

- [47] *Nafs* (pl. *Anfus* or *Nufus*) lexically means soul, the psyche, the ego, self, life, person, heart or mind. (Mu'jam, Kassisi).
- [48] Eating and drinking during the night of Ramadan. Its time starts from Isha until the light of dawn, but preferred time according to the Sunnah is just before dawn.
- [49] Retreat in the Mosque during the last ten days of Ramadan. One confines himself to the mosque and devotes one's whole time to prayer and meditation along with the prescribed religious duties.
- [50] Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim Cf. Tafsir Ibn Kathir, explanation of Surah Al-Baqarah, ayah 188.

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بانی تنظیم اسلامی ڈاکٹر اسرار احمد رحمۃ اللہ علیہ کے سانچہ ارتحال پر

صفحہ 192

قیمت 50 روپے

# میشاق

ماہنامہ کی خصوصی اشاعت

"بیان القرآن" (سلسلہ بیان اور اسلام کا اخلاقی و روحانی نظام) ڈاکٹر اسرار احمد

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آج ہی طلب کیجئے

مکتبہ خدام القرآن لاہور 36-کے ماڈل ٹاؤن لاہور

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permitted to eat, drink and have sexual intercourse till the light of dawn is distinguished from the darkness of the night. The sunnah of the Prophet (SAW) indicates the encouragement of eating *Suhur* [48] just before dawn. "But do not approach your wives while you stay in seclusion in the mosques." This refers to those who stay in *I'tikaf* [49] in a mosque. Allah (SWT) has prohibited the Muslims to have sexual intercourse with their wives during *I'tikaf*. "These are the limits set by Allah so do not go near them. Thus Allah makes His Ayaat clear to mankind so that they may save themselves." Allah (SWT) has explained in detail what He has allowed and what He has prohibited regarding fasting. And He has commanded His servants not to transgress the limits set by Him, so that they may acquire righteousness.

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَذُلُّوا إِلَيْهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِيَأْكُلُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِغْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

(188) And do not eat up one another's properties by unjust means nor approach the decision-makers therewith in order that you may eat up any portion of other people's property sinfully, while you know.

One should not try to grab the properties of others through illegal means or by bribing the judges. A judge may decide in favor of the transgressor because of someone being more persuasive in presenting the argument, but it does not change the fact that the property unjustly earned by the transgressor remains unlawful for him. It is reported in the Two *Sahihs* (*Sahih Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*) that *Umm-e-Salamah* (RA) narrated that Allah's Messenger (SAW) said: "I am only human! You people present your cases to me, and as one of you may be more eloquent and persuasive in presenting his argument, I might issue a judgment in his benefit. So, if I give a Muslim's right to another, I am really giving him a piece of fire; so he should not take it." [50] A judge is only a human and may make a mistake but the unjust person will still be accountable on the Day of Judgment for acquiring others' properties unlawfully and the judgment of the authorities in any case does not change the reality of the true position.

## Endnotes

[41] Surah At-Taubah (9): 24.

[42] Surah As-Sajdah (32): 22.

[43] Surah Ibrahim (14): 22.

[44] Musnad Ahmed 5: 365, Al-Muwatta 1: 22, Abu Dawud 1: 64.

[45] Cf. 'Ethical Virtue in the Qur'anic perspective', by Dr. Absar Ahmed, included in his book 'Knowledge-Morality Nexus'.

[46] Literally, *qisaas* means "equal" or "balanced". In the book *Tafsir al-Qurthubi*, *qisaas* is also explained as "to follow the track of mark", and it comes therefore to mean that the treatment of the offender should be the same as his offence. *Qisaas*, according to Islamic legal terminology, is "specified punishment imposed by the *Shari'ah* as an obligation to be implemented in order to carry out the right of mankind."

