

With the Noble Quran: Attributes of the Fasiqeen (فاسقين Defiantly Disobedient)

(Translated)

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Al Waie Magazine Issue No. 484

Forty-First Year, Jumada al-Awwal 1448 AH corresponding to October 2026 CE

Khalifa Muhammad – Jordan

Allah (swt) says: ﴿وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ * الَّذِينَ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ﴾ **“and He causes none to go astray except the defiantly disobedient * Who break the covenant of Allah after its binding (pledge) and sever what Allah has ordered to be joined and cause corruption on earth. It is those who are the losers”** [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah: 26-27].

In a previous issue, we reflected upon the twenty-sixth verse of Surah Al-Baqarah, which concludes with the statement of Allah (swt): ﴿وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ﴾ **“and He leads none astray except the defiantly disobedient”** [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah: 26]. We explained that Fisq (فسق deviance) signifies a departure from an original state, like a chick breaking out of its eggshell. Deviating from the rulings of the Shariah constitutes fisq (deviation); thus, the transgressors whom Allah (swt) leads astray through His signs and parables are those who depart from the rulings He has ordained. This, by no means, implies that Allah (swt) compels the misguided to stray, nor the guided to be guided. Instead, Allah (swt) recompenses every doer for his deeds in this world. So, for the one who chooses guidance to the Straight Path of Allah, Allah (swt) facilitates for him the means of guidance. And for the one who deviates from the Shariah rulings of Allah (swt) and chooses misguidance, then Allah (swt) facilitates for him the causes of misguidance.

And in this issue, we reflect upon the twenty-seventh verse of Surah Al-Baqarah, which mentions some of the characteristics of the hypocrites (منافقون munafiqun) and their ultimate fate. The first of these characteristics is that they break the covenant of Allah after its solemn binding. Breaking (نقض naqd) means to undo after finalization and to annul after commitment. A covenant (عهد 'ahad) is an instruction, an agreement, or a pact. Mutual agreement and pledging both refer to an accord. As for a solemn covenant (ميثاق meethaq), it is more specific and emphatic than a general covenant, meaning it is a stronger, more binding ratification.

As for the covenant of Allah (swt), it is general and includes all of Allah's covenants. Allah has mentioned in the Noble Qur'an covenants that He has taken upon His creation, obliging them to fulfill them and not break them. An example of this is the saying of Allah (swt) Who said: ﴿وَأَشْهَدُهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمُ الْأَسْتَبْرَاءُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ﴾ **“And He made them testify of themselves, asking, ‘Am I not your Lord?’ They said, ‘Yes’”** [TMQ Surah Al-A'raaf: 172]. He exacted this pledge from all the children of Adam (as), requiring them to acknowledge His Lordship based on the innate nature (فطرة fitrah) He instilled in them, characterized by natural incapacity and absolute need for Him (swt). And among these covenants is His covenant with the prophets to convey the message of Allah, the Almighty, as He said: ﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِيثَاقَهُمْ﴾ **“And mention, O Muhammad, when We took from the prophets their covenant and from you and from Nuh (as), Ibrahim (as), Musa (as) and Eesa (as), the son of Maryam; and We took from them a solemn covenant”** [TMQ Surah Al-Ahzab: 7]. And amongst these covenants is the solemn covenant that He (swt) took upon those who were given the Scripture to make it clear to the people and not conceal it, as He said, ﴿إِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُونَهُ﴾ **“And mention when Allah took a covenant from those who were given the Scripture, saying, ‘You must make it clear to the people and not conceal it’”** [TMQ Surah Aali 'Imran: 187].

And it includes the covenant of Allah (swt), His commands to His servants and His prohibitions for them, which necessitate hearing and obedience. So, He (swt) said: **﴿وَلَقَدْ عَهِدْنَا﴾** **“And We had already taken a covenant from Aadam (as) before, but he forgot; and We found not in him determination”** [TMQ Surah Ta-Ha: 115], meaning, We commanded him and forbade him, but he forgot and disobeyed. And He (swt) said: **﴿وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمِيثَاقَهُ الَّذِي وَاثَقَكُمْ بِهِ إِذْ قُلْتُمْ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا﴾** **“And remember the favor of Allah upon you and His covenant with which He bound you when you said, ‘We hear and we obey’”** [TMQ Surah Al-Ma'idah: 7]. So, the covenant which Allah (swt) took upon the believers concerning the risaalah (رسالة message) of Muhammad (saw) is His (swt) commands and prohibitions, which necessitate hearing and obedience after their belief in Him (swt).

