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Surah Al-Mujadilah

For an introduction to our tafsirs and for a discussion of the Basmallah, which is the first ayah of this Surah, please see our tafsir of *Surah Fatihah* which is also on Quran-Tafsir.org

قَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّتِي تُجَادِلُكَ فِي زَوْجِهَا وَتَشْتَكِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ
يَسْمَعُ تَحَاوُرَ كُفْمًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١﴾

2. Surely Allah hears the speech of her who disputes with you concerning her husband and complains to Allah and Allah hears the discourse of the both of you. Surely Allah is Hearing, Seeing.

Allah (swt) begins this ayah with the word *qad* to stress emphasis and certainty. This means that the information that follows after this word is certainly true without any doubt. What is it that is true without any doubt? Allah (swt) tells the Prophet (saw) that He (swt) has certainly heard the words of the woman who disputes with him (saw). The scholars say the woman here is Khawla bint Thalabah and her husband is Aws ibn al-Samit. The case that she brought to the Prophet (saw) was that her husband had her divorced her by saying “You are to me as the back of my mother”. This was a form of divorce that was done during the time of *Jahilliya* (the pre-Islamic era of ignorance) known as *thihar*. When a husband makes such a statement to his wife then she becomes completely forbidden for him after that. All that the husband had to do was speak these few words and the marriage was completely dissolved. Thus such a form of divorce completely destroys the family in a very simple and easy way. Only a few words spoken by the man and the family is broken. Khawla had brought her case before the Prophet (saw) to contend that this form of divorce was not valid and that it was not fair that she should be separated from her children. It was not fair that her husband should be able to divorce her so easily and not leave for her anyway to get a share of her children or a share of the wealth. *Thihar* was one of the practices in the time of *Jahilliya* that was extremely unfair to women. It was a divorce that completely and utterly destroyed the marriage with only a few words and without any chance of reconciliation.

Then Allah (swt) says that He (swt) also heard her when she complained of her difficulties to Him (swt). Before Khawla brought her case before the Prophet (saw), she had complained to Allah (swt) in her prayers of her sorrow and difficulty. Although she brought her case before the Prophet (saw) because he (saw) was the leader of the Islamic State, she did not complain about her difficulties and sorrow to him (saw). Rather she only complained to Allah (swt). We know that we should never complain about any difficulty to anyone except Allah (swt). For example there is the case of Yaqoob (as) whom Allah (swt) tells us about in Quran when he said concerning his sorrow for his lost children “I only complain of my sorrow and pain to Allah”. So although Khawla had brought her case before the Prophet (saw) to judge, she only complained of her grief and her sorrow to Allah (swt).

Then Allah (swt) says that He (swt) has heard the discourse between the Prophet (saw) and Khawla. Allah (swt) heard very well how she presented her case before the Prophet (saw). So Allah (swt) is telling us in this first part of the ayah that He (swt) is Aware of the entire situation. Allah (swt) knows the case that Khawla brought before the Prophet (saw), He (swt) knows what her husband said to her, He (swt) Knows how she complained of her difficulties and sorrow only to Him (swt) and He (swt) Hears the dialogue that she and the Prophet (saw) had when she brought forward her case.

One lesson that we can take from this part of the ayah is to remind ourselves how our Lord Knows of the difficulties and the sorrows that each of us have to go through. Allah (swt) Sees and Hears everything. He (swt) Knows of the difficulties and the hardships of all people. So whatever difficulty it is that you are going through you should know that Allah (swt) Knows well about your entire situation. When you live only for your Lord then is it not enough for you to know that He (swt) Knows of your hardships? If you are patient for the sake of Allah (swt) through your difficulty then you know that you have a great reward with Him (swt) for that. Any trial that you go through, even the smallest ones, removes some of your sins and raises you in rank closer to your Lord. So how then can the believer ever become distressed? When you know that your Lord is completely Aware of all that you go through? When you know that He (swt) has a reward that He (swt) is keeping with Him (swt) for you? Does not that make any trial bearable?

Mawdudi tells us in his tafsir of this ayah that these ayahs were revealed at the same time when Khawla brought her case before the Prophet (saw). This means that as the Prophet (saw) was speaking with Khawla these ayahs were sent to him (saw). This fact also shows how the Quran is truly a Miracle and how the Prophet (saw) could not have produced it. The Quran is at the height of the Arabic language in every single ayah. There is no ayah that contains any mistakes or that could be expressed using fewer words and carry the same deep meaning. There is no ayah that could possibly be expressed in a better way. Whenever the Arabs at the time of the Prophet (saw) heard the Quran they knew that words such as these that were so perfect, so beautiful and that carried so much meaning could not have come from the mind of a man. No human being could have composed words that were this perfect. Now the fact that the Prophet (saw) recited words such as these in response to events that he (saw) faced shows clearly that there was no way that he (saw) could have produced it himself. Any writer needs time to organize their thoughts, to prepare what they are going to say, to find the correct words to express themselves, and then to check what they are going to say for errors and mistakes. Even after this entire process they are still prone to errors because they are only human and to err is human. So how could the Prophet (saw) have produced a Quran such as this right at the spur of the moment? It is not genius, even a genius is not this good. The only rational explanation is that these words are a revelation from Allah (swt).

So in this ayah we see the great injustice that has been done against Khawla. Her husband divorces her by simply saying these words that liken her to his mother. Because of this she is left without a husband, without a protector and without her children. There is also no chance for the two of them to come back together even if they desired reconciliation. When she complained to Allah (swt) about her difficulties, Allah (swt) heard her call. In response to her call, Allah (swt) revealed this ayah to the Prophet (saw) when she went to address her case before him (saw). This ayah shows that Allah (swt) cares about all His (swt)'s servants equally. He (swt) does not prefer men over women or women over men. Just the fact that Allah (swt) would reveal this ayah in response to the call of Khawla shows that He (swt) cares for her and cares for the difficulty that she has to go through. So we can see that Islam is not like the other religions of the

world that give a higher status to men over women. Our Creator is One and He (swt) does not discriminate among His creation. Allah (swt) cares about all of His (swt)'s servants equally. There is no discrimination of anyone except in piety.

Finally in the ayah Allah (swt) says “**Surely Allah is Hearing, Seeing**”. The two main themes of the Quran are Tawhid in Allah (swt) and the reminder of the Hereafter. The Quran does not contain many laws, most of the laws in the Din are in the Sunnah of the Prophet (saw). This is because our belief or our Aqeedah is the foundation of our Din just as the Quran is the foundation of the revelation from Allah (swt). The remainder of Islam is built upon these foundations. What every Muslim has to be certain of and has to be constantly reminded of is that his *illah* is only Allah (swt) and that he will soon return to Him (swt). This is why Allah (swt) always mentions these two themes of Tawhid and the Hereafter in the Quran. Whenever Allah (swt) brings any other subject in the Quran He (swt) always reminds us of either of these two themes. Here Allah (swt) once again reinforces the concept of Tawhid by reminding us that He (swt) is the Only One Who is capable of Hearing and Seeing all things. There is no sound that does not reach Allah (swt) and there is no sight that escapes Him (swt). There is nothing that you can say that He (swt) does not hear and there is nothing that you can do that He (swt) does not see.

There are at least two benefits to Allah (swt) reminding us of these two Names of His (swt). First it reminds us that we should be careful of what we say and we should be careful of what we do. When the Muslim remembers these two Names of his Lord then Insha Allah he will constantly be trying to do the actions that are pleasing to Allah (swt) and he will constantly be trying to avoid the actions that are displeasing to Him (swt). The other benefit is that it reminds us once again that only Allah (swt) deserves the worship and obedience. Tawhid in essence means that everything must be dedicated only to Allah (swt). By reminding us of these two Names of His (swt) Allah (swt) tells us why that must be so.

Another lesson that we can take from this ayah is to remind ourselves to be careful of what we say. Allah (swt) tells us in this ayah that He (swt) surely hears the words that are spoken. This is a fact that we must always bear in mind. We as Muslims must always remember that Allah (swt) hears everything that we say and that He (swt) will hold us to account for everything that we

say. We should know of the many hadith where the Prophet (saw) has warned us about speaking words that are displeasing to Allah (swt). Foremost among these is when the Prophet (saw) said "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him speak good things or be silent". In another hadith the Prophet (saw) was asked "O Messenger of Allah, which of the Muslims is best?", he replied "He who the Muslims are safe from his tongue and his hand". We also know when Muadh (ra) asked the Prophet (saw) once if people will be judged because of what they say and he (saw) replied by saying "May your mother be lost if you O Muadh, is there anything that has people thrown on their faces into the Fire except that which their tongues reap?" There are many more hadith besides this that tell us the evil of not withholding our tongues. So it is very important that we always think to ourselves that Allah (swt) will hear every single word that we say, and so we must only say those words that are pleasing to Him (swt). We know that Allah (swt) is especially displeased when we speak something evil about others and when we speak about others what they may not like us to talk about. Even if what we are saying is true we should still be careful about what we say about others. So just to be safe unless there is a pressing and important reason you should not speak anything at all about other people. Words are so easy to speak but they can have such dire consequences in the Hereafter. So we have to always realize that there is not a single word that our Lord does not hear and there is not a single word that He (swt) will not hold us accountable for. A word that we might think is nothing may be most displeasing to our Lord as it was for Khawla's husband. May Allah (swt) save us from that ! May Allah (swt) give us the ability to speak only that which He (swt) is pleased with us speaking!

الَّذِينَ يُظَاهِرُونَ مِنْكُمْ مِمَّنِ نَسَاهُمْ مَا هُنَّ أُمَّهَاتِهِمْ إِنْ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ إِلَّا اللَّائِي
وَلَدْنَهُمْ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَقُولُونَ مُنْكَرًا مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَزُورًا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُوفٌ غَفُورٌ



3. Those from among you who make *thihar* to their wives, they are not their mothers. Their mothers are not except those who gave birth to them. These surely say evil and a false word. And surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

We saw in the previous ayah how Allah (swt) showed us that He (swt) was Aware of the situation that Khawla faced when her husband had divorced her simply by saying she is like his mother. Allah (swt) Knows of her sorrow and her difficulty and He (swt) also Hears when she came and spoke with the Prophet (saw). In this ayah Allah (swt) responds to the plea of this woman who called out to Him (swt). In this ayah Allah (swt) tells us what is the ruling on those who divorce their wives in this way.

Allah (swt) begins the ayah by saying “**Those from among you who make *thihar* to their wives**”. Here Allah (swt) brings our attention to those men who commit this act of *thihar*. This act of making of one’s wife forever unlawful by saying that they are like one’s mother. So Allah (swt) is speaking here about the ones among the Muslim community who perform the act that Khawla’s husband did. Thus the legislation that Allah (swt) is going to give in this ayah and in the following ayahs is not only restricted to Khawla’s husband but rather it is applicable for all Muslims who divorce their wives in this way. The evidence for this is from the fact that Allah (swt) said *min kom* which means “from among you”, this shows that it is the Muslim community who is addressed by the legislation of the Quran. So the ruling here is not only for Khawla’s husband but it is for all Muslim men who divorce their wives in this way.

This shows us how from one specific incident a ruling can be derived that is general and applicable for Muslims at all times. This also is part of the Miracle of the Quran in that Allah (swt) can give a ruling that is applicable for all Muslims and at all times from a specific incident that happened in the lifetime of the Prophet (saw). From what happened to that community in those

few years that the Prophet (saw) was with them there is the guidance for an entire nation till the end of time. Could any but Allah (swt) be capable of such?

Also notice in this ayah that although Allah (swt) means to address those who perform the act of *thihar*, Allah (swt) does not address such people directly. Allah (swt) does not say “O you who commit thihar” rather He (swt) says “The ones who do thihar from you”. Since this action is a practice from *Jahilliya* and it is one that Allah (swt) does not approve of, He (swt) does not address the ones that commit directly. This also shows us the regard that Allah (swt) has for the believers. Even when we sin Allah (swt) does not directly address as sinners. Do we have this same regard for our Muslim brothers and sisters?

Then Allah (swt) says “**they are not your mothers**”. This statement of the Creator and Master of the universe completely destroys this practice of *Jahilliya*. The ones who practiced this act of *thihar* literally made their wives into the mothers by their words. Now Allah (swt) says that just because they say these words that does not make their wives into their mothers. “**They are not your mothers**”. A clear statement that completely destroys their practice of *thihar*. Anyone who pronounces these words of thihar after this ayah was revealed will never have it accepted, because Allah (swt) the Master and Lord of the universe has clearly stated that such words of men do not carry any weight. They are meaningless and useless. This ayah then destroys this form of divorce and shows us how it is no longer valid in any way.

From this statement of Allah (swt) where our Rabb says that our wives are not our mothers, we clearly see that the Quran is a legal text with Divine Legislation that practically addresses the situations of our lives. It is not simply a Book of spirituality as some would claim. Some people try to claim that the Quran is only a Book of morals and stories and that it does not have any practical implications on the lives of Muslims. The people who say such are completely wrong. They are the enemies of this Din who want to remove the Law of Allah (swt) from this Din. On the contrary the Quran is a manual on how the human should live his life from the moment he wakes up to the time he goes to sleep. Every action that the human can take is addressed in the Law of Allah (swt). So from the fact that Allah (swt) tells us that our wives are not our mothers it shows that He (swt) is bringing laws pertaining to the relationship that we have with our wives and

the relationship that we have with our mothers. We can share our beds with our wives but we cannot with our mothers. At the same time our mothers demand our obedience in all matters that does not contradict the Law of Allah (swt) but our wives do not. So even though these two women are very close to us, they are not the same. The relationship that we have with each of them has to be different. This fact is clearly shown in this ayah. So from this we see that the Quran is a Book of Laws that should be practically followed and implemented by Muslims today. It is not simply a book of spirituality and morals as some would claim.

Then Allah (swt) says, **“their mothers are not except those who gave birth to them”**. Allah (swt) is clearly telling us here that we have one and only mother. There is no one who can ever be our mother except the one who gave birth to us. She is the only one who is our mother. So regardless of what these men say their wives will never be their mothers. The only mother that a person can have is the woman who gave birth to him or her.

One lesson that we can take from this part of the ayah is to see the special place that our mothers should have in our lives. We should all know the many hadith where Allah (swt) has told us through the Prophet (saw) how we should be kind and dutiful to our mothers. Part of this respect that we have for our mothers is that we keep a special place for them and we do not consider anyone else as equal to their status. For example there is the hadith where a man came to the Prophet (saw) and asked him (saw) who deserves the best treatment from him. The Prophet (saw) replied “Your mother”, and when he asked the Prophet (saw) again, he (saw) once again said “Your mother”. This clearly shows us that there is no one who deserves better treatment from us than our mothers. The fact that the Prophet (saw) would mention our mothers first and then repeat it again shows us that our mothers are on a high very place and everyone else is below them. There is also the hadith where the Prophet (saw) said “Paradise lies at the feet of your mothers”. This means that serving our mothers and making them happy is an action that Allah (swt) is pleased with. An action for which He (swt) will reward with Paradise. So from this ayah and these hadith we should realize that our mothers should have a special place in our lives. There is no one else in this whole world who is our mother and we should always respect and love our mother. We should always treat her kindly and do everything that we can do to make

her happy. As Allah (swt) says in this ayah, our mothers are only those who gave birth to us. They are the ones who carried us in difficulty for months and the ones who suffered in pain to bring us into this world. So no one else can have this special place in our lives. From this you should take the lesson that your mother deserves the best treatment from you. Even if your mother says something or does something that you do not like, you should still respect her and treat her kindly. Remember that first and foremost you serve her and make her pleased because Allah (swt) has commanded you to. So even your kind treatment of her must be because your Lord has commanded you to and not just for her sake. May Allah (swt) give all the sincere brothers and sisters mothers whom they are pleased with and may He (swt) allow them to serve their mothers well!

From this we can also see the special place that Islam has given for women. Allah (swt) has commanded all believers to give their best treatment to their mothers and He (swt) tells us in this ayah that no one else can be our mothers. No one else. Only women can be mothers so how special is the place that Allah (swt) has given for women? Allah (swt) recognizes the suffering and the hardships that women go through in order to bring a child into this world, and because of this He (swt) has legislated that they get the best treatment from us. It is only those people who want women to be treated merely as sexual objects who have problems with the laws that Islam legislates for women. Anyone who has any sense of morality and decency can see that this is the only way of life that truly honors and regards women.

Then Allah (swt) says about those who perform this kind of divorce that they have surely spoken "**an evil**". With this statement Allah (swt) tells us that not only is it wrong to commit *thihar* but to do so is also a great sin. Allah (swt) makes it into a sin to divorce one's wife in this way. Thus Allah (swt) completely destroys this practice from the time of ignorance. We can clearly see what an evil sin it is to say to one's wife that she is as one's mother. First of all it is disrespecting one's mother, because you have only one mother and no one else must be allowed to hold that position and that status. It is also disrespecting one's wife and disrespecting the special relationship that one has established with her through marriage. It also shows us that divorce in general is not an action that is pleasing to Allah (swt). Allah (swt) does not like it when a man

divorces his wife for no good reason. We know the hadith where the Prophet (saw) has told us that divorce is the most displeasing to Allah (swt) of all the actions that He (swt) has made permissible. Many scholars have said that because of this hadith the ruling on divorce is that it is *makruh* or disliked. This means that although divorce is permissible, a Muslim would get more reward if he or she could avoid it. So divorce is not a simple event. It is the breaking of a special contract that was taken by both parties under Allah (swt). A special union was formed under the Name of Allah (swt) and divorce is the breaking of this union. So we should only resort to divorce when all other avenues of reconciliation have failed and it is clear that the husband and wife are not compatible with each other. For those men who divorce their wives simply by saying these few words of *thihar*, they are not only severing the marital relationship that they have with their wives but they are also making their wives unlawful for them forever just like their mothers are. So in this ayah Allah (swt) is showing us that divorce is not a simple thing. You cannot make your wife unlawful to you forever simply by saying a few words. She has shown herself to you and you have touched her, now you cannot release her only by speaking a few words. You have to show her respect and you have to show respect to the marriage contract that you made with her under Allah (swt). You must only resort to divorce when there are no alternatives left and even then it must be taken seriously and done according to the method that the Law of Allah (swt) has prescribed.

In addition to describing their statement of pronouncing their wives as their mothers to be evil, Allah (swt) also calls such words falsehood. Not only is it a great evil for a man to say to his wife that you are like my mother but such a statement has no truth to it whatsoever. She is not his mother, no matter what he says. Thus what they are saying is not only evil but it is also false. Allah (swt) gave them a tongue and two lips to speak and they use these to speak falsehood. So we can see how clearly Allah (swt) describes the reality of their statement. How Allah (swt) describes the practice of *thihar* as exactly what it is. It is evil in that it disrespects mothers, wives, and the marriage contract. It is also falsehood in that there is no truth to it at all. Their wives are not their mothers no matter what they say. Thus we can see from this ayah that not only does Allah (swt) forbid this practice of *thihar* but He (swt) also tells us why it is forbidden.

In the final part of the ayah Allah (swt) reminds us that surely He (swt) is Pardoning and Forgiving. These are two of the Most Beautiful Names of Allah (swt). Both of these Names remind us how Forgiving and Merciful Allah (swt) IS and how He (swt) is Willing to overlook and pardon the mistakes of His slaves. Allah (swt) IS the Forgiving and the Pardoning. Can you realize what this means? It means that such is His (swt)'s Nature. It means that He (swt) can forgive and pardon again and again and again and He (swt) will never get tired of it. Such is Who He (swt) IS. Now Allah (swt) did not need to be Forgiving and Pardoning like this. Allah (swt) owns us and so He (swt) could punish us immediately for any sin that we commit and that would not be injustice from Him (swt) at all. But rather Allah (swt) Himself out of His Own Will and Choice chooses to be Forgiving and Pardoning of his slaves. Allah (swt) chose to be the Forgiving and the Pardoning. This is of His Will because He (swt) is so Majestic and Tremendous a Being. Even though we have done nothing to Allah (swt) for Him (swt) to be so Kind to us He (swt) is still so Kind to us. Can you then even begin to understand the Lord that you have? How then can you choose to be heedless of Him (swt)? So just for this fact that Allah (swt) has Chosen to be Forgiving and Pardoning, we have to love Him (swt) more, worship Him (swt) more and strive to the best of our ability to serve Him (swt) more.

Just as this part of the ayah is a Mercy for us, it was also a mercy to those early Muslims onto whom it was revealed. Imagine for a moment how the husband of Khawla must have felt if Allah (swt) had not revealed this last part of the ayah. Just imagine how terrified you would be if your Creator, Sustainer, Lord and Master has said that you had spoken evil and words of falsehood. You would be so scared because Allah (swt) had just revealed such a condemnation for you. But once again we see that Allah (swt) is Aware of the situation of the human and the emotions of the human that He (swt) created. That is why right after Allah (swt) tells Aws ibn al-Samit and the others who commit this act that they have done wrong, Allah (swt) then reminds them that He (swt) is the Most Pardoning and the Most Forgiving. From this they know that they still have a chance to cease this practice of *thihar* and to seek Allah (swt) Forgiveness. If they turn back to their Lord to seek His (swt)'s Pardon then they would find Him (swt) to be Most Forgiving.

وَالَّذِينَ يُظَاهِرُونَ مِن نِّسَائِهِمْ ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ لِمَا قَالُوا فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَتَمَاسَّا ذَٰلِكُمْ تُوعَظُونَ بِهِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٣﴾

4. Those of who commit *thihar* to their wives and then want to take back what they said should free a slave before they touch (their wives). This is an admonition for you concerning it. And Allah is Aware of all your actions.

In this ayah Allah (swt) continues to give rulings on those who commit this practice of divorcing their wives simply by saying that they are like their mothers. In the previous ayah we saw how Allah (swt) showed us how such a practice was wrong. Allah (swt) said that those who committed it had spoken evil and false words. At the same time, Allah (swt) also reminded us that He (swt) is Pardoning and Forgiving. This means that they still have a chance to have their wrongs be forgiven by Allah (swt). In this ayah Allah (swt) tells us what should be the case of those who wish to go back to their wives after they have committed *thihar*. It is not fair that such a person simply be allowed to have his wife back after he had spoken such evil words and put his wife through such pain and hardship. That is why in this ayah Allah (swt) tells us what is the expiation that such people must pay in order to take back the evil words that they spoke.

Allah (swt) says “**Those who commit *thihar* and then want to take back what they said should free a slave before they touch (their wives)**”. In other words to take back the *thihar* that was committed they must first set free a slave before they can touch their wives. This is the penalty that Allah (swt) puts down for men like Aws ibn al-Samit and others like him who divorce their wives in this way. Before they are allowed to go back to their wives they must first set free a slave. This is a severe penalty because for most people in that society slaves were very expensive and very useful. So setting free a slave was like paying a huge ransom. Now it may seem as if this penalty is extremely severe, but we must remember that they had spoken such evil words so it is the fitting punishment that Allah (swt) has chosen for their crime. In this Din the punishment and the reward is according to the action. So the fact that Allah (swt) has prescribed such a great punishment shows us how this displeasing this act of *thihar* is to Him (swt).

But let us also explore what exactly it is about the thihar that is so displeasing to our Lord. The first evil of thihar is that it breaks the family. It is a kind of divorce that completely destroys the marriage with no chance at all for reconciliation. It is also evil in the cruelty that it shows to women. It is also evil in the disrespect that it shows for mothers. So because the thihar is so displeasing to Allah (swt) we can also see that it is displeasing to Him (swt) that we disrespect our mothers and that we treat our wives cruelly. It is also displeasing to Him (swt) that we do anything to break our families. So we must always strive to honor our mothers and treat our spouses well. Making them happy is part of our worship and servitude to Allah (swt) as well.