Allah (SWT) is very near to a man, even nearer than the jugular vein. He is so near to His servants that He even answers those requests and prayers which a person does not express verbally but keeps within the innermost recesses of the heart. He hears every cry for help and gives to His devotee what is best in his interest, known to Him alone in His infinite wisdom. This *ayah* affirms that Allah (SWT) is near and close to each person, and accordingly there is no need for any external link or intercession between Him and His servants. Further Allah (SWT) says: "So they should also respond to Me, and they should have faith in Me so that they may be rightly guided." A person should answer and reciprocate by acting on the commandments of Allah (SWT), and have firm belief in Him so that he may be guided to the right path and veridical knowledge.

أَجَلٌ لَّكُمْ لَيْلَةُ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفْعُ إِلَىٰ نِسَائِكُمْ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَقَّا عَنْكُمُ فَالَّذِينَ بَايَرُوا مِنْكُمْ وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ - وَكُلُوا وَامْشَوْا حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ثُمَّ أَتُوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى الْبَيْتِ وَلَا تَبَاسِرُوا مِنْهُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ غَافِلُونَ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرُبُوهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لِّلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٧﴾

(187) It is made lawful to you to approach your wives during the night in the (month of) fasting. They are your garments, and you are their garments. Allah knows that you were committing breach of trust with your own selves, but He turned to you in mercy and forgave you, so now have conjugal relations with them and seek what Allah has ordained for you. And eat and drink until the white thread of dawn appears to you distinct from its black thread, then complete your fast till the night. But do not approach your wives while you stay in seclusion in the mosques. These are the limits set by Allah so do not go near them. Thus Allah makes His Ayaat clear to mankind so that they may save themselves.

In the beginning, the Muslims who observed fast supposed that they were not allowed to have sexual intercourse with their wives after *Isha* prayer, but Allah (SWT) made the matters easier for them and allowed eating and drinking, along with having sexual intercourse with their wives, during any part of the night until the light of dawn is distinguished from the darkness of night. "They are your garments, and you are their garments" i.e. as clothes and the body are close to each other, husband and wife are closely related to each other; they conceal each other's defects and are a source of comfort to each other. "Allah knows that you were committing breach of trust with your own selves, but He turned to you in mercy and forgave you, so now have conjugal relations with them and seek what Allah has ordained for you." Some Companions (RAA) of the Prophet (SAW) confessed to the Holy Prophet (SAW) that they had had sexual intercourse with their wives during the *Ramadan* nights, without being sure whether it was allowed or not to do so. So Allah (SWT) revealed this *ayah* and forgave them and gave them permission to approach their wives during the nights of *Ramadan*. The Muslims are

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَكَامٍ أُخَرُ ۗ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِكُمُ الْعِدَّةُ وَلِكُمُ التَّوَكُّلُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى مَا هَدَيْتُم مَّا هَدَيْتُمْ لَافْتِكُمْ وَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٨٥﴾

- (185) The month of Ramadan is the one wherein the Qur'an was sent down as guidance for mankind and clear proofs of the guidance and the criterion. So whoever among you is present in the month, he must fast therein, and whoever is sick or on a journey, then the prescribed number (should be made up) by days later. Allah intends for you ease & convenience and does not intend for you difficulty & hardship, so that you may complete the prescribed period and that you should magnify Allah for having guided you and so that you may be grateful.

The month of Ramadan is that in which the Qur'an was revealed in the night of decree (Layla-tul-Qadr). As mentioned earlier, the Qur'an was revealed in two stages over a period of 22 years. At first, Allah (SWT) sent the Qur'an down all in one go (i.e. in its totality) from the Preserved Tablet to the House of Might (Bayt-ul-Izzah), which is in the heaven of this world. Then it came down in parts to the Messenger of Allah in the context of the historical incidents that occurred over a period of twenty two years. This Book is the guidance for *Muttaqun* (Allah-fearing and the righteous) who believe in it and follow its commandments and it contains clear and unambiguous signs and a criterion between right and wrong for those who understand and have discerning minds. "So whoever among you is present in the month, he must fast therein." This commandment abrogated the *ayah* that allows a person either to fast in Ramadan or pay *Fidyah*. "And whoever is sick or on a journey, then the prescribed number (should be made up) by days later." A sick person or a traveler is allowed not to fast, but he will have to compensate for the missed fasts on other days. "Allah intends for you ease & convenience and does not intend for you difficulty & hardship, so that you may complete the prescribed period and that you should magnify Allah for having guided you and so that you may be grateful." Allah (SWT) has made matters easy for His servants and through His mercy, He allows a sick person or a traveler to refrain from fasting in Ramadan and then complete the number in other days, so that His servants glorify Him and be grateful to Him for these concessions. This shows that fasting in Ramadan has not only been prescribed as a form of worship or training of a Muslim, but also to show gratitude for the great favor of the revelation of Qur'an in the holy month of Ramadan.

