

Abu Yahya Al-Libi Audio Lecture 'Reflections on the Al-Hujurat Chapter'

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[Please note: Images may have been removed from this document. Page numbers have been added.]

Terrorism : Abu Yahya Al-Libi Audio Lecture 'Reflections on the Al-Hujurat Chapter' On 7 July, a forum member posted links on a jihadist website to an audio lecture by Abu Yahya al-Libi entitled "Reflections on the Al-Hujurat Chapter." In the lecture, Al-Libi provides an in-depth analysis of the Al-Hujurat chapter from the Koran, using the verses of this chapter as a reference for what he believes to be a set of moral codes for Muslims. The audio is divided into seven parts, each approximately between 20 and 35 minutes in length. This production is part of a 'Jurisprudential Course' dating back to 1427 Hijri, corresponding to 2006. According to the website, part one is not available for download. Links are only provided for parts two through seven. The audio was produced and released by the Al-Fajr Media Center.

A translation of the audio follows:

(Lesson One unavailable for download)

(Lesson Two)

"I seek refuge in God from the Satan the accursed. Thanks be to God. We praise Him, seek Him, and ask for His forgiveness. We seek the protection of God from the evils of our spirits and the sins of our deeds. He who is guided by God cannot be led astray by anyone, and he who is led astray by him cannot be guided by anyone. I bear witness that there is no god but God, alone, with no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is his slave and messenger. God sent him with guidance and the religion of truth, to proclaim it over all religions, even though the pagans detest it. May the peace and blessings of God be upon him, his kin, all his companions, and those who follow his path and Sunnah until Judgment Day. Thereafter:

"Yesterday, we paused at the words of God Almighty: 'O ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:6). We said that in this verse there is guidance for great behavior that the Muslim must have, and this is the making sure when hearing news and disseminating it. Leniency in this matter and receiving news from every side and spreading it without examining it and verifying it undoubtedly leads to the occurrence of sins, or a Muslim falling into sins and committing injustice against other Muslims. '...Lest ye harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done' (Partial Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:6). Like we mentioned yesterday, the prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) says: 'A person lies if he repeats everything he says' (Hadith). We said that we the mujahidin are in urgent and great need for these manners. This is because a mistake by the mujahid in repeating, disseminating and broadcasting news is not like a mistake committed by others. Bloodshed, theft of money, and other matters can be a repercussion of this. When have this great blessing bestowed on us by God Almighty: the blessing of jihad, the blessing of coming together around this obedience...We are, with the grace of God Almighty, always in an Islamic society. These are blessings that a Muslim rarely obtains. If you examine your life and your time, you will find that most of your time is spent among your brothers, or who, in modern terms, are called the pious. You rarely mingle with the disobeyers, the sinful, the masses, and others. All of your time is spent in a conservative society: a Muslim society, a society that strives to establish the religion of God Almighty. We should be the first to

adhere to these manners between us.

"God Almighty then said after this: 'And know that among you is Allah's messenger. Were he, in many matters, to follow your (wishes), ye would certainly fall into misfortune. But Allah has endeared the faith to you, and has made it beautiful in your hearts, and He has made hateful to you unbelief, wickedness, and rebellion. Such indeed are those who walk in righteousness' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:7). God Almighty bestowed, or mentioned some of His gifts, to the companions (may God be content with them). God said: 'Know O you companions, or you believers, that the messenger (prayers and peace of God be upon him) is among you, and you must behave well with him and respect, honor, and venerate him, as He mentioned in the verses in the beginning of this chapter: 'And know that among you is Allah's messenger. Were he, in many matters, to follow your (wishes), ye would certainly fall into misfortune...' This verse has placed the human being at a crossroads: either towards misfortune, hardship, embarrassment, and sadness, or towards accomplishment, success, and achievement by following the commands of the prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him).

"God said: 'And know that among you is Allah's messenger. Were he, in many matters, to follow your (wishes), ye would certainly fall into misfortune...' Meaning, that you either obey the messenger (prayers and peace of God be upon him) and become accomplished and happy, or you try to take, or pull, the messenger of God (prayers and peace of God be upon him) to your side for him to obey you with what you want. After this you will fall into embarrassment, sadness, and misfortune. 'Fall into misfortune' means that you will be afflicted with hardship. This shows us that the concern of the Prophet Muhammad for us is greater than our concern for ourselves. His view of our interest is greater than our view of our own interest. God said: 'The prophet is closer to the believers than their own selves' (Koranic verse, Al-Ahzab, 33:6). Therefore, man is between two matters: the route to happiness, which is following the cause of the prophet (peace and prayers be upon him), not imposing his opinion on the prophet (peace and prayers be upon him), and not being interest is what his brain tells him (things that oppose the laws of God Almighty). If you try to break the law or break the laws of the Shari'ah for your own interest, or to what your mind deems appropriate, or to what suits your traditions, know that you are taking the route of hardship, shame, and distress. This is what this verse talks about.

