

## Tafsir Sūrat al-Hujurāt

### Learning Objectives:

- A study of verse 9 and 10 of Surat al-Hujurat

وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَى فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّى تَفِيءَ إِلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ [9] إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ [10]

*And if two parties of the believers quarrel, then make peace between them; but if one of them acts wrongfully towards the other, fight the one which acts wrongfully until it complies with God's command; then if it complies, make peace between them with justice and act equitably; indeed God loves those who act equitably. The believers are but brethren, therefore make peace between your brethren and be God-conscious so that mercy may be had on you.*

### 1. Background of the verses

It is reported that a quarrel broke out between the tribes of Aws and Khazraj, which were the two main Muslim tribes resident in Madina. As a result, some members of each tribe got into a heated dispute and were ready to draw swords on each other. At that time this verse was revealed to teach the Muslims how to act in such a situation.

### 2. Conflict resolution

The verses teach us several important lessons about how to resolve disputes:

- The first duty of a Muslim is to intervene to make peace between members of the community who are in dispute. It is a duty for all the believers and they cannot collectively shirk this duty (Wājib al-Kifā'i)
- However, if there is injustice being done to one party, then the Muslim must back those who are on the side of justice, even if they have to speak out against their own friends.
- However, when the crisis is resolved, the verse tells us that one must not take revenge or act excessively; rather one must act with fairness.
- In addition one should attempt to patch up the ill-feeling between the two previously quarrelling parties so that peace can be resumed in the future.

All this is necessary because the Muslims are brothers of one another at the end of the day and fostering good ties within the community is a sign of God-consciousness (*taqwā*).

### 3. The importance of Brotherhood

When a community is united and there is love and harmony between its members, it is able to flourish in social, economic and religious activities.

God encourages this brotherhood by liberally rewarding activities that bring people closer. For example, there is great reward for eating together, praying together, visiting one another, marriage, etc.

In contrast, there is great punishment for those things that divide the community such as gossiping, breaking ties with relatives, oppressing the vulnerable, etc.

#### 4. Rights of a Believer on another Believer

In an important hadith, Imam al-Sadiq (A) advised His companion that:

[The believer has 7 obligatory rights on his fellow believer. If a Muslim does not care about these rights, then he has come out of the protection of God, and has disobeyed Him. These rights are:

- He loves for him what he loves for himself, and dislikes for him what he dislikes for himself.
- That he takes pains to fulfil his needs and to make him happy and does not ignore his words.
- He helps him with his wealth, strength and speech
- He looks out for him, guides him and protects him
- He does not let him go without his basic needs
- He helps him when he is a vulnerable and poor state
- He allocates the best to him and visits him when he is unwell.] <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ṣadūq, *al-Khiṣāl*, Chapter of sevens | (Paraphrased and partial translation)

عن المعلى بن خنيس قال: قلت لأبي عبد الله عليه السلام ما حق المؤمن على المؤمن؟ قال: إني عليك شفيق، إني أخاف أن تعلم ولا تعمل وتضيع ولا تحفظ

قال: فقلت: لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله.

قال للمؤمن على المؤمن سبعة حقوق واجبة، وليس منها حق إلا وهو واجب على أخيه

إن ضيع منها حقاً خرج من ولاية الله، وترك طاعته، ولم يكن له فيها نصيب. أيسر حق منها:

أن تُحِبَّ له ما تُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِكَ و تَكْرَهُ له ما تَكْرَهُ لِنَفْسِكَ،

و الحقُّ الثاني أن تمشي في حاجته و تبتغي رضاه و لا تخالف قوله،

و الحقُّ الثالث أن تصله بنفسك و مالك و يدك و رجلك و لسانك،

و الحقُّ الرابع أن تكون عينه و دليله و مرآته و قميصه،

الحقُّ الخامس أن لا تشبع و يجوع و لا تلبس و يعرى و لا تروى و يظمأ،

و الحقُّ السادس إن يكون لك امرأه و خادم و ليس لآخيك امرأه و لا خادم أن تبعث خادمك فتغسل ثيابه و تصنع طعامه و تمهد فراشه فإن ذلك

كله إنما جعل بينك و بينه،

و الحقُّ السابع أن تبرّ قسّمه و تجيب دعوته و تشهد جنازته و تعودّه في مرضه و تشخص بدنك في قضاء حاجته و لا توجه الى أن يسألك ولكن

تبادر الى قضاء حوائجه

فإذا فعلت ذلك به وصلت ولايتك بولايته و ولايته الله عزوجل