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِلَعَلَّهُمْ يُرْشَدُونَ ﴿١٨٦﴾

- (186) And when My bondsmen ask you about Me, then of course I am near. I respond to the call of a suppliant whenever he calls Me. So they should also respond to Me, and they should have faith in Me so that they may be rightly guided.

relatives who do not qualify as inheritors, from one third of his property at most.

مَنْ بَدَّلَهُ بَعْدَ مَا سَمِعَهُ فَإِمَّا إِثْمَةٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يُبَدِّلُونَهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٨١﴾

(181) Then whosoever changes it (the will) after he has heard it, so its sin would only be upon those who change it. Verily Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

To alter a will is a major sin and those who change it will be guilty, while there will be no blame on the dead person who made the will. And Allah (SWT) knows what the dead person had bequeathed and knows those who hide or change the will.

مَنْ خَافَ مِنْ مُوَسِّعٍ أَوْ إِتْمَاعٍ فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٨٢﴾

(182) But whoever fears partiality or wrongdoing on the part of the testator, and thereupon settles the matter between the parties, there is no sin upon him. Verily Allah is Most-Forgiving Most Merciful.

If any injustice has been done to the rightful heirs or those in favor of whom the bequeath has been made, it is allowed to alter the will to make a proper settlement between the parties, within the provisions of the Islamic law and respecting what the dead person had wished for. Allah (SWT) is Forgiving and Merciful.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨٣﴾

(183) O you who believe! Fasting is made obligatory upon you as it was made obligatory over those who were before you, so that you may learn self-control.

Allah (SWT) says that He has ordained fasting for Muslims as He ordained it for previous nations, namely the Jews and the Christians. Fasting is a means for restraining and controlling the *nafs* [47]; it purifies the souls and cleanses them from the evil and ill behavior. Through fasting, a believer is able to guard himself against evil.

أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَاتٍ مَنِ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ مَنِ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُ وَأَنْ تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٤﴾

(184) (Fasting) for a fixed number of days. But if any of you is ill or on a journey the prescribed number (should be made up) from days later. And for those who can do it (with hardship) is a ransom--the feeding of one that is indigent. But whoever gives more voluntarily; it would be better for him. However your fasting is better for you if you but know.

The injunctions related to fasting were revealed gradually. In the beginning Prophet Muhammad (SAW) instructed the Muslims to observe fast for every three days in a month but it was not made obligatory. Then the command of fasting in *Ramadan* was revealed but there was an option for a sick person, a traveler and for those who did not wish to fast, to pay *fidyah* instead (feeding a poor person). But this concession was later abrogated in the next *ayah*. "However your fasting is better for you if you but know." This was abrogated in the next *ayah* when fasting in *Ramadan* was made obligatory.

*any reasonable demand and compensate him with handsome gratitude. This is a concession and a mercy from your Lord. So whoever violates the limits after it, then for him is a painful punishment.*