We also see from this ayah how Allah (swt) always encouraged the Muslims to free slaves. There are many crimes in Islam for which the punishment is freeing a slave, and freeing a slave is also one of the best acts of voluntary charity that one could do in this Din. Thus we see that the freeing of slaves is an action that is most beloved to Allah (swt). All of the noble Sahabah tried their best to free slaves whenever they could. It is said that Uthman bin Affan (ra) would free a slave every Friday. So those who attack Islam on the basis that it permits slavery ignore all of these facts completely. There are two important facts that we must keep in mind when it comes to Islam and slavery. First is that slavery in Islam is nothing like the slavery of the West. In the West slaves were always looked upon as less than human, and sometimes they were even treated like animals. Often times the slave masters had no compassion at all for all of the suffering that a slave has to go through. That is why we have heard all of those horror stories that slaves had to go through at the hands of their slave masters in the West. But in Islam the slave was always treated as a human, and he was always given the rights that were due to all of the children of Adam (as). Any slave master who treated his slave cruelly was answerable both to the Islamic State and more importantly to Allah (swt). So slaves in Islam never went through the suffering and hardships that we have come to know from slavery in Europe. The second fact to bear in mind concerning slaves in Islam is that slavery was often a necessity, especially for prisoners of war. There was nothing else that could be done with prisoners of war except to execute them, so they were often taken as slaves. But many of these slaves were later freed by Muslims because of commands from Allah (swt) such as this one. The pious Muslims who could afford to do so

were always looking for ways to free slaves. Other slaves bought their own freedom from their masters. So we see that although Allah (swt) permitted slavery, it was nothing like the cruel slavery of the West and there were many ayahs in the Quran where Allah (swt) encouraged the Muslims to set their slaves free.

Then Allah (swt) says “**That is an admonition for you concerning it**”. Here Allah (swt) is telling those who have committed *zihar* that the reason why this penalty of freeing a slave is being prescribed for them is because they have committed this act. Thus Allah (swt) is sending a clear message that anyone who does this to their wives in the future will also have to pay this penalty. By making this connection between the act of *zihar* and the penalty of freeing a slave, Allah (swt) has made a clear deterrent to this act being committed in the future. So we see that sometimes the penalty that Allah (swt) prescribes for a crime is harsh but it is done so that the evil is not repeated in the future. Allah (swt) Knows us even better than we know ourselves, and He (swt) Knows that only by giving a punishment that is as severe as this can the crime be avoided in the future. You will find that this is true for all of the punishments that Allah (swt) has prescribed in His (swt)’s Law.

Finally in this ayah Allah (swt) tells us that He (swt) is Well Aware of our actions. Allah (swt) is Well Acquainted with each and every one of our actions. There is not a single movement that your limbs can make, or a single word that your tongue can speak, or a single glance that your eyes can make, or a single thought that your mind can have except that Allah (swt) Knows about it even better than you do. Notice that whenever Allah (swt) gives a command He (swt) always reminds us of the fact that He (swt) Knows Well about all our actions. Once again we see that whenever Allah (swt) gives a command, He (swt) also reminds of His (swt) Perfect Names so that the concept of Tawhid is reinforced. In this way as we learn these laws we also learn about our Lord. So for example in this ayah the command to free a slave before one can touch their wife after *zihar* is accompanied by the reminder that He (swt) is Aware of all actions. So when Muslims bear this fact in mind they will think twice about violating the commands of Allah (swt). Especially in regards to something that takes place in the privacy of the homes like the sexual relations one has with one’s wife. If a crime is committed outside in public then there might be

someone to try and stop it, but for crimes that take place in the privacy of a home there is often no one to witness such crimes except Allah (swt). So Allah (swt) reminds Muslims that no matter where they are, He (swt) is always Aware of all of their actions. If any of them tries to be with his wife after pronouncing *thihar* without freeing a slave, he will realize the fact that Allah (swt) is Well Aware of what he is doing and he will realize by doing that action he will be earning the Anger of the Lord and Master of the universe. So you see how the knowledge of Allah (swt) is one of the main deterrents from committing sin. How will a man commit a sin when he knows that his Lord and Master is Well Aware of all of his actions? Furthermore how great is the evil that men will do when they forget Allah (swt)? May Allah (swt) give us the ability to realize that He (swt) is always Aware of our actions! May this knowledge motivate us to do only the actions that are pleasing to Him (swt)!

So we see that this ayah clearly demonstrates a general principle for all of the laws of the Islamic State and that is that the primary deterrent of crime is not the police force but it is the fear of Allah (swt) in the hearts of it's citizens. When the Muslims in the State always have the taqwa of Allah (swt), they will not commit any crime easily. Because they know that even if the police or authorities are not present, Allah (swt) is always there and He (swt) Knows very well about each action that they can do. The Islamic State always works continuously to build this taqwa among it's citizens. The primary textbook in the educational system is the Quran and the children are taught that they live in this world only to worship and serve Allah (swt) and that their reward is in the Hereafter. This Truth is firmly implanted in the pure heart of a child at the earliest of age. So the child grows up knowing what is his purpose and he know that Allah (swt) is always Aware of every single action that he does. So all of the laws in the Islamic State are prescribed with this principle in mind. The government knows that on the whole the people will not violate the Law of Allah (swt) so easily because the people as a whole fear Allah (swt). There may be a few sinners and criminals even in the Islamic State but the people as a whole will think twice about breaking the Law of Allah (swt). An example of this is what happened when alcohol was outlawed in the Islamic State. It is said that streets of Madinah were flowing with wine. Everyone threw out all of the wine that they had because more than anything else they feared Allah (swt) and they feared

violating His (swt)'s Law. But look what happened when the West tried to outlaw alcohol. They had to repeal the law because they were not able to enforce it. This is because the people did not have the fear of Allah (swt) in them. When the people do not have the fear of Allah (swt) within them you will find that there is hardly anything that prevents them from breaking the law. Many of them have the attitude that if you are not going to get caught then there is nothing wrong with committing the crime. Not only have they forgotten Allah (swt) but they believe that the purpose of their existence is only to serve themselves. So many of them do not care for their Creator and they do not care for their fellow human being. But for the sincere believer his actions are always linked to what he knows is the purpose of his existence. He knows that he exists only to worship and serve Allah (swt). So he strives to do everything to please his Lord and he thinks twice about violating the laws of his Lord. Even when there is no one else to see what he does he still knows that his Lord is well Aware of all of his actions. When a State exists that can build citizens such as these then it can bring laws that will benefit the society as a whole. It does not have to repeal laws that it knows are good for the people only because it can't enforce these laws. How many people today are unaware of this beauty that exists in the Law of Allah (swt)?

Insha Allah when the Pleasure of Allah (swt) becomes the motive behind all of one's actions and the fear of Allah is always present, then Muslims will refrain themselves from violating the Law of Allah (swt) even when there are no authorities around. The result Insha Allah is a society where you will see much less crime and corruption than in a society that rules by man made laws. The result Insha Allah is a society in which you will see much less decadence and lewdness. You will see a society in which the people can live in peace and tranquility. You will see a society where you will not find the deprivation and poverty that you see today. All that we have to do is return to ruling by the Law that our Creator revealed for us. How can we be so arrogant to think that we can live without Him (swt)? May Allah (swt) remind us that He (swt) is Aware of all of our actions! May Allah (swt) bring back the society where they people remember Him (swt) once again! May Allah (swt) return the honor and dignity to this Ummah once again!

فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامَ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَتَمَاسًا فَمَنْ لَمْ
يَسْتَطِعْ فَأَطْعَامُ سِتِّينَ مِسْكِينًا ذَلِكَ لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتِلْكَ
حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٤﴾

5. So for the one who does not find (the means to free a slave), he should fast for two consecutive months before he touches (his wife), and for the one who is not able (to fast), he should feed sixty *miskeen*. That is so that you may believe in Allah and His Messenger. These are Allah's limits, and for the *kafiroon* is a painful punishment.

In the previous ayahs Allah (swt) told us about the act of *thihar*, the act of divorcing one's wife only by declaring her to be just like one's mother. First Allah (swt) told us how displeasing of an action this was to Him (swt). It is an action which is unjust both to the wife and to the mother of the one who pronounces such words. Then Allah (swt) told us what should be the penalty that the one who wants to take his wife back after pronouncing the *thihar* has to make. Allah (swt) legislated that it had to be the freeing of a slave. We said how this was one of the severest of penalties because a slave was very expensive in those days. So what about for those Muslims who could not afford a slave? What about for those Muslims who could not find a slave to free? In this ayah Allah (swt) gives an allowance for such Muslims.

Allah (swt) begins this ayah by telling us that the one who does not find the means to free a slave should fast for two months consecutively. First of all we have to realize that this is part of the Mercy of Allah (swt) as well. He (swt) could have simply left the penalty for *thihar* as the freeing of a slave, and for whoever was not able to do it they simply could never go back to their wives. Allah (swt) could have left the penalty as such and that would not be injustice for Him (swt). But Allah (swt) Knows the different situations that different Muslims are in. Some Muslims may not have slaves to set free, or they might not be able to afford to buy one and give him his freedom. Other Muslims may not be able to find any slaves to set free because all of them might have already been freed. So Allah (swt) gives those who commit *thihar* another condition that they can fulfill before they are allowed to go back to their wives. They have to fast for two months

consecutively. This ruling only applies for those who cannot find a slave to free or those who cannot afford to free a slave. If one can find a slave to free then they must free the slave.

But even this fast was a severe penalty. Fasting at the time and place of the Islamic State when this ayah was revealed was by no means an easy task. The days were hot and long. There were no air conditioned rooms or anywhere else that you could go to escape the heat of the desert. Also the lifestyle of the people where most of them worked as farmers, soldiers or traders demanded that they be very active. All of these factors were very tiring and draining on their bodies. Now with this command Allah (swt) tells them that not only did they have to fast for a day or two, but they had to fast sixty days in a row. Imagine fasting for two months straight. We know how difficult the fast in Ramadan is and still we do it to seek the Pleasure of Allah (swt). As a penalty for this crime they had to fast for two consecutive months. The fact that the fast was so long made it even more difficult because it did not give their bodies much of a chance to rest and regain their strength. So this too was indeed a severe penalty. But once again we have to emphasize that this is a severe punishment because their crime was a severe one. They had completely disrespected this sacred bond that they had with their wives. They had also disrespected their mothers by allowing another woman to hold a position that was meant only for their mothers. That was why they were given such a harsh punishment. So we see that the punishment for those who cannot find a slave to free is that they must fast for two months straight. The two consecutive months of fasting must also be completed in full before they can touch their wives.

Then Allah (swt) tells us that for the ones who are not able to fast for consecutive months, they must feed sixty *Miskeen*. The *Miskeen* are extremely poor people. They are the ones who cannot even afford to have a complete meal every day of their lives. Many days they have to sleep without having any meal at all. They are the ones who need to be fed as an expiation for the thihar. This ruling only applies for those who cannot find a slave to free and those who cannot keep the fast for two months. This could either be because of old age or because of some illness that prevents their bodies of being capable of the fast. However if they can fulfill either of the two conditions above, then they are not allowed to use this penalty of

feeding the *Miskeen* in order to go back to their wives. We see from this ruling that not only does Islam encourage the freeing of slaves but it also calls on Muslims to feed the poor. There are many other ayahs in the Quran, even among those ayahs revealed in Makkah, where Allah (swt) encourages the feeding of the poor. Food is one of the most basic necessities that any human needs. When the *rizq* becomes straitened for a human there is nothing he desires more than his meal. If you have ever had to go for more than a day without a meal and without knowing when your next meal will come then you will realize how difficult this is. That is why Allah (swt) always encourages us to look after and take care of such people. Anytime that you can help those who are less fortunate than you then this is an action that is most pleasing to your Lord.

Another benefit that we can take from this ayah is to notice the beauty of the language in it. Even though this ayah is giving us detailed rulings on how penalty for the *thihar* has to be paid, it still has the beauty of all of the others ayahs of the Quran. These are ayahs in which Allah (swt) is giving legislation for the Muslim community to live by. Almost all books of law are very dry and have no poetic beauty to them whatsoever. They are formal and to the point, and people only read them to find out what is the law for a given situation. No one would read a book of law to see the poetic beauty in it. No one would read a book of law just to enjoy how it has been written. On the other hand here is the Quran giving detailed laws according to which the Muslim society should live, and it still has the beauty of Quran. The beauty that is present throughout the Quran is also present in these verses even though the subject matter here is legislation. This fact that the Quran can maintain its literary magnificence while still giving detailed legislation further proves that it could not have come from the mind of a human. No human writer can create words this beautiful that give detailed legislation for a society to live by. Anyone who knows how to write will know that such a feat is impossible.

Not only does Allah (swt) maintain the beauty of the Quran while giving us this legislation but He (swt) also maintains its conciseness. Another part of the literary miracle of the Quran is that it is able to express deep and profound meaning using only a few words. Simply see how much meaning Allah (swt) has given in this ayah. First Allah (swt) tells us that this ruling to fast only applies to those who commit *thihar* but those who cannot find a slave to free or who cannot

find the means to afford a slave to free. Then Allah (swt) gives us the exact duration of the fast and He (swt) also tells us that we cannot go back to our wives unless we complete the entire period. Then Allah (swt) puts yet another condition for those Muslims who can neither find a slave to free nor can they keep the fast for sixty days and that is the feeding of sixty *Miskeen*. Allah (swt) told us the number of people to feed and the type of people. All of this detailed legislation has been expressed in only a handful of words. This also shows how the source of these words cannot be from a human mind.

In the next part of the ayah Allah (swt) says “**That is so that you may believe in Allah and His Messenger**”. Here Allah (swt) tells us that these commands have been given in order that we may believe in Him (swt) and His Messenger (saw). In other words the reason why Allah (swt) gave us these commands is so that we may believe in Him (swt). This part of the ayah shows us the important link that must always be made between our belief and our actions. Although our belief must always precede our actions, our actions reinforce and strengthen our belief. Even though our belief must always come first, this belief will be strengthened by the righteous actions that we do. This is why Allah (swt) says in this ayah that these commands have been given in order that we believe in Him (swt) and His (swt)’s Messenger. In other words fulfilling these commands will strengthen our belief in Allah (swt) and the Prophet (saw). So just as actions come from the beliefs, the beliefs come from the actions as well. They complement each other. Here Allah (swt) is telling us that these penalties for *thihar* have been given so that the Muslim community may believe in Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw). In other words any Muslim from the time this ayah was revealed and afterwards, who consciously carries out these commands as a penalty for *thihar* hoping only for the Forgiveness of Allah (swt) would be demonstrating to himself his belief in Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw). He would be strengthening his belief. So this ayah shows how your actions prove your belief. If you simply say that you believe with your tongue but then you do not do any actions to demonstrate that belief then how can you be said to have any belief at all? You need to do the actions that Allah (swt) and the Prophet (saw) order you to do in order to truly believe in your Lord and in the Messenger that He (swt) has sent.

Then Allah (swt) says “**These are Allah’s limits**”. Here Allah (swt) reminds us that these commands are His (swt)’s limits. This means that we should take them seriously and not treat them as a joke. Every single one of the commands of Allah (swt) is a revelation from the Lord and Master of the universe. It has been sent both for the guidance and the salvation for mankind. So how can we not take it seriously? When you realize the Majesty and the Tremendousness of the One Who has sent down these commands then you will realize the seriousness that they deserve. So when Allah (swt) tells us to stay away from a practice that brings dishonor to our mothers and our wives then we must stay away from it. The forbidden actions in Islam are a limit that has been set by Allah (swt) Himself, so we must try our best not to go beyond them. Think of these forbidden actions as a boundary beyond which you cannot cross. They are the limits of your Lord and Master so you must observe them. You have to realize what are the grave consequences of going beyond these limits. Now if perchance Shaitan does overpower you with your desires and you find yourself having gone beyond these limits, then you do not need to lose hope. You should seek Allah (swt)’s Forgiveness and you should remember that your Lord is the Most Forgiving. But before you commit the sin you should remember that these are the limits of Allah (swt) and He (swt) is most displeased with you going beyond them. May Allah (swt) give us all the enabling grace to not transgress His (swt)’s limits!

In the final part of the ayah Allah (swt) says “**for the *kafiroon* is a painful punishment**”. Here Allah (swt) is telling us that whosoever transgresses His (swt)’s limits will have a painful punishment. Recall how we said that there are two meanings for the word “kufir”. One is to reject the Truth that you know and the other is to reject all of the favors and bounties of Allah (swt) upon you. Even Muslims can be guilty of this second form of kufir. When you fail to observe the limits of Allah (swt), when you violate the commands of Allah (swt), are you not then being ungrateful to your Lord for all that He (swt) has given you? Allah (swt) blessed you by giving you life and by placing Iman in your heart and by allowing you to be in the Ummah of His (swt)’s beloved (saw). Are you not then being completely ungrateful if you should then constantly commit sins and show disregard for His (swt)’s Law? People who do such need to realize that their Lord and Master is no joke. They need to realize that they will have a painful punishment. May Allah (swt) save us!

Another meaning of this part of the ayah is that if you constantly transgress the limits of Allah (swt) then you might even fall into the greater form of kufr which is to reject the Truth of this Message. Muslims who constantly commit sins and do not regard the limits of Allah (swt) are even in danger of losing their Iman. This is not to say that if they commit a sin just once then they have then automatically becoming a disbeliever, we all commit sins because such is our nature. Rather the meaning is that if one were to continuously violate the laws of Allah (swt) then the danger exists that they might become among the kafiroon. So do not ever think that it is enough for you to simply say that you believe and then not do the actions that are pleasing to your Lord. You must always be striving to do the actions that are pleasing to Allah (swt) and you must always be striving to stay away from the actions that are displeasing to Him (swt). Such is the only way in which we can save ourselves from this horrible punishment.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحَادُّونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ كُبِتُوا كَمَا كُتِبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ
 وَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ﴿٥﴾

6. Surely those who oppose Allah and His Messenger will be humiliated just like those before them were humiliated. And surely We have sent down Clear Signs. And for the kafiroon is a shameful punishment.

After discussing *thihar* and the penalties for it, Allah (swt) begins with this ayah a new section of the Surah. In this section of the Surah Allah (swt) brings the attention of the Prophet (saw) and the believers to the enemies that the dawah faced in Madinah. In Makkah the enemies of this dawah were clear. It was the powerful tribe of Quraysh who controlled Makkah and who wanted to prevent Islam from coming to power there. This enemy was out in the open for all the Muslims to see. But in Madinah where the Islamic State has been established and where the Muslims were the ones in power, a new kind of enemy surfaced. This enemy was secret and not out in the open for everyone to see. But in many ways this enemy was even more dangerous

than the enemy that was out in the open. It is to this enemy that Allah (swt) brings our attention to in this ayah.

Allah (swt) begins this ayah with the Arabic word *inna*. As we have discussed this word means certainty and truth to a level that cannot be expressed in the English language. So the statement which follows this word is definite and there is no doubt to it whatsoever. The statement which follows this word is where Allah (swt) says **“those who oppose Allah and His Messenger will be humiliated just like those before them were humiliated”**. So Allah (swt) is telling us here that definitely and without a doubt those who oppose Him (swt) and His Messenger (saw) will be humiliated. This means that anyone who stands against Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw) will be brought low and abased. Anyone who tries to oppose this dawah will be made into the lowest of the low. The level of certainty to which this fact is true cannot properly be expressed in the English language. This is something that is definite and there is no doubt in whatsoever. Let us now explore a bit further on what exactly it means to oppose this dawah.

There are two words in this ayah that we have to reflect on. The first is the verb *yuhaaduna* which has been translated here as “to oppose” or “to stand against”. So the ones who will be humiliated and disgraced are the ones who oppose Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw). Since we know what will be the fate of the people who do this we have to try and avoid being like them as much as possible. In order to do that we have to understand the exact meaning of this word. So what does it mean to be in opposition of Allah (swt) and His Messenger? No one who really understands Allah (swt) will ever oppose Him (swt). How could anyone oppose the Lord and Master of the universe? But in this Allah (swt) is speaking about those who oppose Him (swt) and His Messenger (saw), so the meaning here is those who oppose the Message that Allah (swt) has sent through the Prophet (saw). So the next question to ask is who are these people who oppose this Message that Allah (swt) has sent? The most obvious answer to this question is that these are the enemies of Islam who are standing in the path of this dawah. They are the ones who have already made the decision that they are going to live in this world to serve themselves and their desires instead of living to serve Allah (swt) like they know that they were created to do. Furthermore they know that this Message will prevent them from living the kind of

life that they want. A life where the avenues for them to satisfy their lusts and quench their greed are not restricted. So they are trying every means possible to oppose this Message. They are trying every means possible to destroy this Message that they know has been sent by the Creator of the universe. How evil are a people who will try to destroy this Message that has been sent to mankind from their Creator even when they know that this Message is the Truth? This Message that tells every human being what is the purpose of their existence. This Message that can save every human being from the Fire and admit them to the Garden? How evil are a people who would knowingly try to destroy this Message?

How many are the different ways in which they are trying to destroy this Message? Both today and at the time of the Prophet (saw). This includes spreading lies and false propaganda against this Message and those who carry it. We saw this at the time of the Prophet (saw) when they called him (saw) a sorcerer who divides between family members and we see it today when they call us terrorists and fundamentalists who want to implement an ideology of evil. Only the lies change but the fact that they are opposing the Message that was sent down by the Creator and Master of the universe does not. In addition to spreading this false propaganda where they to fool the simple minded people into fearing us, these enemies of Islam also capture and torture the carriers of this Message. We know the stories of what they did to the Sahabah like Bilal (ra) and what they did to Ammar bin Yassar (ra). Similarly we know what they did to Sumaiyah (raa) who gave her life in the cause of this Message because she would not yield to the pain and suffering to which they inflicted on her to make her give up this call. The same is the case today with our brothers and sisters who are being tortured and raped in the detention centers of the enemies of this Message. If you could know only what they are doing to the carriers of this dawah today in the Middle East and Central Asia it would send chills down your spine and you will not be able to sleep at night. These are the evil people who are opposing Allah (swt) and His (swt)'s Messenger. By opposing the dawah carriers they are really opposing their Creator. May Allah (swt) accept all that the sincere brothers and sisters had to suffer through and may He (swt) admit them and their families into His Mercy! May Allah (swt) give them the reward of the martyrs and may He (swt) raise them to the highest levels in Paradise where the Prophet (saw) and the Sahabah are!

So we know that one way to oppose Allah (swt) and His Messenger is by directly working to destroy this Message and those who carry it. But what about the people who simply stand aside and neither work against this Message nor do they work for it? This is how the majority of mankind is. As we will see later on in this Surah, there are only two parties in this world. There is the party of Allah (swt) which is working to establish this Message and there is the party of Shaitan which stands in opposition to it. Ultimately you have to belong to either of these two groups. You are either on the party of Truth or on the party of falsehood. The party of Light or the party of darkness. If we look at the world today we see that it is the party of darkness and falsehood that currently has power, they have the upper hand at this moment. So they would like nothing more than for the majority of mankind to sit back with their sports, television and games, and not be involved in this battle. They want the people to be heedless and ignorant of this conflict. So in this situation if you decide to sit back and not join in this struggle then you are really in the party of Shaitan. Anyone who is not working in some way for the propagation of this Message is in reality against it. Thus you are really against Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw). If you were ignorant about this conflict then you may have an excuse before Allah (swt) on the Day of Judgment, but now that you know what excuse do you have? Are you sure that Allah (swt) will accept your excuses when you meet Him (swt) on the Last Day? Ignorance of this conflict may be a valid excuse but do you think that laziness, weakness and cowardice will be? May Allah (swt) forgive us!

