

Al-Anfal

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Introduction

This is the first surah of the second group according to the *Makkan-Madinan* division. This group consists of two surahs forming a pair; surah *Al-Anfal* and surah *At-Tauba*. This surah was revealed in 2 A.H after the Battle of *Badr* and it has 75 ayat and 10 sections in all.

Since it contains a detailed and comprehensive review of the battle, it appears that most probably it was revealed all at the same time. But it is also possible that some *ayaat* might have been revealed at a later date and then were incorporated in this surah. One of the similarities that these two *Madinan* surahs have between them is that they mark some important events which resulted in the punishment and retribution of the disbelievers. The first such event was the Battle of *Badr*, the details of which we find in this surah. In this Battle Allah (SWT) gave victory as a Divine favor and blessing to the Muslims and destroyed and humiliated the proud and arrogant *Quraysh* of *Makkah*. The second such event was the conquest of *Makkah*, which we will comment upon (*Insh'Allah*) in surah *At-Tauba*.

(1) *"They ask you about the spoils of war. Say: "The spoils are for Allah (SWT) and the Messenger (SAW)." So fear Allah (SWT) and adjust all matters of difference among you."* After Allah (SWT) gave Muslims victory over the disbelievers at *Badr*, they had collected a great amount of spoils left by the disbelievers. The distribution of these spoils led to a difference of opinion among the noble Companions (RAA), for those who collected the spoils said that only they have the share in it, because this was the practice before the advent of Islam. Then, Allah (SWT) revealed this *ayah*, which made it clear that the spoils belonged to Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW) and no one holds a claim on them, while the right to their disposal rests with His Messenger (SAW) and he can distribute as he wishes. The Prophet (SAW) then distributed the spoils equally over all participants of the Battle as ordained Divinely. Then Allah (SWT) commanded the Muslims to settle these matters of disputes between themselves and not to argue with each other or

differ and fear Him alone. Then He said: *“And obey Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW), if you are believers.”* i.e. the obedience of the believers should be total and perfect, for if they have such virtues, their disputes will automatically be resolved between them.

(2) *“The believers are only those who, when Allah (SWT) is mentioned, feel a tremor in their hearts and when His revelations are recited unto them, they increase their Faith.”* The present *ayah* along with the next one describes some of the attributes of a true believer. The first attribute described here is the fear of Allah (SWT). It is stated that one of the quality of a true believer is that when the name of Allah (SWT) is mentioned in front of him, his heart is filled with awe and thus implements what He has commanded. This is because of the realization of Allah’s greatness and his love for Him. The second attribute of a true believer described here is that when the *Qur’an* is recited before him, it increases him in his faith and strengthens it. Then Allah (SWT) said: *“And they put their trust in their Lord.”* This is another of the qualities of a believer, who puts his whole trust in Allah (SWT), for they know that whatever He wills, will occur and whatever He does not will, never occurs.

(3) *“Who establish prayer and spend out of that We have provided them.”* This *ayah* describes two of the most important traits of a believer, that they are never neglectful of performing their regular prayers and they spend in the way of Allah (SWT) i.e. obligatory charity and *Sadaqah (voluntary charity)*, from the provisions and wealth that He has provided them with.

(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.”* Mentioned in the previous ayaat were the qualities of a true believer, here Allah (SWT) mentions their reward in this life and in the Hereafter.

(5) *“As your Lord caused you to go out from your home with the truth, and verily, a party among the believers disliked it.”* As the Companions of the Prophet (RAA) encountered a mutual difference at the time of the distribution of the spoils, similarly at the beginning of the Battle of *Badr*, some of the people disliked the idea of

advancing towards the enemy. But when the Divine decree of their Lord came which commanded them to fight, they all obeyed His command and went along with the Prophet (SAW).

(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).”* When the Prophet (SAW) came to know that Abu Sufyan was on his way to *Makkah* with a trading caravan loaded with goods and merchandize, it occurred to him that this was the time to confront the caravan and get their hands on to the merchandize, so that to break the back bone of the *Quraysh* of *Makkah*, whose lives depended on this trade. But this information also reached Abu Sufyan that the Prophet (SAW) along with his Companions (RAA) is waiting in ambush to attack the caravan. Therefore, he immediately sent someone to *Makkah* to tell them about the danger faced by the caravan. When the messenger reached the *Quraysh*, they gathered all their people and prepared a strong armed force and started to march towards *Badr*. In the meantime, Abu Sufyan also changed his route to avoid any danger and headed towards *Makkah*. When the news of one thousand strong army of *Makkah* reached the Prophet (SAW), he immediately consulted his Companions (RAA) to decide whether to fight with the *Quraysh* army or go after the caravan, for he also gave them the good news that Allah (SWT) has promised them victory over one of the groups, the caravan or the army. Most of the Companions (RAA) immediately pledged their obedience to whatever the Messenger (SAW) wished, who was also in the favor of fighting with the army. On the other hand, some of the Companions (RAA) were a little hesitant and they advised to first attack the caravan and then fight the army for they did not come here to fight and thus were not fully prepared for the battle. This is what this *ayah* refers to when it was said that they argued about the truth. But with the background of the Battle in mind we come to know that it was not the Companions (RAA) who had disobeyed their Prophet (SAW), but the matter of fact was that they did not feel sure that the course recommended was the right course and thus hesitated in taking the decision, when they were consulted.

(7) *“And (remember) when Allah (SWT) promised you one of the two parties that it should be yours.”* This again refers to the same event mentioned in the previous *ayaat*.

Allah (SWT) promised the Muslims victory over one of the two, the caravan or the advancing army of the *Quraysh*. Then He said: *"You wished that the one not armed should be yours, but Allah (SWT) willed to justify the truth by His Words and to cut off the roots of the disbelievers."* i.e. referring to those Companions (RAA) who wanted to advance towards the unarmed caravan, which was much easier and convenient for them, instead of facing the enemy. But this *ayah* states that Allah (SWT) intended it otherwise, so that the truth is established and the very root of the disbelievers is cut off and they are completely annihilated .

(8) *"That He might cause the truth to triumph and bring falsehood to nothing, even though the criminals hate it."* It has further been clarified in this *ayah* that the reason for the Muslims to fight the *Quraysh* army was that Allah (SWT) wanted to make the Muslims and His religion triumph over them and make Islam dominant over all other religions. The truth should triumph and falsehood be discomfited, though the wrongdoers wished otherwise.

(9) *"(Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you (saying): "I will help you with a thousand of the angels following one another in succession.""* There were only three hundred and thirteen Muslims, mostly unarmed who stood combat against the thousand strong army of the *Quraysh*. When the Prophet (SAW) saw the army of the disbelievers being nearly three times stronger than the Muslims, he prostrated before Allah (SWT) and invoked Him for help and support and he kept on supplicating for a long time. At that time, Abu Bakr (RAA) stepped forward and asked the Prophet (SAW) to stop and not to worry, for Allah (SWT) will surely respond to his prayer. Then, the Prophet (SAW) raised his head and went out giving the good tidings of victory for the Muslims, for Allah (SWT) accepted his prayer and promised the Muslims help of one thousand angels coming one after the another to destroy the disbelievers.