"The Muslim person is a follower. The Muslim follows the path of the messenger (peace and prayers be upon him), which is the way to victory and salvation in life and the afterlife. The messenger of God set a good example for those who sought God and the afterlife. What else do you want, except for God and the afterlife? If you want salvation in the afterlife and to please God Almighty, all you have to do is follow the prophet (peace and prayers be upon him). If you see the ruling of God and the Sunnah of the prophet (peace and prayers be upon him), know that your interest is in it. Know that your interest is in following the Sunnah of the prophet (peace and prayers be upon him), and that your distress and hardship is due to disobeying him (peace and prayers be upon him). The believer does not choose the laws of God Almighty. 'It is not fitting for a believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His messenger, to have any option about their decision' (Koranic verse, Al-Ahzab, 33:36). The believer says 'We hear and obey.' Following the orders of the prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) is the way that a Muslim will gain the love of God Almighty. God said: 'Say: If ye do love Allah, follow me. Allah will love you.' (Koranic verse, Al-Imran, 3:31). Some scholars said: 'Some people have claimed to love God and were asked for proof.' They were asked to show proof of their love of God Almighty. What is this proof that they have to present to prove their love of God Almighty? The proof is following the prophet (peace and prayers be upon him). 'Say: 'If ye do love Allah, follow me' (Partial Koranic verse, Al-Imran 3:31)...Meaning, follow the

prophet (peace and prayers be upon him). If you do that, God will love you and forgive your sins. God Almighty said: 'And know that among you is Allah's Messenger. Were he, in many matters, to follow your (wishes), ye would certainly fall into misfortune' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:7). Al-A'anat means misfortune and hardship. 'But Allah has endeared the faith to you, and has made it beautiful in your hearts' (Partial Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:7).

"These are some of the blessings of God Almighty, which is to make religion likable to man. Man alone does not have the capability of liking or disliking something. The hearts of people are in the hands of God, who does anything He wants with them. Man does not possess guidance or guidance to success, only God does. God Almighty said: 'Nor can a soul die except by Allah's leave' (Koranic verse, Al-Imran, 3:145). He also said: 'No soul can believe, except by the will of Allah' (Koranic verse, Yunis, 10:100). Look and examine this: You have become a follower of the prophet (peace and prayers be upon him). You love faith and hate sins because of God Almighty. God, Lord of earth and sky, planted the love of faith in your heart. He is the one who planted in your heart the love of following the prophet (peace and prayers be upon him). You: the weak, the poor, and the unknown...The one who nobody looks at or listens to... God chose you from thousands...millions...of lost people who cannot distinguish between righteousness and injustice, light and darkness, and faith and disbelief. Then He put the light of faith in your heart. This is a great blessing from God Almighty that nobody can give, not even the prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) who was the most honorable to God Almighty. God said to him: 'It is true thou wilt not be able to guide everyone, whom thou lovest. But Allah guides those whom He will and He knows best those who receive guidance' (Koranic verse, Al-Qasas, 28:56).

"At this point, I always like to bring up the story of Abu Talib, the uncle of the prophet (prayers be upon him). Abu Talib provided everything he could in order to protect the prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) and the call the Islam. Abu Talib provided a lot of things that none of the Islamic movements provided, and he was an infidel. He remained under siege with the prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) for three years. He endured hunger, shunning, and economic blockade. Although he remained an infidel, Abu Talib was the one who testified truthfully that Islam is a religion of righteousness. He said: 'I realized that the religion of Muhammad is the greatest religion of mankind.' Abu Talib was the one who assured the prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) that he would not turn him in to anyone until he dies. He said in his poem: 'O God, they will not get their hands on you until I am buried. They will never reach you.' And when was this? This was when the prophet was in real need of someone to defend him and protect him. The prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) used to walk around the Kaaba during Hajj, saying: 'Who will provide an abode for me until I fulfill the days of pilgrimage?' He used to say: 'Who will provide me with an abode until I convey the message of my Lord?' He was looking for someone to carry out this task, and Abu Talib performed it. Yet, when the end had come and death appeared on the horizon, and Abu Talib was on his deathbed, the prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) requested one thing from him. He requested one word, only one word from him. With this word he could move his tongue. But who prevented the tongue of Abu Talib to pronounce this word? He told him: 'O uncle, say only one word and I will intercede for you with God on the Day of Judgment.' Only one word, he does not want anything else from him, only: 'Say this word and you will leave this world.' But the minions of Satan were on top of his head, saying to him: 'Do you want to abandon the creed of Abd-al-Muttalib?' They said to him: 'Do you want to abandon the creed of Abd-al-Muttalib?' Meaning, he was defending the prophet (the peace of God be upon him) and protecting him while he was following the creed of Abd-al-Muttalib, the creed of infidelity and polytheism. Before he left this life, he said: 'I am following the creed of Abd-al-Muttalib.' That was it. He lost both this life and the thereafter. This man was the uncle of the prophet (the peace of God be upon him), who performed these great deeds when the prophet was in great need. This is why