The next word in this ayah whose meaning we must reflect on is the word *kobitha*. The best English words that come close to the meaning of this word are “humiliated” or “disgraced” or “brought low”. This is the fate that Allah (swt) has promised that without a shadow of a doubt will happen to those who oppose this Message. Allah (swt) is telling us that most surely and most definitely, if you stand in the way of this Message then you will be humiliated and brought low. This disgrace and humiliation is both in this world and in the Hereafter. In this world it is being reduced to the level of an animal where you live only to serve your lusts and desires. How noble was the purpose for which Allah (swt) created the human being for and how low have these people brought themselves from that high station. Allah (swt) created us to be His (swt)’s

representatives on this earth, even the angels bowed down before our father. How have these people brought themselves down from that high station by choosing to live a life where they only care about their lusts and desires instead of caring about how they can serve Allah (swt)? So they have humiliated themselves in the life of this world by turning themselves into animals. But their real and true humiliation is in the Hereafter. They will be displayed in front of all of the creation as the ones who had failed the test for which Allah (swt) placed mankind on the earth. Then they will be dragged on their faces into the Fire of Hell. This will be done to them in front of their families and everyone whom they knew. May Allah (swt) save us from this terrible fate!

Then Allah (swt) tells us how they will be humiliated “**just like those before them were humiliated**”. This shows us that those who opposed this Message in the past were also brought low and disgraced in a similar way. If we only look back to the previous nations we can see that those who opposed this Message were humiliated both in this life and the next. For example take the town of Sodom where they were three kinds of people. There were the people who practiced in the filthy crime of homosexuality, there were those in the town who stood by and let this evil happen while going about their own business, and finally there was Lut (as) and the few followers with him who were calling on the people to stop doing this sin that was earning the anger of Allah (swt). In that town only this last group was from the party of Allah (swt), everyone else in that town was on the party of Shaitan. This is because they either committed the sin themselves or they sat back and allowed it to happen. Both of them are equally guilty before Allah (swt) because their silence about this terrible crime is their approval of it. This is why both of these groups received the painful punishment. In addition to pain and suffering the punishment also brought to them shame and humiliation. Imagine having your whole town being destroyed all around you and there is nothing that you can do to stop it. You are completely powerless now and you realize where all of your ego and your arrogance have gone. However the punishment that they were made to suffer in this world was only a small punishment from the life of this world, we know that this world is not a place of reward or punishment. The real punishment is what Allah (swt) has kept reserved for them in the Hereafter. Not only is it a punishment of pain but it is also a punishment of shame and humiliation. Imagine how embarrassing it will be to have to stand

before Allah (swt) as well as all of mankind with no belief in your heart and with sins as evil and disgusting as this on your neck. Allah (swt) promises us that if we stand in opposition to this Message then we will be humiliated in this way just like the people who came before us. May Allah (swt) save us from being like these people! May Allah (swt) give us the ability to work for this Message in any way that we can!

Allah (swt) then says “**Surely we have sent down clear signs**”. Allah (swt) begins this second part of this ayah with the Arabic word *qad* which as we mentioned this means certainty and lack of doubt. The emphasis and certainty that this word conveys cannot be expressed properly in the English language. So the statement that follows this word is also true with utmost certainty and without a shadow of a doubt. Without a shadow of a doubt and with utmost certainty, Allah (swt) is telling us that He (swt) has sent down “clear signs”. The adjective that Allah (swt) uses to describe the “signs” is *bayannah*. This word means something that is clear and out in the open with absolutely no doubt in it. Something that is distinct and inseparable from everything else around it. So these are signs that everyone should be able to recognize and see. There is no one who should not be able to recognize the signs of Allah (swt).

There are two kinds of signs that Allah (swt) has given us. One kind are the signs that all around the universe which point to the Existence, the Oneness and Sovereignty of Allah (swt). Everything that we can sense is limited and so it must have a Creator. Everything that we can sense has a beginning and an end, and anything with a beginning must have an originator. Everything that we can sense is also being controlled by a power that is outside of itself. For example the water always boils at a certain temperature and the fire always burns the wood and the sun always rises in the east. This shows that everything must have a Perfect Controller who has Full Power over these things. This shows how anything that happens in the universe happens by the Will and the Permission of Allah (swt). These are clear signs in the universe all around us that show us that Allah (swt) is there and that He (swt) has complete power and control over this universe. Everything in this universe is in some way limited and everything in this universe is in some way controlled. How could such things come into existence and continue to exist without a Creator and Controller?

In addition to the signs that Allah (swt) has placed all around the universe for a human to recognize that there is One Creator Who is Perfect and All Powerful, Allah (swt) has also given signs to the prophets and messengers that He (swt) has sent to mankind. Every prophet and messenger had a sign to prove to the people that he was from Allah (swt). As we all know the sign that was given to the Prophet (saw) was the Quran. So by “clear signs” Allah (swt) means both the signs in the universe that show His Oneness and Sovereignty and the ayahs of the Quran. Each ayah of the Quran is a clear evidence to show that it could only have come from Allah (swt). Each ayah contains such deep meaning, each ayah always uses the perfect combination of words, and each ayah is always the most concise in that it gives the meaning with the deepest impact on the listener while still using the fewest amount of words. This clearly shows that it could not have been produced by the mind of a human. Please refer to our tafsir of the 24th ayah of Surah Baqarah for a more detailed discussion of how the Quran is a Miracle.

What then is the connection between the two parts of the ayah? In the first part Allah (swt) told us how those who opposed Him (swt) and His Messenger (saw) will be humiliated and brought low and in the second part Allah (swt) told us that surely He (swt) has sent down clear signs. The connection between the two parts of the ayah is that after seeing and perceiving these clear signs how then could anyone oppose Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw) after that? Anyone with two eyes can see that there is a Creator and Controller for this universe? Why then do you not want to serve Him (swt)? Anyone who has even a fraction of a mind will realize that the Quran could only have been revealed by Allah (swt), how then could anyone turn away from it? How could anyone realize that these are the words of Allah (swt) and not follow it? Not only do they not follow it, but they stand in opposition to it and they try to divert the people from it. Can you even imagine what these people are thinking? The only conclusion that we can reach is that they are not thinking at all, rather they are only following their desires. Just like cattle, they blindly go to wherever their desires lead them. So the connection between these two parts of the ayah shows the sheer arrogance and the utter foolishness of a people who have turned away from these clear evidences and have chosen to oppose the Messenger who bears it and the Creator Who revealed it. It also shows the Great Forbearance, Patience, Forgiveness and Mercy of Allah

(swt) in that He (swt) does not punish these people immediately for such sins. If it was any but Allah (swt) who had revealed this Quran, these people would have been punished immediately for their turning away and opposing such clear signs and evidences. This Mercy, Forbearance and Clemency on the part of our Lord is yet another reason why He (swt) deserves our worship and servitude.

One lesson that we can take from this ayah is to realize the reason why these people have become deserving of such a terrible punishment. It is because they because they have turned away from Allah (swt)'s clear signs and have instead opposed Him (swt) and His Messenger (saw). The signs are so clear and still they have turned away from them. Who but the most arrogant and evil of people would turn away from signs that are so clear? The issue here is not that they do not recognize the Truth of this Message but the issue is that they do not want to serve the One Who created them and Who maintains their existence for every moment. They are too arrogant to submit themselves to what they know is the Truth. How could they possibly be so ungrateful to Allah (swt) for all that He (swt) has done for them?

The next lesson that we can take from this part of the ayah is that we must try our best never to be like these people. We have to strive to remove from our hearts all traces of pride and arrogance. We should realize that such arrogance will prevent the Light of guidance from entering into our hearts. We have to pray to Allah (swt) to give us that guidance. We have to contemplate and reflect on the signs of Allah (swt) that are in the universe all around us. We have to make all our efforts to learn the Arabic language so that we can fully comprehend the Miracle of the Quran. Once we understand the Miracle we have to try our best to have our belief be reflected in our actions. We have to strive to do the actions that are pleasing to Allah (swt) in order to strengthen our belief. So instead of opposing the Message like these people have done, we have to stand up in support of this Message and we have to propagate it to others. We have to work in whatever way we can to see that the Law of Allah (swt) is established in the land so that this Message can be carried to the people following the way of the Prophet (saw). Only then can we save ourselves from becoming like these people who have turned away from the Message and who spend their time and their efforts to oppose it.

In the final part of the ayah Allah (swt) tells us that for the Kafiroom is a humiliating punishment. As we discussed in the previous ayah Kafiroom in this ayah could refer to those who have chosen to disbelieve in this Message even though they know that it is true, or it could refer to those who are ungrateful to the favors and bounties of Allah (swt) even though they realize all of them and use all of them. Both of the meanings fit in the context of this ayah. Anyone who does not believe in this Message that Allah (swt) sent after realizing that it is the truth, and anyone who ungrateful to Allah (swt) will have this humiliating punishment. They will have humiliation both in this life and in the Hereafter. There are two kinds of pain that a human being can feel, physical pain and emotional pain. Often times the emotional pain is much worse than the physical pain because this is a pain that is in your heart. While Allah (swt) told us in the previous ayah about the physical pain that these people will feel, He (swt) tells us in this ayah about the emotional pain that they will feel.

Their pride and their arrogance was the main reason why these people had turned away from this Message. They were so much in love with themselves that all they cared about was bringing themselves up in status and satisfying their desires. They knew that should they accept the Message that the Prophet (saw) brought to them then they would not be able to do live their lives to serve their desires. That is why they turned away from this Message despite all of the clear evidences that Allah (swt) had shown them. They would rather live a life in which they serve their desires rather than a life where they serve Allah (swt). Because of this choice that they made their eyes became blind and their ears became deaf to all of the signs that Allah (swt) sent them. They were so filled with arrogance that they had the audacity to turn away from the True and the Real, this is why this punishment is so humiliating for them. First they will be humiliated in this world when all of the temporary power of this world that they have acquired leaves them and they find themselves ill and dying. Although they tried to dominate over men in the life of this world, a time will come when their strength will leave them. This will either be when they are afflicted with some injury or disease, or it will be when old age finally catches up with them. Then when all of their power has left them, they will realize how weak and powerless they are. But the true punishment that these people will receive is in the Hereafter. Not only would that be the most

painful of punishments but it will also be the most humiliating and shameful of punishments. They will have to stand before Allah (swt), their Creator and Sustainer and their Lord and Master having failed the test that He (swt) gave them when He (swt) placed them on the earth. Not only did they fail the test but they also stood in opposition to Him (swt) and His Messenger (saw). Can you imagine the shame that they will feel at that moment? They tried to divert the people away from remembering Allah (swt) and living their lives to worship and serve Him (swt). Not only will they have to stand before Allah (swt) but they will also be standing before all of mankind. They will be standing as failures and in utter humiliation. This is their fate for opposing this Message that Allah (swt) has sent to them. May Allah (swt) save us from ever being like them! May Allah (swt) save us from this terrible fate!

يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا أَحْصَاهُ اللَّهُ وَنَسُوهُ وَاللَّهُ

عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٦﴾

7. The Day when Allah will raise them all together and then He will inform them of all that they have done. Allah has recorded it while they have forgotten. And Allah is over every single thing a Witness.

In the previous ayah Allah (swt) told us that those whoever opposes His (swt)'s Message after they have seen the clear signs would have a humiliating punishment. In this ayah Allah (swt) continues with a description of what will happen to these people in the Hereafter. As you read this ayah notice how Allah (swt) always links what happens in this world with the Hereafter. This shows that a true Muslim who has the correct belief in Allah (swt) must always have his heart on the life after this one. The true Muslim must always be attached to Hereafter. If you do not have a true and firm belief in Allah (swt) then you might be distracted by the life of this world because it is always in front of you. But if you look and listen with your heart then you will realize that there is an existence which is greater and wider than this life. That is in the Hereafter. This world is so

limited and so short that a human soul should never be limited to this existence alone. How can a soul that feels so much be confined to only a few years existence in this world? The Hereafter is the true life. So Insha Allah our hearts must always be on the Hereafter. We have to think about the Hereafter when we remember the rewards that those who serve Allah (swt) will receive and also when we remember about the punishment that those who oppose this Message will get.

Allah (swt) begins this ayah with the word *Yauma*, which means “The Day”. Notice once again that Allah (swt) calls it “The Day” and not “a day”. This is to show us its importance and to bring our attention to it. This is THE Day that you should always be thinking about, the Last Day of your life. Nothing else matters except this Day and everything that you do should be in preparation for this Day. Deep down inside all human beings know that such a day exists. Deep down inside all human beings know that a time of reckoning will come when justice will be done for everyone. But most people have forgotten this Day. They know it exists but they have become so distracted by the life of this world that they have forgotten it. Allah (swt) in His (swt)’s Mercy reminds us of this Day in the Quran. It is part of the Mercy of Allah (swt) that He (swt) reminds us again and again of this Day. So that perchance we will think about it and perchance we will prepare for it.

By calling it as “The Day” instead of “a day” Allah (swt) is also bringing our attention to the fact that it is very close. It is almost as if it is today, that is how close it is. What will happen on this Day? Allah (swt) says in the ayah that He (swt) “**will raise them all together**”. This is referring to the resurrection of all mankind that will happen on the Day of Judgment. Many people think that death is the end of life. This is why they try their best to enjoy themselves in this world because they think that this short existence is all that they have. But in this ayah Allah (swt) reminds us that death is only the beginning. The Day will come very soon when all of mankind will be brought back to life after their deaths. Allah (swt) is the One Who will bring the people back to life. Every single human being who has ever lived will be raised back to life on that Day. No one will remain dead. The death that all of mankind has known thorough the ages is only a sleep and this Day is when all mankind will wake from this sleep. Just as Allah (swt) raises us up from sleep He (swt) will raise us back on this Day.

This ayah also reminds us of the Power of Allah (swt). If anyone doubts how it will be possible to raise the dead, they should think about Allah (swt). They should think about the Power and Ability of Allah (swt). Is not the One Who created the heavens and the earth and Who maintains them and everything in them Able to bring you back to life after your death? If you think that Allah (swt) is not able to do it then you do not understand the Power of your Rabb. Also notice the word *jammiyah* which means “all together”. This word also tells us that Allah (swt) will not raise only a few people, but He (swt) will raise up all of mankind. This includes every single one of the children of Adam (as) that lived since the time of our father to the last child born before the Day of Judgment arrives. This includes you and me. Can you then even begin to comprehend the magnitude of this Day? So this ayah makes us shocked and awed at the Power of Allah (swt) in how He (swt) is able to raise all of mankind, every single human being, back to life. Can you now even begin to understand the Power of your Lord?

In the second part of the ayah Allah (swt) says “**then He will inform them of all that they have done**”. We see that Allah (swt) begins this second part of the ayah with the word *fa* which is used for causation like the word “so” or “because”. So Allah (swt) is telling us that what is in the second part of the ayah is a cause of what was in the first part of the ayah. In the second part of the ayah Allah (swt) tells us that after resurrecting these people who have opposed this Message, He (swt) will then inform them of all their actions. Notice also the word *ma* which is general and comprehensive, and so it includes each and every one of their actions. There is not one action that they can do which Allah (swt) will not tell them about. They will be informed about every single thing that they did on that Day. So on that Day they will be informed about all of the evil and cruel actions which they did to oppose the Message that Allah (swt) sent. All of the lies that they made against the carriers of this dawah, all of the suffering that they caused for the Muslims, all of the ways in which they prevented this Message from reaching their people, all of their oppression and injustice that they did to their people. Allah (swt) Himself will tell them about all of this on the Day of Judgment. Can you imagine the terror that will be in their hearts at that moment as the Lord and Master of the universe is telling them of all of the evil that they have done? This also is part of their punishment and torment.

In the next part of the ayah Allah (swt) says “**Allah has recorded it while they have forgotten**”. Here Allah (swt) tells us that He (swt) has kept account of all of the evil that they had done while they have forgotten. In the Quran the word that Allah (swt) uses for the human being is *insan* which means “the one who forgets”. So it is part of the nature of the human being to forget. To forget the evil that he did with his hands and to forget the evil that he witnessed with his eyes. Just as it is in the nature of the human to forget, Allah (swt) is the One Who has an account and record of all things. Not a single action can a human being do that will escape the Knowledge of Allah (swt) and He (swt) will record clearly each and every action that a human does. So while those who oppose this Message may have forgotten what they did to the dawah carriers, and they may have not even cared much about it, Allah (swt) has clearly recorded each and every single thing that they have done. Allah (swt) does not forget.

In the final part of this ayah Allah (swt) tells us that He (swt) is over every single thing a Witness. So every single thing that happens in the heavens and the earth, Allah (swt) is clearly witnessing that happening. When the People of the Ditch dug a huge hole that they filled with fire and they threw the believers into that fire, Allah (swt) was a Witness over what they did. When Abu Jahl killed Sumiyah (ra) by putting a spear in her most private place, Allah (swt) was a Witness over what he did. When the Serbian soldiers raped and dishonored our sisters in Bosnia, Allah (swt) was a Witness to what they did. Now imagine yourself standing before Allah (swt) on the Day of Judgment and He (swt) is informing you of sins such as these which you have committed. Can you imagine the shame and humiliation that these people will feel having to stand before their Creator, Sustainer, Lord and Master with sins such as these? Not only do they have to meet Allah (swt) with such sins but Allah (swt) is telling them of these things that they have done. Can you then imagine their fear and terror? They deserve this and much more for the evil that they have done against the humble servants of Allah (swt). The most beloved creation to Allah (swt) is a soul that believes in Him (swt) and submits to Him (swt). The most beloved creation to Allah (swt) is a soul that prostrates itself before Him (swt). The ones who cause pain and suffering to these souls are the worst of creatures in the sight of Allah (swt). Not only have they turned away from their duty to serve and worship Him (swt), but they have oppressed and

tortured the ones that He (swt) loves. That is why after this pain of humiliation, the physical pain will begin and this is a pain like none of us can imagine. May Allah (swt) save us from that! May Allah (swt) punish them for the severest of punishments for what they have done!

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا يَكُونُ مِنْ نَجْوَى
ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَا آدْنَىٰ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا
أَكْثَرَ إِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كَانُوا ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾

8. Do you not see that Allah knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth? There is no secret gathering of three but He is the fourth, nor of five but He is the sixth, nor less than that or more but He is with them wherever they are, then He will inform them of what they have done on the Day of Standing. Surely Allah is with every single thing Knowing.

In the previous ayahs Allah (swt) told us about those who oppose this Message. The ones who knew that this Message was the Truth and still worked against it. Allah (swt) told us what will be their fate. They will be humiliated and brought low both in this life and the next. The Day will soon come when they will return to Allah (swt) and then He (swt) will inform them of all that they used to. He (swt) will inform them of all the evil that they have done. He (swt) will inform them of all the ways in which they tried to destroy this Message that has been sent as a Mercy and guidance for all mankind. From the lies that they spoke about the believers, to the pain and suffering that they caused the sincere workers in this dawah, to the dissention and the fighting that they started among the Muslims. They will be informed of all of this evil that they used to do. Now before they actually carried out this evil, they first planned it. They had several secret

meetings where they gathered together and discussed amongst themselves how they could destroy this Message. They thought that they were alone in such gatherings. They thought that no one else knew of the evil that they planned in those meetings and they thought that no one else knew of the sinister plots that they hatched against this Message. In this ayah Allah (swt) shows us how they were not alone.

Allah (swt) begins this ayah with a question. He (swt) asks **“Do you not see that Allah knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth?”**. A question that some of us may ask here is how exactly can we see this fact that Allah (swt) knows everything. Why does Allah (swt) use the word “see” and not the word “know”? We know that Allah (swt) knows all things but how exactly can we see this fact? The answer to this question is that one of the ways through which we know of Allah (swt) is through our senses. We realize by our observation of the universe around us that there has to be one Creator and Controller for this universe that we sense. Everything in this universe by the fact that it is limited and the fact that it is dependent on something greater than itself points to the fact that Allah (swt) Exists and that He (swt) is Controlling all things. Once we realize Allah (swt) through our senses we also have to realize that He (swt) is Perfect and without limitations. So then is the Knowledge of Allah (swt) also Perfect in that He (swt) knows everything. Even when we know Allah (swt) from the world around us we know Him (swt) to be perfect. Perfect in every way including in Knowledge. So all of these signs in the universe that we can see show us that the Knowledge of Allah (swt) is Perfect. Allah (swt) knows about everyone and everything that is in the heavens and the earth and He (swt) knows about everything that happens to them and everything that they do. There is nothing that escapes the Knowledge of Allah (swt). This fact about the Perfect Knowledge about Allah (swt) is a conclusion that we reached with our senses. That is why Allah (swt) asks us in this ayah “Do you not see that Allah knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth?”. Our senses show us the perfection of our Creator and through our senses do we discover Him (swt). When you realize that this universe has a Creator should not that Creator be perfect in every way? Even though this fact is so obvious, there are many humans who act as if this is not true. They foolishly think that their actions will escape the Knowledge of Allah (swt).

In the next part of the ayah Allah (swt) says “**There is no secret gathering of three but He is the fourth, nor of five but He is the sixth**”. A *najwah* is a secret gathering of people. Anytime that people gather in secret, and they do not tell anyone else of their gathering and they do not disclose to others what they spoke then their gathering is said to be *najwah*. In this part of the ayah Allah (swt) tells us that if three people gather together in secret without anyone else present to listen to their conversation, then He (swt) is the fourth in that *najwah*. If five people gather together then He (swt) is their sixth. He (swt) hears everything that is being said and He (swt) sees everything that happens. It is an important part of our Aqeedah to believe that Allah (swt) is beyond restrictions in time or space. So we cannot take the literal meaning of this ayah and say that Allah (swt) is actually present with them, rather we say that Allah (swt) is with by His Knowledge. Because Allah (swt) knows everything that happens in these secret counsels, it is as if He (swt) is there with them.

You may be asking yourself why it is so important for Allah (swt) to tell us that He (swt) is Knowing of what happens in these secret counsels. Recall how the previous ayahs talked about those who had opposed this Message that Allah (swt) sent and how He (swt) would inform these people of all that they had done on the Day of Judgment. Often times when these people gather together to plot against this Message they do so in secret gatherings. In the darkness of their chambers they plot and plan on how they can destroy this Message that was sent by the Lord and Master of this universe. They think about what lies they can tell the simple minded among the people to fool them into thinking that this Message is evil. They plan how they can capture and kill the bearers of this Message. They talk amongst themselves on what they can say to the believers in order to confuse them and in order to make them start fighting each other. They plan all of this evil in these secret gatherings. So Allah (swt) is telling the Muslims in this ayah not to be afraid because He (swt) is Aware of all their plots and plans. As we know from another ayah of the Quran where Allah (swt) tells us how they are planning and He (swt) is planning and He (swt) is best of planners. So they can gather and plan all that they want. Allah (swt) Knows about all that they do and He (swt) will take them to task for it. This Message belongs to Allah (swt) and there is nothing that they can do to destroy it.

Then Allah (swt) says “**nor less than that or more but He is with them wherever they are**”. Here Allah (swt) tells us that there is not a *najwah* of less than three or more than five except that He (swt) is with them. So no matter how large or how small these gatherings of evil are, Allah (swt) Knows all that is said and done in them. The lesson that we should then take from this part of the ayah is to realize that there is no plan that the enemies of Islam can plot against this Message that Allah (swt) does not know about. So despite all of their elaborate planning, we should not think even for one second that the enemies of Islam will be able to overcome this Message. Whatever plan that they make, no matter how big or small is their gathering, Allah (swt) is Well Aware of it. This is Allah (swt)’s Din and we have to trust in Him (swt) that He (swt) will protect it. We should never lose hope and think that the battle is lost. Rather we have to continue working sincerely in this dawah and trust in Allah (swt) that He (swt) will never allow the enemies of this Message to destroy it.

