

Extracts from Speech (TAZKEER BIL QURAN)

The Sixtieth Surah (60th); Al-Mumtahinah (The Examined One)

Verses 5 through 10

Delivered by: Ameer-e-Tanzeem-e-Islami, Hafiz Aakif Saeed, on Friday, 28-03-2014.

Ameer-e-Tanzeem, Hafiz Aakif Saeed, continued the sermon entitled, "TAZKEER BIL QURAN" on the sixtieth (60th) Surah of the Qur'an, Al-Mumtahinah (The Examined One, which is also referred to as 'The Scrutinized One' or 'The Tested One' in certain translations). He reiterated succinctly the introduction to the historical perspective of its revelation and briefly recapitulated the essence of the first four verses of the Surah with special emphasis of their implications for the Muslims of today viz. the Systems prevalent globally. He then went on to elucidate verses 5 through 10 of the Surah in detail.

I seek refuge of Allah (SWT) from the accursed Satan

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

Verse 60:5

"O our Sustainer! Make us not a plaything for those who are bent on denying the truth! And forgive us our sins, O our sustainer: for Thou (SWT) alone art Almighty, (Truly) Wise!"

There are several ways in which the believers can become a cause of trial for the disbelievers, for which every believer should seek Allah's (SWT) refuge. Consider the following possibilities:

- 1- The disbelievers may gain an upper hand over the believers and thus consider it a proof of their being in the right and the believers' being in the wrong; otherwise it would have been impossible that in spite of Allah's (SWT) good pleasure that they (the believers) claim to enjoy, the disbelievers still gained an upper hand over them.
- 2- The persecution of the believers by the disbelievers may become unbearable with the result that they may yield to them and abandon their faith and moral values. This would subject the believers to public ridicule and would provide the disbelievers with an opportunity to further humiliate and debase them (the believers) and their religion.
- 3- Despite proclaiming to be the torch-bearers of the true religion – Islam – the believers may lose their ethical as well as geographical superiority that they should have accrued due to accepting Islam. But as their Islam, the Muslims of today being a case in point, is no more than lip service the neutral bystanders may find the same defects and deficiencies in their character as are commonly found in an un-Islamic community, e.g., the West. The disbelievers would hence be able to argue that your religion and faith that you hold in such esteem is practically no different than our disbelief.

Verse (60:6)

“In them, indeed, you have a good example for everyone who looks forward [with hope and awe] to Allah (SWT) and the Last Day. And if any one turns away, [let him know that] Allah (SWT) is (Truly) Self-Sufficient, The One (SWT) to whom all praise is due.”

Whosoever is hopeful of Allah’s (SWT) Mercy and believes in the Last Day with unwavering conviction, Allah (SWT) too will treat him benevolently and help him in attaining success in the Hereafter.

The latter part of the same verse elaborates the former section, in which it is plainly and clearly declared by Allah (SWT) the Most High that He (SWT) is in no need of such ‘believers’ who profess to ‘believe’ in His Religion (SWT), yet maintain friendly ties and alliances with His (SWT) enemies. His Godhead does not require a certificate of acknowledgement from them to designate Him as Allah (SWT). Similarly, His (SWT) being praiseworthy is not dependent on the praise and glorification offered to Him (SWT) by His creation. If people affirm to real faith in Allah (SWT), it is in their own benefit and not the other way around. The rule ordained at the end of the said verse is that the believers cannot gain anything from their faith until they break off all connections of love and friendship with the enemies of Allah (SWT), similar to the example set by Prophet Abraham (AS) and his companions.

Verse (60:7)

[But] it may well be that Allah (SWT) will bring about [mutual] affection between you [O believers] and some of those whom you [currently] face as enemies: for, Allah (SWT) is Almighty – and Allah (SWT) is Oft-Forgiving, The Most Merciful (A dispenser of Grace).

Although the true believers were following the exhortation to sever their connections with the unbelieving kinsmen patiently, yet Allah (SWT) knew how hard it was to sever abruptly one's connections with one's parents, brothers, sisters and close relatives. Therefore, Allah (SWT) consoled them in this verse with the hope that a time would soon come when some of their same relatives would become Muslims eventually and the enmity and bloodthirstiness of today may transform into love and affection tomorrow. When this verse was revealed, none could fathom the probability of such a miracle happening. But hardly a few weeks had passed when Makkah fell and the people of Quraish began to enter Islam in large numbers. The Muslims thus witnessed with their own eyes the promise made by Allah (SWT) come true.

Verse (60:8)

As for such [of the unbelievers] as do not fight against you on account of [your] faith, and neither drive you forth from your homelands, Allah (SWT) does not forbid you to show them kindness and to behave towards them with full equity; for, verily, Allah (SWT) loves those who act equitably.

This verse answers a query that had been rattling in the minds of Muslims. How should non-hostile disbelievers be treated? How should hostile believers be treated? Should justice prevail under all circumstances? The answer was befittingly revealed in the context of Justice, which in fact has been used

in an exceptional manner. Justice demands that the believers should not be hostile to those who are not hostile to them, for it is not just to treat the combatant disbeliever and the non-combatant disbeliever alike. Muslims had every right to assert positively, with a bit of sternness if necessary, towards those who persecuted them for embracing Islam, compelled them to leave their homes and did not stop pursuing them even after their forced expulsion. But as for those who were not partners in persecuting them, the believers ought to treat them well and fulfill the rights which those disbelievers have on the believers, owing to the strong bond of blood and kinship amongst them.

