do not embrace the faith, and break promises whenever they make a covenant, even when they vow to keep them,

(وَهُمْ لاَ يَتَّقُونَ)

(and they do not have Taqwa) meaning they do not fear Allah regarding any of the sins they commit.

(فَإِمَّا تَثْقَفَنَّهُمْ فِى الْحَرْبِ)

(So if you gain the mastery over them in war), if you defeat them and have victory over them in war,

(فَشَرِّدْ بِهِم مَّنْ خَلْفَهُمْ)

(then disperse those who are behind them,) by severely punishing the captured people according to Ibn `Abbas, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Ad-Dahhak, As-Suddi, `Ata' Al-Khurasani and Ibn `Uyaynah. This Ayah commands punishing them harshly and inflicting casualties on them. This way, other enemies, Arabs and non-Arabs, will be afraid and take a lesson from their end,