Then Allah (swt) says “**He will inform them of what they have done on the Day of Standing**”. The Day of Standing is another name for the Day of Judgment because the people on that Day will be standing as their judged for their actions before Allah (swt). Allah (swt) was a witness to all that they did and said in their secret gathers and then on the Day of Judgment He (swt) will inform them of all of it. Just imagine how these people will be standing before Allah (swt) on that Day, naked and without weapons or friends to help them. Those were meetings and gatherings that they thought they had held in secret. They thought they were alone so they plotted and planned the most evil and diabolical of plans. They never fully understood that Allah (swt) had heard and recorded all that they had said. They deceived themselves into thinking that their Lord and Master was limited in some way. They forgot that nothing escapes His (swt)’s Knowledge. Then on that Day when they stand before Allah (swt), He (swt) will tell them of all the evil that they had spoke in their secret meetings and He (swt) will tell them about all of the plots that they made against His (swt) Message. Once again can you even begin to imagine the terror in their hearts as they are being informed about all of this by their Creator? They know that Allah (swt) is displeased with them and they know that He (swt) burns those whom He (swt) is displeased with. Can you then imagine their terror?

In the final part of this ayah Allah (swt) says “**Surely Allah is with every single thing Knowing**”. Here Allah (swt) reminds us that He (swt) Knows every single thing. There is nothing that escapes His (swt)’s Knowledge. This confirms what we said earlier in that it is through His Knowledge that He (swt) is present at all of the secret gatherings. Allah (swt) knows about every single plan that they made against the Message that He (swt) sent for the guidance of mankind. Allah (swt) knows how much all humans are in debt to Him (swt), and He (swt) knows how the vast majority of mankind have not even come close to living up to the purpose for which He (swt) created us. Allah (swt) knows that there are many who have turned away from this Message and that there are many who are working to destroy it. They are working against this Message even though it was sent to them by the One Who created them and the One Who sustains them for every moment of their existence. So even though they are plotting and planning against this Message, in reality they are plotting and planning against Allah (swt) because He (swt) is the One that sent this Message to remind all of mankind to return to their purpose of serving and worshipping Him (swt). How much of the Wrath of Allah (swt) have these people earned because of their plots and their plans against this Message? Can you imagine the kind of pain and suffering that this Wrath will be transformed into? May Allah (swt) save us from being even close to their station on that Day!

So the first lesson that we should take from this ayah is to remind ourselves that Allah (swt) knows everything. Allah (swt) Knows everything that you do. He (swt) Knows your life even better than you do. Even the smallest of good deed that you do for the sake of Allah (swt), He (swt) knows about it and even the smallest of evil deed that you do turning away from Him (swt). He (swt) knows about it. So when you find your desires tempting you towards something evil, you should repeat this part of the ayah to yourself. We know from the hadith of the Prophet (saw) where he (saw) told us that if an evil deed comes to our heart, and we consider it, but then we decide not do it then we will be rewarded with one good deed. So we should always remember that Allah (swt) Knows the evil thought that came to our minds and He (swt) knows how we suppressed and conquered it only for His (swt)’s Pleasure. Insha Allah this should then motivate us to stay away from anything that is displeasing to Him (swt). The next time that an evil deed

comes to your mind then remind yourself how at that moment Allah (swt) Knows you even better than you know yourself.

Similarly if we find ourselves becoming lazy or complacent in the duties that Allah (swt) has laid down upon us, then we should also read this ayah to ourselves to remind ourselves that if we fail in our duty then Allah (swt) knows about it and if we perform our obligations then He (swt) knows about it as well. Remember that it is Allah (swt) Who rewards you for doing that which is pleasing to Him (swt) and it is He (swt) Who punishes those who fail in their duty to Him (swt). Do you want to be among those whom Allah (swt) is pleased with or those whom He (swt) is displeased with? So try your best and know that He (swt) Knows about all of your efforts and all of your striving.

The second lesson that we can take from the fact that Allah (swt) knows every single thing is that He (swt) also knows about how the enemies of this Message are gathering together in secret and planning on ways to destroy this Message. So we as Muslims must never fear the planning and plotting of the enemies of this Message. Even though they may come up with several elaborate plans to destroy this Message, we must have the firm belief that Allah (swt) knows all about their plans and that He (swt) will never allow their plans to come to fruition. They may have a victory here or there but Allah (swt) Knows about all that they do. In the end He (swt) will see to it that all of their plans come to ruin. In the end this Din will be victorious. Such is a promise from Allah (swt) on the tongue of His (swt)'s beloved (saw). Thus we can have no doubt about it whatsoever. They can plot and plan all that they want but they will never find success. So do not ever think that they can destroy this Din. This is Allah (swt)'s Din and so they will never be able to destroy it. Allah (swt) does not need you to save this Din. He (swt) just asks of you to work sincerely to the best of your ability so that you can send something for your soul on the Last Day. So all that we need to do is try our best and put our trust in our Lord. May Allah (swt) help all Muslims to realize this fact!

أَلَمْ تَر إِلَى الَّذِينَ نُهُوا عَنِ النَّجْوَى ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَيَتَنَجَّوْنَ
 بِالْآثِمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَمَعْصِيَةِ الرَّسُولِ وَإِذَا جَاءُوكَ حَيَّوْكَ بِمَا لَمْ
 يُحَيِّكَ بِهِ اللَّهُ وَيَقُولُونَ فِيْ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَوْلَا يُعَذِّبُنَا اللَّهُ بِمَا نَقُولُ
 حَسْبُهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ يَصَلَوْنَهَا ^ط فَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٨﴾

9. Have you not seen those who were forbidden to have secret counsels? Then they return to that which they were forbidden and they hold their secret counsels to conspire for sin and hostility and disobedience to the Messenger and when they come to you they greet you in a way that Allah does not greet you, and they say to themselves “why does Allah not punish us for what we say?” Enough for them is Hell, they will burn therein. So that is the worst destination.

Similar to the previous ayah this ayah also begins with a question. However since Allah (swt) uses the singular form of the word of “you” in this ayah we can tell that here Allah (swt) is specifically addressing the Prophet (saw). Allah (swt) asks the Prophet (saw) in this ayah if he (saw) had seen those people who were forbidden to hold secret meetings, how they were doing what they were forbidden to do by returning to their secret meetings. To understand whom these people are, we have to understand the context in this ayah was revealed. There are many ayahs of Quran that are independent of the time of revelation, but there are also ayahs in the Quran like this ayah where Allah (swt) is directly responding to an incident that happened to the Prophet (saw) and the Muslims. So to understand this ayah we have to understand the context in which it was revealed.

Mawdudi tells us in his tafsir that this Surah was revealed shortly after the battle of the Trench that took place during the month of Shawwal on the fifth year of hijrah. This was a time when the power of the Islamic State had grown and the dominion of the State had spread across Madinah to the neighboring regions. After the victory of the Muslims in the battle of Badr and the subsequent failures of the enemies of Islam to capture Madinah in the battles of Uhud and the

battle of the Trench, it was clear that Islam was a force to be reckoned with. Before this when the Prophet (saw) was in Makkah and his (saw)'s party was not strong, only those who had a pure intention to work for Allah (swt) joined his group. But now that the Islamic State was established and the strength of the State was clear there were many who decided to join Islam to gain the benefit of being with this powerful State. However these people were not sincere and they never had a desire to truly worship and serve Allah (swt). In fact they realized that the Islamic State was an entity that called on the people to return to their role of worshipping and serving Allah (swt). It was the representation of the submission to Allah (swt) by all of the members of the society. This is why these people who did not want to serve Allah (swt) hated the Islamic State. Since these people had already decided that they were not going to serve Allah (swt), and instead they were going to serve their desires, they decided to oppose the Islamic State and try every way that they could do to destroy it.

The enemies of Islam at that time consisted of two groups. What both groups had in common is that they both pretended to be the friends of the Muslims and they pretended to give their allegiance to the Islamic State, but secretly they were both working to bring about the State's destruction. In their hearts they had a great hatred for this Message that Allah (swt) has sent. A hatred that they did not reveal to the Muslims. The first of these groups were the hypocrites in the Muslim community. These were people like Abdullah ibn Ubayy and others like him. They were a people who never submitted in their hearts to the fact that the Prophet (saw) is the Messenger from Allah (swt). Their Islam was only words they said with their tongues. The other group were the Jewish tribes in and around Madinah who had made alliances with the Prophet (saw). Despite the fact that the Prophet (saw) had allowed them to live within the Islamic State and enjoy its protection, they hated the State and all that it stood for. They were jealous of the fact that Allah (swt) had sent a man from the Arabs and not from Jews to be the Final Messenger to mankind. So they decided to reject the Prophet (saw) even though they knew that he (saw) was the true Messenger from Allah (swt), and they decided to oppose him (saw) in every way that they can. These were the two enemies that the dawah had to face once Islam was established in Madinah. They were both similar in that they knew the Truth, they pretended to be good, but they were evil.

Since both the hypocrites and the Jews had hatred for the Prophet (saw) and for the Islamic State that he (saw) had established, they worked together to try and destroy it in any way that they can. The beginning of all of their plans against the State started in these *najwah* or secret meetings that they would have. It is in these secret meetings that they plotted amongst each other on how to destroy the Islamic State. It is in these secret gatherings that they would discuss with each other on how they can prevent the Message of Allah (swt) from spreading to mankind. They were trying every single method possible to destroy this dawah. Everything from encouraging the Quraysh and other enemies of Islam to attack the State to ways in which they can put the believers through trials and cause doubts in their hearts. They did not spare any method, they used every single plan that they can think of to destroy this dawah. Just think for a second how evil these people are. They are planning and plotting in every way that they can to turn people away from Allah (swt). There should be nothing that is more important in anyone's life than Allah (swt). He (swt) is the Creator and Controller and Master and Owner of everything. So how evil are a people who are plotting and planning to turn people away from worshipping and serving Allah (swt)? This shows how evil both these hypocrites and Jews were, how what they did when they gathered together to discuss how to destroy the Islamic State was the worst of actions. They were working together to destroy the call to Allah (swt), could a human being do anything that is more evil than that?

Now in order to protect the Islamic State, Allah (swt) sent down legislation making it unlawful for these people to gather together in secret. Since these secret gatherings were where all of the plots against the State were being hatched, Allah (swt) brought a law that completely banned such secret gatherings. Allah (swt) works in many ways, sometimes it is through the legislation that He (swt) brings forth for the Islamic State that He (swt) protects this dawah. Even though the Jews were not Muslims, this law applied to them as well because they were citizens of the Islamic State. Since they had the protection of the State, they were required to abide by all of its laws. This was so even though they were allowed to keep their belief and allowed to practice their religion in private. So this law was especially intended for the hypocrites and the Jews who were meeting together to discuss how to destroy the Islamic State and prevent this dawah from

spreading. They were specifically commanded not to have such secret meetings within the borders of the Islamic State. But do you think that they abided by this law?

Allah (swt) begins this ayah by saying “**Have you not seen those who were forbidden to have secret counsels? Then they return to that which they were forbidden**”. In this ayah Allah (swt) asks the Prophet (saw) if he (saw) had seen those who were forbidden to hold these secret gatherings. Allah (swt) is bringing the attention of the Prophet (saw) to these people and to their behavior. They were returning to these secret counsels which they were specifically forbidden from having. Notice how Allah (swt) begins by reminding the Prophet (saw) that they had been forbidden to hold these secret meetings. Then Allah (swt) tells the Prophet (saw) how they had deliberately violated the command that He (swt) had given them. Allah (swt) shows the Prophet (saw) how they were in fact holding these secret gatherings that they were specifically commanded not to hold. So Allah (swt) is bringing the attention of the Prophet (saw) and our attention to the fact that these people were breaking a clear command of His (swt). As they were citizens of the Islamic State they had a responsibility to abide by all of the laws of the State, so Allah (swt) is showing us how they had deliberately violated this law by returning to the secret counsels when they had been told not to.

Then Allah (swt) says “**and they hold their secret counsels to conspire for sin and hostility and disobedience to the Messenger**”. Notice the Arabic word *yatanaajawna* which means “they meet in secret to conspire”. So the purpose of their meeting together in secret is so that they can conspire and make plots of evil. Then Allah (swt) tells us exactly what is this evil that they were conspiring. Their first thing they conspire to was *ithm*, this means “sin” or “crime”. Just by the fact that they were gathering together in secret when they were told not to do is in itself a crime. But their crimes do not end there. We know that the greatest of crimes is to turn people away from the purpose of their creation, which is to worship and serve Allah. So in addition to sinning by the fact that they were holding these secret meetings when they were told not to, another way in which they were sinning is that the purpose of their gathering is to destroy this Message and drive people away from Allah (swt). What could be a greater crime than trying to take the people away from Allah (swt)? That was what these people were guilty of.

After sin the second thing that they discuss in their gatherings is *'adona*. The best translation of this word is that it means enmity or hostility. So even though these hypocrites and Jews were citizens of the Islamic State and as citizens they had a responsibility to work for the common good of the State and to defend it, they were in actuality gathering to create hostility towards the State. They were discussing how they could rebel against the State and how they could encourage the people to do the same. Instead of standing with the Prophet (saw) and the believers they were thinking of ways on how they can oppose them and fight against them. So just as they meet together for sin they also meet together for animosity and hostility towards the Prophet (saw) and the Muslims.

Finally Allah (swt) tells us that through their secret gatherings they were making *ma siyat Ar-Rasul*. This means disobedience to the Prophet (saw). So through their secret gatherings they were discussing ways on how they can disobey the Prophet (saw). The Prophet (saw) is the leader of the Islamic State, he (saw) needs to be obeyed by Muslims because he (saw) is the Messenger of Allah (swt) but he (saw) also needs to be obeyed by everyone else in the Islamic State because he (saw) is the leader of the State. So everyone in Madinah should have obeyed the Prophet (saw) because he (saw) was the leader of that city. But here Allah (swt) is telling us that the Jews and the hypocrites were meeting together in secret to see how they can disobey the Prophet (saw). They are discussing how they can avoid carrying out the commands of the Prophet (saw). This also shows how evil they are, not only do they come together to discuss how to misguide people from the path of Allah (swt) but they also come together to discuss how to escape the commands of the Prophet (saw) as the leader of their State.

In the second part of the ayah Allah (swt) says to the Prophet (saw) **“when they come to you they greet you in a way that Allah does not greet you”**. This ayah is especially referring to the Jews who would greet the Prophet (saw) by saying *“As-Samu alaykum”*. This is similar to the Muslim greeting that we all know so well, but where our greeting means “Peace be upon you” these words mean “Death be upon you”. Allah (swt) is telling the Muslims that even though this greeting is similar in sound to the greeting that He (swt) taught us it is very different in meaning. There are two lessons we can take from this part of the ayah, the first is that it demonstrates the

hatred and animosity that the Jews had towards the Prophet (saw). Here was a man that was sent by Allah (swt) to guide them to the truth. He (saw) was someone whom their own books had prophesized would come and they had even traveled and settled in Madinah to wait for the promise of Allah (swt) to be fulfilled by his arrival. But when he (saw) arrived, they rejected him (saw) for the simple reason that he (saw) was not from their tribe. Their loyalty to the tribe of Bani Israil was more important to them than following the truth. Their loyalty to their tribe was more important than serving their Creator. Not only did they decide to oppose this Message but they had a deep hatred and animosity towards the Prophet (saw). They knew that he (saw) was truly the Messenger from Allah (swt) and this created in them a great feeling of jealousy that an Arab who was not from their tribe should be blessed with this Message. It did not occur to them that the race of the messenger was not what was important but rather what was important was the message that he carried. Their jealousy blinded them to the truth and created in them a hatred and animosity towards the Prophet (saw). That is why whenever they saw the Prophet (saw) they would greet him (saw) in this way. Another lesson we can see from their behavior is how clever and sneaky they are. They did not openly attack or curse the Prophet (saw) like the Quraysh chiefs did, rather they made alliances with the Prophet (saw) and pretended to be the friends of Islam when in reality they hated the Prophet (saw) and they hated Islam more than anyone else. So we as Muslims should always be careful of those unbelievers who pretend to be the friends of Islam. We cannot read their hearts so we do not know what their intentions are, but one question that should always be in our minds is that if they are sincere and they think that Islam is such a beautiful religion then why have they not accepted this Din?

In the next part of the ayah Allah (swt) tells us how these Jews later say to themselves **“Why does Allah not punish us for what we say?”**. They know that the Prophet (saw) is truly the Messenger from Allah (swt). Yet because of their hatred and their jealousy they say these evil words to the Prophet (saw). So after they had said these words to the Prophet (saw), they later wonder amongst as to why the punishment of Allah (swt) does not descend upon them for what they have said. They know that they had said words to insult and curse the most beloved of Allah (swt), so they find it to hard to believe that Allah (swt) does not punish them what they have said.

In the next part of the ayah Allah (swt) tells us why He (swt) does not punish them right at that moment for what they have said. Allah (swt) says, **“Enough for them is the Hell where they will burn therein”**. Allah (swt) does not punish them immediately only because He (swt) wants to save their punishment for the Hereafter. Specifically, Allah (swt) wants to punish them in the fire of hell and there is no punishment whatsoever that is like this. We know that there are punishments in this world such as diseases and tragedies that can strike a person. There is also the punishment in the grave and the punishment from the terrors of the Day of Judgment, but there is no punishment like the punishment of the hellfire. This is punishment that is so intense and so severe that no one can have patience on it. So their plotting and planning against Islam and their words of evil towards the Prophet (saw) have brought down the Wrath of Allah (swt) on them to such a degree that the punishments of this world will not be enough for them. Only a fire that burns so fiercely that it is seventy times more than the fire of this world would be sufficient for them for what they have done and what they have said. This is why Allah (swt) says **“Sufficient for them is the hellfire, where they will burn therein”**.

Of all the people that the Prophet (saw) carried dawah to, the Jews were the most knowledgeable about the previous revelations that Allah (swt) sent. These were a people who used to be ruled by the prophets. They are the ones who had been given the most knowledge by Allah (swt) of the coming of the final Messenger to mankind. That is why when the Prophet (saw) came he (saw) had all of the signs that their books had described the Final Messenger as having. So they recognized him (saw) like they recognize their own sons. But they turned away from him (saw) for the simple reason that he (saw) was not a Jew. Not only did they not accept the Message that he (saw) brought to them from Allah (swt) but they were also the worst in their opposition to him (saw). They were the ones who worked the hardest to prevent this Message from spreading, even though they are people whom Allah (swt) had blessed with knowledge. They knew that this Message was from Allah (swt) and still they tried to prevent it from reaching the people. Because of this rejection despite their knowledge and because of their rebellion to the Islamic State and their hatred to the Prophet (saw), Allah (swt) has kept reserved for them the worst of punishments. May Allah (swt) save us and our families from this horrible punishment!

One lesson that we can take from this ayah is that we must never allow our personal feelings to stand between us and the Truth. We must never turn away from Islam because of any personal issues we may have with any other Muslims, even if they are carriers of dawah. So for example suppose if someone in your family was involved in the dawah, you should not turn away from Islam if you have any personal issues with this person. This Message is only about you and Allah (swt). It is a Message from your Creator and your Master for you to worship and serve Him (swt). It has nothing to do with anyone else. If you accept and follow this Message then you will be saved on the Day of Judgment, and if not the consequences are so terrible that you do not even want to think about it. So do not turn away from this Message because of some animosity or jealousy that you may have with the dawah carrier. At the end of the day you have to realize that this is between you and your Creator.

Finally Allah (swt) says “**so what an evil destination**”. This is the end result for the Jews and the hypocrites for all of the plots and plans that they made against this Message and for all of their evil words that they spoke against the Prophet (saw). The life of this world is only a journey for every single human being. We are here in this world for only a short time and while we are here we are traveling towards our destination. Our beliefs and our actions will influence where we will end up on our journey. For those who have sincerely believe in Allah (swt) and the Prophet (saw) with the correct belief, they will be rewarded with paradise because they would have earned the Mercy of Allah (swt). However for those who chose to follow their desires and turn away from the purpose of their creation, they would have earned the anger of Allah (swt). For such people the end result of their journey will be this fire of hell where they will burn there in. That is why it is the most evil and the worst of destinations. Once they reach this place their journey is over and they will not go anywhere from there. They will stay in this horrible place forever, to burn and feel pain therein forever. That is why Allah (swt) calls it “**an evil destination**”. May Allah (swt) save us and our families from such a horrible place!

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَنَجَّيْتُمْ فَلَا تَتَنَجَّجُوا بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ
وَمَعْصِيَةِ الرَّسُولِ وَتَنَجَّجُوا بِالْبِرِّ وَالْتَّقْوَىٰ وَأَنْتُمْ وَاللَّهُ
الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿١﴾

10. O you who believe, when you gather together in secret, do not gather for sin, and hostility and disobedience to the Messenger, but gather together in secret for birr and taqwa. And have taqwa of Allah the One to Whom you will be gathered.

Allah (swt) begins this ayah by calling out to the believers. Whenever an ayah of Quran begins in this way we should always pay close attention to it because Allah (swt) is specifically speaking to us the believers. Because we love and fear Allah (swt) and we exist only to worship and serve Him (swt), we should rush to carry out whatever commands Allah (swt) gives us in the Quran in this manner. Allah (swt) is addressing us in this ayah by distinguishing us as the ones that believe. There should be nothing that is dearer to us than our belief in Allah (swt). If we want to protect this belief and keep this belief then we must rush to carry out the commands that Allah (swt) gives us in ayahs such as these.

Allah (swt) says to us “**when you gather together in secret, do not gather for sin, hostility and disobedience to the Messenger**”. So the first thing that we notice from this ayah is that the law not to hold secret gatherings is not a general law that applies to all secret gatherings, but rather it only applied specifically to those secret gatherings where the people met for evil purposes. So it is not the secret gatherings that are necessarily evil but it is what is discussed and talked about in those gatherings. Allah (swt) tells us in this ayah that it is permissible if we meet in secret just as long the purpose of it is not evil. Allah (swt) says that whenever we meet each other in secret, we should not meet for sin, hostility and disobedience to the Messenger. In other words Allah (swt) is telling us that we should not be like those Jews and hypocrites whom He (swt) told us about in the previous ayah. Whenever we come together for a gathering, even if it be a secret gather, the purpose of it must be His (swt)’s Pleasure.

This point is further emphasized in the second part of the ayah when Allah (swt) says **“but gather together in secret for birr and taqwa”**. So the purpose of our gatherings must be Birr and Taqwa. *Birr* means righteous actions. These are the actions that we do which are pleasing to Allah (swt). *Taqwa* means the fear of Allah and the awareness that He (swt) is watching all of our actions. It is to guard against the actions that are displeasing to Allah (swt). So Allah (swt) is commanding us here that the purpose of all secret gatherings should only be to please Him (swt). We exist only to worship and serve Allah (swt) and so every action that we do should be to please Him (swt). However whenever we are with a group of people that is in a place where no one else can see or hear what we are saying, there could be a tendency for Shaitan to come and put evil thoughts in our minds. The fact that our group is alone may make us think that we can talk about doing the actions that are displeasing to Allah (swt). So here Allah (swt) is telling us that especially when our group is alone and no one else can see or hear what we are doing then we should make the topic of the conversation on how to do actions that are pleasing to Allah (swt). Shaitan can mislead a group of people just like he can mislead individuals.

Some people might ask that if we are meeting together for *birr* and *taqwa*, then why is it necessary to meet in secret? Why is it necessary for Muslims to meet in secret they might ask. These people do not realize that the reality of this dawah is that it often had to go through stages where it needed to be in secret. When the enemies of Islam are the ones who have the political power, like it is today and like it was when the Prophet (saw) carried dawah in Makkah, this dawah needs to be secret to protect it's members and protect the dawah. It is not because the members of the dawah have fear of anything in this world, but it is because what matters the most is that the group is protected so that the dawah can continue. That is why it is necessary to hold many of the meetings in private and why it is necessary not to disclose all of the names of the members of the group. This way if the enemy captures one of the members of the group, the amount of information that he can disclose is limited. So sometimes when Muslims meet it needs to be in secret, but even then the topic of the conversation must be on how to worship and serve Allah (swt). The topic of the discussion needs to be how to establish the Law of Allah (swt) in the land so that the Message of Allah (swt) can spread to all people.

