

Surah Al-e-Imran (continued)

One of the important topics mentioned in this surah is that of infaaq fee sabeelillah (spending in the way of Allah). The fourth juzz begins by stating that one can never reach the high level of righteousness (birr) until one spends out of those things which are most beloved; in order to reach our objective we need to offer sacrifice and spend for the cause.

The other main topics discussed in this juzz are as follows:

1. Following the commandment to change the qiblah, the people of the book complained and protested, saying that, the Bayt al Maqdas (in Jerusalem) has the honour of being the first place of worship. Allah refutes their claim by highlighting 3 special features of the Bayat al haraam (kaa'ba):

- a. This is the first place of worship on earth.
- b. Certain signs provide evidence for it being the first place of worship, namely: the station of Ibraheem, the zamzam water and hatheem (area adjacent to the kaaba enclosed by a low semi-circular wall).
- c. Whomsoever enters the haram, is given protection and sanctuary.

The kaaba is also, the only place, that every able Muslim is obliged to visit to perform the Hajj once in a life time.

2. The Muslims are being commanded three important things:

- a. To have the taqwaa of Allah, as is His Right.
- b. To hold fast to the rope of Allah, as one.
- c. Not to be divided by splitting into groups.

Abdullah ibn Mas'ud radhi Allahu anhu says: "The right of taqwaa is to obey Allah, not to disobey Him, to remember Him, not to forget Him, to thank Him, and not to be ungrateful."

3. The Muslim ummah is the best ummah due to the following features:

- a. They believe in those things which Allah wants them to believe in.
- b. Command the good (maa'ruf).
- c. Forbid the evil (munkar).

The act of inviting humanity to the truth is not only a reason for their greatness, but, in fact it is a religious responsibility and obligation.

Umar radhi Allahu anhu said that : "Whomsoever wishes to be counted among the Muslim ummah, then he should fulfill these conditions." Referring to the 3 conditions mentioned above.

The prophet salAllahu alaihi wa sallam said:

" By He, in Whose Hand is my soul ! Keep commanding the good, and forbidding the evil, otherwise it is possible that Allah will send his torment on you. Then, you will supplicate to Him , but your supplication will not be accepted/responded to." (Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah).

4. The Muslims have been prohibited from making the munaafiqoon and the kuffar their beloved and close friends due to the following reasons:

- a. They do not refrain from causing you harm.
- b. They wish that you are inflicted with misfortune and worry in worldly and religious affairs.
- c. Their faces and their speech, show their enmity and hatred towards you.
- d. The enmity and hatred in their hearts, is more severe than what they express.

5. The battle of Badr is mentioned. This was one of the greatest battles in our history. The fortunate participants showed examples of unrivaled bravery and courage, they witnessed the unseen (ghayb) help from Allah with their own eyes, they were much fewer in number and were poorly equipped. This battle taught the Muslims two fundamental lessons:

- a. Victory does not depend solely on the armaments and numbers, but, instead, the fundamental conditions are: Imaan, certainty (yaqeen), obedience, and steadfastness.
- b. As long as the Muslims remain united and steadfast on the truth and hold fast to the rope of Allah, then they will have Allah's help and they will be victorious.

6. The Battle of Uhud has been discussed here extensively, in order for us to learn some very important lessons related to the Muslim army.

This battle has been mentioned in approx. 55 ayaat, which explain the causes and wisdom behind this temporary defeat. There is warning and glad tidings, criticism and praise. Following the defeat in Badr a year earlier, the mushrikeen were very keen to seek revenge. So, in the month of Shawwal 3 Hijri, Abu Sufyan lead 3,000 soldiers, 200 on horseback, 700 armored personnel, 3000 camels, and 500 women, in an attack on Madinah. The Muslims were only 700 in number.

The prophet salAllahu alaihi wa sallam, assigned Abdullah ibn Jubair and 50 archers to a hill, later known as 'Jabl Ramaath', with clear instructions, that they were not to leave their positions, come what may, i.e. victory or defeat. The prophet, also positioned his troops in a strategic way, to force the enemy to participate in one on one combat, hence rendering their soldiers on horseback as redundant. The Quraysh lost 8 flag bearers, which demoralised them.

