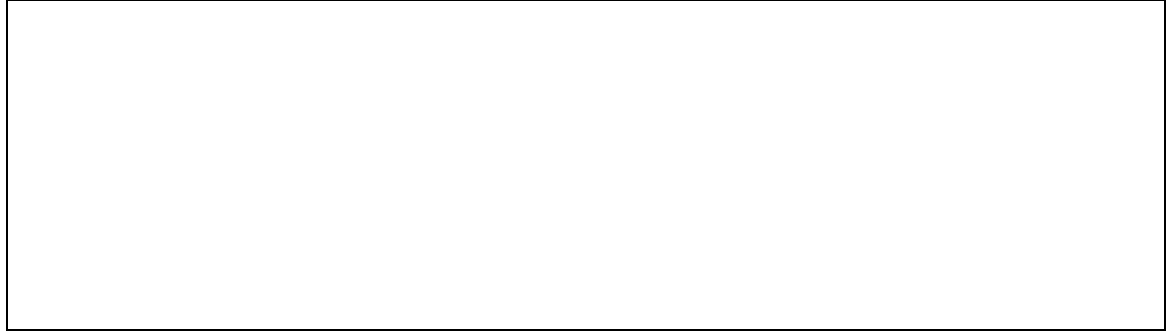


## **An-Nahl (16:75)**



Allah sets forth the Parable (of two men: one) a slave under the dominion of another; He has no power of any sort; and (the other) a man on whom We have bestowed goodly favours from Ourselves, and he spends thereof (freely), privately and publicly: are the two equal? (By no means;) praise be to Allah. But most of them understand not.

### **MUHAMMAD HUSAIN TABA TABAI (AR)**

*God sets the example of two men, one is a slave of another, and he has no power over anything, while the other is the one whom we have sustained with a goodly sustenance from which he spends privately and publicly. Are they both equal? All praise is God's yet most of them do not know.*

The verse mentions two people one of whom is a subservient slave with no powers at all and the other is the one who has been bestowed with ample sustenance and he spends it privately as well as publicly.

The verse then asks whether both can be equals.

Their example has been set because they are not equal in status. The slave is not a free man and does not have the power even over himself. Opposite of him is the free man and has a free self and God has bestowed ample grace on him. He spends it as he desires. Their equality is questioned.

The purpose is to highlight that God alone is the owner of everything and spends them as He wishes so none can be deemed comparable to Him. The others are His creation and have no authority over themselves or on others for they have no right to spend anything of their own free will. This negates any other God who they may claim has created them besides Allah.

Some people have answered the question “Can they be equal?” as they can for they belong to the same God, only one is a slave while the other is a free man. This is incorrect. “All praise to God” means that the praise is a part of God sand to Him belong all that are beautiful.

The purpose of all this argument is that the ruler and the ruled are not equals. The master in this worldly life can spend the sustenance because God has bestowed it upon him and because all praise is for Him. He is the cause of all sustenance and thus is praiseworthy. It is He who creates, gives life, sustains obliges and rewards. Since the humans are subservient they should worship none else for they have no right to do so. He is the sole omnipotent God.

It is also been said the ayah of Hamd is like a thanksgiving or is a final argument. The creations have been told why God is praiseworthy. His Unity and oneness has been established and He it is who has showed us how to be grateful.

In the words, “Nay! Most of them know not” the word “most” refers to the idolaters for they do not know that all grace comes from God and there is no other Lord but Him. Those have a little power and some ownership have it because He has bestowed it upon them.

Some of these people are obeyed out of fear and some worship that which they are afraid of. This is the condition of most of them though some of them know that it is God who is the cause and bestower of all grace yet they rebel. The same is the case of the disbeliever for every deed of his is confiscated and he remains without power over anything. The other example is that of the believer who has been guided by God and he spends in the way of God both privately and publicly. When the disbelievers spend they do so against the will of God but the believer spends the way God wants him to and is thankful of getting the chance to spend. The previous verse while it discusses the unity and oneness of God enumerates His continuous grace and we discern that it is God who is one and who is the only Lord of all the worlds.

There is the verse that says, “God has given the example of two people one of whom is dumb.” Majmaul Bayan says that it is about a dumb person or “Abkum” who can neither understand nor make someone else understand. He does not have the power to speak. Such a man has been described as a blunt knife for he can hardly speak due to the bluntness of his tongue and if he speaks no one understands him.