In the final part of the ayah Allah (swt) says “**And have taqwa of Allah the One to Whom you will be gathered**”. We need to always fear Allah (swt) and be aware of Him (swt) because it is to Him (swt) that we will be gathered. We know from the last ayah of the last Surah of the Quran that Shaitan whispers into the hearts from among the jinn and from among men. So sometimes it is our fellow Muslims that may incline us to do actions that are displeasing to Allah (swt) or they may tell us to neglect doing the actions that we owe to Allah (swt). This is especially so when we gather together in secret. When we are talking in private. So in this ayah where Allah (swt) speaks about Muslims gathering together in private, He (swt) reminds us once again to have taqwa of Him (swt). When we are with other Muslims we must never talk about things which are displeasing to Allah (swt) and we must never be influenced by others who make such talk. At the same time we should speak of ways in which we can be dutiful to Allah (swt). We should encourage each other to do the deeds that are pleasing to Allah (swt). So in our conversations we should encourage our Muslim brothers and sisters to make more salah in the masjid, to be dutiful in their trusts and obligations, and we should encourage them to learn more about Islam and to study Arabic. We should tell them to do all of the actions that are pleasing to Allah (swt) by following the way of the Prophet (saw). This is because when all is said and done, when everything is over, in the end we will all be gathered before Allah (swt). Then Allah (swt) will judge us for our beliefs and for our actions. In the end this is all that matters.

One of the names of the Day of Judgment is the Day of Gathering. On this day every single human being who had ever lived will be gathered before Allah (swt). There is nowhere that they can go to hide from Allah (swt). So do not think for one second that you can escape Allah (swt). One Day very soon you will be gathered before Allah (swt), you and everyone else you know. So whenever you are alone in a group make sure that you always remember this fact. Make sure that every word that you speak is one that is pleasing to Allah (swt). Make sure that every action that you do is one that you think Allah (swt) will be pleased with.

إِنَّمَا النَّجْوَى مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ لِيَحْزُنَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَلَيْسَ بِضَرَارٍ هُمْ شَيْئًا إِلَّا
 بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

11. The *Najwah* are only from Shaitan that he may cause grief to the ones that believe but he cannot harm them in any way except by the permission of Allah and so on Allah let the believers put their trust.

In this ayah Allah (swt) tells us that these *Najwah* that the Jews and the hypocrites hold are only from Shaitan. It is only Shaitan who is making them hold these secret gatherings. These secret gatherings where they meet together to plan how they can destroy this Message that Allah (swt) has sent as a mercy and guidance for all mankind. All such secret gatherings are from Shaitan. The only secret gatherings that are exempt from this rule are the ones that the Muslims have where they encourage each other to do actions that are righteous and they encourage each other to have fear of Allah (swt). Beside this type of secret gathering where the name of Allah (swt) is mentioned often, all other secret gatherings are only the work of Shaitan. We know that Shaitan works his way into the hearts of people through their desires. But it is especially when a person is alone or in a small group of people are alone that they are the most vulnerable to him. The Prophet (saw) warned us of this fact when he (saw) said, “the wolf always attacks the lone sheep”. This means that when you are alone or when you are alone with a small group of brothers or sisters, that is when you are most likely to be tempted by Shaitan. That is why it is at this time that we should be especially wary of him.

We know that for the Jews and the hypocrites Shaitan convinced them that their pride and their desires should be more important than following the truth. That is why he made them come together for these secret meetings where they can plot and plan between themselves on how to stop this Message. They realized that only if they stop this dawah could they continue to serve their desires instead of serving Allah (swt) like they were created to do. So we as Muslims must be wary of these secret gatherings. Most often it is the work of Shaitan where he brings his minions together so that they can disobey Allah (swt) and submit to their desires.

Then Allah (swt) tells us Shaitan's motives behind making the Jews and hypocrites go to these secret gatherings and that is so that he can cause grief for the ones that believe. Although Shaitan is an open enemy for all mankind, the only ones who stand in opposition to him are the true believers. These are the ones who truly believe in Allah (swt) with all their hearts and they strive to worship and serve Him (swt). They are always remembering Allah (swt) and because of that Shaitan knows that it would be very difficult for him to influence them. Even though he does not have direct power over them, he still hates them because they are doing what he refused to do, and that is that they are submitting to Allah (swt). He hates them because they have submitted to their Lord. Because he has this hatred for them and because he knows that it is very hard for him to influence them, he tries to do the next best thing and that is to cause them grief and sadness. That is why he invites his servants to these secret meetings so that they can plot and plan against the believers. Their goal is to create some difficulty or hardship for the believers. They want to create some trial and difficulty for the believers so that they can cause them grief and suffering.

This was true when this ayah was revealed as Shaitan caused hypocrites like Abdullah ibn Ubayy to meet with their Jewish allies in secret, and it is true today where the hypocrites in this Ummah are meeting with their Jewish allies. Any country in the world today where you can find members of this dawah working to bring back the Law of Allah (swt) you will also find these enemies of Islam working together to stop them. They talk about how they can arrest and capture the carriers of dawah. How they can torture and kill the members of these movements so that they can be made examples for all of the people. Through these evil plans they want to cause grief for the believers and prevent the Message of Allah (swt) from spreading to mankind. It is Shaitan who is making them do these evil actions, because he knows that if people return to serving Allah (swt) then it will be difficult for him to influence them. He knows that his influence over the people will be greatly reduced if the Law of Allah (swt) is returned to the land. That is why Shaitan is making his minions to come together in secret like this. So that they can plot and plan against this dawah. So that they can prevent the Islamic State from returning. So that they can continue the status quo where the society is heedless of Allah (swt) and the people are in sin.

However Allah (swt) clearly tells us in the ayah that Shaitan cannot do any harm to us whatsoever except by the His (swt)'s permission. While Christianity and some other religions think that there is always a battle between the forces of heaven and the forces of hell, and sometimes the forces of hell can be victorious, we know that this is the furthest from the truth. Everything is the creation of Allah (swt) and He (swt) has full power over all things, including over Shaitan. This is why Shaitan cannot do anything except by the permission of Allah (swt). So in this ayah Allah (swt) is telling us not to have fear. Even though Shaitan hates the believers and he is gathering his forces to make plots against the believers, they cannot do anything except by the permission of Allah (swt). Only if Allah (swt) allows their plots to succeed will they succeed.⁵

Finally Allah (swt) tells us that it is in Him (swt) that we should put our trust. Even though Shaitan is gathering his forces to meet in secret to make their plans against this Message, against the Prophet (saw) and against the believers, Allah (swt) is still above them and Allah (swt) can stop any evil plan that they want to carry out. So we should always put our trust in Allah (swt) to protect us from their plans and plots. Notice the “fa” of causation that is present in the command for us to put our trust in Allah (swt). First Allah (swt) tells us that Shaitan wants to cause us pain and grief, that Allah (swt) says that because of that we should put our trust in Him (swt). The meaning here is that our trust in Allah (swt) is the only weapon that we have against Shaitan and his minions. They are making plots that are so evil that the evil of their plots can move mountains, but we are not afraid of them because of our trust in Allah (swt). We put our trust in our Lord to keep us safe from them. If Allah (swt) does not safeguard us then there is no way that we can protect ourselves from them on our own.

Trust in Allah (swt) in this ayah does not mean that we must become passive or that we must stop fighting Shaitan ourselves. It simply means that we must not become overwhelmed by fear or grief because of all of their plots and plans. For our part we have to try our best both to strive in path of Allah (swt) and to protect ourselves from the plots of Shaitan, but we must never rely on ourselves or our actions but we must rely on only Allah (swt). We should try our best and at the same time we should put our trust in our Lord. May Allah (swt) keep us all safe from them!

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا فِي الْمَجَالِسِ فَافْسَحُوا
يَفْسَحِ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَإِذَا قِيلَ انشُرُوا فَانشُرُوا يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا
مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾

12. O you who believe. When it is said to you to make room in your assemblies, then make room. Allah will make ample room for you. When it is said to you to rise up, then rise up. Allah will raise those who believe from you and those who have been given knowledge in degrees. And Allah is to all your actions Well-Aware.

Similar to the previous ayah, Allah (swt) begins this ayah by calling out to the believers. However in this ayah Allah (swt) begins a new subject matter. After telling us in the previous ayahs about what the enemies of this Message are doing in their gatherings, Allah (swt) tells us in this ayah how we should behave in our gatherings. Gatherings by themselves can be a source of great good because it is where Muslims come together to learn knowledge, to increase in their iman and to discuss the problems and concerns of the community. However there are certain rules and etiquettes that must be adhered to in these gatherings. It is to such that Allah (swt) brings our attention here.

Allah (swt) begins this ayah by saying “**O you who believe. When it is said to you to make room in your assemblies, then make room**”. Allah (swt) tells here us that when we are in assembly or in a gathering of people, and we are asked to make room, then we should make room. We should not crowd the rooms that we are in so that our fellow Muslims do not have room to sit. For example when we are sitting in a crowded masjid on the day of Jummah we should move up and move in as much as possible so that our brothers have room to sit as well. The rule that is given in this ayah can really be extended to any situation in which we are requested to share what we have with our fellow Muslims. Anything that we are given we have to remember that it is from Allah (swt) and anything that we do we should remember that we are doing it for the sake of Allah (swt). So even when we go to the masjid for jummah or to listen to a speech, we are going to that masjid and we are sitting in that masjid for the sake of Allah (swt). The masjid

belongs to Allah (swt) and so does that part on which are sitting, So when we are asked to make room for our brothers who are also servants of Allah (swt) like we are, then why should we not make room for them? If we selfishly take all of the space in the masjid for ourselves, then are we really there for the sake of Allah (swt)? Are we really remembering Allah (swt) at that moment? Similarly in any other situation when we are asked to share something with our brothers, we should not be reluctant to share it. We have to always remember that everything we do is for the sake of Allah (swt) and everything we have is from Allah (swt). So we should love to sacrifice from the things that we have for our fellow Muslim brothers and sisters.

Then Allah (swt) says “**Allah will make ample room for you**”. Here Allah (swt) specifically tells us that if we only try to make room in our gatherings for our brothers then He (swt) will make room for us. This reminds us that even the space in a gathering on which we sit belongs to Allah (swt) and if He (swt) wanted He (swt) could make more room for us. The question can now be asked that if Allah (swt) can make room for everyone, then why does He (swt) ask us to move in the first place. Why does He (swt) not just make the room? The response to this is that Allah (swt) wants us to make the effort. Allah (swt) wants us to do the action so that He (swt) can reward us for it. We know that Allah (swt) does not need anything from the Muslims. Allah (swt) could bring the Islamic State right now even if all of the Muslims are sleeping. But that is not how our Rabb works, He (swt) wants us to take the first step and then He (swt) will complete our actions for us. So all that the Muslim who is sitting in an assembly has to do is move his body a few inches, an action that really requires the least amount of effort. But if he would do just that, then Allah (swt) would make room for all of the people in the gathering. More importantly Allah (swt) would reward him for making room for his brother and for obeying a command from his Lord. What is unfortunate is that Muslims today do not want to make any effort, they think they can just sit where they are and rely on Allah (swt) to do everything for them. They do not care about their brothers and they do not want to make the least amount of sacrifice for this Ummah. They do not realize that if only they would make the effort, then Allah (swt) would complete their actions. Allah (swt) will give them victory if only they would try. May Allah (swt) help us to realize this fact! May Allah (swt) help us to do the best that we can!

In the next part of the ayah Allah (swt) tells us that when we are told to rise up then we should rise up. To rise up means to move from a state where you are seated and relaxed and into a state where you are standing and doing action. So Allah (swt) is telling us here that whenever we are called on to do some action then we must rise to do that action. The scholars have said that this ayah refers to rising for salah and rising for jihad. So Allah (swt) is telling the believers that when the Prophet (saw) or when a Khalifah calls on them to rise for the congregational prayer or rise to fight in the path of Allah (swt) then they must do so. They must not remain seated in a relaxed and passive state. Allah (swt) did not create us to waste our precious moments in this life sleeping or sitting down, but rather He (swt) created us to strive hard in His cause. This striving must be both in worshipping Allah (swt) and working to spread the Message of Allah (swt) to mankind. So when the command comes for us to rise we must rise.

In the next part of the ayah Allah (swt) tells us that He (swt) will raise in ranks those of us who believe and those of us who have been given knowledge. Notice the connection between the previous part of the ayah where Allah (swt) told us to rise for salah and jihad and this part where He (swt) says that He (swt) will raise those who believe and those who have been given knowledge. There are hadith of the Prophet (saw) where he (saw) closely linked salah with belief. Some scholars have even interpreted these hadith to mean that those who intentionally leave the salah have left the fold of the believers. There are also hadith of the Prophet (saw) where he (saw) has said that those who go out in search of knowledge, it is as if they go out in fighting in the path of Allah (swt). Just like a mujahid struggles in battle to defeat his foe, the seeker of knowledge must struggle and strive to attain the knowledge that will bring him closer to Allah (swt). So the lesson that we can take from this part of the ayah is that for those of us who rise for salah and those of us rise to fight in the path of Allah (swt) as well as those of us who strive hard to seek knowledge, all of these actions will validate our belief and because of that Allah (swt) will raise us in ranks.

The scholars say that to be raised in this ayah means to be raised through the levels of paradise. We know that there are different levels to paradise. The lowest level is much better than anything that the life of this world can offer. But as you are raised through the higher levels the

pleasure and happiness of each level only increases. The highest of levels is what has been reserved for the prophets and the highest part of this level has been promised for the Prophet (saw). May Allah (swt) grant the Prophet (saw) that upper most level because there is no human being that deserves it more than him (saw)! May Allah (swt) also give us the ability to strive hard enough to be close to him (saw)!

In the final part of the ayah Allah (swt) reminds us once again that He (swt) is Well Aware of all our actions. Allah (swt) is Well Aware of our actions and it is only through our actions that we will receive that reward in the Hereafter that all of us yearn for. There are four actions that Allah (swt) called on us to do in this ayah. One is that when we are in a gathering of people and we are asked to move and make room then we must make room. We must not be selfish and hoard all of the room on the earth of Allah (swt) for ourselves. We also said that this command could be generalized to apply to anything that we have, if we can spare it and if there are any of our Muslim brothers or sisters that can benefit from it then we should share it with them. Then Allah (swt) told us that when we are given the command to rise then we must rise. So when the adhan is called we must stop what we are doing and go to the salah. Similarly when the Khalifah calls us for jihad to fight in the path of Allah (swt) then we must go. If the Khalifah is not there then we must work in whatever way we can to establish that position of leadership for the Muslims. We must work to bring back the one who can rally the soldiers of Allah (swt) against the enemies of this Message. Finally Allah (swt) mentioned those who believe and those who have been given knowledge. So in addition to those actions mentioned above we must also do the actions that will strengthen our belief and the actions that will increase our knowledge. These actions include contemplating on the signs of Allah (swt), studying the Quran and Sunnah as well as the learning of the lives of the Prophet (saw), the Sahabah and the righteous. It also includes learning the Arabic language and the Islamic sciences like Usul. Insha Allah if we make a sincere effort then Allah (swt) will raise us in the levels of paradise because of the beneficial knowledge that we learn and the effort that we exert to acquire it. So everything that we do must be done only with the intention of seeking the pleasure of Allah (swt). Allah (swt) is well Aware of all of our actions and our intentions behind those actions.

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا نَجَّيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدِمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَانِكُمْ
صَدَقَةٌ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ فَإِن لَّمْ تَجِدُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ

رَحِيمٌ

13. O you who believe, when you consult the Messenger spend before your consultation some charity. That is better for you and purer. But if you find not the means then Allah is Forgiving Merciful.

Allah (swt) begins this ayah by telling the believers that before they meet with the Prophet (saw) they should first give charity before they can speak with him (saw). This is one of the many ayahs in the Quran that encourage the believers to spend in charity. When you spend from what you have been given, it validates your belief. It shows that you truly believe in Allah (swt) because you are spending from what you have been given for the sake of Allah (swt). This is the state of mind that Allah (swt) wants the believers to be in when they meet with the Prophet (saw). They must realize how fortunate they are to be speaking with the Messenger of Allah (saw). The one who is the best of the creation of Allah (swt). Every moment that they have with him (saw) is a blessing which we cannot even begin to imagine. So when they are with the Prophet (saw) they need to be in a state of mind where they have cleared their mind of all evil and they have truly shown their belief. The best way to accomplish this is to spend some charity from their wealth or their property before they sit with the Prophet (saw). This action on their part will truly demonstrate their belief and truly demonstrate that they are worthy to sit and speak with one who is the best of the creation of Allah (swt).

In the second part of the ayah Allah (swt) tells the believers that to spend charity before speaking with the Prophet (saw) is better for them and it is purer. It is better in that they will get the reward from Allah (swt) because of what they spent in charity. Anything that you give away which is purely for the sake of Allah (swt), you will find the reward for that with Allah (swt) in the

Hereafter. So it would have been better for the Muslims who wanted to meet with the Prophet (saw) that they gave this charity than if they had met with him (saw) without giving this charity. Now they have a chance to speak with the Messenger of Allah (saw) but they also have a reward with Allah (swt) in the Hereafter because of the charity that they gave. Allah (swt) also tells them that to give this charity before consulting with the Prophet (saw) is purer. This means that they will be in a purer state if they speak with the Prophet (saw) after having spent some charity than they would be if they had spoken to him (saw) without. There is none of us who is without sin. There have been moments in all of our lives when we have forgotten the purpose of our existence. We have forgotten that we are the servants of Allah (swt) and so we have done actions that are displeasing to our Lord and Master. Because of that action we have been tainted with disobedience to Allah (swt). But Allah (swt) has told us in many hadith through the Prophet (saw) that one of the best ways in which we can clean ourselves from the sin that we have committed is to spend in charity. So by spending in charity the believers who are meeting with the Prophet (saw) will be in a purer state because they would be cleansed of some of their sins.

In the final part of the ayah Allah (swt) tells the believers that if they do not find the means in which to spend in charity then surely Allah (swt) is Forgiving and Merciful. If anyone did not have means to spend this charity before they speak with the Prophet (saw) then they are not obligated to do so. They may speak to the Prophet (saw) without giving away anything. So from this part of the ayah we see that Allah (swt) makes a dispensation in this obligation for those who cannot afford to spend in charity. In other words only the ones who had the means and who could afford to spend this charity were obligated to do. If for whatever reason they do not find anything to give in charity, then surely Allah (swt) is Most Forgiving and Most Merciful and He (swt) would not hold it against them. But notice that Allah (swt) only says that He (swt) is Most Forgiving and Merciful towards those who genuinely could not find the means in which to spend. For those among the Muslims who were wealthy and who had more than they needed, the Mercy and the Forgiveness of Allah (swt) does not necessarily extend to them in this matter if they refuse to spend. This is because they would be turning away from a direct command of Allah (swt) only because of the love of their wealth. So this dispensation is only for the poor.

We also see from this ayah that the door of the Prophet (saw) was always open for anyone who wished to speak with him (saw). Even though when this ayah was revealed the Prophet (saw) was already the head of the Islamic State, and he (saw) already had responsibilities as the leader of a nation, a statesman and diplomat, a military general and as Messenger of Allah who gave the people the revelation from their Creator, he (saw) still found time to sit and speak with the people concerning their issues and problems. This shows how loving and caring the Prophet (saw) was for this Ummah, and how Merciful Allah (swt) was in that He (swt) gave him (saw) to us. The problems the people had which they took to the Prophet (saw) were similar to the problems that Muslims have today. In the responses that the Prophet (saw) gave to them when they came to him (saw), we have a guidance that we can apply to our lives as well. So for example for all of the youth in the Ummah today who want to go out and fight in the path of Allah (swt), we have the advice of the Prophet (saw) to the man who came to the Prophet (saw) and requested permission to go on jihad and he (saw) asked the man if he had parents. When he replied in the affirmative the Prophet (saw) told the man to go back and to make his jihad to strive to look after his parents. So our youth must realize that they need to make sure that their families are taken care of before they can even think about going out in the path of Allah (swt). Looking after our family is just as much a responsibility as working in this dawah. There are many more examples like this that we can gain if only we would make the effort to study the life of the Prophet (saw) and study his (saw)'s Sunnah. However since the vast majority of hadith books today are still in Arabic, learning this Sunnah means learning the Arabic language as well. If we make this effort then it would be like we are having our own meetings with the Prophet (saw) just like the Sahabah did when he (saw) was alive. But just like they had to spend this charity before they spoke with him (saw), we have to make the effort to learn Arabic and learn the Sunnah before we can receive the guidance that are in his (saw)'s words. May Allah (swt) give us the ability to do that! So we see from this ayah that the Prophet (saw) always cared for the Muslims and he (saw) was always there to guide them and show them the way on how they can be the best servants of Allah (swt). May we find the guidance that are in his (saw)'s words for our own lives as well!

ۚ أَشْفَقْتُمْ أَن تَقْدِمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَانِكُمْ صَدَقْتِ فَإِذْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَتَابَ
 اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
 وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

14. Are you afraid of giving charity before your consultation. And when you did not do it then Allah has turned to you so establish the Salah, and give the Zakat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. And Allah is Well Aware of all of your actions.

In the previous ayah Allah (swt) gave the Muslims who were living with the Prophet (saw) a rule stating that they needed to spend something in charity before they would be allowed to sit with him (saw) and speak with him (saw). Perhaps the reason for this rule was so that the people realized how valuable the time of the Prophet (saw) was. He (saw) did not have time for idle talk and for conversations that will bring no benefit in the worship and servitude to Allah (swt). Not only was the Prophet (saw) forming the Islamic State and building the Muslim community, but he (saw) also had to establish the rules of this Din. He (saw) had to set a precedent that would be followed for generations to come. Where then did that leave time in the day of the Prophet (saw) for conversations that did not hold any value? Do you think that the Prophet (saw) simply spoke with the Sahabah about the weather or about who won the game last night? No, rather every word that he (saw) spoke was connected with the remembrance of Allah (swt). It was a word that would help to establish the Law of Allah (swt) in the land and a word that would help to carry the Message of Allah (swt) to mankind. So the Prophet (saw) did not have time for idle talk and that was why Allah (swt) revealed the rule in the previous ayah obligating the Muslims to spend before they are allowed to speak with him (saw). But some of the Muslims loved the Prophet (saw) so much that they would sometimes speak to him (saw) without spending this charity. They loved the Prophet (saw) and so they always wanted to be with him (saw). They wanted to spend every moment of their day with him (saw). Some of them would even give up their jobs and be hungry just so that they could spend their day with the Prophet (saw). They just could not get enough of him (saw). That was when Allah (swt) revealed this ayah.

Allah (swt) begins this ayah with a question. He (swt) asks the believers if they are afraid to spend in charity before they speak with the Prophet (saw). Allah (swt) has told us in other ayahs of the Quran how Shaitan threatens us with poverty. This means that whenever we try to spend our wealth for the sake of Allah (swt), Shaitan comes to us and whispers to us that we would become poor if we were to give this wealth for Allah (swt). When he does this there are two important facts that he makes us forget. First is that we exist only to serve Allah (swt) and so we should never be hesitant to spend to earn the pleasure of Allah (swt). The second is that Allah (swt) is our Provider and how much sustenance we would receive has already been written for us even before we were born. When we bear this in mind then we realize that we do not lose anything by spending in the path of Allah (swt). We will get exactly the amount that Allah (swt) wrote for us regardless of if we spend in His Cause or not. The only difference is that if we do spend our wealth to seek the pleasure of Allah (swt) then we would get the reward in the Hereafter for that action on our part.

So Allah (swt) asks the believers in this first part of the ayah as to why they are afraid to spend this charity before they speak with the Prophet (saw). The reason why Allah (swt) asks this question is to make the believers think as to why they should be hesitant to spend in charity before they speak with the Prophet (saw). Is it that they do not realize what a privilege and honor it is to speak with the Prophet (saw)? Or is it that they do not realize that all of the wealth is from Allah (swt) and how much they have has already been written for them? Why then should they be hesitant to spend this charity?