(10) *"Allah (SWT) made it as glad tidings, and that your hearts be at rest therewith. And there is no victory except from Allah (SWT). Verily, Allah (SWT) is All-Mighty, All-Wise."* i.e. Allah (SWT) is able to give victory to the Muslims without the need of sending the angels, but He sent down angels to support the Muslims, so that by this good

news they feel comfort and reassurance in their hearts, for surely He is the possessor of All-Might and perfect Wisdom.

(11) *“(Remember) when you were overcome by slumber, a token of His protection and He caused water to descend on you from the sky, to clean you thereby and to remove from you the filth of Satan, and to strengthen your hearts, and make your feet firm thereby.”* Mentioned here are the blessings which Allah (SWT) bestowed on the believers before the Battle. Allah (SWT) cast slumber on the believers as a sign of peace and tranquility for them which caused them to go to short-sleep (drowsiness). The second blessing that Allah (SWT) bestowed upon the Muslims was that He sent down rain upon them, so that they used the water to drink and purify themselves. He also removed from them the whisperings and instigations of the Satan, strengthened their heart by giving them courage and patience to fight their enemies and made their feet firm.

(12) *“(Remember) when your Lord inspired the angels, "Verily, I am with you, so keep firm those who have believed.”* This is the command that Allah (SWT) gave to His angels that He sent for the help of the believers. He commanded them to make the believers firmer and strengthen their battle against their enemies. Then Allah (SWT) said to the angels: *“I will cast terror into the hearts of those who have disbelieved, so strike them over the necks, and smite over all their fingers.”* The angels were commanded to participate in the battle themselves and destroy and tear apart the disbelievers upon whom He has already cast fear and humiliation.

(13) *“This is because they defied and disobeyed Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW). And whoever defies and disobeys Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW), then verily, Allah (SWT) is Severe in punishment.”* This was and has always been the reason for the confrontation between Islam and *Kufr*.

(14) *“This is the torment, so taste it, and surely for the disbelievers is the torment of the Fire.”* i.e. this is only a small punishment for the idolators, while they should realize that the punishment in the Hereafter which is due to come for the disbelievers is much more lasting and severe.

(15) *“O you who believe! When you meet those who disbelieve, in a battle-field, never turn your backs to them.”* This *ayah* implies that when Muslims are engaged in a battle against the enemies of Islam, then it is not permissible for them to turn back and run away from the battlefield.

(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 (SWT). And his abode is Hell, and worst indeed is that destination!”* However, there are two exceptions to this rule viz., they can turn back from the battlefield as a part of some strategic move or can move back to join a detachment for additional support and then resume attacking afresh. But other than these situations, it is not permissible for a Muslim to turn back from the battlefield. And those who indeed turn back, then for them will be the sever punishment of Hellfire, which is a very evil abode indeed.

(17) *“You killed them not, but Allah (SWT) killed them.”* This indeed is a reminder from Allah (SWT) for the Muslims that the victory of the battle of *Badr* was not the result of their own effort, but it was Allah (SWT) Who helped them and supported them and made them victorious over their enemies. They were fewer in number and weaker in strength, but nothing can occur without the will of Allah (SWT). Then Allah (SWT) said: *“And you threw not when you did throw but Allah (SWT) threw.”* This refers to the miraculous event when the Prophet (SAW) threw a handful of dust towards the *Quraysh* army. Allah (SWT) made this dust enter the eyes of the disbelievers, thus causing a rampage in the army. Then He said: *“That He might richly reward the believers through a fair trial from Him.”* i.e. He blessed them with this victory as a favor for them. *“Verily, Allah (SWT) is All-Hearer, All-Knower.”* i.e. Allah (SWT) hears and knows the prayers and supplications of His servants and He knows who deserve His help and support.

(18) *“This (is the fact) and surely, Allah (SWT) weakens the deceitful plots of the disbelievers.”* i.e. all their plans and plots that they devised against the believers were rendered ineffective through this victory.

(19) *"If you ask for a judgment, now has the judgment come unto you and if you cease, it will be better for you, and if you return, so shall We return, and your forces will be of no avail to you, however numerous it be, and verily, Allah (SWT) is with the believers."* When the disbelievers marched towards the Muslims, their leader Abu Jahl prayed to Allah (SWT) for the victory for the most superior out of the two armies and to the most noble and guided. They were under the false impression that they were the most superior and the guided ones, therefore they thought that they were praying for themselves. They also declared that day to be the *Day of Furqan* i.e. the criterion, which will decide as to who was true and who was false. Thus Allah (SWT) said to them in this *ayah* that the verdict that you prayed for is before you, for the truth has triumphed and falsehood has been defeated. Therefore, if you return from your wickedness and disbelief, it will be much better for you in this life and the Hereafter. But if you persist in your disbelief and rebellion, then He will repeat the defeat that you suffered in the Battle of *Badr*, even if you gather all of your forces against the Muslims, for how can any force or power avail you, when He is with the believers.

(20) *"O you who believe! Obey Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW), and turn not away from him while you are hearing."* In this *ayah* Muslims have been commanded to obey Allah (SWT) His Messenger (SAW). They have been asked not to do anything that would take them away from the path of obedience and that they should listen to the message of truth brought by this noble Messenger (SAW).

(21) *"And be not like those who say: "We have heard," but they hear not."* i.e. be not like the hypocrites who profess to have faith but the reality is that they do not believe. They give no heed to what they hear.

(22) *"Verily! The worst of (moving) living creatures with Allah (SWT) are the deaf and the dumb, those who understand not."* i.e. those people who do not use their intellect or reason to listen to the truth and they are like animals who have eyes to see but cannot see the truth and are dumb and devoid of reason.

(23) *"Had Allah (SWT) 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, averse."* i.e. if they had

any virtue in them with sound intentions, then Allah (SWT) would surely have blessed them with the ability to listen and understand the truth, but this did not happen because Allah (SWT) knows that there is no good in them and they had no desire to listen to the truth. And even if they were made to listen to the truth, they would have turned away and refused to register it.

(24) *“O you who believe! Answer Allah (SWT) and (His) Messenger (SAW) when he calls you to that which will give you life.”* Allah (SWT) has commanded the believers to obey Him and His Messenger (SAW) and that they should give their response in deed and life to the call of duty, for it gives life. If the call of duty refers to *Jihad* then it will mean that the Muslims should respond to the call of *Jihad* and fight for the cause, for that call leads to real life i.e. the eternal life of the Hereafter. *“And know that Allah (SWT) comes in between a person and his heart.”* This *ayah* means that if a person repeatedly rejects the call of Allah (SWT) towards guidance even when his heart has testified that it is the Truth, then Allah (SWT) puts a seal on his heart and lets him grope blindly in the darkness. *“And verily to Him you shall (all) be gathered.”* i.e. on the *Day of Resurrection* in His presence you shall all be gathered.