the prophet (the peace of God be upon him) knowing what Abu Talib did, said: 'I will ask God to forgive you as long as I am not advised to stop.' God Almighty then revealed the following verse: 'It is not fitting, for the prophet and those who believe, that they should pray for forgiveness for pagans, even though they be of kin, after it is clear to them that they are companions of the fire.' (Koranic verse, Al-Tawbah, 9:113). And God revealed another verse: 'It is true thou wilt not be able to guide every one whom thou lovest, but Allah guides those whom He will and He knows best those who receive guidance' (Koranic verse, Al-Qasas, 28:56).

"O servant of God, O Muslim, the one whom God has guided, have you performed the same work as Abu Talib? No, by God you have not. The protection of the prophet (the peace of God be upon him) does not have an equivalent. Protecting the prophet (the peace of God be upon him) during the time of stress, weakness, and inability while all the infidels were against him, while he was steadfast against them, is not like defending Islam or the creed in an abstract way. Of course this was a great and noble work, and form of jihad. But if it were coming from a faithful Muslim, nothing would equate to it. This is why the first supporters and migrants cannot be equated to those who came after them. They endured, were patient, withstood harm, and defended the prophet (the peace of God be upon him). Why was Abu Bakr (may God be pleased with him) the best companion? Because he supported the prophet (the peace of God be upon him) in every critical situation and at every moment when he needed him... To the point that Abu Bakr (may God be pleased with him) used to defend him and tell them: 'Do you want to kill a man just because he says: My Lord is God?' He did this when the infidels from the Quraysh tribe harmed the prophet (the peace of God be upon him). This was the state of the companions (may God be pleased be with them). Thus, the blessing of Islam is a great blessing. This is why God mentions it, saying: 'But Allah has endeared the faith to you, and has made it beautiful in your hearts' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:7). When you observe the Shari'ah, you see it with its rules, wisdoms, discipline, coordination, and harmony. There is no doubt that your love and certainty for it increases, and this by the grace of God Almighty. This is from God Almighty. 'But Allah has endeared the faith to you, and has made it beautiful in your hearts, and He has made hateful to you unbelief, wickedness, and rebellion. Such indeed are those who walk in righteousness' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:7). God Almighty is the one who made your heart avoid these sins. 'Such indeed are those who walk in righteousness' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:7).

"Those who are on this path: the people of bounty, the people who love faith, the people who hate infidelity, disobedience, and immorality... They are on the righteous path, meaning on the straight way. As for those who differ from them: they are on the path of seduction and falsehood, no matter how much they beautify, how much they compose elegantly, and how much they praise. They are on the path of seduction and deviation, we seek refuge in God. Anyone who takes a certain way, even if he is crooked...He pretends that he is on the righteous path, including the Pharaoh, who was a great infidel. When talking to his people, he would say to them: 'I will not show you except what I see. And I will only guide you on the righteous path.' The Pharaoh guided his people to the righteous path. He belittled his people, and they obeyed him. And this is the exact thing that we hear about the criminals, the tyrants who fought the religion of God Almighty. They describe oppression, infidelity, positive laws, democracy, and every creed and religion as the way to progress, civilization, advancement etc. To them this is the righteous path. But then what? We will tell them: 'You have your religion, and I have mine.' Our religion is the religion of Islam, which God Almighty spoke of, saying: 'Verily, this is my way, leading straight. Follow it. Follow not (other) paths. They will scatter you about from His (great) path' (Koranic verse, Al-An`am, 6:153). There is only one way that leads to God Almighty. It is the way of Islam. 'If anyone desires a religion other than Islam (submission to Allah), never will it be accepted of him; and in the hereafter He will be in the ranks of those who have lost (all

spiritual good)' (Koranic verse, Al-` Imran, 3:85). Islam is the only religion acceptable to God. God said: 'Guide us to the right path.' He did not say paths, because there is only one path. If a person finds himself on the path of guidance regarding his belief, worship, character, behavior and conduct, he must praise God Almighty. And he must know that God Almighty has made him among the righteous, on the safe path that will lead him to God Almighty.