In this *ayah*, the law of 'qisas'<sup>[46]</sup> i.e. the principle of equality of the value of human life, has been set forth in detail. Before the advent of Islam, the practice after a murder was a chain of brutal and bloodthirsty reactions. The families and the tribes of both the slayer and the slain used to engage themselves into a war, generation after generation and they would take the lives of innocent men, women and children from the clan of the murderer. Islam, through the Prophet (SAW) put an end to this barbaric human behavior and gave a just and kind system of justice where the retribution of a murder is not to be determined by the rank of the slain or the murderer but with equality and justice. It has therefore been clearly stated that the murderer himself shall be made to pay for the blood but the heirs of the slain have the choice to pardon the murderer if someone pays them the blood price on his behalf. *"And compensate him with handsome gratitude"* i.e. the heirs of the slain should accept the compensation in rightful manner. *"This is a concession and a mercy from your Lord"* i.e. this concession in punishment is alleviation from Allah (SWT) that was not allowed for any other nation. *"So whoever violates the limits after it, for him is a painful punishment."* This warning is for those heirs of the slain who accept the blood money and still kill the murderer in retaliation. The whole penalty can be remitted if the aggrieved party agrees, out of brotherly love. In meeting that demand, the culprit should equally be generous and acknowledge the good will of the other side. One who transgresses will face severe punishment in the Hereafter.

وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَوةٌ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

(179) *And in the enforcement of the law of equitable retribution is life for you, O men of wisdom! So that you may restrain yourselves.*

The purpose of ordaining the penalty for the crime is to make people abstain from evildoing.

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدُكُمْ الْمَوْتُ إِنْ تَرَكَ خَيْرًا \* الْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ \* حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ

(180) *It has been made obligatory upon you, when death approaches any of you and he leaves any property, that he must execute a will for the parents and the next of kin equitably – being an obligation over the God-fearing.*

When the *ayah* of inheritance in *surah An-Nisa* was revealed, this *ayah* was abrogated. So the deserving inheritors receive their fixed shares as prescribed by Allah (SWT) in *surah An-Nisa* and it is not incumbent anymore on Muslims to make a bequeath for their parents or their kin. But according to the *sunnah* of the Prophet (SAW), a person is allowed to make a will for charitable purposes and for those

لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالنَّبِيِّاتِ  
وَالْكِتَابِ وَآتَى حَتَّىٰ دَوَى الْغُرَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَآتَى السَّبِيلَ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي  
الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالْكَرَاءِ وَجِينِ  
النَّاسِ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

(177) It does not accomplish righteousness that you turn your faces toward the East and the West; but the accomplished righteousness is that (of him) who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book and the Prophets; and gives wealth in spite of its love, to the relatives, the orphans, the needy, the way-farer, those who ask, and in (ransoming) the enslaved; and (of) those who fulfill their promise whenever they make an agreement; and the steadfast in distress and affliction and in times of war. Such are the people who prove (their faith) true, and they are the only righteous ones.

The theory and a holistic definition of piety and righteousness has been mentioned in this *ayah* and it gives a comprehensive and clear description of the righteous and Allah-fearing man. As far as the context of this *ayah* is concerned, Allah (SWT) first commanded the Muslims to change the Qiblah from Bayt-ul-Maqdis (Jerusalem) to the Ka'bah. This change did not go well with the Jews, but Allah (SWT) clarified the wisdom behind this change by asserting that there is no real virtue in the mere act of turning your faces to the east or to the west in the prayer, unless it is commanded by Allah (SWT). Allah (SWT) says that far from deadening formalism, the real virtue and righteousness is that a person should obey all the salutary regulations and should make his sincere motive the love of Allah (SWT) and the love of his fellow men for the sake of Allah (SWT). Here we have four elements of righteousness: (a) One's faith should be true and sincere, (b) one should be prepared to make it manifest in deeds of charity and kindness to fellow men, and one must be a good citizen by supporting charitable institutions and social organizations, (c) one must pray regularly and pay obligatory annual poor-due, and (d) one must be steadfast and unshakeable in all circumstances. It is clear therefore that righteousness is not merely a matter of void utterances, it must be found on strong faith and constant practice. It must cover the person's thinking and action and extend to his inside and outside life, to his individual and corporate affairs<sup>[45]</sup>. Only those who acquire these qualities are truthful in their faith and are pious and Allah fearing.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلِ ۚ الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ وَالْأُنثَىٰ بِالْأُنثَىٰ ۚ فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ  
مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ فَاتَّبِعْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَدَاءُ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ ۚ ذَلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۚ فَمَنِ اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ  
ذَلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٨﴾