(25) *“And fear the affliction which affects not in particular (only) those of you who do wrong.”* This *ayah* is a stern warning for the believers who are only busy with themselves and do not promote virtue and forbid evil, for a Muslim should not allow any crime or sin to prevail in their society. It states that when an affliction or oppression is sent down on the sinners and the criminals, it is not necessarily restricted to them. Rather it also encompasses those who have committed no sin, for they abandoned their duty of preventing the evil-doers from committing sins. In the end of this *ayah* Allah (SWT) again warned His servants from His punishment and said: *“And know that Allah (SWT) is Severe in punishment.”* Know that Allah's punishment is stern.

(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 so that you might be grateful.”* Allah (SWT) reminds the Muslims of their state when they were weak and oppressed and were

overpowered by the idolators of *Makkah*. But then Allah (SWT) blessed them with power and confidence by giving them shelter in *Madinah* where He allowed them to settle in a safe resort. Then He gave them brothers like the *Ansar of Madinah* who helped them giving refuge and support to them and even parted with their wealth and property for them in obedience to Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW). The purpose behind all these Divine blessings was to give them an opportunity to show gratefulness to their Lord.

In a way this *ayah* is also applicable to the Muslims of the subcontinent in the times of British colonialism. They were oppressed and persecuted by the Hindus as well as by the British. Thus they prayed to Allah (SWT) for an independent state where they could practice their religion in freedom and implement the laws according to what He has commanded. Allah (SWT) granted them Pakistan, made them greater in number when they were few and made them strong when they were weak. He gave them sustenance and livelihood and a safe place to live so that they show gratitude to Him and establish His Deen.

(27) *“O you who believe! Betray not Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW), nor betray knowingly your trusts.”* i.e. all the duties that He has ordained for you.

(28) *“And know that your possessions and your children are but a trial.”* i.e. Allah (SWT) puts you to test through His blessings like your wealth and children. These blessings can sometimes become the cause of heedlessness towards Allah (SWT) and these very children and property become your punishment. This is how He makes these blessings a trial for you, so that to disclose those amongst you who are grateful and obedient to their Lord and those who lack zeal and show ingratitude to Him. *“And that surely with Allah (SWT) is a great reward.”* i.e. a person’s love for His property and children should not make him heedless of Allah’s obedience, for the best of reward is with Him.

(29) *“O you who believe! If you obey and fear Allah (SWT), He will grant you a criterion, and will expiate for you your sins, and forgive you, and Allah (SWT) is the Owner of the Great Bounty.”*

Allah (SWT) informs us in this noble *ayah* that those of His servants who obey Him sincerely and fear Him, will be blessed with three things viz. Criterion, removal of sins and forgiveness. Criterion here refers to the guidance to differentiate between the right and the wrong. Thus those who are blessed with Criterion are able to judge the difference between the truth and falsehood, which eventually paves the way for salvation in the Hereafter. Then Allah (SWT) said that He will remove from them their sins and forgive them, for He gives from His Infinite grace and bounty to whoever He wills.

(30) *“And (remember) when the disbelievers plotted against you to imprison you, or to kill you, or to drive you out. They were plotting and Allah (SWT) too was planning, and Allah (SWT) is the Best of the planners.”* This refers to an incident when the chiefs of the *Quraysh* gathered together in *Makkah* to consult each other on how to restrict Prophet Muhammad (SAW) from preaching his religion. They were afraid of the rising power of Islam and of the fact that one day its followers might have enough power to drive them out of their city. This was the main agenda when the chiefs met for consultation. In that meeting three alternatives were discussed viz., to imprison the Prophet (SAW), to expel him out of *Makkah* or to kill him. In the end they all agreed on the plan of Abu Jahl. He proposed that they should choose one strong man from every tribe of *Quraysh*. Then they all strike Muhammad (SAW) with their swords at the same time and kill him. This way, the Prophet's tribe will not be able to take revenge from all the tribes and they will be forced to accept the blood money. But Allah (SWT) informed the Prophet (SAW) of their evil intentions and thus He made all their plans and plots go to dust, for surely He is the best of planners.

(31) *“And when Our revelations are recited to them, they say: "We have heard this; if we wish we can say the like of this. This is nothing but the tales of the ancients.”* This also refers to their evil intentions and the wicked plans they had against Islam and its Prophet (SAW). Whenever the idolators of *Makkah* listened to the recitation of the

Holy *Qur'an*, they would utter absurd remarks such as this is nothing but stories from the past and that we can say things like that if we wish. But the fact is that whenever they were challenged to produce anything similar to the like of this *Qur'an*, they would never accept the challenge.

(32) *"And (remember) when they said: "O Allah (SWT)! If this is indeed the truth from You, then rain down stones on us from the sky or bring on us a painful torment.""* They would say such things only to prove to their followers that they are indeed following the right path and that if Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was the true Messenger of Allah (SWT) then surely they would have been punished for rejecting him. Thus they prayed to Allah (SWT) that if it is the truth i.e. the *Qur'an*, then send down on them a painful punishment.

(33) *"And Allah (SWT) would not punish them while you are amongst them, nor will He punish them while they seek Forgiveness."* This *ayah* means that the only reason that the disbelievers of *Makkah* did not receive an immediate punishment for their disbelief was because of the two shelters they had: the presence of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) among them and their asking for forgiveness from Allah (SWT). This was also the case with Prophet Noah (AS), Hud (AS), Salih (AS) and Lot (AS) that the punishment did not descend on their people until they remained with them. There were also Muslims living in *Makkah* after Prophet's migration who were not able to migrate with him. This could also be a factor in preventing the coming of mass punishment upon them, for they used to invoke Allah (SWT) for mercy and forgiveness.

(34) *"And why should not Allah (SWT) punish them while they stop (men) from the Sacred Mosque, and they are not its custodians? None can be its custodian except the pious, but most of them know not."* i.e. why should not the disbelievers be punished when they have already become entitled to it because of their disbelief and while they prevent Muslims from going to *Al-Masjid Al-Haram* (the Sacred Mosque) for a pilgrimage or to pray therein. They did this because they thought of themselves as the custodians of the Sacred Mosque, but Allah (SWT) said that the disbelievers and idolators cannot be the guardians of the Sacred Mosque while its guardians can only be the righteous Muslims, but the disbelievers will never understand.