"God Almighty said: 'A grace and favor from Allah. And Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:8). Meaning, what you learned from these matters that we have mentioned and recounted is nothing but a pure favor from God Almighty. It is not something that you earned. It is kindness, generosity, and bounty from God Almighty. 'A grace and favor from Allah. And Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom.' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:8). We ask God Almighty to make us among those who hear the speech and follow the best of it; and to make us among the righteous: those who live on the righteous path and die on the righteous path. God is listening and is near. May the peace and blessings of God be upon His Prophet Muhammad, his family, and all his companions."
(Lesson Three)

"I seek refuge in God from the Satan the accursed. Thanks be to God. We praise Him, seek Him, and ask for His forgiveness. We seek the protection of God from the evils of our spirits and the sins of our deeds. He who is guided by God cannot be led astray by anyone, and he who is led astray by him cannot be guided by anyone. I bear witness that there is no god but God, alone, with no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is his slave and messenger. God sent him with guidance and the religion of truth, to proclaim it over all religions, even though the pagans detest it. May the peace and blessings of God be upon him, his kin, all his companions, and those who follow his path and Sunnah until Judgment Day. Thereafter:

"Yesterday, we talked about the Koranic verse: 'And know that among you is Allah's messenger. Were he, in many matters, to follow your (wishes), ye would certainly fall into misfortune. But Allah has endeared the faith to you, and has made it beautiful in your hearts, and He has made hateful to you unbelief, wickedness, and rebellion. Such indeed are those who walk in righteousness. A grace and favor from Allah. And Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:7-8). We said that this verse, the first one, demonstrated the means through which a Muslim can attain happiness, abundance, relief, tranquility, peace of mind, and contentment in life. It also demonstrated the way through which one can fall into distress, hardship, discomfort, and the like. Following in the steps of the prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) is the means to happiness. Disobeying his order and contesting God and His messenger (peace and blessings of God be upon him) is the means to distress, difficulty, hardship, and discomfort. The verse which we talk about today is linked to this. If we ponder the sequence of the verses, we will find a wondrous connection between them.

"The verse which we talked about two days ago in which God Almighty says: 'O ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49: 6). This means not verifying the news one receives leads to committing injustice against others...Whether it is injustice to their money, soul, honor, or blood. One may discover later that he committed an injustice against his brother and regret it, but it is too late. This verse urges us to verify our news. The Holy Koran and the prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) ordered us to follow this principle of verifying the news. So, if we do not want to fall into discomfort and distress, including committing injustice against others, we must follow in the footsteps of the prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him).

"The verses which we are talking about today deal with a kind of distress. It is one of the toughest kinds of distress and discomfort between a Muslim and his Muslim brother. In other words, it is fighting and bloodshed. This fighting occurs due to disagreements, which in turn, occur due to being way from the religion of God Almighty. When the people distance themselves from the rulings of God, the Shari'ah and from adhering to the Sunnah of the prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him), God will punish them by instilling enmity and hatred into their hearts. This is in accordance with the Koranic verse which applies to the Jews: 'But they forgot a good part of the message that was sent them, so we estranged them, with enmity and hatred between the one and the other' (Partial Koranic verse, Al-Ma'idah, 5: 14). When they forgot an order of God, God instilled enmity and hatred among them. This means that God filled their hearts with rancor and enmity as punishment for their abandonment of His rulings. This is what would happen to Muslims if they deny any of the Shari'ah rulings of God and go astray from the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him). No doubt that this will lead to disagreement, because there is difference in opinions, hearts, and nature of souls. If there was not a point of reference for those who have different viewpoints and everyone adheres to their opinions, this would lead to collision, which, in turn, would lead to disagreement, which would lead to fighting. The Koran deals with Muslims, rather with people, from the perspective of their situation in reality. The Koran did not leave a problem without a solution. This means that Muslims are human beings. They might be influenced by their whims. They might do something or do injustice unwittingly. These situations Muslims go through need a remedy and a Koranic cure, which is clearly demonstrated by these verse.

"God Almighty said: 'If two parties among the believers fall into a quarrel, make ye peace between them. But if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until he complies with the command of Allah. But if he complies, then make peace between them with justice and be fair, for Allah loves those who are fair (and just)' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49: 9). This verse is the main evidence in jurisprudence when it comes to fighting the transgressors. Transgressors, as we mentioned before, are those who revolt against the Imam with an interpretation. Although this verse did not point to the Imam, the interpretation, or the like, the verse states that if two Muslim sects fight each other, we should make peace between them. If one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then we should fight against the one that transgresses until he complies with the command of God. The verse did not point out the provisions mentioned in jurisprudence. That is why there is a difference between the meaning of the transgression in the terminology of jurisprudence and its meaning in colloquial language, as mentioned in the book and the Sunnah. The transgression means an absolute injustice, as it was mentioned in the aforementioned verse and other verses and Hadith. As for the transgression in the terminology of jurisprudence, which they mention in the jurisprudence books and for which they set specified provisions, it means revolting against the Imam using an interpretation. If there was a sect or a group of believers that chose one of themselves as Amir and wanted him to be Imam, then they revolted against him with swords and force, offering their own interpretation and sShari'ah evidence...Those people are called the transgressors. This verse is among the verses and Hadith, which the people of Sunnah and Jama'ah used as evidence, that he who commits a major sin is not a non-believer. It means that he is not expelled form the Muslim fold, contrary to the opinion of the Kharijites (Secessionists). This is why God Almighty called them believers, despite fighting each other, as it was mentioned in the verse.

