

Taraveeh: Second Night

Surah Al-Baqara Continues:

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

These verses serve as an introduction to the prohibition of lending money on interest. The true conception of Allah, Revelation and Life-after-death has been emphasized to keep alive the sense of accountability. The stories of Prophet Abraham (Allah's peace be upon him) and of the one who woke up after a sleep of hundred years have been related to show that Allah is All-Powerful and is able to raise the dead and call them to account. The Believers, therefore, should keep this fact in view and refrain from taking interest on money. **252 - 260**

The theme of **153 - 251** has been resumed and the Believers have been exhorted to spend in the way of Allah in order to please Him alone. In contrast to this, they have been warned against the evils of lending money on interest. Instructions have also been given for the honest conduct of day-to-day business transactions. **261 - 283**

Surah Al-i'Imran:

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

Name

This Surah takes its name from v. 33. Al-i-Imran, like the names of many other surahs, is merely a name to distinguish it from other surahs and does not imply that the family of Imran has been discussed in it.

The Period of Revelation

This Surah consists of four discourses:

- The first discourse (vv. 1-32) was probably revealed soon after the Battle of Badr.
- The second discourse (vv. 33-63) was revealed in 9 A. H. on the occasion of the visit of the deputation from the Christians of Najran.
- The third discourse (vv. 64-120) appears to have been revealed immediately after the first one.
- The fourth discourse (vv. 121-200) was revealed after the Battle of Uhud.

Subject

Though these discourses were revealed at different periods and on different occasions, they are so inter-linked and so inter-connected with regard to their aim, object and central theme that they make together one continuous whole. This Surah has been especially addressed to two groups: the people of the Book (the Jews and the Christians) and the followers of Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon him).

The message has been extended to the Jews and the Christians in continuation of the invitation in Al-Baqarah, in which they have been admonished for their erroneous beliefs and evil morals and advised to accept, as a remedy, the Truth of the Quran. They have been told here that Muhammad (Allah's peace be, upon him) taught the same right way of life that had been preached by their own Prophets; that it alone was the Right Way, the way of Allah; hence any deviation from it will be wrong even according to their own Scriptures.

The second group, the Muslims, who had been declared to be the best Community in Al-Baqarah and appointed torch-bearers of the Truth and entrusted with the responsibility of reforming the world, have been given additional instructions in continuation of those given in the preceding Surah. The Muslims have been warned to learn a lesson from the religious and moral degeneration of the former communities and to refrain from treading in their footsteps. Instructions have also been given about their formative work they had to perform. Besides this, they have been taught how to deal with the people of the Book and the hypocrites who were putting different kinds of hindrances in the way of Allah. Above all, they have been warned to guard against those weaknesses which had come to the surface in the Battle Uhud.

Background

The following is the background of the Surah:

1. The Believers had met with all sorts of trials and hardships about which they had been forewarned in Al- Baqarah. Though they had come out victorious in the Battle of Badr, they were not out of danger yet. Their victory had aroused the enmity of all those powers in Arabia which were opposed to the Islamic Movement. Signs of threatening storms had begun to appear on all sides and the Muslims were in a perpetual state of fear and anxiety. It looked as if the whole Arabian world around the tiny state of Al- Madinah -- which was no more than a village state at

that time -- was bent upon blotting out its very existence. This state of war was also adversely affecting its economy, which had already been badly disturbed by the influx of the Muslim refugees from Makkah.

2. Then there was the disturbing problem of the Jewish clans who lived in the suburbs of Al-Madinah. They were discarding the treaties of alliance they had made with the Holy Prophet after his migration from Makkah. So much so that on the occasion of the Battle of Badr, these people of the Book sympathized with the evil aims of the idolaters, in spite of the fact that their fundamental articles of the Faith -- Oneness of Allah, Prophet hood , Life-after- death -- were the same as those of the Muslims. After the Battle of Badr, they openly began to incite the Quraish and other Arab clans to wreak their vengeance on the Muslims. Thus those Jewish clans set aside their centuries-old friendly and neighborly relations with the people of Al-Madinah. At last when their mischievous actions and breaches of treaties became unbearable, the Holy Prophet attacked the Bani- Qainu-qa'a, the most mischievous of all the other Jewish clans who had conspired with the hypocrites of Al-Madinah and the idolatrous Arab clans to encircle the Believers on all sides. The magnitude of the peril might be judged from the fact that even the life of the Holy Prophet himself was always in danger. Therefore his Companions slept in their armors during that period and kept watch at night to guard against any sudden attack, and whenever the Holy Prophet happened to be out of sight even for a short while, they would at once set out in search of him.
3. This incitement by the Jews added fuel to the fire which was burning in the hearts of the Quraish and they began to make preparations to avenge the defeat they had suffered at Badr. A year after this an army of 3,000 strong marched out of Makkah to invade Al-Madinah and a battle took place at the foot of Mount Uhud. The Holy Prophet came out of Al-Madinah with one thousand men to meet the enemy. While they were

marching to the battle-field, three hundred hypocrites deserted the army and returned to Al- Madinah, but there still remained a small band of hypocrites among the seven hundred who accompanied the Holy Prophet. They played their part and did their worst to create mischief and chaos in the ranks of the Believers during the Battle. This was the first clear indication of the fact that within the fold of the Muslim Community there was quite a large number of saboteurs who were always ready to conspire with the external enemies to harm their own brethren.

4. Though the devices of the hypocrites had played a great part in the setback at Uhud, the weaknesses of the Muslims themselves contributed no less to it. And it was but natural that the Muslims should show signs of moral weakness for they were a new community which had only recently been formed on a new ideology and had not as yet got a thorough moral training. Naturally in this second hard test of their physical and moral strength, some weaknesses came to the surface. That is why a detailed review of the Battle of Uhud was needed to warn the Muslims of their shortcomings and to issue instructions for their reform. It should also be noted that this review of the Battle is quite different from the reviews that are usually made by generals on similar occasions.

Subject: Guidance

This Surah is the sequel to, Al-Baqarah and the invitation therein is continued to the people of the Book. In Al- Baqarah the Jews were pointedly invited to accept the Guidance and in this Surah the Christians have particularly been admonished to give up their erroneous beliefs and accept the Guidance of the Quran. At the same time, the Muslims have

been instructed to nourish the virtues that may enable them to carry out their obligations and spread the Divine Guidance.

Topics and their Interconnection

In these introductory verses, the fundamental truths about Allah, Revelation and Life-after-death have been reiterated to serve as fitting preliminaries, leading to the main topics discussed in the Surah. **1 – 32**