(35) *“Their prayer at the House was nothing but whistling and clapping of hands. Therefore taste the punishment because of your disbelief.”* The *Quraysh* used to circumbulate the *Ka’bah* and considered it as a practice of Prophet Abraham (AS), but they changed the actual form of the practice and these wicked people started to circumbulate while naked. Similarly, they also made changes to the prayer of Prophet Abraham (AS) and nothing was left of the prayer except for whistling and clapping of hands. Therefore, Allah (SWT) said that they must now suffer the punishment for their disbelief, which came upon them in this world in the form of the Battle of *Badr*.

(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 a regret for them. Then they will be overcome. And those who disbelieve will be gathered unto Hell.”* Allah (SWT) informed us in this *ayah* that the disbelievers of *Makkah* used to amass huge amount of funds in wealth and arms for their conquests against the Muslims. So, in a way it has been said that the disbelievers spend their wealth to hinder people from the path of Allah (SWT). Then Allah (SWT) said that they will continue to spend it. According to some scholars this is a prophecy which Allah (SWT) had foretold His Prophet (SAW) about the Battle of *Uhud* when the disbelievers amassed a huge amount of wealth and arms to take revenge from the Muslims of their loss of lives in the Battle of *Badr*. But the *ayah* can also be general, which would then mean that the disbelievers will continue their spending of the wealth against the Muslims and to hinder people from His path but in the end these very efforts will become the cause of their regrets and they will be overcome and disgraced in this life and in the Hereafter they will taste a painful punishment.

(37) *“In order that Allah (SWT) may distinguish the wicked from the good, and put the wicked one on another, heap them together and cast them into Hell. Those are the losers.”* This *ayah* states that through the events mentioned in the previous *ayat* Allah (SWT) separated the true believers from the disbelievers. Thus, He will place the disbelievers together one on another and cast them into Hellfire, for they are the real losers in this life and in the Hereafter.

(38) *“Say to those who have disbelieved, if they give over, their past will be forgiven. But if they repeat, then the examples of those before them have already preceded.”* This was the last chance given to the *Quraysh* of *Makkah* that they denounce their disbelief and embrace Islam. This way their past sins will be forgiven, but if they persist in their disbelief then they should reflect upon the past generations that Allah (SWT) had destroyed for their disbelief and it might be possible that a similar fate awaits them.

(39) *“And fight them until there is no more oppression and the Deen will all be for Allah (SWT) Alone. But if they cease, then certainly, Allah (SWT) is All-Seer of what they do.”* Allah (SWT) has commanded the Muslims to fight against the disbelievers until there is no more oppression, mischief or *Shirk* prevalent on the face of this earth and Allah’s *Deen* i.e. Islam, becomes dominant over all other religions. The root of evil is in polytheism. Thus the actual purpose of fighting in the way of Allah (SWT) against the idolators is to dislodge Polytheism, persecution, corruption and mischief which curtails freedom and does not leave for the people the freedom to distinguish between the truth and the falsehood. From here also began the last phase of Prophet’s revolutionary struggle i.e. the armed conflict. At this point it seems appropriate to point out the six phases of a revolutionary struggle. These are:

- (1) *Da'wah* (Calling people to Islam and *Iman*)
- (2) *Tanzeem* (Organization of those who respond)
- (3) Training
- (4) Passive Resistance
- (5) Active Resistance
- (6) Challenge and Conflict

This *ayah* points out to the sixth phase of this struggle where the Muslims are commanded to fight against the idolators and disbelievers until there is no more *Shirk* or oppression and Allah’s supremacy is established on earth. Even today if we want to achieve these goals we will have to follow the footsteps of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) but for that purpose we will have to fulfill all the prerequisites that are needed for a successful revolutionary struggle. However we should also point out the fact that under present conditions there is no need for an armed struggle, for indeed such a struggle is not likely to succeed.

Today, the state and government are recognized as two different entities, and the right of the citizens to bring about a change in the government and the established system is now an accepted democratic right, as long as they do not indulge in violence or rebellion against the state. In the end of this *ayah* Allah (SWT) said that if they resist from *Shirk* and oppression then they should know that He sees all their actions. This means that if they stop committing *Shirk* and making mischief, then cease fighting with them and do not treat them unjustly.

(40) *"And if they turn away, then know that Allah (SWT) is your Protector, (what) an Excellent Protector, and (what) an Excellent Helper!"* Allah (SWT) encourages the believers that if the disbelievers persist in their disbelief and hatred for Islam and continue to fight with them, then they should know that Allah (SWT) will protect you from them, and surely He is an excellent Protector and an excellent Helper.

(41) *"And know that whatever of war-booty that you may gain, verily one-fifth of it is assigned to Allah (SWT), and to the Messenger (SAW), and to the near relatives, the orphans, the needy and the wayfarer, if you have believed in Allah (SWT) and in that which We sent down to Our slave on the Day of criterion, the Day when the two forces met. And Allah (SWT) has power over everything."* This subject was one of the most sensitive of issues after the Battle of *Badr*, therefore it has again been dealt with in this *ayah*, which has detailed the laws and injunctions of the distribution of the spoils of the war. Allah (SWT) said that before the distribution of the spoils, one-fifth of it is reserved for Himself and His Messenger (SAW) while the remaining four parts be distributed between the Muslim army. Firstly, the one-fifth of the spoils was to be spent on the Messenger (SAW) himself and his family to whom the wealth and property coming out of charities had been declared unlawful, thus it was a grace and reward from Allah (SWT). Then it was given to the Muslim orphans, the needy and the wayfarers. However, the right of disposal within these five categories remained with the Prophet (SAW) and it was not incumbent on him to make it five equal shares for the recipients. Instead, it was all at his discretion. Sometimes he would take from it his share and divide the rest among other recipients like his relatives i.e. from *Bani Haashim* and *Bani al-Muttalib*, and the poor like *Ashab Al-Suffah* who spent most of their time in the company of

the Prophet (SAW) to acquire knowledge and had dedicated themselves wholly to serving Islam. While at other times he would even give that fifth to the Muslim army. The other four-fifths was to be shared out among the *Mujahideen* (Muslim Warriors) who took part in the fighting, by giving one share to each foot-soldier and three shares (two according to another opinion) to each horseman i.e. one share for him and two for his horse if they were used in the fighting. This wealth is permissible and good for the Muslim army, and has been prescribed by Allah (SWT). All these laws have been commanded by Allah (SWT) for His servants if they truly have believed in Him and seen the reality on the day of Battle of *Badr* when the disbelievers faced a humiliating defeat. And He separated the truth from the falsehood, for surely He has power over everything.