"The prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) mentioned in a Hadith that cursing a Muslim is straying from the right path, and fighting him is non-belief. This is a verified Hadith...If one of the Kharijites or any one who does not connect between the proofs comes saying that merely fighting among Muslims is non-belief according the text of the Hadith of the

prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him). This is true, but the non-belief in this Hadith does not expel one from the Muslim fold, nor is it an act of a non-believer. The verse explicitly points out that the two fighting sects are still believers despite their fighting. Is this clear, brothers? Then, this is the jurists' definition of the transgressors. The jurists mentioned several rulings when it comes to the transgressors. First, they said (and we do not want to go into details) that if there was an Imam for Muslims who is agreed upon by the influential people, that is to say, they did not disagree about him, whether this Imam was ruling Muslims across the whole world or was an Imam in a certain country and the people of this country yielded to him, recognized him, and obeyed him, then the ruling is the same in both cases. Is it clear? This is according to what was mentioned by Shaykh Muhammad Ibn-Abd-al-Wahab and Imam Al-Sana'ani. Shaykh Abd-al-Wahab was cited as quoting the consensus of the people on this issue. In other words, he who controls any of the Muslim countries is considered the grand Imam, or the Caliph who manages to take control of all Muslim countries. The ruling is clear. There are some who support this ruling, and there are others who believe that installing such an Imam is illegitimate. Let us ponder the situation of the first kind of people. If those people are not biased towards a certain party which can solely issue rulings or the like, and regard this Imam as illegitimate, and the Imam can make them abide by the Islamic provisions and take people's right from them, the Imam is not permitted to fight them whether they support his Imamate or not. Why? Because they fall under the power and tyranny of the Sultan. If he wanted to take a Muslim's rights, he could. If he wanted to make them abide by a ruling, he could. If he wanted to enforce the limits set by God on them, he could. He is not permitted to fight those people. This is the first point.

"The second case is that when they are scattered among the Muslims, they talk in public and call for removing the Imam, but they do not resort to force or take sides with other parties. In this case, the Imam, or Amir may punish them with corporal punishments. He may imprison them, but he may not kill them. Why? Because they do not wage war or raise arms against the Imam. The prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) says: 'A Muslim's blood is immune except for three cases: a married adulterer, a life for a life, and an apostate, who abandons unanimity' (Hadith). This second type is not one of them. Is that clear?

"The third case is when they gather on one side. This is, when they are biased towards one side, apart from the rest of the Muslims, but are still under the jurisdiction of the ruler or the Imam. They do not wage war or raise arms against him. In this case, the Imam may appoint someone who may apply Islamic rules and judgments upon them, whether they accept this or not. But an Imam may not fight them. He may scatter them among the Muslims. He may try to find a way to stop their evil. However, he may not fight or kill them. Is it clear so far, brothers?

"Good. The fourth case is when they take a special form, raise arms, and call for disobeying the Imam and replacing him with another ruler. In this case, these people are transgressors who must be fought. There are certain conditions to consider them transgressors. These conditions require that they have to have strength, ability to fight, and power. Some (scholars) state that such a group must have a head, or an Amir. Others do not. The only common agreement is that they must be powerful and strong enough to resist the Imam's attempt to force them to do anything or to take something from them, that he deems right. This is because they have the power, strength, and arms. Is this clear, brothers? In this case, the Imam has the right to fight them. However, he must not start fighting them before he calls them to return to obedience. Why is this? This is because fighting the transgressors is to stop evil. It is not like fighting the infidels. We fight the infidels because we want to spread Islam, but we fight these (transgressors) only to stop evil. If this happens, fighting them must stop. Yes, we said first that he (the Imam) must call them back to obedience and lay down their arms. If they have a certain