The lesson that we should take from this part of the ayah is that we should never be hesitant to spend our wealth to seek the pleasure of Allah (swt). We should never hold back from giving charity if it means that we become closer to the Prophet (saw). The way of the Prophet (saw) was that he (saw) always would give in charity. Even though he (saw) had a large family to support, he (saw) still gave more than anyone else. So even though we cannot give in charity to have a conversation with the Prophet (saw), we can still give in charity to be closer to the person of the Prophet (saw). We must remember that *Sadaqah* simply means spending anything to seek the pleasure of Allah (swt) with it. So it does not have to be money, any food that we give is

Sadaqah, any knowledge that we teach is Sadaqah and even a smile we give to our brother is Sadaqah. The only thing is that we give it to seek the pleasure of Allah (swt) with it. If we always keep in mind that we live to serve Allah (swt) and how much we love the Prophet (saw) then Insha Allah it would be easy for us to spend what we have to seek the pleasure of Allah (swt) and to follow the way of our beloved Prophet (saw).

In the next part of the ayah Allah (swt) says “**And when you did not do it then Allah has turned to you**”. Here Allah (swt) reminds the Muslims that some of them did not spend in charity when they spoke with the Prophet (saw). Then Allah (swt) tells them how He (swt) has turned to them mercifully because of that. In other words Allah (swt) has forgiven them for their speaking with the Prophet (saw) without spending the charity. The scholars say that this part of the ayah abrogated the command in the previous ayah. In other words after this ayah was revealed then it was no longer an obligation to spend in charity before speaking with the Prophet (saw). Allah (swt) removed that obligation from the Muslim community. They could now speak to the Prophet (saw) whenever they wanted and they were not required to spend this charity.

Then Allah (swt) says “**so establish the Salah, and give the Zakat, and obey Allah and His Messenger**”. After Allah (swt) abrogated the obligation of giving charity before speaking with the Prophet, He (swt) then reminds the Muslims of their other obligations. In other words Allah (swt) is telling them that if you are not able to give this charity then at least you should strive to do the other obligations that have been laid down upon you.

The first among these is duties is the Salah. Of all of the obligations that Allah (swt) has laid down upon us there is nothing that is more important than the five prayers that we make. The Salah is so important that some scholars even say that one leaves the folds of Islam if one intentionally does not pray. The Salah is our connection with Allah (swt). When we pray we praise and glorify Allah (swt) with our hearts, with our tongues and with our limbs. Our entire body is in a state of submission and worship to our Lord. We pray because we know that only Allah (swt) deserves that glorification and that praise. It is also where we beg and plead to Allah (swt) to guide us to a way that is pleasing to Him (swt) and away from the ways that are displeasing to Him (swt). In this ayah Allah (swt) tells the believers that they must *establish* the salah. This

means that they must not simply perform the salah, but they must perform it in the best way possible. They must pray at the correct time, having ablution, facing the qiblah and meeting all of the other prerequisites of the Salah. It also means that it should be prayed in a group if possible and in a masjid would be even better. But most of all it means that it must be performed with tranquility and concentration on Allah (swt) and on the Quran that is being recited.

Then Allah (swt) says that they should give zakat. All Muslims must give zakat. It is the foundation of the economic system of the Islamic State. It is the means by which the wealth is fairly distributed among all of the Muslims. Through the zakat everyone in the Islamic State gets a fair share of the wealth and no one is left in poverty. Allah (swt) loves the believers and so He (swt) wants all of them to be cared for and for all of their needs to be met. That is why it is an obligation on all Muslims to pay zakat on the wealth that they have. It is a means of purifying themselves and a means of purifying their wealth. When we give in Zakat our sins gets washed away and our wealth become pure of the filth that clings to wealth that is hoarded and not shared with the people. How unfortunate it is today that we do not have a Khalifah to collect the wealth and distribute it among all of the Muslims fairly? How unfortunate it is that we are the poorest of nations even though we have the most wealth and resources in our lands?

Then Allah (swt) says “**and obey Allah and His Messenger**”. So after giving them the command to establish the salah and pay the zakat in the previous part of the ayah, Allah (swt) then tells them that they must perform all of the other obligations that are due upon them. We see from this part of the ayah how comprehensive this Din is. This Din is not simply Salah and Zakat, although these are the pillars of the Din. Rather this Din is all that Allah (swt) and the Prophet (saw) told us to do and not to do. Whatever Allah (swt) or the Prophet (saw) tell us to do we must do, and whatever they tell us to avoid we must stay away from. Also notice in this ayah how Allah (swt) connects obedience to the Prophet (saw) with obedience to Him (swt). This clearly shows that the Sunnah is equal to the Quran as a source of legislation in the Law of Allah (swt). That is why we must always follow the Sunnah and never give it a secondary role to the Quran. Whenever the Prophet (saw) commands us to do something then we must treat it as though Allah (swt) has told us to do it. This is because all that the Prophet (saw) tells us to do is really from

Allah (swt). The Prophet (saw) does not speak of his own desire but he (saw) only speaks that which Allah (swt) revealed onto him (saw). Although the Sunnah may not be a miracle like the Quran, it is still from Allah (swt). May Allah (swt) help all Muslims to realize this fact!

Finally Allah (swt) says “**And Allah is Well Aware of all of your actions**”. The Sahabah were men and women of action. They knew that Allah (swt) was Aware of all of their actions so they strived to do more and more actions that Allah (swt) would be pleased with. They realized that the purpose of this life is nothing but the accumulation of as many of the actions that Allah (swt) is pleased with as possible, and they knew that Allah (swt) was Aware of every single action that they did. So they strove with every moment of their lives to do as many of the deeds that Allah (swt) is pleased with as possible. Similarly whenever their desires prompted them to do an action that was displeasing to Allah (swt) they remembered this fact as well. They also realized the tremendous mission that they had in the life of this world. They knew that the task of carrying this Message to mankind demanded from them they strive to their utmost. They knew that the enemies of this Message were working night and day to destroy it. Scheming and planning in their secret meetings. So they knew that they had to work just as hard. This was why they strove for the sake of this Din. They did more and more actions to support this Message. The one consolation they had was that they were certain that Allah (swt) was Aware of all of their actions. This is how we must try to be as well. We must always be reminding ourselves how our Lord is Aware of each and every action that we do. Even though it is hard to remember this fact at every moment of your life, try to remember it as much as possible. This thought that Allah (swt) is Aware of what you are doing for every moment of your life is what should motivate you to strive harder to seek the pleasure of Allah (swt) in everything that you do. For every action that you strive to do, strive with the realization that your Lord Knows more about your striving than you do. May Allah (swt) give us the ability to remember that all of our actions are done for Him (swt) and to remember that He (swt) is Well Aware of all our actions!

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا هُمْ مِنْكُمْ وَلَا مِنْهُمْ وَيَحْلِفُونَ عَلَى الْكُذِبِ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

14. Do you not look to those who befriend a people who have the Wrath of Allah on them, they are not from you nor are they from them, and they swear to a lie while they know.

In this ayah Allah (swt) begins a new section of the Surah where He (swt) tells us about the most dangerous enemy that our Ummah can ever face. The reason why they are so dangerous is because they are an enemy that is within our community. Of course we are referring to the *munafiqoon* or the “hypocrites”. They are the ones who say with their mouths that they believe in Allah (swt) and the Messenger (saw) but in their hearts they do not want to serve Allah (swt) and they do not want follow the Messenger (saw). They are similar to the *kuffar* in that they would rather serve their desires than serve Allah (swt), but unlike the *kuffar* they keep this fact secret in their hearts and on the surface they behave like they are servants of Allah (swt). They are the most dangerous enemy for this Ummah because they are an enemy that we cannot see. At least with the *kuffar* we can see them and we know that they are our enemy. But with these hypocrites we can never tell who they are. Their evil is only in their hearts. May Allah (swt) save this Ummah from them!

Allah (swt) begins this ayah by asking us “**Do you not look to those who befriend a people who have the Wrath of Allah on them**”. When this ayah was revealed many of the hypocrites in Madinah still maintained close ties and friendships with the Jews. We know that before Islam came to Madinah the pagan Arabs and the Jews maintained close friendships and alliances. The two main Arab tribes at that time were Aws and Khazaraj and they were always at war with each other. The Jewish tribes in and around Madinah would both support and arm the Aws and the Khazaraj in their wars with each other. In fact the Jewish tribes made a handsome profit by arming both of these tribes. Then Allah (swt) blessed the Aws and Khazaraj by bringing the Prophet (saw) to them, making them Muslim and establishing the Islamic State in their city. Now these two tribes that had once been the most bitterest of enemies were the closest of

brothers. This was the effect that Islam had on their hearts. But not every single one of them was like this. When the Islamic State was established, there were two groups of people among both the Aws and the Khazaraj. One were the sincere believers who truly wished to serve Allah (swt) by following the Prophet (saw), and the other group were the hypocrites who only submitted to Allah (swt) by their tongues but their hearts were still in the time of ignorance before Islam came. The true Muslims severed their ties with the Jews because they knew that their loyalty must be only for Allah (swt) and the Prophet (saw), and they knew that the Jews are those who had earned the anger of Allah (swt). However the hypocrites still maintained their friendships and their alliances with the Jews. Not only did they maintain their alliances with the Jews but as we saw from the previous ayahs, they were in fact working with the Jews against the Prophet (saw) and against the Islamic State. They were plotting with the Jews on how they could destroy the Islamic State and kill the Prophet (saw). So here Allah (swt) is bringing the attention of the Prophet (saw) and the attention of the Muslims to these hypocrites who were in their midst. Allah (swt) is telling them to look at these people who claim to be Muslims but who have befriended a people who have earned the Wrath of Allah (swt).

There is an authentic hadith where the Prophet (saw) has clearly told us that the Jews are the people who have earned the anger of Allah (swt). Now we know that the Prophet (saw) does not say anything of his own desire but rather everything that he (saw) speaks is revelation from Allah (swt). So in fact Allah (swt) is telling us that the Jews are the people who have earned His (swt)'s anger and His (swt)'s wrath. Allah (swt) is the Most Merciful, the Most Kind, the Most Loving and the Most Forgiving. How then could a people be so evil that they would earn the anger of such a Being? We would need volumes of books simply to enumerate the sins and the crimes of these people. But the best way to summarize their faults is to say that they were a people who were so much aware of the Truth but they still refused to follow it. They were a people whom Allah (swt) had favored and He (swt) had chosen them to carry His Message to mankind. But they gave up this duty because of their love for this world. They chose to serve their desires rather to serve Allah (swt) even though Allah (swt) had blessed them and favored them above the other nations. Instead of being thankful and being humble before Allah (swt) because

they were chosen, the fact that Allah (swt) had favored them and the fact that Allah (swt) had chose them made them arrogant. They thought that they were better than everyone else because of this bounty that Allah (swt) gave them. They did not realize that they were better than others not because of who they were but because of what they did. It is only your belief and your actions that determines your station with Allah (swt), and not the tribe that you are from or your family. So the moment that they gave up this dawah and started to pursue the life of this world, they lost their status as being the favored and the chosen people of Allah (swt). Not only did their pride and their arrogance lead them to think that they were better than others and lead them to give up this dawah, but it also made them refuse to submit to the truth when it came to them. Allah (swt) sent them prophet after prophet and messenger after messenger to remind them to return to their role of calling mankind to worship and serve Allah (swt). Not only did they refuse to follow these prophets and messengers, but they even plotted against them and they even killed many of them. This was despite the fact that they recognized the miracles of these prophets and messengers clearly and they knew that these men had indeed been sent to them by Allah (swt). No messenger from Allah (swt) did they recognize more clearly than the Prophet (saw). Allah (swt) tells us how they knew him (saw) better than they knew their own sons. Yet despite the fact that they knew that he (saw) was the Messenger of Allah (swt), the final Messenger for whom they had been waiting, they still refused to follow him (saw). Not only did they refuse to follow him (saw) but they even plotted and planned against him (saw) and against the Message that he (saw) brought. That is why they are a people who have earned the anger of Allah (swt). May Allah (swt) save us from ever becoming like them!

How then could any Muslim maintain close ties of friendship with such people? When you know that these are people who have done so much evil that they have earned the anger of Allah (swt), how then could have anything to do with them? We as Muslims should pay attention to what Allah (swt) is telling us in these ayahs. Allah (swt) is warning us about these Jews in these ayahs of His (swt)'s Book. We should not make close ties of friendship with them and we should not try to emulate them. We should see how Allah (swt) is telling the Prophet (saw) and telling the Muslims to look at these hypocrites and to wonder how they can still be friends with a people who

have earned the anger of Allah (swt). This ayah shows that the hypocrites have not realized that the purpose of their existence is to serve Allah (swt). If they live to serve Allah (swt) and if they love Allah (swt), then why would they be near a people whom Allah (swt) is angry with? So we see that this ayah is a warning to the Prophet (saw) and to the Muslims. We should not be like the Jews who have earned the anger of Allah (swt). We should also not be like the hypocrites who say they submit to Allah (swt) with their tongues but in their hearts they still have the love of this world. May Allah (swt) save us from ever becoming like these people!

In the next part of the ayah Allah (swt) says “**they are not from you nor are they from them**”. Here Allah (swt) is describing the hypocrites. He (swt) is telling us that they are not from the believers and they are not from the Jews. Their loyalties are not with the Muslims nor are they with the Jews. All that they care about is themselves and all that they want to do is to serve their desires. These hypocrites knew that as long as the Prophet (saw) remained in Madinah and the Islamic State existed, they would not be able to live a life where they serve themselves. The Law of Allah (swt) would prevent them from exploiting the people and from satisfying all of their desires. This Law that prohibited taxes and usury, fornication and wine. That is why they tried every way possible to destroy the Islamic State. To destroy this Mercy that Allah (swt) had sent down for all mankind.

If we study our history we would see that a lot of the trials and internal fighting that happened within our community was actually caused by the hypocrites. Many of the battles where Muslims fought against Muslims were actually caused by the hypocrites. They had an agenda from the very beginning to destroy this Message that Allah (swt) has sent as a mercy and guidance for all mankind. They only pretend to be Muslims but in reality they did not care about anyone but themselves. They certainly did not care for Allah (swt). They knew that the Islamic State stood for the worship and servitude of Allah (swt), something that they loathed, so they tried any way that they could to destroy it. This could be by making the Muslims to fight each other like they did at the time of the Sahabah during the battle of the Camel, or it could be by collaborating with the enemies of this Message like they did in the 1920s when the Islamic State was destroyed. Their methods are different but their goal is always the same.

If there has been one other group that has hated the Islamic State as much as these hypocrites do, it has been the Jews. Now we are not speaking here about all the Jews, as we mentioned before there are many good and sincere people among the Jews as there are in all religions and nations. We are speaking here about those particular Jews in power. Those Jews who want to maintain the status quo where they control a large portion of the world's wealth. They also see Islam to be a threat. They know that Islam will destroy their interest-based banking system which feeds their coffers with the blood and sweat of the people. Just like the hypocrites they also want to destroy this Message. That is why they often work together towards this common goal of bringing down the Law of Allah (swt). These are the enemies of this Message and Allah (swt) warns us about them in this ayah.

In the final part of the ayah Allah (swt) says **“and they swear to a lie while they know”**. Here Allah (swt) tells us how the hypocrites swear to what they know is a lie. This lie is that they told the Prophet (saw) and the believers that they are truly a part of this community. The lie that they spoke when they said that they were Muslims. They tell us that they are with us and they are one of us. Not only did they tell the Prophet (saw) that they were a part of this community but they even swore to this. They extended their hands to the Prophet (saw) when they gave him (saw) the allegiance to become citizens of the Islamic State. On the blessed hand of the Prophet (saw) they gave an oath that they would serve, defend and propagate this Message that Allah (swt) sent to mankind. But in their hearts they desired nothing more than to destroy it. This is the lie to which they swore. By telling us this fact Allah (swt) shows us what an evil and worthless people they are. They know what is in their own hearts. They know that they do not have a desire to submit to this Message. At least the kuffar would admit to this. But these hypocrites do not. They swear to the Prophet (saw) that they are with the believers when in reality they are not. In reality they are against the believers and everything that the believers stand for. This is why they are the worst of enemies for this Message. May Allah (swt) protect us from them and from ever being like them!

أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا إِنَّهُمْ سَاءَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

16. Allah has prepared for them a severe punishment. Evil indeed is that which they do.

In the previous ayah Allah (swt) told us the terrible crime that the hypocrites commit. They would pretend to be with the believers but in their hearts they have rejected this Message that Allah (swt) has sent to them. They have rejected this Message that has been sent to them by their Creator even though they lie with their tongues and say that they have accepted it. They try to destroy this Message even though all around them they can see the mercy and the justice that it brings for all of the people in their society. Only to satisfy their low desires they would deny mankind the justice and the mercy of this Message, and they would deny mankind the opportunity to know their Creator. In this ayah Allah (swt) tells us what is their payment or their recompense for what they have done

Allah (swt) tells us that He (swt) has prepared for them a severe punishment. There are two words to notice in this first part of the ayah. The first is the word *a'ada* which means "prepared". Allah (swt) has already prepared this punishment for them and it is waiting for them. Can you even begin to imagine what a terrible prospect this is? It means that the punishment is already there waiting for them right now. There is no way that they can make some excuse and get out of this punishment. Allah (swt) would not prepare a punishment that He (swt) does not plan to use. Allah (swt) would not prepare a punishment that He (swt) does not plan to use. This punishment has been prepared specifically for these hypocrites. Do you now realize how terrified these hypocrites must now be? Do you realize how terrified you should be if you should ever become one of them?

The next word to notice in this ayah is *Shadeed*, this is how Allah (swt) describes their punishment. This word literally means "strong" or "powerful", but when used in the context of describing a punishment, it means "severe" or "extreme". Allah (swt) has told us in other ayahs of the Quran that He (swt) has reserved the lowest levels of hellfire for the hypocrites. The deeper

one goes into the hellfire the more intense is the pain that one will feel. The fire will burn more fiercely and everything else in the fire that is there to cause pain will inflict even more pain.

Because we know that in the fire there is not only the fire itself but everything else that can cause pain will be there as well. So the pain from the cutting of knives, and the biting of animals, and the ailments of diseases will also be in this fire. It will only increase them in the pain that they feel. No matter how much you may be suffering in the life of this world right now, know that what you are in right now compared to this hellfire is like a paradise. So you should thank Allah (swt) that you are still not in this place. You should thank Allah (swt) that you have in the moments of your life that are remaining a chance to save yourself from this place. May Allah (swt) save us from that horrible place!

In the second part of the ayah Allah (swt) says “**Evil indeed is that which they do**”. Evil is the only word to describe what these people have done. Notice the Arabic word *inna*, which as we mentioned means surely or definitely without any possibility of doubt. There is no word in the English language that can properly convey the amount of certainty that is given by this word *inna*. So Allah (swt) is telling us here that what they used to do was *surely* evil, there is absolutely no doubt in it. No one can dispute this fact. They are a people who turned away from the purpose for which Allah (swt) created them. We all know that Allah (swt) created us so that we can worship and serve Him (swt). Nothing else should matter in our life except that we try our best to dedicate each and every moment of our lives to Allah (swt). These hypocrites have turned completely away from the purpose for which Allah (swt) created them and they have turned away from the purpose why He (swt) maintains them and keeps them alive for every second of their existence. We have to remember that not only did Allah (swt) create us but He (swt) is sustaining us and keeping us alive for every moment of our lives. Thus they are ungrateful to Allah (swt) for their creation and for the fact that He (swt) is keeping them alive for every moment of their lives. Not only have they turned away from the life of servitude to Allah (swt) for which they were created, not only have they turned towards a life of serving their desires instead, but in addition they are actively working against Allah (swt). They stand in opposition to the Message that Allah (swt) has sent. They work to bring down the Islamic State that the Prophet (saw) established under the

direction of Allah (swt). They ally themselves with a people who have earned the anger of Allah (swt) and they are actively working to destroy this dawah and to lead people away from Allah (swt). But despite all of this evil that they have turned, the worst of their evil is that they lie and say that they are Muslims. They lie and say that they believe when in reality they do not. They lie and say that they are the servants of Allah (swt) when in reality they are the servants of the devil. Despite the kufr that is in their hearts they pretend to be with the believers. They pray with the believers and talk with the believers and live in the same community as the believers. They do all of this and yet this does not have any affect on them. Even though they can see the Mercy of Allah (swt) first hand by living in the Islamic State and interacting with the Muslims, this does not change their view towards this Message. Even though they hear the Quran being recited to them again and again, it does not soften their hearts to it. They are such a lowly people that all that they care about is the satisfaction of their desires. Not only are they not influenced by having the privilege of being with the believers, but we can also see their evil from the fact that they are not even honest about what is in their heart. The kafir is a despicable creature because he also has turned away from serving Allah (swt) and has chosen to serve his desires, but at least he will admit this fact. They hypocrite will not even do that. He claims with this tongue that he is a servant of Allah (swt) which is the most honored of positions that can be held by any human being. But in reality he is an enemy of Allah (swt) working against this Message that Allah (swt) has sent for all mankind only so that he can satisfy his lusts and appetites. This is why Allah (swt) tells us in this ayah that what they do is surely evil. It is not possible for a human being to be more evil than this. May Allah (swt) save us from ever being like these people!

If you think that hypocrites as evil as this only existed at the time of the Prophet (saw) then you have to think again. How many are the kings and presidents in the Muslim world today who rule their land by other than the Law of Allah (swt)? How many are the so called scholars who say that it is permissible to rule by other than the Law of Allah (swt) and they even say that there is no Islamic State and that Islam is not political? How many are the modernists and free thinkers who call themselves Muslims and call for a “reform” of this Din? How many are the traitors who would spy on their brothers and sisters in the dawah and report their activities to the

authorities? How many are the weaklings who call themselves Muslims but see no problem with them committing the major sins like adultery and missing the Salah? These are all hypocrites who are every much as evil as Abdullah bin Ubayy. The same valleys in hellfire that are waiting for him are also waiting for them. They have all turned away from Allah (swt) for the paltry price of the life of this world. They would all like to compromise with kufr rather than confront it. Is this the way of the Prophet (saw)? Is this what he (saw) would have done? May Allah (swt) expose these evil people to the Ummah for the hypocrites that they are! May Allah (swt) give them their just punishment for the evil that they have done!

أَتَّخَذُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ جُنَّةً فَصَدُّوا عَنِ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَهِمْ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ﴿١٧﴾

17. They have taken their oaths as a screen so that they can turn (the people) away from Allah's way. So for them is a humiliating punishment.

In this ayah Allah (swt) describes yet another evil characteristic of these hypocrites. Allah (swt) tells us that they take their oaths as a screen so that they turn the people away from the way of Allah (swt). Their oaths in this ayah refer to the oath of allegiance they gave to the Prophet (saw). Every citizen of the Islamic State at that time was required to pledge their allegiance to the Prophet (saw). This was a promise that they gave to the Prophet (saw) that they would fulfill their duty of serving Allah (swt) by following all of the laws of the Shariah and working to propagate this Message to all of mankind. Once they gave this oath they were guaranteed the protection of the Islamic State and they could live their lives in safety and peace. However these hypocrites were not sincere and they were not true in this promise that they gave to the Prophet (saw). They had no intention of serving the State and in fact they were working to destroy it.

Allah (swt) tells us in this ayah how “**They have taken their oaths as a screen**”. These hypocrites took this oath that they gave the Prophet (saw) as a screen for them. This sacred trust that they gave to Allah (swt) on the blessed hand of the Prophet (saw) was actually a cover through which they plotted and planned their evil against this Message. So once again you should

see what an evil people they are. They are using the promise that they gave to Allah (swt) as a means of covering and hiding their evil deeds. They know that once they give this oath to the Prophet (saw) then no one can question or criticize them for what they do. So it provided the perfect cover through which they can plot and plan all of their evil actions. They enjoyed the protection and the prosperity of the Islamic State while they were plotting its destruction. They promised to serve the Din of Allah (swt) when in reality they were working to destroy it.

