

Ramadan Immersion



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Introduction

- Surah al-Hujurat is the 49th surah of the Qur'an and it is a late Madinan surah.
- It is called al-Hujurat, which means the rooms or private chambers that no one can really enter – referring to the Prophet's home that was attached to the mosque. It gets its title from the fourth verse of the surah.
- It is among the last surahs that were revealed in the last few years of the Prophet's life.
- In this period, the challenges the Muslims were facing and the conditions that they were in were very different.
- The surahs in this time generally speak about laws and legislations, solidifying the Muslims and the threats the Muslims were facing.
- This surah addresses issues within the community in light of all the important events that were occurring at this time.
- It is the first of the al-mufassal surahs; which refers to the particular surahs the Prophet (ﷺ) would recite in his prayers – beginning from Surah al-Hujurat until the end of the Qur'an in the 29th juz.
- The Prophet (ﷺ) would frequently recite this surah during the fajr salah. Hence, this is a unique characteristic of this surah.
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- There were many causes of revelations and the subject focuses on ethics, morals and mannerisms. Hence, it is called the surah of adab; the right conduct in dealing with others.
- Imam Fakhruddin al-Razi said the surah is divided into five parts of adab:
 - Dealing with Allah
 - Dealing with the Prophet (ﷺ)
 - Dealing with other Muslims present within the community
 - Dealing with other Muslims absent within the community
 - Dealing with others that are non-Muslims and humanity at large
- When Allah mentions يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا in the surah:
 - It speaks about a new category of adab a believer must have.
 - It calls the believers to attention and they are supposed to be alert.
- The word adab means:
 - The right way of dealing with an individual or situation.
 - It is about doing the right thing and not simply about being nice to others.
 - For example:
 - If someone insults the Prophet (ﷺ), we should not show tolerance in the situation but instead call them out for it.
 - When we receive news from an individual who is untruthful or not upright, the correct adab to deal with the rumors is to look into matters thoroughly before believing them.
 - It also means to be courteous, respectful and nice to others.
- There are different requirements of adab that we must have between us and Allah, with His Messenger as well as with the believers, and others.
- The cause of the revelation for the first two verses were revealed when a tiff took place between Abu Bakr and Umar ibn al-Khattab in which they had raised their voices at one another.

○ Narrated `Abdullah bin Az-Zubair:

قَدِمَ رَكْبٌ مِنْ بَنِي تَمِيمٍ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ أَمِّرِ الْقَعْقَاعَ بْنَ مَعْبَدٍ. وَقَالَ عُمَرُ بَلْ أَمِّرِ الْأَقْرَعَ بْنَ حَابِسٍ. فَقَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ مَا أَرَدْتُ إِلَيَّ - أَوْ إِلَّا - خِلَافِي. فَقَالَ عُمَرُ مَا أَرَدْتُ خِلَافَكَ. فَتَمَارَيَا حَتَّى ارْتَفَعَتْ أَصْوَاتُهُمَا، فَنَزَلَ فِي ذَلِكَ {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقَدَّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ} حَتَّى انْقَضَتِ الْآيَةُ.

A group of Bani Tamim came to the Prophet (and requested him to appoint a governor for them). Abu Bakr said, "Appoint Al-Qaqa bin Mabad." `Umar said, "Appoint Al-Aqra' bin Habeas." On that Abu Bakr said (to `Umar). "You did not want but to oppose me!" `Umar replied "I did not intend to oppose you!" So both of them argued till their voices grew loud. So the following Verse was revealed: 'O you who believe! Be not forward.....' (49.1) (Sahih al-Bukhari)

○ Narrated Ibn Abi Mulaika:

إِذَا الْخَيْرَانِ أَنْ يَهْلِكَ - أَبَا بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا - رَفَعَا أَصْوَاتَهُمَا عِنْدَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حِينَ قَدِمَ عَلَيْهِ رَكْبٌ مِنْ بَنِي تَمِيمٍ، فَأَشَارَ أَحَدُهُمَا بِالْأَقْرَعَ بْنِ حَابِسٍ أَخِي بَنِي مُجَاشِعٍ، وَأَشَارَ الْآخَرُ بِرَجُلٍ آخَرَ - قَالَ نَافِعٌ لَا أَحْفَظُ اسْمَهُ - فَقَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ لِعُمَرَ مَا أَرَدْتُ إِلَّا خِلَافِي. قَالَ مَا أَرَدْتُ خِلَافَكَ. فَارْتَفَعَتْ أَصْوَاتُهُمَا فِي ذَلِكَ، فَنَزَلَ اللَّهُ {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ} الْآيَةَ. قَالَ ابْنُ الزُّبَيْرِ فَمَا كَانَ عُمَرُ يُسْمِعُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَعْدَ هَذِهِ الْآيَةِ حَتَّى يَسْتَفْهِمَهُ. وَلَمْ يَذْكُرْ ذَلِكَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ، يَعْنِي أَبَا بَكْرٍ.