claim or if they raise doubts that the Imam has made such and such mistakes, or committed acts of injustice, etc., the Imam must send someone to them to remove those doubts. If they are victims of any kind of injustice, the Imam must give them back their rights, if this will stop the fighting. After the Imam does all this for them and they insist on fighting, the Imam may take support from God and fight them. Whoever the Imam asks to go out to fight them must obey. Why? Because obedience of the Imam is compulsory, and this is one of the collective obligations. The rulings of fighting these people are different from those of fighting the infidels, apostates, and highwaymen. These kinds of people have certain rules, which include the prohibition of killing their wounded. According to the unanimous opinion (of scholars), if one of their warriors is wounded in action, no one may come and end his life, because the intention is to stop their evil, and this is already done. If any of them escapes to his people no one must chase and kill him, because his escape may be final, and he might not be returning to fight. It is also prohibited to kill their captives. If one of them falls captive in the hands of the people of the Imam, then the Imam must not kill him. This is also agreed upon by unanimous opinion. Unanimous opinion includes the creeds of the Malikis, the Shafi'is and the Hanbalis, including the Hanafis. However, they have certain rules and restrictions, but now is not the time to mention them. Is that clear? Therefore, he (the Imam) has no right to kill captives. Their women and children also must not be taken captive, because they are Muslims just like any other Muslims, even though they have committed a major sin. Their money is not to be seized, because their money is immune. Shari'ah has only legitimized their blood when necessary, but their money remains protected. For this reason, we cannot say that he whose blood is legitimate, his money is legitimate too. Shari'ah might legitimize the blood of someone, but prohibits his money. Is that clear? Their money is protected. Yes, the Imam may hold their money until their fighting ceases and their sedition ends, but taking their money and distributing it among the Muslims is not permissible. This is unanimous."God Almighty says: 'If two parties among the believers fall into a quarrel, make ye peace between them, but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of Allah. But if it complies then make peace between them with justice and be fair, for Allah loves those who are fair (and just)' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:9). Pay attention to what this verse implies. It mentions two fights: one before reconciliation, and one after. The first fight is informing the people of it, while the second fight is an imperative. 'If two parties among the believers fall into a quarrel' is just news, while 'if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other then fight' is an order. If fighting occurs between two parties of believers before reconciliation, other than that of the Imam, before two parties fight for any purpose, either for an earthly benefit or because of any doubt, we should not take part in the fight, because this is a kind of sedition. If we see signs of preparation for fighting between the two parties, it is then a duty for the Imam to try to reconcile them. Each party believes to be right. We are not to take part in this fight, but to try to reconcile both parties. If we attempt to reconcile them and fail to do so, and we discover who the transgressing party is and who the victim is, then we may fight on the side of the victimized party, following the Hadith of the prophet that says: 'Support your brother, transgressor, or victim' (Hadith). The most important commandment that we have in such a conflict between Muslims is to try reconciliation. So, these are the stages of dealing with the fighting. This fighting does not mean that either of them is a believer. The prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) was standing on the pulpit, giving a speech, when his grandson, Al-Hasan -Bin-Ali was on his side. The prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) kept looking at him, and then at the people, and said: 'This son of mine is a master, and God may use him to reconcile two great parties of the believers. It happened later, as the prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) said, for God helped Al-Hasan to reconcile the people of the Levant and Iraq. What is meant here is that the prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) called those two parties 'believers.' I mean the part of the Levant under Mu'awiyah (Bin-Abi-Sufyan) (may God be pleased with him) and that of Iraq under Ali-

Bin-Abi-Talib, (may God be pleased with him). It was Al-Hasan who fixed the matter when he reconciled to Mu'awiyah (may God be pleased with them all). God says: "If two parties among the believers fall into a quarrel, make ye peace between them.' Meaning, aim to remove the causes of fighting, because they are brothers and believers as God says. Reconciling brothers of faith has a very great reward from God. God Almighty says: 'In most of their secret talks there is no good, but if one exhorts to a deed of charity or justice or conciliation between men, (secrecy is permissible). To him who does this, seeking the good pleasure of Allah, we shall soon give a reward of the highest (value)' (Koranic verse, Al-Ma'idah, 4:114).

"A Muslim must try to know the causes of conflict between Muslims, and try to eliminate those causes and reconcile the Muslims. Man may try to reconcile between people out of pride or hypocrisy, but the one who does this only to please God will get a great reward from God, as mentioned in the above Koranic verse. Inciting sedition among the Muslims and urging them to fight against one another is a great sin, which has a great punishment from God Almighty. The prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) says: 'Beware of inciting sedition, because it shaves not hair, but religion.' Corrupting Muslim hearts leads to all kinds of conflict and sedition between Muslims. This is why the prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) likened it to 'shaving the religion.' This is enough for today, and tomorrow we will continue, God willing". (Lesson Four)

"I seek refuge in God from the Satan the accursed. Thanks be to God. We praise Him, seek Him, and ask for His forgiveness. We seek the protection of God from the evils of our spirits and the sins of our deeds. He who is guided by God cannot be led astray by anyone, and he who is led astray by him cannot be guided by anyone. I bear witness that there is no god but God, alone, with no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is his slave and messenger. God has sent him with guidance and the religion of truth, to proclaim it over all religions, even though the pagans detest it. May the peace and blessings of God be upon him, his kin, all his companions, and those who follow his path and Sunnah until Judgment Day. Thereafter:

"We have previously talked about and dealt with God's saying: 'If two parties among the believers fall into a quarrel, make ye peace between them, but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of Allah. But if it complies, then make peace between them with justice and be fair, for Allah loves those who are fair (and just)' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:9). We have said that this Koranic verse is axis of legitimizing the fights against the aggressors, even if the verse has not actually pointed out the definition of transgressors, as scholars of religious law think. In addition, this verse has not dealt with the details of rulings about them and the rulings of fighting against them, which pertain to shedding their blood, money, women, and sons, as well. But this is taken from the total of evidence which is included in the statement on the inviolability of Muslims and on glorifying such inviolability. It is also taken from the history of companions of Prophet Muhammad (may God be pleased with them) pertaining to fights which occurred among them.

