

يَتَّيِّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا ءَابَاءَكُمْ وَءِخْوَانَكُمْ ءَوْلِيَاءَ إِنِ اسْتَحَبُّوا
الْكُفْرَ عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِّنكُمْ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

At-Tauba (The Repentance) 9:23

O You Who Believe!

- Do not take your fathers and your brothers as protectors, if they love infidelity above Faith.
- If any of you do so, they do wrong.

Commentary

Allamah Taba Tabai (AR)

In the verse being discussed the words, " If any one of you do so, they do wrong", this was not to give the idea to those whose fathers and brothers were disbelievers that they were not morally very guilty because they belonged to that family, but then this verse would not have been able to instill the fear in them or to keep the believers from befriending them.

The words, "If any one of you do so, they do wrong" linguistically acts as a reminder that they are definitely unjust after due deliberations. The words, " Verily God does not guide those who are unjust", has come in places in the Qur'an. The verse (50) of Surah Maidah on this issue adds to its meaning when it says, "*O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians for your friends and protectors: They are but friends and protectors to each other. And he amongst you that turns to them (for friendship) is of them. Verily Allah guides not the unjust people.*"

The conclusion that we draw here is that such people are bereft of the mercies of God and none of their good deeds even will help them attain success both here and in the hereafter.

Tafsir Burhan in the book Jama' Banussaha vol.2 quotes Nisai who says Talha bin Shiba, Bani Abduldar, Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib and Ali bin Abi Talib where boasting among each other.

Talha said, *The Keys of the Kabah are with me and I can spend the night in it if I want to.* Abbas said, *I have the post of the water bearer and I too can spend the night inside the Kabah because I work there.* Hazrat Ali said,

I do not understand what you say. I have prayed towards this Qiblah six months earlier than everyone, and I have gone to Jihad.

God then revealed the verse, *“Do you make the giving of drink to pilgrims, or the maintenance of the Sacred Mosque, equal to (the pious service of) those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and strive with might and main in the cause of Allah?”*

Compiler says

What he means by saying that he had prayed to the Kabah six months earlier than all others is that he believed in Islam six months earlier than everyone else, because here it is the belief that is under scrutiny and not prayers or else the prayers would have been mentioned. Talha bin Shiba mentioned here according to some was Shiba himself and according to some others it was Uthman bin Abi Shiba.

Tafsir Burhan quotes Ibn Shahar Ashub who in turn quotes Abu Jafar (AS) about the explanation of the verse, "O you who believe! Take not for protectors your fathers and your brothers if they love infidelity above Faith", that faith here means the succession of Hazrat Ali.

The compiler says

This tradition is critical of the in-depth of the Qur'an and it is important to analyze the status of belief before passing a judgment because belief has various stages each of them has its own zenith.

Tafsir Qummi says that when Hazrat Ali declared,

From today onwards no idolater is allowed to enter the precinct of the Kabah. The Quraysh became very angry and said, " Our trade has perished, our wives and children have become destitute and now our houses are about to fall." It was then that God revealed the verse (24) of Surah Taubah,

"Say: If it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred; the wealth that you have gained; the commerce in which you fear a decline: or the dwellings in which you delight - are dearer to you than Allah, or His Apostle, or the striving in His cause; - then wait until Allah brings about His decision: and Allah guides not the rebellious."

The compiler says

Then wait until Allah brings about His decision is very necessary. The verse refers to something, which is presently not in demand, and there is no customer for it in the market so they need to find alternative means for daily income. In the next verse it says, "O you who believe! Truly the Pagans are unclean; so let them not, after this year of theirs, approach the Sacred Mosque. And if you fear poverty, soon will Allah enrich you, if He wills, out of His bounty, for Allah is All-knowing, All-wise."

It is due to these traditions or this particular tradition that we can say that the subject of both the verses is the same but so far as language of expression is concerned they are very different because in the verse O you who believe! The language is respectful while in the verse, Say: If it be that your fathers" takes a hard tone especially in the end when it says "and Allah guides not the rebellious.' So how can it be possible that the evildoers are included when the verse is addressing the righteous believers?

The verse speaks of love of fathers and brothers but there are no such indications in the tradition and the Quraysh were not afraid of losing their fathers, brothers, wives or children. Then why did the verse mention them? Moreover, it admonishes them for giving precedent to the love of their kin over the love of God and His Messenger. We should ponder why the word " Jihad" has been used here. Durre Manthur records Ahmed Bukhari quoting Abdullah bin Hisham as saying,

We were with the Holy Messenger and he was holding the hands of Umar bin Khattab. Umar said, *O Messenger of God, you are the dearest one in my heart after my life.* The Messenger replied to this statement by saying,

None of you has truly believed until I become more dear to him than his own life.

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

No commentary available for this verse

Ayatullah Sayyid Kamal Faqih Imani and a Group of Muslim Scholars

The last temptation and pretext that might appear among a group of Muslims in front of the command of war against idol-worshippers was that they thought if they fought against the idolaters, they should renounce their relatives and tribes.

On the other side, their capitals and commerce was mostly in the hands of idolaters. By means of their intercourse into Makkah, the briskness of their market would increase.

On the third side, this group of Muslims had some good and comfortable houses in Mecca which might be destroyed if they fought against idolaters.

This holy verse clearly and decisively answers such persons. At first, it says:
“ *O’ you who have Faith! Do not take your fathers and your brothers for guardians if they prefer unbelief to belief, ...*”

Then, as an emphasis, it adds:

“*... and whoever of you takes them for a guardian, those – they are the unjust.*”

What injustice is greater than this that a person, by making friends with disbelievers and joining to the camp of foreigners and the enemies of the Truth, does injustice both to himself, and to the society which he belongs to, and to the Messenger of Allah (S) ?