(178) O you who believe! The law of equitable retribution has been made incumbent upon you in cases of murder – the free for the free, the enslaved for the enslaved, and the female for the female. But if any remission is made for him (the murderer) by the 'Wali' (entitled to receive blood-money), then grant

"That whereon is invoked any other name except that of Allah" i.e. any offerings or sacrifices in the name of anyone or anything other than Allah (SWT). "But whoever has no other option (he may eat)—without being pleased or exceeding the limits, in that case there is no sin upon him. Certainly, Allah is Most Forgiving, Ever Merciful."

Allah (SWT) has, however, permitted to eat from things which are prohibited in the time of utter necessity. For instance, when it is needed for survival on account of an illness or when there is absolutely nothing lawful available. But the permission has been given on two conditions. Firstly, one should not have a desire to eat what Allah (SWT) has prohibited, and secondly only that much should be taken which meets the minimum requirement for survival.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيُسْتَرُونَ بِهِ تَمَتَّا قَلِيلًا أُولَٰئِكَ مَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ إِلَّا النَّارَ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٤﴾

(174) Verily those who conceal what Allah has sent down of the Book and obtain therewith a petty consideration, they do not eat into their bellies but the Fire. And Allah will not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will purify them, and for them is a painful torment.

Allah (SWT) criticizes the Jews for concealing the Prophethood of Muhammad (SAW). As mentioned earlier, the Jews recognized Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as a Messenger of Allah just as they recognized their own sons but hid the truth so as to retain the joys and delights of this earthly life. Allah (SWT) states that they have earned His wrath and that He will not look at them or speak to them on the Day of Resurrection and will punish them with a severe torment. Grievous will be the penalty of the rejecters of faith and Allah (SWT) will not purify them.

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهَدَىٰ وَالْعَذَابَ بِالْمَغْفِرَةِ ۖ فَمَا أَصْبَرَهُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ ﴿١٧٥﴾

(175) They are those who buy error in place of Guidance and torment in place of forgiveness. So how much steadfast are they on the (way to) Fire!

Instead of believing in Prophet Muhammad (SAW), they rejected him and preferred error and misguidance over the truth and punishment over forgiveness because of their stubbornness and arrogance. They know what torture and woeful torment they will suffer but still persist in their misguidance and ignorance.

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِي الْكِتَابِ لَفِي شِقَاقٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿١٧٦﴾

(176) That is because Allah has sent down the Book with the truth, and verily those who differ concerning the Book are definitely in a far-flung schism.

Allah (SWT) has sent the Qur'an to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) just as He sent other books, which brought guidance and truth and exposed falsehood, to Prophets before him. But they reject the Messenger (SAW) and the Book revealed to him and are in extreme schism. That is why they deserve a great torment and punishment.



وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءُنَا أَوْ لَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَفْعَلُونَ شَيْئًا  
وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

- (170) And when it is said to them: "Follow what Allah has sent down", they say: "Instead we shall follow what we found our forefathers on – what! Even though their forefathers had not been sensible, nor were they on the right track.

This *ayah* strongly condemns blind following of the traditions of one's ancestors without considering whether they tally with the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) or not. The disbelievers, when asked to follow the way of Allah (SWT) and His Prophet (SAW), say that they will follow their forefathers only, who worshipped idols and were disbelievers. So Allah (SWT) says: "What! Even though their forefathers had not been sensible, nor were they on the right track" i.e. will they still follow their forefathers and imitate their practices even when they know that those whom they follow had no knowledge and guidance?

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مَثَلُ الَّذِي يَنْفَعُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءَ وَنِدَاءَ، صُمُّ بَكْمُ غَمٌّ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿١٧١﴾

- (171) And the example of those who disbelieve is as the example of him who shouts at that (flock of sheep) which listens to nothing except a call and cry. (They are) deaf, dumb and blind, so they have sense.

