

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَقَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ  
 إِذَا ضَرَبُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَوْ كَانُوا غُرَرًا لَوْ كَانُوا عِنْدَنَا مَا مَاتُوا  
 وَمَا قُتِلُوا لِيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ ذَٰلِكَ حَسْرَةً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحْيِي  
 وَيُمِيتُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١٥٦﴾

*Al-Imran (The Family of Imran) 3:156*

**O You Who Believe!**

- Be not like the unbelievers, who say of their brethren, when they are travelling through the earth or engaged in fighting: "If they had stayed with us, they would not have died, or been slain."
- This, that Allah may make it a cause of sighs and regrets in their hearts.
- It is Allah that gives Life and Death.
- And Allah sees well all that you do.

**Commentary**

Allamah Taba Tabai (AR)

It is the continuation of the verses revealed especially about the battle of Uhud. It deals with another affair affecting them, i.e., the grief and sorrow that had overwhelmed them because so many of their braves and notables had been slaughtered. The overwhelming majority of the martyrs was from the Helpers; as reportedly no more than four of the Emigrants were martyred. It gives rise to the surmise that most of the resistance was from the Helpers' side and that the Emigrants had left the battleground long before them.

The word, "those who disbelieve", refers to the unbelievers not to the hypocrites, as some people think. It is not the hypocrisy, per se, which incites such talks — although the hypocrites had uttered these words. Such talk, in reality, is a product of disbelief. Thus it was necessary to ascribe it to the unbelievers. *ad-Darb fil-ardh* (lit., striking in the earth) metaphorically means travelling. *Al-Ghuzza* is plural of *al-ghaizi* (fighter) like *at-talib* and *at-tullab* or *ad-darib* and *ad-durrab* "so Allah makes this to be an intense regret in their hearts", i.e., so that Allah may punish them through this intense regret; it has thus put the means in place of the end.

The words, "Allah gives life and causes death", explain the reality about which the unbelievers had gone astray, and had said, "Had they been with us, they would not have died and they would not have been slain." The words, "death", as used here, covers natural death as well as slaughter - we have explained earlier that when used alone, this word covers every type of death. The clause, "and Allah sees what you do", explains the reason for the prohibition contained in the words, "be not like those who disbelieve".

In the clause, "they would not have died and they would not have been slain", death is mentioned before slaying; the sequence follows that of the preceding clause, "when they travel . . . or engage in fighting". Also, unlike slaying (which is an abnormal happening) death is a natural and normal phenomenon; therefore the normal was mentioned before the abnormal.

The verse, in short, admonishes the believers not to be like the unbelievers; they should not say about someone who dies outside his home town or among strangers, or is slain when engaged in jihad, that if he had been with them he would not have died or been killed. This type of talk throws one into mental agony and divine punishment - it is the intense grief put in their hearts. Moreover, it emanates from sheer ignorance: Being near them or away from them neither gives life nor causes death. Giving life and death is among the affairs exclusively reserved for Allah - the One Who has no partner or colleague. Therefore, the believers should fear Allah and not be like the unbelievers; and Allah sees what they do.

Mir Ahmed Ali (AR) and Aqa Mahdi Puya (AR)

"Their brethren" means the Muslim relatives and friends of the infidels and the hypocrites who had to journey in the cause of Islam and face hardship or fight the enemies of Islam and die in the battlefield.

The infidels ridiculed the deserters when they reached Madina for having lost their friends and relatives in the battle of Uhad and assured them that if they had been with them (the infidels) they would not have suffered the misfortune. The ignorant infidels and "their brethren" did not know that Allah is the giver of life and death and that ultimately the infidels themselves had to regret for not becoming Muslims, because finally Islam was to emerge victorious.

Ayatullah Sayyid Kamal Faqih Imani and a Group of Muslim Scholars

We ought to stand firm against discouraging propagations and inspirations, and gossips should not be retold. We must know that death and life are from the determinations of Allah and are not concerned to fight and journey. So, the enemy cast the evil propagation in the form of sympathy and regret.

Thus, Allah is the Clear sighted and the Cognizant. So, be careful of your conditions, thoughts, and deeds.