The attack from lions such as Ali, Humza, and Abu Dijanah utterly defeated the Quraysh and they had to flee the battlefield. In light of this victory, a large proportion of the archers that had been assigned to the hill, left their positions and started to gather the war booty. Khalid ibn Waleed, who had not yet embraced Islam, was observing this like a hawk. In this way, he enacted his military strategy, and attacked the Muslims from behind the hill. This, sudden attack from behind, caused panic and the Muslims found themselves in the midst of an attack from the front and rear. A seemingly minor error, changed certain victory into defeat. The Quraysh suffered 22 casualties, while 70 companions were martyred. The Quraysh were quick to leave the battle. The munaafiqeen were quick to spread mischief, by claiming that if the Muslims were on the truth, then they would not have been defeated. The 25 ayaat that follow, give a detailed analysis of their statements and attitudes.

When the Quraysh reached the point of 'Rawhaa' they realised that they had left the battle prematurely, and therefore decided to attack and crush Madinah. This news reached the prophet salAllahu alaihi wa sallam.

Having buried the 70 martyred companions, he called upon his companions to march to 'Humraa al asad'. The companions (may Allah be pleased with them), were quick to respond to

the prophet's call, despite the injuries and casualties. They marched forth. Allah instilled fear into the hearts of Quraysh, who changed their mind and redirected themselves to return to Makkah.

Allah has mentioned these companions as follows:

"Those who answered Allah and the Messenger after being wounded; for those of them who did good deeds and feared Allah, there is a great reward." (Ayat 172)

The last section of Al-e-Imran mentions those believers who remember Allah in all their affairs and at all times, reflect on the creation and pray to their Lord. (Ayat 190 - 195).

The sura concludes by highlighting 4 principles for success:

- a. Sabr: To be steadfast and not to lose heart in the face of adversity.
- b. Musabara: To outdo the enemy in terms of steadfastness, commitment and courage.
- c. Murabatha: To be prepared to face the enemy.
- d. Taqwaa: To be ever mindful of Allah.

Surah an-Nisaa

This surah consists of 172 ayaat and is sometimes referred to as an-Nisaa Kubraa (i.e. the greater) while Surah at-Talaaq is referred to as an-Nisaa Qusraa (i.e. the lesser/smaller). These two have been grouped together as they contain a great deal of guidance related to women.

The part of this surah which is included in the fourth juzz, includes the following topics:

1. Orphans should be given the wealth that belongs to them and one should not take measures to usurp their wealth and deprive them of this in any way. Although this includes both male and female orphans, there is special emphasis given to the rights of female orphans as they are more likely to be discriminated against, without a guardian.
2. The believers are permitted to marry up to 4 wives at any one time, as long as they can fulfill their rights and maintain equality and justice between them. Otherwise, it is sufficient to marry just one wife. The tradition of polygamy (taking more than 1 wife) was rampant even before the advent of the last prophet. However, there were no rules or regulations regarding this practice, and as a result women were ill-treated and exploited. Islam gave this practice the needed rules and regulations, to restore women's rights. It is bizarre, that the disbelievers frown upon polygamous relationships, which ensure women their rights and provide them with security and protection. However, illicit and immoral practices with more than one woman, are not only not frowned upon, but in fact, people who object to this are seen as backward and unjust.
3. Prior to the advent of the last prophet, women were deprived of any inheritance. The Arabs would say: "How can we give inheritance to the one who does not ride the horse, hold the sword or fight with the enemy?". This ignorant practice deprived women and children of their right to inheritance. Islam abolished this injustice and established a just system which gave everyone their due right to inherit. To give women and children their rightful inheritance is not a favour upon them, but rather a moral and religious obligation.
4. Those women are mentioned whom a person cannot get married to, due to their close relationship e.g. due to blood relations, in-laws or suckling etc. (Ayat 23 - 24).