"We have said that jurists identify a transgressor as one who revolts against the just Imam. We have said that according to rulings about transgressors in general, they are fought in order to fend off their evil. Such fighting does not intend to kill them. Thus, some scholars have said that there are nine or ten differences between killing the transgressors and killing infidels and apostates. Among these differences we have mentioned is that the infidels are intentionally sought out to be killed, whether they are already infidels or are apostates. As for the transgressors, they are fought in order to fend off evil and to put an end to the harm that would occur because of their transgressions. Among these differences (also) is that the infidels are

fought by attacking them face-to-face and turning back in retreat. As for the transgressors, they are not fought when they turn back in retreat. In other words, they are not fought when they flee from battlefield. Among these differences (also) is that wounded people among the infidels are finished off. As for the transgressors, their wounded people are not finished off. In addition, among these differences (also) is that prisoners among the infidels are killed, while the majority of scholars say that the truth is that killing prisoners among transgressors is not permitted. Moreover, among these differences is that taking women belonging to the infidels as captives is permissible. As for the transgressors, they are Muslims and their women are Muslims. Therefore, taking their women and their children as captives is not permitted. Among these differences is that money belonging to the infidels are divided and seized. As for the transgressors, dividing their money is not allowed because it is money belonging to Muslims, for the money of a pious Muslim is sacrosanct. Therefore, this rule only applies to the money belonging to the transgressors. In brief, these are the differences between fighting against the transgressors and fighting the infidels, whether they are apostates or already infidels.

"As for this Koranic verse which we are discussing, in which God Almighty says: 'If two parties among the believers fall into a quarrel,' this verse applies to any fighting between two parties among the Muslims. As we know, the motives of the fighting among Muslims are many. The motives might be religious. This means that there might be a party, including highwaymen, who are doing mischief in the land, and who are encroaching upon the bloods of people, and who are stealing their money. For this reason, fighting against those people is legal, because it is something commanded by the Shari'ah. The motive of fighting might pertain to a worldly thing, fights among tribes and the fight among two parties of believers. This fight is forbidden, and the killer and person who is killed in such a fight will go to the Hell. This is something included in the saying of the Prophet Muhammad (prayers and peace of God be upon him): 'If two Muslims encounter each other using their swords, the killer and the person who is killed will go to the Hell' (Hadith). This is because their fighting is related to a worldly matter. The third point is that the fighting can occur between two parties among the Muslims over an ambiguous right. In other words, a reformer and liar cannot be differentiated. The people who are rightful and unjust and those who are unjustly treated cannot be identified. This is within the context of ambiguous right. Each party among them alleges that Truth is on their side and that they are in the right. As for those people, fighting among them is prohibited. Some of those people might be excused on the basis of their interpretation and allegation about right.

"So, there are various reasons behind the eruption of fighting among the Muslims. This Koranic verse is about the fighting which occurs over something illegitimate. I mean that fighting can occur over a worldly matter or over something ambiguous, whose right is neither evident nor clear. In this context, God Almighty says: 'If two parties among the believers fall into a quarrel, make ye peace between them.' He has ordered other Muslims to endeavor to make peace these two parties. Making peace should be through explaining who is the rightful man and who is the unjust man. Making peace occurs when one of the two parties concedes. Otherwise, if each party inflexibly cling to its right, reconciliation cannot be achieved. To prove this point, when fighting occurs among two parties of the Muslims, the duty imposed on the Muslims is to endeavor and do their utmost efforts toward making peace among these parties and to halt the fighting. This reconciliation, as we have previously mentioned, has the great reward granted by God Almighty. The Prophet Muhammad (prayers and peace of God be upon him) says: 'I would like to let you know that the fact that an act whose rank is greater than fasting, performing prayers, and paying alms is making peace among people' (Hadith).