A disbeliever is devoid of understanding and preaching before him is like preaching to the cattle, which only listen to the sounds but are incapable of understanding their meaning. So Allah (SWT) says that those who cover themselves with the dark veil of ignorance are deaf, dumb and blind. That is to say, those who reject faith are like dumb driven cattle that can merely hear calls, but cannot distinguish intelligently between meaning and absurd discourse.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿١٧٢﴾

- (172) O you who believe! Eat of the nice (lawful) things which we have provided you and pay thanks to Allah if you worship Him, and only Him.

Allah (SWT) commands the believers to eat from the pure and lawful things He has provided for them on this earth, if they truly are His servants. Indeed, gratitude for Allah's gifts is an important form of worship.

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَخُلُقَ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أَهْلَ بِهِ لغيرِ اللَّهِ فَمَن اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ  
إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٧٣﴾

- (173) He has only made unlawful for you the carrion, blood, flesh of swine and that whereon is invoked any other name except that of Allah; but whoever has no other option (he may eat) – without being pleased or exceeding the limits, in that case there is no sin upon him. Certainly, Allah is Most Forgiving, Ever Merciful.

Carrion means dead animals which die before being slaughtered. However, dead animals of the sea are excluded from this ruling as the Prophet (SAW) said: "Its water is pure and its dead are permissible." [44]

you can help me. I reject what you did before; that you associated me with Allah (SWT). Certainly such wrongdoers will have painful punishment.” [43] And when those who lead people astray and those who follow them will see Allah’s punishment, they will denounce each other, but will not find a way to escape from the Hellfire.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا لَوْ أَن لَّنَا كَرَّةٌ فَتَنَّبَرَّآ مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَنَّبَرَّآ مِنَّا كَذَلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ اللَّهُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ حَسَرَاتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ  
وَمَا هُمْ بِخَرِجِينَ مِنَ النَّارِ ﴿١٦٧﴾

(167) And those who followed will say: “If a return were possible for us, we would disown them as they have disowned us”. Thus Allah would show them their actions as regrets to them, and they would not be able to escape from the Hellfire.

Allah (SWT) describes the condition of the idolaters in the Hereafter, when they will denounce the idols and leaders they used to follow and will wish that they could return to this world so that they can denounce them as they have denounced them and instead worship Allah (SWT) alone. “Thus Allah would show them their actions as regrets to them” i.e. their deeds will become nothing but dust and will be of no avail.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا ۚ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٦٨﴾

(168) O Mankind! Eat from whatever is in the earth (provided it is) lawful and clean. And do not follow the footsteps of Satan; verily he is to you a manifest enemy.

Allah (SWT) alone is the Sustainer of all creation and He has allowed His servants to eat any of the lawful things on earth and avoid unlawful things. Unlawful things are not only those directly prohibited by Allah (SWT) but even lawful things acquired unlawfully—by usurpation or theft or cheating etc. And Allah (SWT) says: “And do not follow the footsteps of Satan; verily he is to you a manifest enemy” i.e. do not follow the ways and methods through which Satan misguides people and follow only the way of Allah (SWT) which has been shown by the Prophet (SAW), as Satan only invites his followers towards sin and immorality so that they may become the inmates of Hellfire.

إِنَّمَا يُأْمُرُكُمْ بِالسُّوءِ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ وَأَن تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾

(169) He only enjoins upon you the evil and the lewd, and that you attribute to Allah what you do not know.

Satan commands his followers to commit evil acts like adultery, theft, gambling, usury and even worse than that i.e. saying something about Allah (SWT) without knowledge. Satan makes them believe in superstitions and baseless and unfounded customs as a part of their religion, although there is no proof of their being from Allah (SWT). We find examples of this in the Jews who prohibited the meat of camels when it was not made unlawful by Allah (SWT) and the pagan Arabs who would prohibit some animals because of ascribing them to their idols and gods.

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْدَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ يَرَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِذْ يَرُونَ الْعَذَابَ أَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ الْعَذَابِ ۝

(165) And among the people are those who set up besides Allah, parallels whom they love as they ought to love Allah, whereas the believers are most ardent in love for Allah. And if those who carry out injustice, could visualize that when they will face the torment, (they will admit) that all the strength rests with Allah in toto and that Allah is stern in punishing."