(42) *“(And remember) when you 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 that Allah (SWT) might accomplish a matter already ordained; so that those who were to be destroyed might be destroyed after a clear evidence, and those who were to live might live after a clear evidence. And surely, Allah (SWT) is All-Hearer, All-Knower.”* This *ayah* gives some details of the valley of *Badr*. It is a broad valley having two narrow entrances, north and south with cliffs on either sides. The Muslims camped near the northern part of the valley which was closer to *Madinah*, while the disbelievers were in the southern part of the valley which was farther from *Madinah*. As far as the trade caravan is concerned, Abu Sufyan changed his route as soon as he heard about the plans of the Prophet (SAW) and took his caravan away from the range of Muslims and passed along with the sea shore, instead of going through the valley of *Badr*. This is what the *ayah* means when it states that the caravan was on the ground lower than the Muslims. Then Allah (SWT) said that if there would have been an arranged battle between the two sides then it might not have been fought in the first place, for they would not have reached at *Badr* on the same time or some other differences would have crept in one way or the other. But because Allah (SWT) wanted to accomplish what was destined to be done i.e. to humiliate and disgrace the enemies of Islam and give triumph to His Messenger and his followers, He made such circumstances which made it impossible to avoid the

confrontation. He (SWT) made them arrive at *Badr* on the same time, though it takes three days from *Madinah* and ten days from *Makkah* to reach there. It was all planned by Allah (SWT), so that to make it the day of Criterion i.e. distinction between the truth and the falsehood, and so that those who choose death i.e. disbelief and *Shirk* are destroyed and those who choose life i.e. Islam, might live.

(43) *“(And remember) when Allah (SWT) 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 knows what is in the breasts.”* Though the army of the believers was more than three times the Muslim army, yet Allah (SWT) showed them much less in number to the Prophet (SAW) in a dream. He then related this incident to all of his Companions (RAA), which made their resolve and took courage to fight even more than before and Allah (SWT) said that if He had shown the disbelievers to the Prophet (SAW) and the Muslims as many, then they might have been discouraged or would have disputed among themselves whether to initiate action or not. This was because the Muslims were very few in number and ill-equipped for any type of war, for they thought that they are only going to attack a trade caravan, but Allah (SWT) had desired other plans destined for them and saved them from losing hope and courage. A question may arise here: was the dream shown to the Prophet (SAW) false as he was shown a much lesser number of the army of the disbelievers. Firstly, it should be kept in mind that the dream of a Prophet of Allah (SWT) can never be false. Secondly, the Prophet (SAW) was shown the real strength of the army of the disbelievers and not as it appeared in one’s sight. This means that the real strength of an army depends upon the courage and the will to fight of its soldiers, which can only be achieved if one knows that he is fighting for a just cause or not. Otherwise, they might appear as plenty in number with all their pomp and show, but the reality is that they are as weak as water. In the end Allah (SWT) said that He even knows what is in their breasts i.e. He knows those amongst the army of the disbelievers who were forced to come along with them, for within their hearts they had testified to the prophethood of Muhammad (SAW) but were afraid to disclose it.

(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.”* Allah (SWT) showed the army of the disbelievers to the Muslims as very few in number. Similarly He made it appear to the disbelievers that the Muslim army was weak and less in number. This was done because Allah (SWT) wanted the two armies to meet in the battlefield, so that He would make it a *Day of Criterion* i.e. the distinction between the truth and the falsehood, and give the disbelievers a humiliating defeat, and surely the final decision rests with Allah (SWT) alone.

(45) *“O you who believe! When you meet force, take a firm stand against them and remember the Name of Allah (SWT) much, so that you may be successful.”* This is the instruction given by Allah (SWT) to the believers when they encounter an enemy in a combat. They are being asked to be steadfast against their enemy and remember Him much.

(46) *“And obey Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW), and do not dispute lest you lose courage and your strength departs, and be patient. Surely, Allah (SWT) is with those who are patient.”* Further Allah (SWT) commands the believers to obey Him and His Messenger (SAW) and do not dispute among yourselves, for then they will lose courage and power to fight their enemies. This is what happened in the Battle of *Uhud* when the Prophet (SAW) commanded the archers not to leave their appointed places. He instructed them, *“Stick to your place, and don't leave it even if you see birds snatching us, till I send for you; and if you see that we have defeated the infidels and made them flee, even then you should not leave your place till I send for you.”*¹ But when they saw the disbelievers being defeated and fleeing towards the mountain, they wanted to join their victorious brothers and collect the booty. Their commander Abdullah bin Jubair (RAA) commanded them not to leave their places but they disputed among themselves and left their positions, which eventually became the cause of their defeat. This was because they disobeyed the orders of an appointed *Ameer* by the Prophet (SAW), who said: *“Who obeys me obeys Allah (SWT), and who disobeys me disobeys Allah (SWT). Who obeys the Ameer obeys me, and who disobeys the Ameer disobeys me.”*² In the end Allah (SWT) instructed the Muslims to observe patience, for verily, Allah (SWT) is on the side of those who are patient in adversity.

(47) *"And be not like those who come out of their homes boastfully and with vainglory and hinder from the Path of Allah (SWT), and Allah (SWT) is encompassing all that they do."* In this ayah Allah (SWT) instructs the Muslims not to become proud of their strength and their numbers like the *Quraysh* of *Makkah* who marched from the city boasting arrogantly and with the desire for exhibitionism and suppressed people from embracing the truth. In the end Allah (SWT) warned the disbelievers that He is surrounding all that they do, i.e. He has knowledge of all their actions.

(48) *"And (remember) when Satan made their deeds seem fair to them and said, "No one of mankind can overcome you this Day and verily, I am near to you." 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 (SWT) for Allah is Severe in punishment.""* This ayah refers to the incident when the *Satan* appeared to the *Quraysh* army in the form of *Suraqah bin Malik*, along with a group of his soldiers to help the disbelieving army. At that time the *Quraysh* were also worried about a possibility of attack from their enemies, the tribe of *Bani Bakr*. Therefore, the *Satan* appeared in the form of *Suraqah bin Malik*, an influential tribal chief from the tribe of *Bani Mudlij* and ruled out any threat of attack from their enemies. He then addressed the *Quraysh* army and made their purpose of marching towards the Muslims seem fair to them and said to them that no one can defeat you and march forward without any fear, for I am with you and I will protect you from your enemies i.e. from *Bani Bakr*. But when the two armies actually met each other at the valley of *Badr*, the *Satan* ran away proclaiming that I have nothing to do with you and I see something that you do not see. This he said because he saw the angels coming down from the sky for the help of the Muslims and he was fully aware of their strength and the power of Allah (SWT) that is why he then said that I fear Allah (SWT) and that He is severe in punishment. Also worth mentioning at this point is the creation of *Jinn* and angels and the relation between the two. As we mentioned in surah *Al-Baqarah*, the *Jinn* are created from fire whereas the angels are created from light and they are much closer to each other than the humans which are created from clay. Thus the angels and the *Jinn* are able to see each other while a human

being cannot see them in their original form except if Allah (SWT) permits them. This is why the *Satan* was able to see the thousand angels coming down for the aid of the believers at the Battle of *Badr*.

