

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنفِتُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا بَيْعَ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلَّةٌ وَلَا شَفِيعَةٌ ۗ وَالْكَافِرُونَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٢٥٤﴾

Al-Baqara (The Cow) 2:254

O You Who Believe!

- Spend out of (the bounties) We have provided for you.
- Before the Day comes when no bargaining (will avail), nor friendship nor intercession.
- Those who reject Faith they are the wrong-doers.

Commentary

Allamah Taba Tabai (AR)

This verse is rendered as a warning to the believers, telling them to give alms and not to lose the respite they have in this life. They are recommended to provide some fitting provisions thereby for their certain journey; the next life, the Hereafter.

The meaning is quite clear. The last sentence implies that not spending in the way of Allah is unbelief and injustice.

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

To provide or give help in cash and kind to the needy has been identified with the "spending in the way of Allah". It is an exhortation, not a compulsion. According to your conscience you have the liberty to spend in the way of Allah "out of what He has given to you", whether you have large means or a moderate income.

"Before the day comes" implies that one has to do good in this world. What you sow (in this life) you shall reap (in the life of the hereafter). "There will be no bargaining, nor any friendship nor intercession" means that wrongdoers will not be able to claim salvation in exchange of good deeds done by their ancestors or their posterity; or on account of the acts of their religious leaders as the Christians think that Jesus, by his blood, has redeemed the sins of his followers. This verse categorically denies this type of assertion and warns the people not to indulge in such a false belief. The wicked will be punished.

To make the social life in this world egalitarian every individual should contribute to the welfare of the human society out of what Allah gives him. The overall effect of this system covers every person in the community.

Islam is the only religion which makes spending (in the way of Allah) obligatory. Every Muslim must follow the divine commandments as to how the bounties of Allah, given to him, should be shared with his less fortunate relatives and fellow-creatures.

This verse tells us the order in which charity should be given.

First, in the list, are the parents, then the near kindred, the orphans, the needy and the wayfarer. There is no reward if parents and the nearer kindred are overlooked in order to meet the demands of others. The needs of the parents should be cared for as a duty without the embarrassment of their having to ask for the same. The Holy Prophet advised his followers to take care of the parents, brothers and sisters, and the nearest relatives first, and then the others. It must also be noted that wars (in self-defence) require funds. To finance such wars is as important as spending for the helpless relatives, because it is in the interest of the whole community that the invaders should not be allowed to destroy the polity of the faithful.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

What should be spent in the way of Allah? Whatever good that may benefit others is the answer. As Zakat (the poor-tax) is compulsory, it cannot be made a part of "whatever good you do", which has no connection with Zakat. Also, Zakat cannot be spent on the members of the family. The word *afwa* in verse 219 of this surah makes it clear that only surplus should be given. The Holy Prophet has defined the surplus, and how much and to whom it should be given. In all events moderation is the guideline.

Ayatullah Sayyid Kamal Faqih Imani and a Group of Muslim Scholars

On the Resurrection Day, there will be neither any bargain to buy the means of felicity and security against one's infidelity, nor any friend or intercessor to make their infidelity invalid.

"... before there comes a day wherein shall be no bargaining neither friendship, nor intercession; and the infidels - they are the unjust."

They are deprived from intercession in that world because they were the cause of deprivation for others in this world. For example, a miser person not only is unjust to himself, since he extinguishes the light of generosity inside his self and wastes his situation in the Hereafter, but also practically proves inequity against others when he ignores the Divine commandments.