

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

(156) *“O you who believe! Be not like those who disbelieve and who say to their brethren when they travel through the earth or go out to fight; "If they had stayed with us, they would not have died or been killed,"”* This refers to the hypocrites who do not have faith in Allah (SWT). They do not believe in the fact that the decrees of Allah (SWT) are inevitable and cannot be changed. They believe that if their friends and relatives would not have traveled or fought in the way of Allah (SWT) then they would have not died and surely would have been alive. But Allah (SWT) says: *“so that Allah (SWT) may make it a cause of regret in their hearts.”* i.e. because of this thought, they feel grief and sorrow in their loss. And Allah (SWT) says: *“It is Allah (SWT) that gives life and causes death. And Allah (SWT) is All-Seer of what you do.”* i.e. Nothing can happen without Allah’s (SWT) will and it is Allah (SWT) who ordains life and death. This is the essence of faith and the basic difference between a believer and a non-believer. Believers wholly trust Allah (SWT) and submit to Him. They believe that Allah (SWT) holds control over every living thing and nothing occurs without His permission and knowledge. On the contrary, non-believers do not have faith in Allah (SWT), thus they perceive the whole world as a pure coincidence or chance happening. He (SWT) has knowledge of all your actions.

(157) *“And if you are killed or die in the way of Allah (SWT), forgiveness and mercy from Allah (SWT) are far better than all that they amass.”* This means, that those who die or are killed in Allah’s (SWT) cause, earn His mercy and forgiveness which is far better for them than the worldly delights that they will enjoy in this life if they would have stayed alive a little longer. His mercy would surely be better than all the riches they amass.

(158) *“And whether you die, or are killed, verily, unto Allah (SWT) you shall be gathered.”* i.e. whether you die a natural death or you are killed in the way of Allah

(SWT), the fact remains that you all shall be brought before Him. Before Him you shall all be gathered.

(159) *“And by the mercy of Allah (SWT), you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh hearted, they would have deserted you; so pardon them and ask forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs.”* This *ayah* describes that it is Allah’s (SWT) mercy that He has made Prophet Muhammad’s (SAW) heart soft and gentle for his *Ummah*. He has made him full of kindness and mercy for the believers and this is why He has given him the title of *“Mercy to all the creations”*. In another *ayah* *Qur’an* says that it grieves Prophet Muhammad (SAW) if his *Ummah* is in difficulty and always prays for them so that they are rightly guided. On the other hand, Allah (SWT) says that if Prophet’s behavior would have been severe and harsh with his followers then they would surely have deserted him. But Allah (SWT) had made them gather around him because he does not deal with them severely. If they make mistakes, he forgives and implores Allah (SWT) to forgive them. Further this *ayah* indicates that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) always consulted his Companions (RA) for advice in different matters as he did before the Battle of *Uhud* when he asked his Companions (RA), whether to stay in *Madinah* or go out and meet the enemy in the open. Then Allah (SWT) said: *“Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah (SWT).”* i.e. whatever the decision is made after the consultation then stick to it and put your trust in Allah (SWT). *“certainly, Allah (SWT) loves those who put their trust in Him.”*

This *ayah* is also important regarding the leadership of an Islamic movement. It gives us an important clue as to what qualities should a leader (*Ameer*) of an Islamic party possess. It describes the characteristics of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as a leader, a perfect example for all to follow.

(160) *“If Allah (SWT) helps you, none can overcome you; and if He forsakes you, who is there after Him that can help you?”* This means that if you struggle hard and devote yourself in Allah’s (SWT) cause, He will surely help you and no one will be able to defeat you. But if He forsakes you because of your own deeds then there will be none to help you after Him. *“And in Allah (SWT) (Alone) let believers put their trust.”*

(161) *“It is not for any Prophet to take illegally a part of booty”* After the battle of Badr some hypocrites accused the holy Prophet (SAW) of taking a red robe illegally from the booty, but Allah (SWT) warns these people for entertaining such evil thoughts and exonerates His Prophet (SAW) of deceit and treachery. *“and whosoever deceives his companions as regards the booty, he shall bring forth on the Day of Resurrection that which he took.”* This *ayah* contains a warning against those who steal from the booty. It states that whoever betrays the trust and steals from the booty then whatever he has stolen will be brought forth from him on the *Day of Judgment*. Further Allah (SWT) says: *“Then every person shall be paid in full what he has earned and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.”* i.e. they will be dealt according to their deeds; none shall be wronged.

(162) *“Is then one who follows (seeks) the good Pleasure of Allah (SWT) like the one who draws on himself the Wrath of Allah (SWT)? His abode is Hell, and worst indeed is that destination!”* The one who seeks Allah’s (SWT) pleasure refers to those who follow His commandments and do not take anything illegally from the booty, and those who have incurred the wrath of Allah (SWT) refers to those who betray their companion’s trust and steal from the booty. They are the people of hellfire and they will remain in it forever. Can the man who seeks to please Allah (SWT) be compared to him who has incurred his wrath? Hell shall be his home. Evil indeed shall be his fate.

(163) *"Varied are their positions with Allah (SWT)"* i.e. Allah (SWT) grades the people of righteousness and people of evil. It means that there are different levels of Paradise for the believers, similarly there are various degrees of punishment and hell for the evildoers and hypocrites. *"and Allah (SWT) is All-Seer of what they do."* i.e. He knows who deserves what rank or grade as He sees all their deeds. Allah (SWT) is fully cognizant, of what they do.

