

Ramadan Immersion



Imam Ali Hofioni

Ayah 13-16

- Imam Qurtubi mentioned Allah highlights the ten qualities of Al-Walid ibn al-Mughira; a chief of the Quraysh who was an enemy of the Prophet (ﷺ). This is because Allah punished him with two of these adjectives in the dunya.
- زَنِيم – Means an illegitimate child. However, it also has the meaning of something that is very salient.
- For example, a thick piece of flesh that sticks out of a sheep's neck. This means that it is something recognizable and can be highlighted from a far distance.
- During the Prophet's mission, Al-Walid ibn al-Mughira later on found out that he was an illegitimate child. He was born out of wedlock and not from the tribe he claimed to be from.
- Al-Walid ibn al-Mughira was a man blessed with abundant wealth, property and children, but he was ungrateful to Allah for His favors.
- Later on, three of his sons accepted Islam. Amongst them was the famous military commander, Khalid ibn al-Walid.
- When verses of the Qur'an were recited to Al-Walid ibn al-Mughira, he claimed they were just ancient fables and reduced its importance.
- Allah said He will "mark his snout". This refers to a type of branding for an individual – it is a form of punishment where one will have their nose cut off.

- This ayah was revealed before the migration to Madinah. Thus, Allah was telling the Prophet (ﷺ) that this individual will have their nose cut off in the dunya and the akhirah as well.
- In the Battle of Badr; the first major battle between the Muslims and the mushrikun, Al-Walid ibn al-Mughira had his nose cut off.

Ayah 17-19

- Allah gives a parable to the people of Makkah; the Quraysh. He tells them about the people of the garden.
- The story of the people of the garden:
 - According to Imam Qurtubi it refers to a large garden in Yemen which belonged to a very wealthy and righteous man. He used to give a portion of his harvest to the poor. Hence, Allah blessed his garden.
 - The man had a rule; whatever that fell from the basket onto the ground, whatever the sickle left behind, whatever grains scattered and whatever the sickle missed harvesting should be given to the poor.
 - After the man passed away, his sons inherited the garden. They lived a lavish lifestyle and refused to continue their father's good deed; they became greedy. They said their wealth has decreased as their family has increased.
 - The sons intended to do something evil. They took an oath never to give the poor their harvest anymore and pick the fruits for themselves in the morning. Thus, Allah destroyed the garden while they were sleeping.
 - Allah punished them for their firm resolve to do the action despite not committing the action; He held them accountable for it.
 - This teaches us that Allah will hold us accountable for the slightest intentions we make, and even our thoughts.

Ayah 20-27

- The garden was reduced to ashes. Meaning, Allah left no trace of it.
- By daybreak, the brothers called to each other to harvest the fruits before the poor people came, unaware that their garden had been destroyed.
- They whispered to one another not to let any poor people enter the garden and they headed out early fixated on their purpose (حَزْبٌ قَادِرِينَ).
- According to some mufasssirun, the word حَزْبٌ refers to the name of the garden or the village where the garden existed. Nevertheless, the majority translated it as a firm resolve.
- When they arrived at the piece of land, they were devastated to find it destroyed and they started regretting their actions. They cried, "We must have lost our way!" – they knew they were deprived of their livelihood.

Ayah 28-31

- Majority of the mufasssirun say they were three brothers; some say it was more.
- One of the brothers was more sensible. He had warned his brothers prior to the punishment of Allah, "Did I not urge you to say, 'Allah willing.'?"
- Despite this fact, Allah included this brother in the punishment as well. This is an important lesson for us to be cautious of who we surround ourselves with.
 - Narrated 'A'ishah reported: Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

"يغزو جيش الكعبة فإذا كانوا ببيداء من الأرض يخسف بأولهم وآخرهم". قالت: قلت: يا رسول الله، كيف يخسف بأولهم وآخرهم وفيهم أسواقهم ومن ليس منهم؟! قال: "يخسف بأولهم وآخرهم، ثم يبعثون على نياتهم"

"An army will raid the Ka'bah and when it reaches a desert land, all of them will be swallowed up by the earth." She asked; "O Messenger of Allah! Why all of them?" He answered, "All of them will be swallowed by the earth but they will be raised for Judgement according to their intentions." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

- Sometimes, Allah prevents a person's sustenance due to their sins.
 - It was narrated that Thawban said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

" لَا يَزِيدُ فِي الْعُمُرِ إِلَّا الْبِرُّ وَلَا يَرُدُّ الْقَدَرَ إِلَّا الدُّعَاءُ وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيُحَرِّمُ الرِّزْقَ لِلْخَطِيئَةِ يَعْمَلُهَا " .

