

MESSAGE OF THE QUR'AN

Translation and Brief Elucidation

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Surah An-Nisa — cont....

(Ayaat 71-87, inclusive)

Translator's Note:

For the sake of continuity and coherent explanation, most of the general discourse has been made by employing the 'male' as a prototype, which is in no way meant to be diminutive of the opposite gender or to disrespect the status of women.

Moreover, each verse (Ayah) has been kept as a continuum in order to prevent the misrepresentation of meanings, which may occur when the verses are broken up and the translation of those verses becomes kaput when done in bits and pieces.

Cross-references taken from other parts of the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Messenger of Allah (SAW) are provided in italics.

The Translation of the Holy Qur'an done by the Message International – USA (www.FreeQuran.com) and edited by Saheeh International – UK, Dar Al Mountada – Saudi Arabia and Al Qummah – Egypt has been used in order to synchronize the use of modern English Language, which we believe will give a more accomplished sense of understanding to Today's mind.

Recap from the previous issue: verses 60 – 70:

The reader would recall that we had concluded our previous translation and elucidation of Surah An-Nisa (Women) at verse 70. The underlying message of those 11 verses was not merely a continuation of the charge sheet against the wicked and preposterous claims and deeds of the Munafiqun (hypocrites), rather it also summed up the various stages that the hypocrites go through until

they reach a point of no return, whereby their hearts (or minds) are sealed for good so much so that they become blind to all forms of Truth and are then hell-bent on rebelling against every command and edict set forth in the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

The verses also explained that the real cause of their plight is their personal ego along with the added influence of Satan and all other kinds of 'Taghut' (evil). When hypocrisy reaches that stage, then the hypocrite literally starts taking Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW) as foes and at that juncture the intercession of even the most righteous does not do any good to them in the Court of Allah (SWT) and their final abode is thus destined to be the Hellfire.

The final section of those verses presented a simultaneous contrast in the shape of the believers and it was mentioned that those men (and women) who endeavor to emulate the sincerity in deeds of the Prophets (AS), The Truthful, The Martyrs and the righteously pious are the ones who are blessed with Allah's (SWT) bounty and for them are prepared the pleasures of Paradise.

Fresh Exposition: verses 71 through 87 of Surah An-Nisa.

Verse 71

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا خُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ فَالْقُرُوبُ أَكْرَمُ أَجْزَاءٍ

"O you who believe, be on your guard. March [to battle] in small groups or as one body."

In this ayah Allah (SWT) commands the believers to be ever on guard against the disbelievers by always being prepared to confront them in the battlefield, as and when needed. Then, as the occasion may require, they should advance towards their enemy in detachments i.e. on an expedition, as the Prophet (SAW) and the Muslims did after the Hijrah, or they should march all together in full formation.

Verse 72

وَأَنَّ مِنْكُمْ لَمَنْ لَيَحْطَأَنَّ فَإِنْ أَصَابَكُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا نِعْمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى إِذْ لَمْ أَكُنْ مَعَهُمْ شَاهِدًا

"Among you there is the sort of person who is sure to lag behind: if a calamity befalls you, he says, 'Allah has been gracious to me that I was not there with them.'"

This is the conduct of the hypocrites. They not only used to stay behind and refrain from accompanying those who fought for Allah's (SWT) cause, but also would discourage the believers from joining Jihad. If the Muslim army faced some temporary trials or were defeated by their enemy, the hypocrites would rejoice on their defeat and would consider it as Allah's (SWT) mercy and favor upon them that they did not join the Muslims for Jihad; otherwise they too would have suffered defeat.

Verse 73

وَيَوْمَ أَصَابَكُمْ فُضْلٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لَيَقُولَنَّ كَأَن لَّمْ تَكُن بِيَتْمُومَ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مَّوَدَّةٌ لَّيَلَيْتَنَّ كُنْتُ مَعَهُمْ فَأَفُوزَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا

"Yet he is sure to say, if you are victorious by Allah's favor, 'If only I had been with them, I could have made great gains,' as if there had been no ties of affection between you and him."

On the other hand, whenever the Muslim army returned victorious, along with the booty that Allah (SWT) bestowed on them, the hypocrites who stayed behind wished they would have been with them so that they could gather the worldly benefits and take possession of their share from the booty. This is because they do not have any love or friendship for the believers and their only aim and objective is the enjoyment and benefits of this world.