Allah (swt) tells us in the second part of the ayah the reason why they have taken their oaths as a screen. It is so that they can lead the people away from the path of Allah (swt). We know that these are a people who want to destroy the Islamic State so that they can live a life where they can serve their desires instead of submitting to the Law of Allah (swt). One of the ways in which they can do that is by leading the people away from the path of Allah (swt). This means by leading the sincere believers away from this Din. So one of the goals of these hypocrites is to turn the Muslims away from their role of serving Allah (swt). One of the ways in which they do this is by encouraging the Muslims to be lazy and not to strive hard in the service of Allah (swt). They also tell the Muslims to be stingy and not to spend their wealth for the cause of Allah (swt). They also encourage the Muslims to commit sins and to give in to their desires. Finally they also work to put doubts into the hearts of Muslims. This was especially known among the later generation of the hypocrites. They introduced many strange and foreign philosophies into the thoughts of Muslims so as to create doubt in those weak minded Muslims who did not know how to respond to such thoughts. These hypocrites made the Muslims think about divine destiny, about the knowledge of the unseen and about the *mutashabiyat* ayahs of the Quran. All of this is knowledge that should not be sought and questions that should not be asked, but they went after this knowledge and they used it to create doubts in the hearts of the Muslims. All of this was done with one objective in mind and that was to turn the people away from the worship and servitude of Allah (swt). They wanted to turn the people away from Allah (swt). They want to take the people away from the Real and the True. The One Who created them and the One Who sustains them for every moment of their lives. Could there be anything that is more evil than that?

In the final part of the ayah Allah (swt) tells us that these hypocrites will have a humiliating punishment. On the Day of Judgment when all of mankind will be brought forth and made to stand before Allah (swt), He (swt) will expose these hypocrites for who they really are. They will no longer be able to hide behind their oaths. All of the Muslims will see that these were the people who claimed to be believers but they were not. Everyone will see that these were the people who were working to destroy this Din only so that they can follow their desires. The great evil that they have done will be exposed in front of all to see. Could there be anything more embarrassing or humiliating that to be exposed for whom you really are in front of all of the people, including your friends and family who were Muslim? Then they will be dragged into the fire of Hell for what they have done. May Allah (swt) save us from ever being in that situation! May Allah (swt) save us from ever becoming like them!

لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ
 هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

18. Their wealth and their sons will never benefit them in the least against Allah. These are companions of the Fire. They will stay therein forever.

In the previous ayahs we saw how Allah (swt) told us that the hypocrites will receive a painful and humiliating punishment. We saw that the reason why they will receive this terrible punishment is because they are people who preferred to serve themselves rather to serve their Creator and Sustainer. They chose to serve themselves and they chose to try and destroy the Message that their Creator has sent to them. Not only do they not want to serve Allah (swt) themselves but they do not want others to serve Him (swt) as well. They want to prevent the sincere believers from creating the society that submits to Allah (swt). They were averse to submitting to Allah (swt) so they tried their best to destroy the Message through which such a society can be built. They tried every way possible to destroy this Message.

Now did these people not fear Allah (swt)? Did they not think that there would be consequences for the evil that they did? They always thought to themselves that their wealth and their sons would save them against any consequences that their evil actions might bring. That is how the people whose focus is on the life of this world think. Their thoughts and their reasoning do not reach beyond the life of this world. In the life of this world, wealth and sons can help you and profit you against whatever difficulties or trials that you may have to face. If you get into trouble with the law you can always buy your way to freedom and if you have to face an enemy then your sons will be there to support you. That was how those hypocrites used to think. They thought that their wealth and their sons could help and protect them against whatever consequences they had to pay for the evil that they had done.

Allah (swt) says in this ayah “**Their wealth and their sons will never benefit them in the least against Allah**”. On the Day of Judgment when they return to Allah (swt), they will see how useless and worthless all of their wealth and all of their sons are. Notice the word *Shain* which means “not at all”. The meaning of this is that the wealth and the sons of the hypocrites will not help them at all against Allah (swt) on that Day. Their wealth and their sons cannot save them even a little bit from the punishment that is due for them because of the evil that they have done. What value does Allah (swt) hold for the wealth of this world? Does Allah (swt) need their wealth when all of the treasures of the heavens and the earth belong to Him (swt)? What can their sons do against the Lord and Master of this universe? Can even the strongest of human beings harm Allah (swt) even in the least? So we see how foolish was their thinking when they thought that their wealth and their sons can save them from Allah (swt). These will not do anything for them even in the least.

The lesson that we can take from this part of the ayah is that we must never let anything that we have in this world deceive us into thinking that it can help us against Allah (swt). There is nothing that can help us against Allah (swt). Allah (swt) is the Real and True. On the Day of Judgment all of mankind will realize the Reality of His (swt)’s Existence. All of mankind will perceive the true reality of their Lord and the illusion of this world. So we should realize that there is absolutely nothing of this world that can help us against Him (swt). This world when compared

to Allah (swt) is only a mirage that will fade away. So do not count on anything from this world to save you from Him (swt) on that Day. Not your money. Not your children. Not some saint or talisman. Nothing from this world can save you from Allah (swt) on that Day. All that we can take with us to that Day are our good deeds. Our good deeds that we did sincerely for the sake of Allah (swt) and following the way of the Prophet (saw). May Allah (swt) give us the enabling grace to do as many good deeds as we can in preparation for this Day! May Allah (swt) detach our hearts from anything of this world that we may be foolishly clinging onto! May Allah (swt) help us to realize that He (swt) is all that matters!

In the second part of this ayah Allah (swt) tells us that these are the companions of the Fire. The hypocrites are the companions of the Fire. They may have said the Shahdah, they may have made the Salah, they may even have fasted in Ramadan and made the Hajj. They may have done all of the actions that Muslims do but they are still companions of the Fire. If this does not cast terror into the heart of a believer then what will? We read this ayah so many times or we have it heard it so many times but how often do we understand the consequences of it. Do we realize or comprehend what it truly means? Allah (swt) is telling us that these people are the companions of the Fire. This means that they are close to the fire and the fire is close to them. The Fire will be all around them and it will surround them and they will not know anything but this Fire. Just imagine what a frightful prospect it means to have the Fire to be your companion. Could there be a more terrible companion? We cannot even begin to describe in words the pain that they will feel. All that we can do is fervently pray to Allah (swt) to save us from it!

In the final part of the ayah Allah (swt) tells us that they will remain in this Fire forever. The only prospect that is more frightening than this Fire is the fact that they will remain in it forever. Even though the Fire will burn them so fiercely it will not kill them. Their skin will merely grow back so that it can be burned again. Just as there is no hope for them to die in the Fire, there is also no hope for them to ever leave it. The word *Khalid* that Allah (swt) uses to describe their stay in the Fire means eternity. Just imagine to yourself how terrible this situation is. You are in this Fire for ages and ages and the pain that you will feel from it is never ending. In fact it is only getting worse. For most of us when we think about it our minds turn off because of the fear of it. If

you are too scared to think about it, then realize at least that this is a true reality. It is not a story but it is real. Once you realize the reality of this place do you not then want to do all that you can to save yourselves from it?

If we were to even think for even one moment that this punishment is too harsh for these hypocrites then we have to remind ourselves of what they have done. They pretended to be Muslims and they pretended to be a part of this community. They pretended that they were a part of the best nation ever raised for the guidance of mankind. The nation of the Prophet (saw). But in their hearts they wanted nothing more than to serve their desires. They wanted nothing more than to live a life where they satisfied their low instincts and lusts. This was despite the fact that Allah (swt) gave them a mind with which they could realize that they had been created for a much more noble purpose than this. Even though they knew that their purpose in this life was to worship and serve Allah (swt) like all of the other creation, they turned away from this noble purpose so that they can follow their desires. We as human beings are influenced by our environments. For these hypocrites they were in an environment where Islam was all around them. They were in the masajid where they saw the Muslims bowing and prostrating before Allah (swt). They heard the ayahs of Quran being recited to them. They saw the kindness and compassion that Islam brought into the hearts of people. They saw the justice that the Law of Allah (swt) brought for all of the citizens in the Islamic State, even the non-Muslims. Yet all of this did nothing to persuade them to return to the life for which they had been created. The life of a Muslim for which they knew that Allah (swt) had promised such a great reward in the Hereafter, and the life of a Muslim which they knew would lead to so much tranquility and peace in this life. They just did not have the courage and the strength to overcome the push of their desires and their lusts. So despite all that they know they chose to live a life of hypocrisy and rebellion to Allah (swt). This is why they have been promised such a terrible punishment. May Allah (swt) save us from it!

Once again when we read this ayah we must not think that it only applies to Abdullah ibn Ubayy and the hypocrites who lived at the time of the Prophet (saw). We must be aware that there are hypocrites like this in our community, and we ourselves must fear that we might fall into hypocrisy if we are not careful in our duty to worship and serve Allah (swt). We know that once

the Prophet (saw) made a list of the hypocrites in the Islamic State, and Umar ibn al-Khattab (ra) kept thinking that his name was on that list. Even though he (ra) was the one for whom the Prophet (saw) himself made dua to Allah (swt) to make him (ra) join the Prophet's group in Makkah. Even though he (ra) was the one who strengthened the Muslims when they were in Makkah, and because of Umar the Muslims were able to pray in front of the Kabbah where they could not before. Even though he had made hijra and left his home in Makkah to be part of the Islamic State in Madinah. Even though he (ra) had fought alongside with the Prophet (saw) in the battle of Badr when the Muslim army was outnumbered three to one. Even though he was the one who insisted to the Prophet (saw) that the prisoners of war in Badr be killed and then later Allah (swt) revealed an ayah of Quran confirming the opinion of Umar in this issue. Al Farooq had done all of this and still he thought that he might be a hypocrite. How then should we behave and how then should we think? Although we should always have a hope that Allah (swt) will forgive us all of our sins and admit us into His Mercy, we must also have a fear that we might fall into hypocrisy. That is why we must never allow the life of this world to deceive or to draw us away from the worship and servitude of Allah (swt). We must never do any action that will betray or harm our Muslim brothers or sisters. We must never speak anything that we know to be a lie. We must never break a trust when we are given it. We have to realize that all of these are signs of hypocrisy. There are even some scholars who say that today the vast majority of the Ummah is in some state of hypocrisy. We have to reflect and think about how far this is from the truth. Can we even say about our own selves that this is not true? Do you really think that you are free from all forms of hypocrisy?

In order to save ourselves from falling into hypocrisy and in order to save ourselves from this horrible punishment we have to always remember the great responsibility that we have on our shoulders when we say that we are Muslims. We are saying that we are the ones who live our lives to serve Allah (swt) and we are the ones who are also calling on the rest of mankind to fulfill this purpose of our creation. Because of that we must be the foremost in striving to carry out the commands of Allah (swt). We must never become lazy in performing our Salah properly or in doing any of our other obligations that our Lord has laid down upon us. Similarly we must avoid

all of the actions that Allah (swt) has forbidden such as looking at members of the opposite sex with desire or speaking ill about our brothers and sisters. We must strive to do all of our actions to seek the pleasure of Allah (swt) and following the way of the Prophet (saw). This is the only way we can save ourselves from being like the hypocrites. This is the only way in which we can save ourselves from this horrible place. May Allah (swt) give us the ability and the will to do that!

يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيَحْلِفُونَ لَهُ كَمَا يَحْلِفُونَ لَكُمْ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ أَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

19. The Day when Allah will raise them altogether, and so then they will swear to Him just as they swear to you, and they *yahsabona* that they have something. Now surely they are liars.

The hypocrites are those who did the greatest evil in the life of this world. Of all of the creations of Allah (swt) they are the absolute worst. Not only do they turn away from the purpose for which Allah (swt) created them but they pretend as if they are serving Allah (swt). They are working to destroy the Message that Allah (swt) has sent all the while claiming that they are among those who support this Message and they are among those who propagate it. So double is the evil that they do. They are evil in that they turn away from Allah (swt) and they are evil in their falsehood and deception. In this ayah Allah (swt) brings our attention back to the Day when they will return to Him (swt). The Day on which they will have to pay for all of the evil that they have done.

Allah (swt) begins this ayah with the word “The Day”. Once again bringing our attention to this most important Day. A Day when we all have to stand before Allah (swt) and account for everything that we have done. In the previous ayah Allah (swt) showed us the terrible punishment that these hypocrites will receive in the Fire, we seek refuge in Allah (swt) from the Fire. In this ayah Allah (swt) tells us what will be the situation of the hypocrites before they are placed into the

Fire. Allah (swt) will raise all of them on the Day of Judgment. Every single one of them will be raised up from their graves and they will all be made to stand forth before Allah (swt). Notice the word *jamiyan* in this ayah which means “all together”. The meaning here is that not one of them will be spared from being raised up on that Day. Every single one of them will be brought back to life and made to stand before Allah (swt) for all of the evil that they did.

Then Allah (swt) says, “**so then they will swear to Him just as they swear to you**”. Here Allah (swt) tells us how they will swear to Him (swt) on that Day just as they swore to the believers in this life. In this life these hypocrites swore to the believers that they were with them. They told the believers that they truly believed in Allah (swt) and had a sincere desire to submit to His (swt)’s Law. They swore to the believers that they were brothers and they were working towards a common goal. Then on the Day of Judgment when they have been raised up and they are standing before Allah (swt) they will swear these same promises to Him (swt). In the life of this world they made these promises to the Prophet (saw) and the believers so that they can be a part of the Muslim community, on the Day of Judgment they will make these promises before Allah (swt) so that they can escape the terrible punishment in the Hereafter. Although it is the exact same promises that they will make to Allah (swt) as they made to the Prophet (saw) and the believers, what will be different is that on the Day of Judgment these promises will not work. These promises may have worked in the life of this world but they will not work on that Day. While the Prophet (saw) may have allowed them to be a part of the Muslim community when they swore to him (saw) that they were true believers, when they swear to Allah (swt), He (swt) will not accept what they say. Their lies will not work with the Lord and Master of the universe Who knows all things, even what is in the deepest corners of the hearts of men.

In the next part of the ayah Allah (swt) says that they *yahsabona* that they have something. This word does not even mean to think. It describes when something comes in the mind that is less than a thought. It is when they arrive at a conclusion in their minds based only on their desires and their whims and they do not reflect or think about it at all. This is how they think that they have something, it is a weak thinking based only on their desires. “To have something” means that they have the truth in the words that they speak. Allah (swt) tells us that

they *yahsabona* that they have some truths in their words. So they think, a weak thinking, that they have some truth to what they were saying. But in reality they have no truths to their words whatsoever. Every word that they will tell Allah (swt) on the Day of Judgment will be a lie just as every word that they told the Prophet (saw) and the believers in this world was a lie. All that they have are excuses. They think that they have something but they have nothing. They will have nothing on that Day to save from that terrible punishment.

In the final part of this ayah Allah (swt) tells us that now surely they are the liars. On that Day they will not be able to hide anything from Allah (swt). They will be exposed in front of everyone for the liars that they are. Who is a worse creature than a liar? Allah (swt) gave them a tongue with which to speak and communicate the truth. They owe it to Allah (swt) to only speak good words with the tongue that He (swt) gave them and to only speak the truth. Not only did these hypocrites use their tongue to lie but they used their tongue for the worst possible lie. What lie is greater than to lie about Allah (swt)? What lie is greater than to say that you are believer when you are not? What could be a worse use of the tongue that Allah (swt) gave you then to use it to lie to the Messenger of Allah (swt) and tell him (saw) that you are of the believers when you are really against this community and working to destroy it? May Allah (swt) save us from their treachery and their lies!

أَسْتَحْوَذَ عَلَيْهِمُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَأَنسَهُمْ ذِكْرَ اللَّهِ أَوْلَاتِكَ حِزْبَ الشَّيْطَانِ ۗ لَا
إِنَّ حِزْبَ الشَّيْطَانِ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

20. Shaitan has gained mastery over them. So they have forgotten the remembrance of Allah. These are the party of Shaitan. Now surely it is the party of Shaitan who are the losers.

In this ayah Allah (swt) continues to tell us about the hypocrites. Those within our community who had turned away from worshipping and serving Him (swt). In the previous ayahs Allah (swt) told us about the terrible punishment that they will receive. In this ayah Allah (swt) tells us what has lead them to that situation where they have become deserving of that terrible punishment. In this ayah Allah (swt) tells us as to what has made them into hypocrites. Pay very close attention as to how Allah (swt) describes their situation in this ayah. If you are not careful then this may happen to you as well. May Allah (swt) save us and our families from that fate!

Allah (swt) begins this ayah by saying that these are a people whom Shaitan has gained mastery over. What does it mean that Shaitan has gained mastery over them? It means that he controls them. We know Shaitan has absolutely no power over any human being unless that human being first gives Shaitan that power over him. We also know that Allah (swt) has clearly warned mankind that Shaitan is an open enemy to them. So how then could Shaitan gain mastery over any human being when he has no power over them and they know that he is their open enemy? What is it that allows Shaitan to control them? What are the doors through which he enters their hearts? It is only through the desires and the lusts. That is how he gains mastery over a people. He whispers into their hearts and encourages them to follow their desires and their lusts. These feelings include the desire for members of the opposite sex, the lust for power and domination, and the greed for material things and wealth. Those people who allow themselves to be controlled by their desires and lusts, meaning they simply submit to these feelings whenever they come, are those who Shaitan has gained mastery over. We see that this description matches the hypocrites perfectly. They are a people who love the life of this world, and they do

not care about anything except satisfying their desires. That is how Shaitan has gained mastery over them.

The lesson that we can take from this ayah is that we must always beware of Shaitan. When we know the method of attack of our enemy we must put up our defenses on that front. When we know the doors through which he enters then we must close those doors. Since we know that Shaitan attacks us through our lusts and our desires we must never allow ourselves to be influenced or controlled by them. Every time one of our instincts or our lusts triggers inside of us, we have to stop and think. Is the action or the feeling that we are being pushed to do one that is permissible in the Law of Allah (swt)? Not everything that we desire is forbidden in the Law of Allah (swt). For example, we may desire sweet foods or we may desire our wives and Allah (swt) in His Mercy has allowed us to have these. So these are not unlawful for us. But when our desires push us towards something that is forbidden by the Law of Allah (swt), we must immediately remember Allah (swt). We must remember that Allah (swt) is our Lord and Master, our Creator and Sustainer, and He (swt) is Perfect and Holy. We must remember how Allah (swt) created us so that we can serve Him (swt), and how we have a duty in this life to live in accordance with His (swt)'s Law. We must remember how every second of our life in this world is a Mercy from Allah (swt) and if He (swt) wanted He (swt) could make us die in the very next second of our life and we could find ourselves in the Fire of Hell. Allah (swt) could do this to you and it would not be injustice for Him (swt) at all because you are His (swt)'s creation. We must remember that if we do that forbidden action that our desires are pushing us towards then we would be earning the displeasure of Allah (swt). Do you realize what it means to have the displeasure of Allah (swt)? Do you want to earn the displeasure of Allah (swt)? Only by remembering Allah (swt) all of the time can we defend ourselves against Shaitan. This is not going to be easy, because our desires and our lusts can push so strongly and we have so many different desires and lusts. But we must always remember that this is the test for which Allah (swt) placed us on this world and this is what He (swt) will reward us for on the Day of Judgment. The reward is equal to the effort. So know that the more that you strive against Shaitan when he comes to you through your lusts the more that your Lord will be pleased with you.

One desire that we can see many Muslims succumbing to is the desire of laziness or passiveness. Many Muslims just choose to be ignorant of the great test that they have in this world. They allow the moments in their life to pass by without doing anything. We have all been guilty of this from time to time. But this feeling is also from Shaitan and so it is a feeling that we must strive against. Your body feels lazy and you do not feel like doing any work so you do not. You just sit back and watch the seconds tick away as you come closer and closer to your death. We must remember that this feeling within ourselves is also from Shaitan. He knows that we were created to be the servants of Allah (swt) and he knows that it is through our actions that we serve Allah (swt). If we are lazy and sleeping or if we are relaxing and watching the television most of the time, how then could we be serving Allah (swt)? Is a person who spends the hours of his life playing or relaxing a servant of Allah or a servant of Shaitan? For those of us who are living in the West we need to be especially careful of this attack of Shaitan's. This is a culture where people encourage you to relax and take it easy. It is a culture where hard work is looked down upon, especially among the youth. This mentality comes from Shaitan. So we need to save ourselves from him by constantly remembering Allah (swt). We have to remind ourselves that every moment that we have in this life is worth more than a treasure because every moment is a chance for us to remember Allah (swt) and please Him (swt). What could give us more joy than pleasing our Creator? So race with all of your strength to the Pleasure and Forgiveness of your Lord!

Then Allah (swt) says of these hypocrites **"So they have forgotten the remembrance of Allah"**. Here Allah (swt) is telling us that because Shaitan has gained mastery over them that is why they have forgotten the remembrance of Allah. Once you are in a state where all that you can think about is satisfying your desires, then you will forget about Allah (swt). You forget about Who Allah (swt) IS and you forget what you owe as a duty to Him (swt). You forget about Allah (swt)'s commands and prohibitions, and you forget the terrible consequences you will have to face if you fail to abide by the Law of Allah (swt). This then is the consequence of allowing yourself to be controlled by your desires. You will forget to remember Allah (swt). Could there be any worse situation for a human being to be in than this? What is more tragic than a heart that has forgotten its Creator and Sustainer? When everything else in the universe is constantly

making *tasbih* for Allah (swt), you are living in heedlessness of Him (swt). This is the terrible consequence of succumbing to your desires and following Shaitan. You will forget your Creator and Sustainer. May Allah (swt) save us from that!

Shaitan will not only stop at making you forget Allah (swt). Once you have forgotten Lord and your duty to live by His Law, then Shaitan comes to you and does something much worse. He puts doubts into your heart about Allah (swt) and the Message that Allah (swt) sent. He makes you believe that this world is all that there is, and there is nothing beyond this material existence. He makes you forget that Allah (swt) Exists and that Allah (swt) is the Creator and Controller as well as the Lord and the Master. He makes you doubt the fact that Allah (swt) sent a Messenger to guide you and he makes you doubt the fact that there will be consequences in the Hereafter if you fail to abide by this guidance. This is what you will end up as if you allow yourself to follow him. We seek refuge in Allah (swt) from Shaitan rejected!

Then Allah (swt) tells us that these people are the party of Shaitan. They are Shaitan's group because they always do what he tells them to do. Since they have allowed themselves to be controlled by him, they will do his every bidding. Even if this means going against the Messenger of Allah (saw) and the believers, and working to destroy the Message that Allah (swt) sent to mankind. We know that in the time of the Prophet (saw) Abdullah ibn Ubayy and the hypocrites who were with him had actually formed a group and they were working with the Jews to destroy the Islamic State. They were working to undermine the authority of the Prophet (saw) so that they can take power for themselves and establish a government where they did not have to follow the Law of Allah (swt). This Sacred Law curbed their desires and their lusts so they were working to destroy it. That is why they are the party of Shaitan. They are a group that only cares about following their desires. They are a group that has forgotten Allah (swt) and they only see the life of this world. They are a group that works to take mankind away from the purpose for which they were created. Because of this fact they are working to destroy this Message that Allah (swt) has sent to mankind. This Message that reminds us to return to the worship and servitude of Him (swt). Can you then imagine how terrible and evil this group is?

One does not have to be actually in a group that is opposing the Islamic State to be part of Shaitan's group. Even if you are someone who only cares for yourself and following your desires, then you are already a part of his group. The distinctive characteristic of the members of this group is a willingness to submit to one's desires and lusts instead of submitting to the Law of Allah (swt). Anyone who allows themselves to be controlled by their desires is part of this cursed group. Instead of serving the Lord and Master of the universe, they are following and obeying the one who has been cursed, rejected and condemned!