The two righteous persons were about to be ruined. They were Abu Bakr and when a mission (ﷺ) `Umar who raised their voices in the presence of the Prophet from Bani Tamim came to him. One of the two recommended Al-Aqra' bin Habeas, the brother of Bani Mujashi (to be their governor) while the other recommended somebody else. (Nafi`, the sub-narrator said, I do not remember his name). Abu Bakr said to `Umar, "You wanted nothing but to oppose me!" `Umar said, "I did not intend to oppose you." Their voices grew loud in that argument, so Allah revealed: 'O you who believe! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet.' (49.2) Ibn Az-Zubair said, "Since the revelation of this Verse, had to ask him to (ﷺ) `Umar used to speak in such a low tone that the Prophet repeat his statements." But Ibn Az-Zubair did not mention the same about his ((maternal) grandfather (i.e. Abu Bakr). (Sahih al-Bukhari

Ayah 1

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقَدَّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

O you who have believed, do not put [yourselves] before Allah and His Messenger but fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is Hearing and Knowing.

- This ayah speaks about the adab towards Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ).
- This is a direct command from Allah to the believers to pay attention.
- A believer should not act upon something before Allah and His Messenger has conveyed something. One should not cross either one of them.
- Allah is All-Hearing and All-Knowing – these attributes of Allah that are mentioned relate to the message of the ayah. He knows what we intend to do.
- We are reminded that it is Allah or His Messenger (ﷺ) that will decide on matters.
- All of what Allah wants to tell us comes through the Prophet (ﷺ). This is why we hold the Prophet (ﷺ) in high regard.
- The correct adab with Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) is to follow what they say and wait to first hear what they have decreed in any situation.
- This is a reminder that prior to doing something, we must first check with what Allah and His Messenger have said. Hence, we should ask or learn about something beforehand. (i.e. if something is prohibited etc.)
- We should not declare a ruling without actually knowing what Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) want or without knowing what the Qur'an says, then pass it off as Islam.
- What Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) say is priority. Part of good adab is knowing and checking before teaching, declaring, issuing, acting upon something etc.

Ayah 2

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ، بِالْقَوْلِ
كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَن تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَلُكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ

O you who have believed, do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet or be loud to him in speech like the loudness of some of you to others, lest your deeds become worthless while you perceive not.

- This ayah speaks about the adab towards the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).
- When Abu Bakr and Umar were arguing, they were speaking in a higher tone that drowned out the Prophet's voice.
- It was mentioned in the tafsir that the delegation that came commanded for the Prophet (ﷺ) to come out without any formality. This tells us that he should not be treated like a friend or normal person in a gathering.
- From this we learn that the adab with the Prophet (ﷺ) is lowering the voice and addressing him in a respectful manner, out of the awe and respect for him as the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).
- This tells us about the specific behaviors we should have in our day to day lives. It is not just about our belief but practical behaviors are also signs of adab.
- As the Prophet (ﷺ) is no longer living amongst us today, here are the ways that we can apply this adab:
 - When we hear the words of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), the hadith; we should respect it. We should listen properly and not talk over it, and we should show our respect and honor these words.
 - When we go to the Prophet's Mosque, we should not be raising our voices, shouting or screaming as his body is resting there.

- Narrated Al-Sa'ib bin Yazid:

كُنْتُ قَائِمًا فِي الْمَسْجِدِ فَحَصَبَنِي رَجُلٌ، فَنظَرْتُ فَإِذَا عُمَرُ بْنُ الْخَطَّابِ فَقَالَ
 اذْهَبْ فَأْتِنِي بِهِمَا. فَجِئْتُهُ بِهِمَا. قَالَ مَنْ أَنْتُمْمَا - أَوْ مِنْ أَيْنَ أَنْتُمْمَا قَالَا مِنْ أَهْلِ
 الطَّائِفِ. قَالَ لَوْ كُنْتُمَا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْبَلَدِ لَأَوْجَعْتُكُمَا، تَرْفَعَانِ أَصْوَاتَكُمَا فِي مَسْجِدِ
 رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

I was standing in the mosque and somebody threw a gravel at me. I looked and found that he was `Umar bin Al-Khattab. He said to me, "Fetch those two men to me." When I did, he said to them, "Who are you? (Or) where do you come from?" They replied, "We are from Ta'if." `Umar said, "Were you from this city (Medina) I would have punished you for raising your voices in the mosque of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)." (Sahih al-Bukhari)

- Adab with the Prophet (ﷺ) is extremely important because if one lacks adab towards him, their actions will be void.
- According to Ibn Ashur, there are two ways in which one's actions are void:
 - Adab is a protection for one's self. If one loses it, they can eventually lose their iman and this can lead to disbelief.
 - The belittling of the Prophet (ﷺ) leads this person to lose respect for him to the point they do not care about what he says.
 - If one lacks adab, they might stay Muslim but they will be ill-mannered.
 - Some part of this person's actions will be canceled out, or the sin of disrespecting the Prophet (ﷺ) would be so high that the actions and good deeds they have earned will not matter.