Verse 74

فَلْيَقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يَشْرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ ۚ وَمَن يَكُفِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ فَاسِقٌ ۖ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

"Let those of you who are willing to trade the life of this world for the life to come, fight in Allah's way. To anyone who fights in Allah's way, whether killed or victorious, We shall give a great reward."

Those who are ready to sacrifice their lives and their worldly desires to attain Allah's (SWT) pleasure, are the ones who owe the responsibility to fight in the way of Allah (SWT). Further, Allah (SWT) encourages the believers for Jihad for His (SWT) cause and guarantees them either martyrdom, in which case He (SWT) will admit them to Paradise or He (SWT) promises them victory over their enemies, so that they can enjoy whatever reward and booty they have gained.

Verse 75

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ
الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ نَصِيرًا

“Why should you not ? ght in Allah’s cause and for those oppressed men, women, and children who cry out, ‘Lord, rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors! By Your grace, give us a protector and give us a helper!’”

When Prophet Muhammad (SAW) migrated to Madinah along with his companions (RAA), some of the poor Muslims did not migrate because they did not have the means to travel to Madinah, neither could they defend themselves from the persecution of the Quraysh. This group of Muslims including helpless children men and women prayed to Allah (SWT) to send for them a helper and save them from the oppressors. Therefore, Allah (SWT) encourages the believers in this ayah to fight for His (SWT) cause and deliver the oppressed Muslims (in all times to come) from their horrifying state.

Verse 76

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ الظَّالِمِينَ فَفَاتَوْا أَوْلِيَاءَ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّ كَيْدَ
الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا

“The believers ? ght for Allah’s cause, while those who reject faith ? ght for the cause of evil. Fight the allies of Satan: Satan’s strategies are truly weak.”

Whenever there is a revolutionary movement, the society is polarized into two groups viz., Hizbullah (Allah’s party) and Hizbushaitan (party of Satan). Those who believe in Allah (SWT) and the Last Day and fight in His way to attain His pleasure are from His party. On the other hand, those who disbelieve in Allah (SWT) and fight for the forces of evil are the friends of Satan. So Allah (SWT) commands the believers of His party to fight against the party of Satan. Surely the devils' cunning is weak indeed.

Verse 77

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قِيلَ لَهُمْ كُنُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلْيُحْيُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَخْشَوْنَ

النَّاسِ كَخَشِيَةِ اللَّهِ وَأَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً ۚ وَالْأَوَّلِينَ يُرْكَسَبَت عَلَيْهِمُ الْغُتَاتُ ۚ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنِي إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ لَّفُلِحَ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا
فَكُلِينَ ۚ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ إِن تَقَىٰ ۚ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ۚ

“[O Prophet], do you not see those who were told, ‘Restraining yourselves from fighting, perform the prayer, and pay the prescribed alms’? When fighting was ordained for them, some of them feared men as much as, or even more than, they feared Allah, saying, ‘Lord, why have You ordained fighting for us? If only You would give us just a little more time.’ Say to them, ‘Little is the enjoyment in this world, the Hereafter is far better for those who are mindful of Allah: you will not be wronged by as much as the grain in a date stone.’”

Before the Hijrah the Muslims were being persecuted and tortured by the Quraysh in Makkah, and the Muslims demanded Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to give them permission to fight back. Instead of retaliation, they were commanded to observe patience and purify themselves by means of Prayer and Zakat. But afterwards, when the permission to fight was revealed, the hypocrites within them showed cowardice and feared their enemies i.e. the Quraysh, as they should have feared Allah (SWT) or even more than that, and they wished that the order of Jihad in the cause of Allah (SWT) be delayed, so that they enjoy the temporary things of this life for a few more days. On the other hand, Allah (SWT) says that those who have Taqwa will be admitted to Paradise in the Hereafter and no one will be wronged on that Day even in the least bit, as everyone will be rewarded according to what they earned in this life.

Verse 78

إِن مَّا تَكُونُوا يَدْرِكُكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّشِيدَةٍ ۚ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَخَسَةٌ يَّقُولُوا هَٰذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَخَسَةٌ يَّقُولُوا هَٰذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ ۚ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَبِأَلِّ ذُلٍّ لَّيْسَ لَهُ تَفَكُّورٌ ۚ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَقْتُلُونَ حَبِيبًا ۚ

“Death will overtake you no matter where you may be, even inside strong fortresses.’ When good fortune comes their way, they say, ‘This is from Allah,’ but when harm befalls them, they say, ‘This is from you [Prophet].’ Say to them, ‘Both come from Allah.’ What is the matter with these people that they can barely understand what they are told?”