Many people associate rivals and equals with Allah (SWT), worshipping them and attributing some of the exclusive properties and powers of Allah (SWT) to them. Allah is the Supreme Authority and it is only He who holds the right to prescribe what is lawful and what is unlawful and define the rights and duties for His subjects. But there are people who ascribe some of these attributes to other ideologies, institutes or persons, who are dearer to them than Allah (SWT). At another place Allah (SWT) says:

"O Prophet, tell them: If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your spouses, your relatives, the wealth that you have acquired, the business in which you fear a loss, and the homes which you like are dearer to you than Allah, His Messenger, and making Jihad in His Way, then wait until Allah brings about His decision. Allah does not guide the transgressors." [41]

In contrast, a true believer's only priority is to please Allah (SWT). He loves Him and thus obeys His commandments, fears His wrath and is ready to sacrifice all other affections for His sake, be it his wealth and property, his nation, his ideology or his family. "And if those who carry out injustice, could visualize that when they will face the torment, (they will admit) that all the strength rests with Allah in toto and that Allah is stern in punishing" i.e. if the disbelievers could see the punishment they would face in the Hereafter because of the partners they ascribe to Allah (SWT), they would never return to the deviation of setting up rivals and equals to Allah (SWT). And as Allah (SWT) has stated in another ayah: "Who could be more unjust than the one who is reminded of the revelations of his Lord and he turns away from them? Surely We shall take vengeance on such criminals." [42]

إِذْ تَبَرَأَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا وَأَوْرَاوا الْعَذَابَ وَتَقَطَّعَتْ بِهِمُ الْأَسْبَابُ ۝

(166) When, those who were followed will renounce those who followed; and (the moment) they face the torment, all the connections would be cut off from them.

The misguided leaders, saints and the Jinns who lead people astray in the world will disown their followers on the Day of Judgment as Allah (SWT) says: "Once the matter has been decided (on the Day of Judgment), Satan will say (to his followers): "In fact, the promises which Allah (SWT) made to you were all true; I too made some promises to you but failed to keep any of them. However, I had no power over you. I just invited you, and you accepted my invitation. Now! Do not blame me, but blame yourselves. I cannot help you, nor

# MESSAGE OF THE QUR'AN

Translation and Brief Elucidation

By

Dr. Israr Ahmad

## Al-Baqarah

(Ayaat 164-188)

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالتَّحَلُّفِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَضَرِّيفِ الرِّيحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

(164) Certainly, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, the alternation of the night and the day, the ships that sail in the sea alongwith what benefits people, the water which Allah sends down from the sky, then revives therewith the earth after its death, and spreads therein all kinds of living creatures, the veering of the winds, and the clouds made subservient between the sky and the earth, are definitely signs for people who have sense.

This *ayah* gives the proofs that Allah (SWT) is the only Deity. He is the creator of the heavens and the earth and all the creatures in them and they all testify to His oneness. The structures, mountains, valleys, deserts and seas within them display His ineffable creativity spread out before us. "The alternation of the night and the day" refers to the coming of day and night one after the other. "The ships that sail in the sea alongwith what benefits people" refers to the traveling of people from one shore to another carrying food and goods that benefit people. "The water which Allah sends down from the sky, then revives therewith the earth after its death, and spreads therein all kinds of living creatures". Another sign of Allah's Omnipotence and Greatness is the rain which He sends down from the sky and invests life therewith in the lifeless and brings forth grains and fruits of every variety for His creatures. "The veering of the winds, and the clouds made subservient between the sky and the earth i.e. sometimes they bring the mercy of Allah (SWT), and sometimes trouble and torment. "Are definitely signs for people who have sense". It is only those who give deep thought to Allah's signs who can know their true significance and the metaphysical reality that lies beneath the outward surface of things. In all the variegated natural phenomena mentioned in this *ayah* are signs and portents of Divine existence for people who understand and have discerning minds.