(164) *"Indeed Allah (SWT) conferred a great favor on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from among themselves, reciting unto them His revelations and purifying them, and instructing them the Book (the Qur'an) and the wisdom, while before that they had been in manifest error."* This *ayah* has already been commented upon in *ayah* 151 of surah *Al-Baqarah* which talks about the blessing Allah (SWT) bestowed upon mankind in the advent of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Allah (SWT) sent Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as a response to the prayer of Prophet Abraham (AS) and Ishmael (AS), when they supplicated to their Lord to send a Messenger amongst their descendants. Therefore, Allah (SWT) accepted their supplication and sent Prophet Muhammad (SAW) amongst their offspring who recites the Book of Allah (SWT) i.e. the *Qur'an*, to the believers and purifies them from all evils with it, as Allah (SWT) said in another *ayah*: *"We have revealed the Qur'an which is a healing and a mercy to the believers..."*² Further the Prophet (SAW) teaches the believers *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*, whereas before that they were lost in error and were clearly astray.

(165) *"When a single disaster befell you" "although you inflicted (your enemies) losses twice as great, you say: "From where does this come to us?"*" This *ayah* refers to the hypocrites who after the Battle of *Uhud* started to doubt the Prophethood of Muhammad (SAW) because of their heavy losses and defeat, but this *ayah* states that they themselves inflicted losses twice as heavy on the enemy in the battle of *Badr* when they killed seventy of

them and captured seventy others so why should they say: "why did this defeat happen to us". So Allah (SWT) answers them: "*Say (to them), "It is from yourselves."* i.e. it is indeed your own fault that you have suffered in the *Battle of Badr* when you (i.e. the archers) disobeyed the Prophet (SAW) and abandoned their positions. "*And Allah (SWT) has power over all things."* i.e. He does what He wills and no one can change His decision. Allah (SWT) is all-Powerful i.e., Omnipotent.

(166) "*And what you suffered on the day when the two armies met, was ordained by Allah (SWT)*" This means, that whatever losses the Muslims suffered in the *Battle of Badr*, it was by Allah's (SWT) will and by His perfect wisdom. He controls everything and nothing happens outside of His will, because all matters rest exclusively with Him. "*In order that He might test the believers."* i.e. He tests them with trials and tribulations so that to distinguish those who are patient, firm and steadfast amongst them. He (SWT) does this so that He might distinguish the true believers and the hypocrites.

(167) "*And that He might test the hypocrites*" This *ayah* refers to the chief of hypocrites, Abdullah bin Ubay, who left the battlefield along with his 300 men and returned to *Madinah*. "*It was said to them: "Come, fight in the Way of Allah (SWT) or (at least) defend yourselves."*" When Abdullah bin Ubay was leaving with his men, some of the 700 Muslims left in the battlefield followed them and tried to persuade him to come back and fight against the 3000 strong *Quraysh* army for the sake of Allah (SWT). When that did not appeal them they tried to convince them to at least fight to defend their city of *Madinah*, when it is being threatened by the enemy. But "*They said: "Had we known that fighting will take place, we would certainly have followed you."*" i.e. if we would have known that you are going to fight today with the unbelievers then we would certainly have followed you in the battlefield. "*They were that day, nearer to disbelief than to Faith, saying with their mouths what was not in their hearts."* They pretended to be as Muslims but

they were nearer to disbelief as they conceal extreme enmity and hatred against the believers but do not utter what they believe in. *“And Allah (SWT) has full knowledge of what they conceal.”* i.e. He knows the hypocrites and what they conceal in their hearts against the believers. Allah (SWT) knew their secret thoughts.

(168) *“They are the ones who said about their killed brethren while they themselves sat (at home)”* Again this *ayah* refers Abdullah bin Ubay who returned to *Madinah* with his 300 men from his way to the battlefield. They said: *“If only they had listened to us, they would not have been killed.”* i.e. if the Muslims would have listened to our advice and not go out in the battlefield but would have stayed with us, then they would not have died or been killed. But Allah (SWT) said: *“Say: “Avert death from your ownelves, if you speak the truth.”* i.e. even though you stayed in *Madinah*, if death suddenly comes to any of you, you will not be able to avoid it. So if you are truthful in what you claim then try to ward off death from yourselves.

(169) *“Think not of those who are killed in the Way of Allah (SWT) as dead. Nay, they are alive, with their Lord, and they are well provided by their Lord.”* This subject has already been mentioned in *ayah* 154 of surah *Al-Baqarah*. Allah (SWT) says that never think of those persons who are martyred in the way of Allah (SWT) as dead. In fact they are alive enjoying an eternal life and He also provides them with sustenance as Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: *“The martyrs convene at the shore of a river close to the door of Paradise, in a green tent, where there provisions are brought to them from Paradise day and night”³.*

(170) *“They rejoice in what Allah (SWT) has bestowed upon them of His Bounty, rejoicing for the sake of those who have not yet joined them, but are left behind (not yet martyred) that on them no fear shall come, nor shall they grieve.”* i.e. the martyrs are pleased of what Allah (SWT) has given them from His unlimited bounties and they

are also happy to think that there is nothing to fear or to regret for those of their brothers whom they have left behind and who have not yet joined them in their bliss i.e. they are not yet martyred.

(171) *“They rejoice in a Grace and a Bounty from Allah (SWT), and that Allah (SWT) will not waste the reward of the believers.”* i.e. the martyrs are happy to receive Allah’s (SWT) grace and bounty and they are pleased that Allah (SWT) has fulfilled His promise and given them tremendous rewards. And surely the reward of the faithful is not lost. Allah (SWT) will not deny the faithful their reward.

Foot Notes

[1] Surah Sajdah (32) : 18.

[2] Surah Bani-Israel (17) : 82.

[3] Musnad Ahmed 1 : 266.