(49) *"When the hypocrites and those in whose hearts was a disease said: "These people are deceived by their religion." But whoever puts his trust in Allah (SWT), then surely, Allah (SWT) is All-Mighty, All-Wise."* This refers to the hypocrites of *Madinah* and those among them who had a disease in their hearts i.e. the disease of deception and doubt which eventually stems up into *Nifaq* (Hypocrisy).

Among them was the chief of hypocrites, Abdullah bin Ubay, who was a hypocrite from the very first day he embraced Islam and died in that state. When these hypocrites saw the Muslim army in the battlefield of *Badr*, they ridiculed them and said: look at these fools who are challenging an army much more powerful and strong than them and that their religion has deceived them i.e. for throwing them into the jaws of death. But Allah (SWT) said that they are themselves fools for they do not know that whosoever puts his total trust in Him, then he is never humiliated nor disgraced, for He is Mighty and Powerful.

(50) *"And if you could see when the angels take away the souls of those who disbelieve, they smite their faces and their backs, (saying): "Taste the punishment of the blazing Fire.""* This *ayah* mentions the punishment of the disbelievers at the time of death when the angels take their souls smiting their faces and backs and tell them to taste the punishment of the Hellfire.

(51) *"This is because of that which your hands had forwarded. And verily, Allah (SWT) is not unjust to His slaves."* i.e. the disbelievers will be punished for their own evil-deeds that they had committed in this world and certainly Allah (SWT) will not bring injustice upon His servants.

Foot Notes

[1] Sahih Bukhari 4: 276. (Kitab Al-Jihad 2812)

[2] Sahih Muslim 6: 13.

(52) *“Similar to the behavior of the people of Pharaoh, and of those before them; they rejected the revelations of Allah (SWT), so Allah (SWT) punished them for their sins. Verily, Allah is All-Strong, Severe in punishment.”* The *Madinan* Surahs, as we have already studied, have a unique pattern to their subjects. They first address the believers, then the hypocrites and then the *Children of Israel*. Likewise, this ayah after addressing the believers and the hypocrites, gives a reference to the history of the *Children of Israel*. The *ayah* states that as the *Quraysh* of *Makkah* were punished for their evil deeds, so were the people of Pharaoh who rejected the signs and revelations of Allah (SWT) that He sent down to Prophet Moses (AS), and also those who were before them like the people of *Aad* and *Thamud*, who were punished for their misdeeds and were destroyed completely. Then in the end the *ayah* states that Allah (SWT) is mighty and severe in punishment i.e. no one can escape His punishment.

(53) *“That is so because Allah (SWT) will never change a grace which He has bestowed on a people until they change what is in their ownelves. And verily, Allah (SWT) is All-Hearer, All-Knower.”* This has always been the practice of Allah (SWT) that as long as people do not change their state of moral rectitude themselves, He does not change the good that He has bestowed on them. In other words Allah (SWT) keeps on sending His favors and blessings to a people until they themselves invite the punishment of Allah (SWT) by changing their condition i.e. from the good state to a bad state of being. At this point we should also highlight the fact that revolutions do not necessarily succeed through a bloody coupe or a revolt against the state, but a change in the system can be brought only by purifying the souls of the people i.e. they will have to change their own conditions first, in order to have any effect on the entire system. It is just like the revolutionary struggle put up by Prophet Muhammad (SAW), which started with *Da'wah* and training and ended with armed conflict—the last phase of a revolutionary struggle. This subject will further be elaborated (*Insh'Allah*) in surah *Ra'd* and surah *Ibrahim*.

(54) *“Similar to the behavior of the people of Pharaoh, and those before them. They belied the revelations of their Lord, so We destroyed them for their sins, and We drowned the people of*

Pharaoh for they were all wrong-doers." Again this *ayah* bears reference to the people of Pharaoh and those who were before them. They rejected the signs and revelations of Allah (SWT) and thus He destroyed them for their sins and drowned the people of Pharaoh, for they were all evil-doers.

(55) *"Verily, The worst of moving (living) creatures before Allah (SWT) are those who disbelieve, - so they shall not believe."* i.e. the worst and basest kind of creatures among living human beings are those who reject and disbelieve Allah's revelations. They are like those who do not use their intellect or reason to listen to the truth and they are like animals who have eyes to see but cannot see the truth and have ears, but cannot hear the truth. Then, at the end Allah (SWT) said that O Muslims such disbelievers will never believe no matter what you do.

(56) *"They are those with whom you made a covenant, but they break their covenant every time and they do not fear Allah."* This refers to the *Jews of Madinah* who had made a treaty with the Muslims when the Prophet (SAW) arrived in *Madinah*. Such was the statesmanship of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) that when he arrived in *Madinah*, he eliminated all the prejudices between the *Ansar* and the *Muhajireen* and made treaties with the neighboring *Jews* for the defense of *Madinah*. Although, they concluded the treaty but violated it in secret by sending messages to the *Quraysh* to come and attack the Muslims and they promised them their full support. This is what this *ayah* refers to that they make the covenant with the Muslims but violate it every now and then because their only concern is the life of this world, for they do not fear Allah (SWT).

(57) *"So if you meet them in war, punish them severely in order to disperse those who are behind them, so that they may learn a lesson."* In this *ayah* Allah (SWT) instructed the Muslims that whenever you encounter such people i.e. those who have violated the treaty, then give them a severe punishment which should be a lesson for others. All the punishments in Islam are used as a deterrent for others, so that it serves as an admonition for others. For example an apostate is given capital punishment, so that Islam does not become like a shop or a store which a person can enter whenever he wants and leave whenever he wants. The criminals and disbelievers may look at these punishments as cruel, but the

acts of evil and heinous crimes against a society are much more cruel and barbaric.

(58) *"If you fear treachery from any people, throw back to them (their treaty) fairly. Certainly Allah (SWT) likes not the treacherous."* In this *ayah* Allah (SWT) has instructed the Muslims that if the other party with whom you have a treaty is violating the treaty, then you do not have to continue to abide by that treaty. But at the same time you have to inform them of your severing the treaty before you take any action against them. Then Allah (SWT) says that surely He does not like those who commit breach of trust.

(59) *"And let not those who disbelieve think that they can outstrip Us. Verily, they will never have the power to do so."* i.e. do not think that the disbelievers have escaped Us, for it is not possible for them to save themselves from His punishment and they cannot frustrate Allah (SWT).