Firstly, the hypocrites are being reminded that even if you do not join Jihad, you will still taste death and nothing will save you from it even if you build strong and high fortresses. Secondly, Allah (SWT) admonishes them for their wrong attitude towards the Prophet (SAW). Whenever Allah (SWT) gave them success and victory, they became happy and said, 'this is from Allah (SWT)'. But when Allah (SWT) tested them with some calamity or they suffered defeat, then they would blame the Prophet (SAW) for it, without accepting the responsibility for their own misgivings and refusal to act as they had been instructed. The verse continues on to decree that *all* events are from Allah (SWT), either made to occur in order to put people to trial or to simply punish them for wrongdoings, but the hypocrites lack the insight to comprehend this philosophy.

Verse 79

مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا

"Anything good that happens to you (O Prophet) is from Allah; anything bad is [ultimately] as a consequence of your own action, from your own selves (O Muslims). We have sent you (O Muhammad) as a messenger to people; Allah is sufficient witness."

This means that whatever success or victory Muslims enjoy is from Allah (SWT) alone, but whatever loss is suffered is due to the actions and errors of Muslims owing to their disregard for the orders of Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW). Moreover, the verse explains that Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) duty is only to convey the message and instructions from Allah (SWT) to the people and he is not answerable for their wrong actions and evil deeds. Furthermore, it also implies that Allah (SWT) is a witness that Muhammad (SAW) has conveyed the message he was entrusted with. Allah is (your) all-sufficient witness.

Verse 80

مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ تَوَلَّى فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا

"Whoever obeys the Messenger obeys Allah. If some pay no heed, We have not sent you to be their keeper."

This ayah again emphasizes the importance of following the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in all aspects of life and criticizes those who turn away from his (SAW) Sunnah. It also reiterates that the function of the Prophet is merely to invite people to Islam while their acceptance or otherwise is in the Hands of Allah (SWT).

Verse 81

وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ فَإِذَا بَرَزُوا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ بَيَّتَ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي تَقُولُ وَاللَّهُ يَكْتُبُ مَا يُبَيِّنُونَ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ
وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ

“They say, ‘We obey you,’ but as soon as they leave your presence, some of them scheme by night to do other than what you said. Allah records what they scheme, so leave them alone, and put your trust in Allah: He is sufficient protector.”

This again refers to the attitude of the hypocrites who declared their obedience when they were in Prophet’s (SAW) presence, but as soon as they left him, some of them met secretly at night and planned against what he (SAW) had said. But they are ignorant of the fact that Allah (SWT) knows everything and He warns them that He records all their plots, which will be shown to them in the Hereafter. Therefore the believers are told to ignore them and forgive them and not to fear them.

Instead have faith and trust in Allah (SWT) who is sufficient for all as a Helper and Protector.

Verse 82

أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا

“Will they not think about this Qur'an? If it had been from anyone other than Allah, they would have found much inconsistency in it.”

The main cause of the deviation of the hypocrites from the right path is that they do not ponder on this Qur'an, because they did not believe that it is from Allah (SWT). Therefore, they are being admonished to use their reason and objective judgment, for they will surely come to the conclusion that the Qur'an is a book from Allah (SWT), free from all human conjectures and discrepancies and if it

would have been from any other than Allah (SWT) then it would have many inconsistencies in it.

Verse 83

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوِ الْخَبَرِ أَذَاعُوا بِهِ ۖ وَلَوْ رَفَعُوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَى أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنْصُونَ مِنْهُمْ ۚ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَتَبَعْتُمُ الشَّيْطَانَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

“Whenever news of any matter comes to them, whether concerning peace or distress, they spread it about; if they referred it to the Messenger and those in authority among them, those seeking its meaning would have found it out from them. If it were not for Allah’s bounty and mercy towards you, you would almost (except for a few) all have followed Satan.”