In the final part of this ayah Allah (swt) tells us that now surely the party of Shaitan are the losers. Recall that in the previous ayah how Allah (swt) was telling us how they will all be brought back on the Day of Judgment. So it is on the Day of Judgment when we will see that this group will surely be among the losers. Everything that they worked for in terms of their efforts to oppose the Prophet (saw) and bring down this Message that Allah (swt) sent for mankind will be lost. They will not find any good deeds with which to save themselves on that Day. So while we may see them enjoying themselves in the life of this world without any sense of consequence for anything that they do, and while we may see them oppressing the Muslims and causing them all kinds of suffering and hardships we should not think for one moment that they will have any kind of victory because of this. All that they have is the temporary and fleeting pleasures of the life of this world which will be over before they know it. In the Hereafter they would have lost everything. That is why as Allah (swt) concludes this ayah He (swt) says they will be among the losers.

Even in the life of this world we can see that this group is among the losers. If someone looks only on the surface, it may seem as if they are enjoying themselves. It may seem as if they get to satisfy all of their desires and lusts without limit. But we have to ask ourselves if they are truly happy and if they have any true tranquility and inner peace. You will find that they do not. All that they care about is satisfying their desires and their lusts. They are always in misery because they are always craving their lusts. They are never satisfied and they are always thirsty. They know that what they are enjoying now will end. They know that every pleasure is fleeting and transitory. So there is not one moment when they are truly happy and truly tranquil. May Allah (swt) save us from ever being like them!

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحَادُّونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ فِي الْأَذَلِّينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21. Surely the ones who oppose Allah and His Messenger these are in the lowest.

Recall in the sixth ayah of this Surah where Allah (swt) told us that the ones who opposed Him (swt) and His Messenger (saw) will be humiliated just like the ones who came before them were humiliated. In this ayah Allah (swt) continues to describe such people. Although this ayah applies to all those who oppose this Message, the context of this ayah shows that it is especially in reference to the hypocrites. In this ayah Allah (swt) tells us that these people will surely be in the lowest.

The hypocrites are in the lowest both in this life and in the Hereafter. In the Hereafter we know that the hypocrites will be in the lowest levels of hellfire. They will be where the fire of hell is the most painful and the most unbearable. In the life of this world they are in the lowest level of humanity. If mankind can be divided among the believers, those who are ignorant of this Message, the disbelievers and the hypocrites, then the hypocrites are at the lowest level. They are similar to the disbelievers in that they have also turned away from the purpose of their creation which is to worship and serve Allah (swt), they have turned away when they know the Truth. This is how they are like the disbelievers but their situation is really much worse than this. They say with their tongues that they are believers and that they are servants of Allah (swt). Even though they have rejected Allah (swt) and rejected this Message they pretend as if they have not. This is why they are the lowest of the low. The fact that they are surrounded by the believers and they are in the environment of Islam does not do anything to change their minds, they are set on serving themselves instead of serving Allah (swt). They would rather worship their desires instead of worshipping Allah (swt). That is why they are the lowest of creatures, even worse than animals. If we were to compare these hypocrites to any of the creation of Allah (swt), we would see that they are the lowest. Among all of the creatures of Allah (swt) that we can see the human being is the only one to whom Allah (swt) gave a mind that he could use to study the universe around him and know Allah (swt) from the signs that are present all over the universe. These hypocrites have a mind through which they can know Allah (swt) and they also know that they have to submit to

Allah (swt). They were reminded of Allah (swt) from the ayahs in the Quran that were being read to them when they were in prayer with the believers. Even the ayahs of the Quran themselves were a clear proof that showed them that they could not simply live a life where they followed their desires. They even had the Prophet (saw) in their midst, and they heard what he (saw) said and they saw what he (saw) did. Anyone who saw the noble character of the Prophet (saw) must have known that he (saw) was nothing less than the Messenger of Allah (swt). Yet despite all of these signs that were right in front of them, despite all of these evidences that had shown them the truth, these hypocrites turned away from all of them. Not only did they turn away from all of these signs and evidences, but they even planned to drive out the Prophet (saw) and destroy this Message that Allah (swt) had sent for all mankind. That is why they are in the lowest of the low, not only among humanity but even among the animals. What creation of Allah (swt) can we say is better than these hypocrites? Even the flies that eat feces are a better creation than them!

Notice when Allah (swt) says that they are the lowest of the low, He (swt) uses the word *inna* which means certainty without any doubt whatsoever. So if you have any doubts as to whether these hypocrites are really the worst of creatures then you have to remove those doubts right now. Whenever Allah (swt) uses this word to describe a situation it might be a reality that is hard for us to comprehend or difficult for us to believe. But that is why Allah (swt) uses the word *inna* to describe that reality to us. Some Muslims with a weak understanding may think that these hypocrites are still human after all, is there any reason to say that they are the lowest of the low? If you think in this way, it really betrays the weakness in your comprehension of the reality of this universe. How can a people who recognize and see all of the signs of Allah (swt) and still turn away from them be anything but the lowest? Allah (swt) tells us that surely and definitely they are the absolute worst of creation. As we mentioned mankind can be broken into four groups of those are sincere believers, those who are ignorant of this Message, those who have rejected this Message and these hypocrites. Now if we as Muslims were to turn away from this Message then which of these groups do you think that we will become? May Allah (swt) save us!

كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَأَغْلِبَنَّ أَنَا وَرُسُلِي إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٢١﴾

22. Allah has written down: “I will most certainly prevail. I and My Messengers”. Surely Allah is Strong and Mighty.

We saw in the previous ayah how Allah (swt) told us that those who oppose Him (swt) and His Messenger (saw) will be the lowest of creatures. Now in this ayah Allah (swt) says that He (swt) has written down the fact that He (swt) and His Messengers will prevail. This ayah was first and foremost a consolation for the Prophet (saw) and the believers in Madinah. Allah (swt) is telling them that they should never think for one moment that the enemies of Islam will ever succeed in destroying this Message that He (swt) has sent for mankind. Allah (swt) has written down the fact that Islam will be victorious. Similarly we as Muslims today must never lose hope that this Message will be dominant once again. When an event has been written to take place by Allah (swt) then there can be no one to prevent that event from becoming a reality. We should realize that what Allah (swt) means when He (swt) says that He (swt) and His Messengers will prevail is that Islam will be victorious over its enemies.

We know that Islam has many enemies. Both from among the disbelievers and from among the hypocrites within our own community. What both of these groups have in common is their hatred for Islam. They know that this Message calls them to return to worshipping and serving their Creator, and they are a people who would rather serve their desires. So they will try every possible way to destroy this Message. They will try fabricating false propaganda against the Prophet (saw), they will try putting doubts into the hearts of the believers by introducing strange thoughts and philosophies, they will try changing the understanding of the Muslims toward Islam so that Muslims think it is only restricted to prayer, almsgiving and fasting. Ultimately their goal is to bring down this Message so that they can live a disgusting life where they only follow their desires and their lusts instead of worshipping and serving their Creator. But from this ayah we can clearly see that they will never succeed. Allah (swt) has written down that this Din will prevail, and when the Lord and the Master of this entire universe writes something down can human beings ever change that?

We should also ponder on why Allah (swt) says “**I and My Messengers**”. Notice the closeness that Allah (swt) has placed for this Message to Himself (swt). This is because for this Message to be victorious is for Allah (swt) to be victorious. This dawah has been sent to mankind from none other than Allah (swt). The commands and prohibitions that have been laid for humanity in this Message is what Allah (swt) wants for mankind. To live according to this Message is what Allah (swt) has created the human being for. That is why Allah (swt) has established this close relationship between Him (swt) and this Message that has been sent for mankind. Victory for this Message is victory for Allah (swt).

Also notice in this ayah that when Allah (swt) says “My Messengers” how it is in the plural. We know that the Prophet (saw) was the only Messenger who was sent by Allah (swt) in Madinah where these hypocrites were planning against this Message. So why then does Allah (swt) say in response to their plots and schemes that He (swt) and His *Messengers* will be victorious? This is because as we know all of the prophets and messengers whom Allah (swt) sent all called the people to the same Message. That is to live their lives in worship and servitude to Allah (swt). So the victory for Islam is not only the victory for Allah (swt) and the Prophet (saw), it is in fact a victory for all of the prophets and messengers that Allah (swt) ever sent to mankind.

In the final part of this ayah Allah (swt) reminds us that surely He (swt) is Strong and Mighty. Allah (swt) is Power. There is nothing that He (swt) cannot accomplish. These hypocrites and their Jewish friends meet in their secret counsels and they plot against this Message. But what can they accomplish against Allah (swt)? No matter how much they plot and plan against this Message, there is nothing that they can do to succeed because they are against Allah (swt) Who is the Mighty and the Strong. Who can have any power against Power itself? So when we think today about how the enemies of Islam are scheming to bring down this Message we have to remember these Names of Allah (swt). No matter how many resources and think tanks they have working for them, we have to remember that Insha Allah we have Allah (swt) on our side. All we have to do is work to the best of our ability and depend on Allah (swt). When we think about these Names of Allah (swt) we have to ask ourselves if there can be anyone better for us to depend on? Remember Who we have with us then ask yourself how we can fail if we are sincere?

We as human beings are by our nature weak creatures. Anything that we want to accomplish requires some effort on our part. There is not even the simplest of tasks that we can do without requiring any effort. Even for us to drink a cup of water requires us to make some effort. But Allah (swt) is the exact opposite of this, He (swt) is Mighty and Strong. There is no task that requires any effort on the part of Allah (swt). For anything to happen, He (swt) only says to it "be" and it is. There is only the Will of Allah (swt) for something to happen followed by the reality of it happening. That is the strength of Allah (swt). This entire universe belongs to Allah (swt) and He (swt) can do whatever He (swt) wants in this universe without the slightest effort. That is the Power of Allah (swt). Now think about the enemies of Islam and how they are plotting against this Message, think about Who they are really plotting against. They have lulled themselves into a false sense of security because of the things of this world that they have been given. Their material resources, their military strength and their intelligence capabilities have made them think that they might actually stand a chance against this Message that Allah (swt) has sent. This shows that they have not even comprehended Who they are up against. Allah (swt) is Might and Allah (swt) is Strength. He (swt) has decreed that this Message will be victorious even if the hypocrites and disbelievers hate it. He (swt) has decreed that this Message will be victorious, what then can be said after that? So what can these weak human beings do against Allah (swt)? Even if they have all of the weapons and all of the resources in the world, they are only the creation of Allah (swt). So we as Muslims must never look to our enemies and become disheartened because of their apparent strength. We should realize Who we have on our side. Once we realize Who we have with us then we should realize that we can never lose hope. We should keep on struggling for this Message to the best of our ability, and know that one day soon the victory will come for this Din. Such is a promise that is binding on the Lord and Master of the universe.

لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
وَلَوْ كَانُوا آبَاءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَانَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ أُولَئِكَ كَتَبَ
فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ أُولَئِكَ
حِزْبُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

22. You will not find a people who believe in Allah and the Last Day loving those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even though they be their parents or their sons or their brothers or their relatives. These are the ones (for whom He has) written iman in their hearts and strengthened them with *Ruh* from Him, and He causes them to enter gardens under which rivers flow to stay therein forever. Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Allah. These are the party of Allah. Now surely the party of Allah are the successful.

This long ayah is the final ayah of this beautiful Surah. In the previous ayahs Allah (swt) told us about the enemies of this Message who were working night and day to destroy it, the ones who had chosen to serve their desires and their lusts rather than serve Allah (swt). Allah (swt) told us that these people are the party of Shaitan. They are indeed the worst of creation and on the Day of Judgment they will have the worst of punishments. Is there any way in which we can save ourselves from being among such people? Is there any alternative to the party of Shaitan that works to destroy this Message that Allah (swt) has sent a mercy and guidance for all mankind? Yes there is and Allah (swt) tells us about such people in this ayah. These are the people who will be successful in the Hereafter. They are the party of Allah (swt). They are the ones who dedicate their life to their Creator. So carefully study the description that Allah (swt) gives in this ayah for His (swt)'s party and then try your best to be like them. If you can emulate these people, if you can be a part of such a movement, then know that you are walking on the Straight Path that leads to the Pleasure of Allah (swt).

Allah (swt) begins the description of His (swt)'s party by saying **“You will not find a people who believe in Allah and the Last Day loving those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even though they be their parents or their sons or their brothers or their relatives”**. This shows that the first characteristic of the members of the party of Allah (swt) is that they love Allah (swt) and the Prophet (saw) more than anyone else. They love Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw) more than they love their parents, their children, their siblings and even their own selves. How could you not love Allah (swt) when He (swt) is the One Who created you and He (swt) is the One Who is keeping you alive for every moment of your life? Even the actions that you do are made possible because of Allah (swt). It is Allah (swt) who moves your feet when you want to go somewhere and He (swt) Who moves your hands when you want to do something. It is Allah (swt) Who has given your eyes the ability to read these words. Every moment of your life when you are doing something, that is possible only because of Allah (swt). At every moment of your life Allah (swt) is with you. Every moment of your life is only possible because of Allah (swt) so how then can you not love Him (swt)?

After Allah (swt) the next one who should have our love is the Prophet (saw). We know the hadith where the Prophet (saw) has said that “Not one of you believes until I am dearer to him than his parents, and his children and all of mankind”. So our love for the Prophet (saw) is actually a way of worshipping Allah (swt) because the completion of our belief rests not only on loving the Prophet (saw). Not only on our loving him (as), but also loving him (saw) more than all of mankind. Our love for Allah (swt) should also generate within us a love for the Prophet (saw). In addition to loving the Prophet (saw) as a way of worshipping Allah (swt) we should also love the Prophet (saw) because he (saw) was the very best. Not only is the Prophet (saw) the best human being that ever walked on this earth but he (saw) is also the best of Allah (swt)'s creation. Think about all that Allah (swt) created and now think about what it means for the Prophet (saw) to be the best of such creation. To be better than the galaxies, and the stars, and the mountains, and the oceans. To even be better than paradise itself. Such was the Prophet (saw), the very best of creation. How can we not love him (saw)? How can we love any people that are in opposition to him (saw) and his Sunnah?

We know from the Quran that even Allah (swt) Himself and the angels send peace and blessings upon the Prophet (saw). We know from the Seerah that when the Prophet (saw) walked how even the trees would extend their shade for him (saw). But most importantly we know that the character and person of the Prophet (saw) was the example of the best that a human being can be. The Prophet (saw) never got angry for no reason, and never for his own personal sake. He (saw) was kind and soft when he spoke with the believers and he (saw) was quick to forgive. He (saw) respected and regarded all people, and he (saw) was the very best to his wives and his family. But most importantly the Prophet (saw) was someone who lived every moment of his life in worship and servitude to Allah (swt). He (saw) remembered Allah (swt) at every moment, and he (saw) served Allah (swt) at every moment. Is that not what we all aspire to do? Should that not be the goal of every human being? We can say that Allah (swt) created mankind to be His (swt)'s servants and He (swt) sent the Prophet (saw) as a guide and role model to follow on how we can accomplish this goal. The Prophet (saw) was the model for every single human being to emulate in order to realize the purpose of their existence. How then can you not love him (saw)? How can you ever follow him (saw) if you do not love him (saw) so? We should also love the Prophet (saw) because he (saw) worked harder than anyone else, sacrificed more than anyone else, and suffered through trials and hardships more than anyone else so that we as Muslims can be guided to Allah (swt). So that we can achieve tranquility in this life, and be saved from the fire and be placed in the garden in the next life. The Prophet (saw) suffered and cried only for you, how then can you not love him (saw)?

So we see from this ayah that in order to be in Allah (swt)'s party we have to love Allah (swt) and the Prophet (saw) even more than we love our own families. We all have a natural human love for our parents, for our children, for our siblings and for our relatives. But if we love Allah (swt) and the Prophet (saw) much more than we love these people, then how would our relationship with these people be if they oppose Allah (swt) and the Prophet (saw)? What should our relationship with our family be if they should choose to oppose this dawah? Then we should not love them anymore. How can we ever love any that would oppose whom we love the most? This is how the party of Allah (swt) is. They do not love anyone who opposes Allah (swt) and His

Messenger (saw) even if they be their own blood relatives, their own parents or their own children. So the first characteristic that we can see about the party of Allah (swt) from this ayah is that they love Allah (swt) and the Prophet (saw) more than anyone, and they would even give up all of the love that they have for their parents, their children or their siblings if these were to oppose Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw) in any way.

If you think that it is difficult for you to turn away from loving your family then think how difficult it must have been for the Sahabah? Imagine how hard it must have been for the Sahabah to face off against their own parents or their own children in battle. Abu Bakr (ra) had to fight against his own son in the battle of Badr. Similarly Umar (ra), Ali (ra) and Hamza (ra) also had to fight members from their own family. How hard it must have been for Ansar like the son of Abdullah ibn Ubayy who was a true believer to see his father persist in hypocrisy and opposition to the Prophet (saw)? This was the test that Allah (swt) gave them and these Sahabah demonstrated that their love and their loyalty was first and foremost to Allah (swt) and the Prophet (saw). If their parents and their children opposed this Message that Allah (swt) sent and opposed the Prophet (saw), then they broke off the relationship that they had with them immediately.

We should also note that what Allah (swt) forbids in this ayah is for you to have a deep love for such people. Allah (swt) does not give you an excuse to be cruel to such people or to treat them unjustly. This is especially true for parents but it also true for all of your family members. Our families always deserve the best treatment from us. They deserve that we respect them and honor them and be kind with them. If they are sincere believers then they also deserve that we love them more than anyone else besides Allah (swt) and the Prophet (saw). But even if they do not worship and serve Allah (swt) as they should, they still deserve that we behave with them in the best way possible. We may not have a deep love for them in this case but we still treat them in best way possible. Such also is part of our worship and servitude of Allah (swt).

Also notice in this ayah how Allah (swt) links our beliefs to our emotions. As was the case in the hadith that we quoted above, for our belief to be complete our emotions must also be in accordance with what we believe. If you were to think about it, how could you ever love anyone who opposes Allah (swt) and who goes against the commands of Allah (swt) when you believe

that Allah (swt) is your Creator and your Sustainer? If you truly believe in the Last Day then how could you not love the Prophet (saw) who came to save you from being destroyed on that Day? When the Day of Judgment is the most important Day in your life and all of your actions are preparing for that Day and you know that the Prophet (saw) is the model for you to follow to prepare for that Day then how can you ever love anyone who opposes the Prophet (saw) and the Message that he (saw) brought for mankind? So we clearly see from this ayah that for us to prove that we believe in Allah (swt) and the Last Day, we have to love Allah (swt) and the Prophet (saw) more than anyone else. We also have to remove from ourselves the love of anyone who is in opposition to this Message that Allah (swt) has sent.

The next description that Allah (swt) gives us of His (swt)'s party is that He (swt) says **“these are the ones (for whom He has) written iman in their hearts and strengthened them with *Ruh* from Him”**. The party of Allah (swt) are those whom He (swt) blessed with faith and spirit. We know from the hadith of the Prophet (saw) that Allah (swt) will guide those who seek the guidance from Him (swt). We on our own can not guide ourselves even if we wanted to, we need Allah (swt) to guide us. That is why for those human beings who sincerely search for the truth of the Existence of Allah (swt) and the truth of this Message, Allah (swt) will guide them to this truth. We know that for those whom Allah (swt) chooses to guide, there can be no one who can misguide them after that. This guidance that Allah (swt) gives to those whom He (swt) pleases is the iman that He (swt) writes in their hearts. When Allah (swt) refers to the qalb or the heart, He (swt) does not refer to the organ which pumps blood but He (swt) refers to the seat of our knowledge and understanding. It is here that Allah (swt) writes iman. This iman is the deep conviction that you have in your heart that Allah (swt) Exists even though you do not see or hear Him (swt). It is the conviction that you have that Allah (swt) is One and Only and that He (swt) is the complete Lord and Master for this entire universe. You also believe without a shadow of a doubt that Muhammad ibn Abdullah (saw) is the Final Messenger of Allah (swt). From your belief in this comes your belief in everything that Allah (swt) has told us through the Prophet (saw) such as belief in the Hereafter, belief in the stories of the previous nations and other matters of the unseen such as the angels and the jinn. If you are among those that Allah (swt) has blessed with

this gift then you must always be thankful to Him (swt). You must always praise and glorify your Lord for writing faith in your heart. Can you imagine a greater treasure than this? There is no greater gift that Allah (swt) can give any of His (swt)'s creation than this *iman* that He (swt) writes in the hearts of those who sincerely search for the truth. Insha Allah if you have sincerity in your heart then you can be among those for whom Allah (swt) written such.

In his tafsir of this ayah, Imam Qurtubi mentions that another meaning of this part of the ayah in addition to “write iman in their hearts” is to “gather iman in their hearts”. From this usage of the word we can take the meaning that Allah (swt) gathers the complete iman and places that into the hearts. With this meaning we can see that members of the party of Allah (swt) do not believe only in a part or a segment of what Allah (swt) has revealed but rather they will believe in everything that He (swt) has revealed. Allah (swt) has taken faith as a whole and He (swt) has gathered it in their hearts.

Then Allah (swt) describes His party as those who have been strengthened with a *Ruh* from Him (swt). The word *Ruh* literally means spirit, but the scholars say that in this ayah it is used to refer to the clear evidences and undeniable arguments that Allah (swt) gives for the believers. It is through these signs that Allah (swt) strengthens our Iman and brings us closer to Him (swt). Anything of this world through you which you remember your Lord and through which you are drawn closer to Him (swt) is part of this spirit that He (swt) sends down upon you to strengthen your faith with it. Allah (swt) is there if we search for Him (swt). This spirit encompasses anything that leads us to Him (swt).

Then Allah (swt) says of His (swt)'s party how “**He causes them to enter gardens under which rivers flow to stay therein forever**”. Every moment that you are in paradise you will nothing but pure happiness. The beauty of these gardens and the happiness that you will feel therein is beyond description by our weak words, so we will not even try. Rather we simply invite you to close your eyes and picture yourself in this garden, and then know in your heart that such a place is true. Such a place is true and all that you have to do to enter it is be a member of Allah (swt)'s party. Being a member of this party in the life of this world demands struggle and sacrifice, but just look at the reward that your Lord is promising you. Gardens under which rivers flow.

Notice also how Allah (swt) has tells us that He (swt) is the One Who will cause the party members to enter into these gardens. We cannot walk into these gardens whenever we feel like, no rather we need Allah (swt) to place us in there by causing us to enter it. So only if Allah (swt) permits will you enter these gardens. Only if you live your life to please Allah (swt), to follow the Prophet (saw), and to support this dawah will you be made to enter such gardens. Allah (swt) will only make to enter these gardens those whom He (swt) is pleased with. Allah (swt) will only make to enter these gardens those from His (swt)'s party.

Then Allah (swt) says “**Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Allah**”. What it means for Allah (swt) to be pleased with them is that He (swt) is pleased with their striving and their efforts in the life of this world. What it means for them to be pleased with Allah (swt) is that they are pleased with the reward that He (swt) has given them in the Hereafter. How wonderful would it be for you to know true happiness and also for you to know that your Creator is happy with you?

Finally in the ayah Allah (swt) says “**These are the party of Allah. Now surely the party of Allah are the successful**”. What does it mean to be in the party of Allah (swt)? It does not necessarily mean that you belong to any group or organization. Rather it means that you believe in Allah (swt), that you do what is pleasing to Him (swt), and that you work in whatever way you can to support this Message. If you can do this then Insha Allah you will be among the successful. It is very important for us to realize what true success is, because only when we are aware of what it is will we be working towards the goal of achieving it. Success is not to make a three figure salary or to graduate from medical school. If we think that is what success is, then that is the false goal that we would be working towards. But in this ayah Allah (swt) clearly tells us that the ones who are successful are the members of His (swt)'s party. The ones who dedicate their lives to serving His cause and to spreading His Message to mankind. May Allah (swt) make us worthy to be members of His party!

All praise and thanks belongs to Allah (swt), our tafsir of Surah Mujadillah ends here.