(60) *"And make ready against them all you can of power, including cavalry to threaten the enemy of Allah (SWT) and your enemy, and others besides whom you may not know but whom Allah (SWT) does know. And whatever you shall spend in the Cause of Allah (SWT) shall be repaid unto you, and you shall not be treated unjustly."* Allah (SWT) instructs the Muslims to always keep themselves prepared with whatever supplies they can gather against the enemies of Allah (SWT). This includes all the military strength, equipment, weapons and cavalry that they can afford, so that they can fill with fear the hearts of their enemies and those whom they do not know. It should also be pointed out here that the need of military equipment and weapons does not mean total dependence on them nor does it mean that you forsake them altogether for your faith and trust in Allah (SWT). It has been narrated that one day Prophet Muhammad (SAW) noticed a Bedouin leaving his camel without tying it. He asked the Bedouin, *"Why don't you tie down your camel?"* The Bedouin answered, *"I put my trust in Allah (SWT)."* The Prophet (SAW) then said, *"Tie your camel first, then put your trust in Allah (SWT)."* Thus the Muslims should spend their utmost energy to acquire strength and power needed for the defense of their homeland like Nuclear capability and other state-of-the-art weapons. But at the same time they should have total trust and faith that the

final decision rests with Allah (SWT) alone. Also worth mentioning here is the Nuclear capability of Pakistan, acquisition of which is nothing less than a miracle. Pakistan has the honors to be the first Muslim country to achieve such a feat and it is required of them to go as far as they can to make this capability as a deterrent, in order to terrorize the hearts of the enemies of Islam. However, making oneself capable to defend an Islamic country does need to be backed financially. Therefore, in the end of this ayah Allah (SWT) has encouraged the Muslims to spend in His cause, for whatever they spend for His cause in this world, it will be returned to them in full in this world and in the Hereafter and surely they will not be treated unjustly.

(61) *“But if they incline to peace, you also incline to it, and trust in Allah (SWT). Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.”* i.e. if the disbelievers at some stage are inclined towards peace then you should accept their offer of peace and conclude a treaty with them, for surely Allah (SWT) knows and hears all that they do.

(62) *“And if they intend to deceive you, then verily Allah (SWT) is All-Sufficient for you. He it is Who has supported you with His Help and with the believers.”* i.e. if they deceive you even after offering peace to you then you should not worry, for you should know that Allah (SWT) is sufficient for you as a Helper and a Protector. Then Allah (SWT) said to the Prophet (SAW) that He has strengthened you with His help and with such believers who are always ready to sacrifice their lives and their wealth in the way of Allah (SWT). They were not like the Companions of Moses (AS) who showed cowardice and refused to fight their enemy. They rebelled against Allah’s commandments and committed blasphemy to such an extent that they replied to Moses (AS) that you and your Lord fight yourself with the enemies and we are not going to join you. But unlike the *Israelites* the Companions (RAA) of the Prophet (SAW) showed the spirit of sacrifice and fidelity each time they were called upon to fight and help Allah’s Messenger (SAW).

(63) *“And He has united their hearts. If you had spent all that is in the earth, you could not have united their hearts, but Allah (SWT) has united them. Certainly He is All-Mighty, All-Wise.”* This refers to another of Allah’s favors that He bestowed upon His Prophet (SAW) and his Companions (RAA). This *ayah* states that it was Allah (SWT) Who brought

together the hearts of the believers and made them brothers to each other. Then Allah (SWT) said to the Prophet (SAW) that even if you had spent all the wealth of this world, you could not have brought them together because of the hatred and enmity that existed between them for years. They were divided into clans and groups, who were always at war and had great hatred and enmity for each other. Then when they embraced Islam, they became one *Ummah* helping each other in piety and righteousness. This was all by the grace and help of Allah (SWT), for He is Mighty and Wise.

(64) *“O Prophet! Allah (SWT) is Sufficient for you and for the believers who follow you.”* i.e. O Prophet (SAW) Allah (SWT) is sufficient for you and for your followers in His support and Help against your enemies. Some Scholars have also translated it as 'O Prophet (SAW) Allah (SWT) is sufficient for you and so are the believers who help him and support him in any adversity'.

(65) *“O Prophet (SAW)! Urge the believers to fight. If there are twenty steadfast persons amongst you, they will overcome two hundred, and if there be a hundred steadfast persons they will vanquish a thousand of those who disbelieve, because they are people who do not understand.”* This noble *ayah* urges the believers to fight against the enemies of Allah (SWT) and also gives them the good news of His blessing that even a few sincerely true Muslims will be able to overcome a large number of disbelievers' army. Allah (SWT) encourages the believers to fight and wage war against His enemies and reminds them of His Help and support. He told them that they will rout a larger force than theirs with His will. Therefore, if there will be twenty Muslims, they will be able to overcome two hundred of the disbelieving army and if they are one hundred, they will be able to gain victory against a thousand strong enemy by His grace and Help. This is because the disbelievers have not understood the truth and thus these fools have taken up arms against those who have accepted it.

(66) *“Now Allah (SWT) has lightened your (task), for He knows that there is weakness in you. So if there are of you a hundred steadfast persons, they shall overcome two hundred, and if there are a thousand of you, they shall overcome two thousand by Allah's will. And Allah (SWT) is with the patient ones.”* Soon after the previous *ayah* was revealed in which Allah (SWT)

commanded one Muslim to fight ten disbelievers, He then revealed this ayah which made the matter easier for the Muslims and stated that if there are patient and persevering Muslims then they should not leave the battle field even if they are half of the disbeliever's army, for surely they will overcome them with His will. The reason given for the lightening of their burden was because of the weakness that had developed within some of them. This refers to the hypocrites of *Madinah* who had embraced Islam to weaken it from within. After the Battle of *Badr* an Islamic state started to emerge and the people of *Madinah*, mostly *Jews* pretended to be Muslims, but in reality they had only accepted Islam to plot and plan against the believers and the Prophet (SAW). That is why Allah (SWT) said that He knows there is some weakness in the Muslims i.e. the presence of hypocrites. At the end of the *ayah* Allah (SWT) stated that He is with the patient ones i.e. those who are steadfast and firm in following Allah's commandments.

(67) *"It is not fitting for a Prophet that he should have prisoners of war until he had thoroughly subdued the land. You desire the good of this world, but Allah (SWT) desires the Hereafter. And Allah (SWT) is All-Mighty, All-Wise."* This *ayah* refers to a particular event after the Battle of *Badr*. In the Battle seventy of the *Quraysh* chiefs were killed and further seventy were taken as prisoners of war. As at that time no clear injunction was revealed regarding the prisoners of war, the Prophet (SAW) called upon his Companions (RAA) for consultation. Umar (RAA) said that they should kill these captives and not let them go for ransom, for they might return to fight against the Muslims. This was also the opinion of some other Companions like S'ad bin Muadh (RAA), while others including Abu Bakr (RAA) gave the opinion to release the captives in return for ransom, for they thought that it might be possible that at some later stage they might accept Islam. The Prophet (SAW), because of his kindness and affection towards the creation of Allah (SWT), accepted the opinion of Abu Bakr (RAA) and set the captives free in return for ransom. This became the reason for the displeasure of Allah (SWT) and He revealed this *ayah* admonishing the Muslims for the decision that they had taken ransom to release the prisoners, for it is not befitting for a Prophet of Allah (SWT) and his followers that once they overpower their enemy, they release them until they have thoroughly subdued them. Then Allah (SWT) further

admonishes them that it is not proper for the believers to desire the worldly things of this life i.e. the ransom that they got in return of the prisoners, while He wants them to seek Paradise in the Hereafter. And surely He is the Mighty and Wise.