In Tahdhib Imam Jafar Sadiq is reported to have explained the divorce of a slaver and his marriage. He said, there is no divorce or marriage for him because being subservient he does not have the authority over anything. He further said that divorce and marriage is subjected to his owner’s approval. This meaning is found in most Shia books.

The Holy Messenger spoke about the words, “can they be equals?” And Hadhrat Ali is the one about who the words are “is such a man equal to one who commands justice and is himself on the straight path?” Tafsir Burhan has the same Hadith.

Sunni Tafsirs say that the words, “Allah puts forward the example of two men, one of whom is dumb” refers to Hisham bin Umru who used to spend his wealth privately and publicly and he had a slave called “Aljuza” who used to restrain him from doing so. Some have taken it to be Usman bin Mata’un and his slave.

In the matter of the example of the two men, one person was Abi bin Khalaf and the other is Hamza and Usman bin Mata'un. Hashim bin Umru and Abu Jahal both have been taken to be the dumb man.

### **MIR AHMED ALI (AR)**

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Islam teaches man to be active and useful to himself and others. Self-denial and disinterestedness in the collective life are not encouraged by Islam.

On the one hand there was Ali ibn abi Talib, the truest identity of Holy Prophet, who gave away whatever he had in the cause of Allah (Imam Husayn, his son, reached the highest peak of giving away in the way of Allah), left no stone unturned and spared nothing that belonged to him or was in his power to establish the true faith, in the worst circumstance (Refer to the commentary of Ali Imran: 52 and 53 for dawat dhil ashirah; Al Baqarah: 207 and Anfal: 30 for the night of hijrat; Ali Imran: 13 for the battle of Badr; Al Baqarah: 214 and 251 for the battle of Khandaq; Ali Imran: 121, 122, 128, 140 to 142, 144, 151 to 156, 159, 166 to 168 and Anfal: 16 for the battle of Uhad; Al Bara-at: 25 to 27 for the battle of Hunayn, and many other services he rendered to help and protect the Holy Prophet. It was his mission in whose recognition the Holy Prophet declared at Ghadir Khum: "Of whomsoever I am mawla, Ali is his mawla" (see commentary of Al Ma-idah: 67).

On the other hand there were in the history of Islam those who not only always shrank and stepped back at crucial times but also deserted the Holy Prophet whenever odds were against him. See commentary of Al Baqarah: 214 and 251; Ali Imran: 121, 122, 128, 140 to 142, 151 to 156, 159, 166 to 168; Anfal: 16; and Al-Bara-at: 25 to 27, and Nisa: 65.

### **AYATULLAH KAMAL FAQIH IMANI AND SEVERAL SCHOLARS**

Allah has discussed the fact as to how the pagans are being misled, saying:

*" Allah sets forth a parable of a bonded slave, having no power over anything, ..."*

Allah here sets forth a parable to clarify His intention by it and thereby approaches the concept to the audience. The parable is: 'the slave who is a bonded one and has authority over nothing; ' that is, he has got no options.

And a free man whom Allah has provided with means of sustenance, possesses property and blessings, gives away out of his belongings openly and in secret and without any fear. The verse says:

*" and one whom We have provided with good means of sustenance from Us, then he spends from it secretly and openly. ..."*

As for the sentence:/ hal yastawun/ signifies: "Are they equal?" Some commentators claim that this allegory relates to the believers and the disbelievers, since a disbeliever involves in no 'good ', while a believer acquires the 'good'. Thus Allah has explained the difference between the believer and the disbeliever, hence, He has persuaded people to choose the path of the believers and dissuade them from taking the path of the disbelievers.

The holy phrase "Praise belongs to Allah! " signifies that one must thank Allah for His blessings. This meaning refers to all of Allah's blessings. That is, say that the act of worship only deserves Him Who leads us towards monotheism, theology (the sciences of Divinities) , and gratitude, and shows us the road to Paradise.

However, most people, that is the pagans, do not know that it is He Who deserves being worshipped, and all blessings belong to Him. The verse says:

*"... Are they equal, Praise belongs to Allah! But most of them do not know. "*