In this ayah Allah (SWT) commands the Muslims to refrain from spreading rumors from unreliable sources before investigation. (Translator’s Note: Today’s media is an apt example of such unreliability.) In times of distress, the hypocrites of Madinah and the enemies of Islam would spread rumors and unreliable news to frighten and cause needless harm to the Muslims. Thus Allah (SWT) warns such mischief makers and commands them to refrain from spreading rumors. Instead they are commanded to report any news coming from unknown sources to the Messenger (SAW) or those who are in authority, so that they would investigate it and draw the right conclusions. In fact it is Allah’s (SWT) grace and mercy that He protects the Muslims from the plots and schemes of their enemies, otherwise they too would have followed the footsteps of Satan except a few of them.

Verse 84

فَقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ إِلَّا نَفْسُكَ وَخَرِصِ السُّوءِينَ ۚ عَلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ يَكْفِ بِأَسِ الْأَذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۚ وَاللَّهُ أَشَدُّ تَكْلِيلًا

“So [O Prophet] ? ght in Allah’s way. You are accountable only for yourself. Urge the believers on. Allah may well curb the power of the disbelievers, for He is stronger in might and more intense in punishment.”

Allah (SWT) commands His Prophet (SAW) to fight for the cause of

Allah (SWT), even if no one else is ready to accompany him (SAW) in his mission. *(Translator's Note: which did not happen as history is evident to the great numbers of believers that stood shoulder to shoulder with the Messenger (SAW) in his mission. That part of the verse in fact serves as a general rule for Prophethood.)* And do not be concerned about those who do not join you to fight in Allah's way as you will only be held responsible for yourself and not for their deeds and actions. This was also the case of the followers of Prophet Moses (AS), when he asked his people to fight in Allah's (SWT) cause and recapture the holy lands occupied by the enemies of Allah (SWT). But they refused to fight and thus Moses (AS) said: "O my Lord! I have no control over anyone except myself and my brother. Please, set us apart from these disobedient people." *(Al-Maida, 5:25)*

Furthermore, Allah (SWT) commands His Prophet (SAW) to urge and motivate the believers to fight along with him (SAW) for the cause of Allah (SWT).

Moreover, Allah (SWT) gives assurance to the Muslims that He (SWT) will overthrow the might of the disbelievers by giving strength and courage to the Muslims to defend Islam. And surely Allah's Might, Power and Authority are stronger than that of any so-called rival and His (SWT) punishment is much greater and effective.

Verse 85

مَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ نَصِيبٌ مِنْهَا وَمَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ كِفْلٌ مِنْهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُقِيتًا

"Whosoever speaks for a good cause will share in its benefits and whosoever speaks for a bad cause will share in its burden: Allah controls everything."

The verse implies that whoever pleads or recommends for a good cause, he will have his share in its blessings, but those who plead for an evil cause, they will have their share of punishment in the Hereafter. This ayah also strictly warns the Muslims not to plead on behalf of those who support a bad cause even if they are friends or relatives. Allah (SWT) is a witness over everything and He (SWT) controls all things.

Verse 86

وَإِذَا حُيِّتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا أَوْ رُدُّوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيبًا

“And when you [believers] are offered a greeting, respond with a better one, or at least return it: Allah keeps account of everything.”

According to this ayah and the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW), if a Muslim greets his brother he should return the greeting equally which is an obligation on him, but it is recommended to say a better greeting e.g. if a Muslim greets his brother by saying, Assalam-o-Alaikum (Peace be upon you), he should return the greeting equally by repeating the same words or greet him with a better greeting and say, Assalam-o-Alaikum-wa-Rahmatullah (Peace and Blessings be upon you). As far as the non-Muslims are concerned, the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW) clearly indicates that a Muslim should not initiate the greeting with them, but if they greet the Muslims, then they should return the greeting politely and respectfully without adding anything to it. The verse finishes on a familiar note, as Allah (SWT) says that whatever people think or do, He (SWT) is aware of everything and He (SWT) keeps count of all things.

Verse 87

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُجِبُّكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَيِّقًا

“He is Allah: there is no god but Him. He will gather you all together on the Day of Resurrection, about which there is no doubt. Whose word can be truer than Allah’s?”

The verse gives the basic message of ‘Tauhid’, i.e., The Oneness of God. Allah (SWT) says that He (SWT) is the only Lord of the whole creation and has no partner whatsoever. He (SWT) sustains the whole universe and He (SWT) will gather all mankind on the Days of Resurrection and Judgment which are surely to come. The verse ends by citing the ultimate Truthfulness of the promise regarding Allah’s (SWT) statement that the Day of Judgment has to come and there is no doubt about it.

And Allah (SWT) Knows Best!