(68) *"Had it not been a previous sanction from Allah (SWT), a severe torment would have touched you for what you took."* This refers to the *ayah* 4 of surah Muhammad (SAW), which had already been revealed much before this surah. There Allah (SWT) gave an option to the Muslims that when your enemies are thoroughly subdued then it is permissible for you to keep their captured men as prisoners. The difference of opinion that arose between the Muslims was due to their interpretation of that *ayah*, for some thought that they had broken the back of the disbelievers' army, thus they can keep their men as prisoners and release them in return of ransom. While others said that they should kill them for they have not yet routed the disbelievers. Thus Allah (SWT) said that if that *ayah* had not been revealed before, they surely would have been punished severely for their decision.

(69) *"So enjoy what you have gotten of booty in war, lawful and good, and be afraid of Allah (SWT). Certainly, Allah (SWT) is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."* Although the decision to release the captives became the cause of displeasure of Allah (SWT), yet by His grace and Mercy He gave the believers permission to enjoy the booty that they had collected from the battlefield as well as the ransom that they got in return for the prisoners. But in future they should fear Allah (SWT) and know that He is Most Forgiving and Merciful for His servants.

(70) *"O Prophet (SAW)! Say to the captives that are in your hands: "If Allah (SWT) knows any good in your hearts, He will give you something better than what has been taken from you, and He will forgive you, and Allah (SWT) is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.""* The Prophet (SAW) was asked to invite the prisoners to consider that if they become righteous and accept Islam then they will be given much more than they have lost i.e. the ransom that they gave for themselves, and their previous sins will be pardoned. Also amongst the army of the disbelievers were those who were forced to come along with them but within their hearts they had testified to the prophethood of

Muhammad (SAW). They were afraid to disclose it because of the fear of their tribe and their lack of motivation to migrate and leave their land and family. Abbas (RAA), the uncle of the Prophet (SAW) was also amongst these prisoners, who ransomed himself and embraced Islam later on. And surely Allah (SWT) is Forgiving and Merciful.

(71) *“But if they intend to betray you, they have already betrayed Allah (SWT) before. So He gave (you) power over them. And Allah (SWT) is All-Knower, All-Wise.”* i.e. if any of the prisoners falsely declare that they are Muslims and that they were forced to accompany the *Quraysh* so as to avoid punishment, then know that they have indeed shown treason against Allah (SWT) before i.e. in the Battle of Badr. Thus He gave the Muslims power over them to capture them, and surely He is Aware of their actions and Wise in His decisions.

(72) *“Verily, those who believed, and emigrated and strove hard with their property and their lives in the Cause of Allah (SWT) as well as those who gave (them) asylum and help, - these are (all) allies to one another. And as to those who believed but did not emigrate, you owe no duty of protection to them until they emigrate, but if they seek your help in religion, it is your duty to help them except against a people with whom you have a treaty of mutual alliance, and Allah (SWT) is the All-Seer of what you do.”* In the first part of this *ayah* Allah (SWT) mentions the virtues and the character of the *Muhajirin* and the *Ansar of Madinah* and stated that they are supporters and helpers to each other. The *Muhajirin* forsook their homes and their properties and left their relatives behind and strove hard and fought against the enemies only for the sake of Allah (SWT). Here the fighting against the enemies refers to the eight expeditions sent by the Prophet (SAW) to attack the trade caravans of the *Quraysh* of *Makkah* carrying goods and merchandise from Syria. The Prophet (SAW) only took part in four such expeditions along with the *Muhajirin* who were allowed to take part in them, while the *Ansar of Madinah* were not involved in these early expeditions. But they gave their *Muhajir* brothers refuge and shelter in their homes and helped them with their wealth and even divorced their wives if any of them had two, so that their *Muhajir* brothers could marry them. Such was the bond of brotherhood created between the *Muhajirin* and the *Ansar* that they were permitted to inherit from each other, having more right than even the

deceased's relatives but this practice was abrogated when Allah (SWT) ordained the fixed share of the relatives. Then Allah (SWT) mentioned those who embraced Islam but did not migrate to the Prophet (SAW) in *Madinah* and stayed behind with their disbelieving relatives and tribes. It was said to the Muslims that it is not incumbent on them to protect or help such believers until they do not leave their homes and fight in the cause of Allah (SWT). But if they ask for their support to safeguard their faith from the disbelievers then it becomes obligatory for the Muslims to aid them against their enemy except against a nation or a tribe with whom they have a treaty. And know that Allah (SWT) sees all the actions of His servants.

(73) *“And those who disbelieve are allies to one another, if you do not do so, there will be tumult and oppression on earth, and great mischief.”* Since the disbelievers are protectors and helpers to each other, therefore, O Muslims if you do not come together as one united block under one leader, then there will be much corruption and oppression in the land.

(74) *“And those who believed, and emigrated and strove hard in the Cause of Allah (SWT), as well as those who gave asylum and aid; these are the true believers, for them is forgiveness and an honorable provision.”* This *ayah* refers to the *Muhajirin* and the *Ansar*, an attestation from Allah (SWT) for their being true believers and a promise of forgiveness and generous provision made to them. At the beginning of this surah, Allah (SWT) described some traits of such true believers. It was stated that one of the qualities of a true believer is that when the Name of Allah (SWT) is mentioned before him, he feels a tremor in his heart which increases them in faith. Then it was said that they are never neglectful of performing their regular prayers and they spend in the way of Allah (SWT) from the provisions that He has provided for them. Similarly, Allah (SWT) mentioned their unique characteristics in another *ayah*: *“Only those are the believers who have believed in Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW), and afterwards doubt not but strive with their wealth and their lives for the Cause of Allah (SWT). Those! They are the truthful.”*¹

(75) *“And those who embraced the faith afterwards, and emigrated and strove hard along with you, they are of you. But kindred by blood are nearer to one another in the decree ordained by*

Allah (SWT). Verily, Allah (SWT) is the All-Knower of everything." It was declared by Allah (SWT) that from now on whosoever will believe in Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW), migrate to safeguard his religion and will strive hard for the cause of Allah (SWT) will be included in the universal brotherhood of Islam. But this does not mean that they have a right in the inheritance of their brother in Islam, for the blood relations of a Muslim have precedence over them. Indeed Allah (SWT) knows everything.

Foot Notes

[1] Surah Al-Hujurat(49): 15.