'Nothing extends one's life span but righteousness, nothing averts the Divine Decree but supplication, and nothing deprives a man of provision but the sin that he commits.' (Sunan Ibn Majah)

- They admitted their wrongdoing and began blaming one another. They also exhibited regret and remorse. This is a sign of tawbah.
 - Abdullah ibn Mas'ud reported: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

النَّدَمُ تَوْبَةٌ

"Regret is part of repentance." (Sunan Ibn Majah)

Ayah 31-35

- They began shifting their hopes to Allah; maybe if we turn to Him, He will give us something better.
- According to the mufasssirun, Allah did indeed replace their garden with a far better garden; it was more beautiful as well as more fruitful. This time around, they were giving and not withholding their harvest.
- Imam al-Qushayri said Allah forgave them and He gave them more when they turned to Him. The majority of scholars share this same position.

- Allah is reminding the Quraysh not to be like the people of the garden. Their father was a righteous man who gave but they withheld, and hence their garden was destroyed.
- Similarly, the father of the Arabs is Ibrahim AS and Ismail AS. Allah is telling the Quraysh not to forget the type of life they lived.
- They are acting like the sons of the righteous man of the garden; they completely changed the trajectory of doing good in that garden. They are the custodians of the Ka'bah; the holiest place on earth, but they forgot who their forefathers were.
- This is an important lesson for us to continue the good work that our parents have left behind.
 - For example, one of the things we can do to honor the legacy of our parents after they leave this world is to maintain the ties with their family and friends.
 - Abdullah ibn Umar reported: The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

أَبْرُ الْبِرِّ أَنْ يَصِلَ الرَّجُلُ وَدَّ أَبِيهِ

"Among the best acts of righteousness is to keep relations with a man who was loved by one's father." (Sahih Muslim)

- According to Abdullah ibn Abbas, these few verses about the people of the garden were revealed in Madinah, after the Battle of Badr. It was a parable for the Quraysh as they set out for the battle.
- The Quraysh who outnumbered the Muslims, had vowed to kill the Prophet (ﷺ) during the Battle of Badr. Their resolve was to return to the Ka'bah, and celebrate their victory with everything evil (i.e. drinking, dancing etc.). However, Allah upset their plan – they were ultimately defeated just like the owners of the garden.
- It is a part of Allah's mercy to punish His slaves in this world, rather than in the Hereafter, which is much more severe. Thus, whenever we go through hardship it is all khair for us.
 - Anas narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"إِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِعَبْدِهِ الْخَيْرَ عَجَّلَ لَهُ الْعُقُوبَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِعَبْدِهِ الشَّرَّ أَمْسَكَ عَنْهُ بِذَنْبِهِ حَتَّى يُوفَى بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ " .

"When Allah wants good for his slave, He hastens his punishment in the world. And when He wants bad for His slave, He withholds his sins from him until he appears before Him on the Day of Judgement." (Jami` at-Tirmidhi)

- After mentioning about the people of the garden, Allah speaks about the people of Jannah.
- Allah says Jannah is for the مُتَّقِينَ – those who have taqwa.
- Definition of taqwa:
 - It is derived from وقى (و-ق-ى), meaning to shield. Meaning, it is something that protects an individual from something else.
 - If an individual has taqwa, they have something protecting them against sinning.
 - It also has the meaning of having awe/being impressed by something.
 - When we say اِتَّقُوا اللَّهَ (Ittaqullah), meaning fear God or be mindful of Allah – it means we should have awe for who Allah is.
 - Allah is such that He makes a person so astonished for how great He is. He should always have this effect on us whenever we speak about it.
 - They are those who not only stay away from sin but those who have the mentality to recognize who Allah is.
- Allah asks the Quraysh a rhetorical question: "Should We then treat the Muslims like the criminals?" – those who do righteous deeds and those who commit sins are not equivalent.

Ayah 36-40

- The Quraysh' method of judging was very skewed. Thus, Allah then asks, "How do you judge or do you have a scripture in which you learn?"

- The Qur'an should have been treated as the greatest bounty for them after it was revealed to the Prophet (ﷺ); they had nothing prior to it. Nevertheless, they were ungrateful.
- They chose to live a life based on their desires as opposed to a life that controls them towards a path of purification and righteousness.
- An individual who lives a life of perpetually chasing their desires, will become like an animal. It's all about fulfilment and never about nourishment.
- When an individual lives a life of desire, they also become very arrogant and think that the world revolves around them.
- There is nothing wrong with fulfilling our desires in a halal manner once in a while. Not everything our desires crave is haram. However, if we constantly give in to them, we will end up submitting to our desires rather than to Allah.
 - For example, the craving of food is not haram. Nevertheless, the quantity of consumption can be haram if we overeat.