Thus, the most prominent characteristic of the fasiqeen is their breaking of Allah's covenant by disbelieving after the testimony to which He (swt) made them bear witness against themselves, and after He sent them the Messenger (saw) to convey His commands and prohibitions to them. It also includes their disobedience of His commands and their commission of what He has forbidden, for disbelief in Allah (swt) is fisq (فسق defiant disobedience), and disobedience to His commands is also fisq. The fasiqun are those who have taken a path from the paths of misguidance that necessitates the extension in punishment of being led astray. Some Qurānic commentators (مفسرون mufasirun) have said that those intended by fasiqeen described with these attributes are the Jews. However, the more correct view is that it includes all corrupt people in general even if the verse was revealed concerning the Jews and others from the mushrikeen, because (العبرة بعموم اللفظ لا) (بخصوص السبب) “The consideration is for the generality of the wording, not the specificity of the cause.” The Shariah ruling of being led astray is linked to the derived noun (مشتق mushtaq) “fasiqeen,” which is an active participle (اسم فاعل ism fa'il), and linking a ruling to a derived noun (اشتقاق ishtiqaaq) indicates the causality (علية 'iliyyah) of the source of derivation (اشتقاق ishtiqaaq), as established in the fundamentals (أصول usul) of Shariah jurisprudence. The source of derivation is fisq (فسق deviance). Therefore, everyone who is characterized by this attribute deserves the extension in punishment of being led astray, and this includes the Jews as well as other than the Jews.

As for His (swt) saying, **﴿وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ﴾** **“and they sever what Allah has commanded to be enjoined”** [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah: 27] — this is the second characteristic of the fasiqeen who deserve misguidance; namely, that they sever what Allah (swt) has commanded to be enjoined. And what Allah has commanded to be joined is general because “what” (ما maa) is a relative pronoun (اسم موصول ism mawsool) from the words of generality in the language. Thus, it includes maintaining kinship ties, keeping ties with relatives, dutifulness to parents, kindness to neighbors, honoring the guest and everything that involves enjoined ties. It also includes ties with Allah (swt) through obedience to Him, and ties with His Messenger (saw) through obedience to him. Therefore, anyone who intentionally severs anything that Allah (swt) has commanded to be enjoined, while being aware of what they are doing, is from the defiantly disobedient who deserve misguidance.

As for His (swt) saying: **﴿وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ﴾** **“and they spread corruption in the earth”** — the root meaning of spreading corruption (فسد fasada) in the Arabic language is the frustration of a purpose and the removal of benefit, and if it involves harm, it is even more emphatic. It includes causing harm to others, whether by word or by deed. It also includes polytheism (شرك shirk) because it corrupts the innate disposition (فطرة fitrah) and diverts a person from what they should be upon. Furthermore, it includes all acts of disobedience. Therefore, every corruptor is from among the corrupt (al-fasiqeen) who deserve misguidance (إضلال idlaal).

As for His (swt) saying: **﴿أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ﴾** **“It is they who are the losers”** describes those who possess those attributes, or some of them, as being in a state of loss. At-Tabari said: (الخاسرون: جمع خاسر، وهم الناقصون أنفسهم وحظوظهم بمعصيتهم الله من رحمته، كما يخسر الرجل في تجارته؛ بأن) “The ‘losers’ (خاسرون khasirun) is”

the plural of loser (خاصر khasir), and they are those who have diminished their own souls and their shares by their disobedience to Allah, and thus from His mercy—just as a man incurs a loss in his trade when the capital of his sale is reduced. Likewise, the disbeliever and the hypocrite incur a loss through Allah depriving them of His mercy.”

And condemnation of these attributes has been mentioned in various places in the Noble Quran. Among these is His (swt) saying: ﴿وَالَّذِينَ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوءُ الدَّارِ﴾ **“And those who break the covenant of Allah after its ratification, and sever what Allah has commanded to be joined, and spread corruption on earth—for them is the curse, and for them is the evil abode”** [TMQ Surah Ar-Ra’d: 25]. And He (swt) informed that for them is the curse and for them is the evil abode—and in both the curse and the evil abode there is a loss beyond which there is no loss. In contrast, Allah (swt) praised those who fulfill the covenant of Allah (swt) and join what Allah (swt) has commanded to be joined as He (swt) said: ﴿كَمَنْ هُوَ أَعْمَىٰ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولَٰئِكَ الْأَلْبَابِ * الَّذِينَ يُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَنْقُضُونَ الْمِيثَاقَ * وَالَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ﴾ **“Is he who knows that what has been revealed to you from your Lord is the truth like one who is blind? Only those endowed with understanding will remember * Those who fulfill the covenant of Allah and do not break the covenant, * And those who enjoin what Allah has commanded to be enjoined”** [TMQ Surah Ar-Ra’d: 19-21]. He (swt) praised them and promised them a good outcome as He (swt) said about them: ﴿أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَقَبَى الدَّارِ * جَنَّاتٌ عَدْنٌ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ * سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ﴾ **“For them will be the ultimate abode— * Gardens of perpetual residence, which they will enter along with whoever was righteous among their forefathers, their spouses, and their descendants. And the angels will enter upon them from every gate, * [saying], ‘Peace be upon you for what you patiently endured. And excellent is the ultimate abode’”** [TMQ Surah Ar-Ra’d: 22-24].

And we conclude our reflection with the Noble Quran by pointing out those who are the most frequent violators of covenants and pledges; namely, the Jews. Allah (swt) has described them in numerous places in the Quran as breaking covenants and repeating this behavior. Among these instances is His (swt) saying: ﴿أَوَكَلَّمَا عَاهَدُوا عَهْدًا نَبَذَهُ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ **“And is it not that every time they took a covenant, a party of them threw it away? But, in fact, most of them do not believe.”** [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah: 100]. Their current state of treachery, deceit, and deception bears witness to this.