Verse (60:9)

Allah (SWT) only forbids you to turn in friendship towards such as fight against you because of [your] faith, and drive you forth from your homelands, or aid [others] in driving you forth: and as for those [from among you] who turn towards them in friendship; it is they, they who are truly wrongdoers!

This verse clears the subject further that this particular set of instructions to sever ties with the disbelievers is based on their hostility towards Islam and Muslims and not due to the disbelief that they cling on to. It is, therefore, imperative for the Muslims of all times to distinguish between the hostile disbeliever and the non-hostile disbeliever. The latter must be treated well.

An example that explains the ordained command in practice is the incident that took place between Asma (RA) the daughter of Abu Bakr (RA) and her disbelieving mother. A wife of Abu Bakr (RA) named Qutaylah bint Abdul Uzza was a disbeliever and had remained behind in Makkah after the migration to Madinah. Asma (RA) had been born of her. After the peace treaty of Hudaibiyah, when the traffic opened between Makkah and Madinah, she came to Madinah to see her daughter and also brought some gifts. Asma (RA) herself relates that she went to the Holy Prophet and asked: "Should I see my mother? And can I treat her as a daughter should treat her mother?" The Holy Prophet replied: "Yes, treat her as your mother." (*Musnad Ahmad, Bukhari, Muslim*).

This evidence is sufficient enough to lead one to the inescapable conclusion that a Muslim serving his unbelieving parents is allowed, rather encouraged, while helping his unbelieving brothers, sisters and relatives is permissible, provided that they are not hostile towards Islam and the Muslims.

Verse (60:10)

O You who have attained faith! Whenever believing women come unto you, forsaking the domain of evil, examine them, [although only] Allah (SWT) is fully aware of their faith; and if you have thus ascertained that they are believers, do not send them back to the deniers of the truth, [since] they are [no longer] lawful to their erstwhile husbands, and these are [no longer] lawful to them. None the less, you shall return to them whatever they have spent [on their wives by way of dower]; and [then, O believers,] you will be committing no sin if you marry them after giving them their dowers. On the other hand, hold not to the marriage-tie with women who [continue to] deny the truth, and ask but for [the return of] whatever you have spent [by way of dower] - just as they [whose wives have gone over to you] have the right to demand [the return

of] whatever they have spent. Such is Allah (SWT)'s judgment: He judges between you [in equity] – for Allah (SWT) is All-Knowing, (Truly) Wise.

The Surah takes its name from first few words of this words viz. 'Examine them'. The background of this injunction is that after the peace treaty of Hudaibiyah, in the beginning, the Muslim men started fleeing Makkah and arriving in Madinah, who were sent back to Makkah by the Messenger of Allah (SAW) according to the terms of the treaty, with the advice to be patient and wait for glad tidings to come ashore. Meanwhile, a Muslim woman, Umm Kulthum Uqbah bin Abi Mu'ait (RA) emigrated to Madinah. The disbelievers invoked the treaty and demanded her (RA) return with two of her brothers following her to Madinah to take her back. At this point, the question arose whether the treaty of Hudaibiyah applied to the women or not. Allah (SWT), Who is the All-Knowing' has answered this very question in sections of the verse, ordaining that If the emigrating women have faith and it is ascertained that they have travelled all the way only for the sake of preserving that faith sans any other motive, then they are not to be handed over for return to Makkah.

Moreover, the various versions of the treaty that have reached us via the books of Ahadith have one common factor – the Treaty was applicable to men (Ra'jul) only and the matter pertaining women was somehow missed out! The Quraish were dumb folded by this legal lacuna in the Treaty and had no grounds to protest and cry wolf. This has been reported in several Ahadith and mentioned in a number of authentic exegeses of the Qur'an (Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn al- Arabi, Ahkam al-Qur'an; Razi, Tafsir Kabir etc.).

Islam, however, was interested only in safeguarding the believing women and not to make the holy city of Madinah a place of refuge for every kind of female fugitive, spy or worse. Therefore, Allah enjoined that the arriving women must be ascertained by examination of their faith and once proven that faith alone was the reason for their emigration, they will not be returned to Makkah.

In this verse a basic principle of the Law of Evidence has also been stated and its further clarification has been made by the procedure that the Holy Prophet (SAW) had prescribed for implementing it. This section of the verse enjoins the following three matters:

- 1- Examine the faith of the emigrating women who present themselves as believers;
- 2- Allah (SWT) alone knows the truth about their faith; the Muslims have no means to find out whether the women have really believed in Islam or not; and
- 3- When it has been ascertained that they are believers, they are not to be returned.

The latter section of the verse deals with the future of those believing women. This means that a Muslim who wants to marry any of these women should pay a fresh dower and marry her. The dowers to be repaid to their unbelieving husbands will not be considered their dowers.

Additionally, the verse throws light on the family matters of utmost importance for Muslims living in the West today.

Firstly, the woman who becomes a Muslim is no longer lawful for her unbelieving husband nor her unbelieving husband is lawful for her.

Conversely, it is not lawful for a man who becomes a Muslim to retain his wife in wedlock if she chooses to remain an infidel.

The verse ends with an implied challenge to all systems except Islam to manifest such equity in matters as sensitive as the relationship between spouses. Indeed Allah (SWT) is All-Knowing, Truly Wise.

On this note, the Ameer concluded the elucidation of verses 5 through 10 of Surah 60, Al-Mumtahinah, and Supplicated to Allah (SWT) to bestow on us the understanding of the Qur'an and make it easy for us to follow His (SWT) commandments and lead a righteous life. He coupled the supplication with Aameen!