"God Almighty says: 'In most of their secret talks there is no good, but if one exhorts to a deed of charity or justice or conciliation between men, (secrecy is permissible).' Therefore, Shari'ah is

always keen to make peace, even to make peace when dealing with private problems occurring between a man and his family. It urges for making peace. 'If a wife fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part, there is no blame on them if they arrange an amicable settlement between themselves, and such settlement is best' (Partial Koranic verse, Al-Nisa, 4:32). Therefore reconciliation is something good and required. The Shari'ah urges for and encourages it. Muslims are required to seek ways to defuse the war between two parties of believers. So, this is the first issue and the first phase by which the Muslims should perform their duty. This issue is about seeking to halt the fighting and make peace in order to put an end to the reason that agitated and led to the fighting.

"God Almighty says: 'If two parties among the believers fall into a quarrel, make ye peace between them, but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other then fight ye.' Scholars explain the transgression which occurs in this context by saying: 'Either the transgression is when one of the parties does not comply with reconciliation, meaning, this comes after people make endeavors to make reconciliation and one of the parties accepts and says that it is ready for reconciliation and making concessions about part of its part. Nevertheless, one of the two parties continues the fight and does not comply with the demands of peace mediators. Therefore, this is the transgression. In other words, the transgression is the refusal to stop fighting when another party has done so. Is it clear? Some of the scholars explained the transgression by saying that (it occurs) after peace is achieved and the fighting is halted. One of the two parties carries out transgression against the other and resumes the fight. This transgression takes place after reaching reconciliation. Is it clear? Regarding this, God Almighty says: 'But if one of them transgresses beyond...' Meaning, that the party continues its transgression and continues its noncompliance with reconciliation, with the presence of its reason. Or the expression 'one of them transgresses...' Which means that a party is in breach of the reconciliation and resumes the fight against another party after all agrees on the reconciliation. 'But if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses.' The second phase is fighting against the group of transgressors whose injustice has become evident, as well as when it becomes clear that this party wants to fight and to shed the blood of Muslims, although its injustice is clear, when it does not comply with the reconciliation or when it is in breach of this reconciliation. Have you got this point my brothers?

"'Fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses.' You can see that in the first phase, God has ordered the Muslims to seek to halt the fighting. In this context, He has ordered us to fight and engage in the fight. Why? Because there are diseases and corruption that can only be resolved through fighting. I mean that as for this party, people endeavor toward making reconciliation, while another party makes concessions, and a person who is rightful becomes clear. Nevertheless, this party is transgressing against and shedding the blood of the Muslims. It has become hard to find a solution with this sect, and there is no way to stop its evil except by fighting it, as the Shari'ah says. Here, Muslims either to have an Imam who takes care of them, so it is necessary to fight with the Imam against the transgressor sect; or that such fighting takes place in a time during which Muslims do not have an Imam. This happens a lot. Muslims now do not have an Imam. Fighting among Muslim sects and Muslim parties occurs a lot. In such cases, scholars say that people of knowledge, reason, and wisdom who people respect and appreciate should seek to make peace between them. Why make it a condition that people of knowledge should play that role? Because the issue needs clarification regarding who is the oppressor and who is the oppressed, and this requires wisdom and knowledge. Merely entering into reconciliation is not something that God Almighty desires. Therefore, scholars have said that if there is no Imam for Muslims then the majority, meaning the influential people or those rulers or authority figures that people follow and obey, should endeavor to achieve reconciliation and

halt the fighting. After that, if it appears that there is a transgressor sect and the scholars judge so, then is permissible to fight them. Is that clear, brothers? Why? In order to halt their evil.

"God Almighty says: 'But if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one of them transgresses until it complies with the command of Allah' (Partial Koranic verse, Al Hujurat, 49:9). 'Until it complies with the command of Allah...' Meaning, until it comes back through God's judgment. What is meant by 'command of God,' as the scholars said, is God's judgment in general, or to come back to reconciliation in particular. It is either the reconciliation which it violated in the first place, or it is the reconciliation which it refused to obey at the start. Is it clear? If it complies, then the issue is over...Which means that if that sect says: 'I surrender, I comply to reconciliation, and I accept God's ruling,' then make peace and reconciliation between them in justice. After that, you must seek peace between these two sects. However, such peace must be in justice and without prejudice or bias, but according to the Shari'ah rulings of God Almighty. 'But if it complies then make peace between them with justice and be fair, for Allah loves those who are fair (and just)' (Partial Koranic verse, Al Hujurat, 49:9)...Which means to be just in reconciliation because God likes those who make justice. This is a great privilege, because the objective of the people of justice is to attain the love of God.

"God Almighty shows us the cause or the reason which encourages Muslims to make peace and reconciliation. e says: 'The believers are but a single brotherhood, so make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers and fear Allah, that ye may receive mercy' (Koranic verse, Al Hujurat, 49:10). How can there be fighting and bloodshed between two brothers? This one is a Muslim and that one is a Muslim too. They are joined under one religion, one creed, one Shari'ah, and one judgment. In the first place, people of one creed must be as one strong building where each stone holds up the next. They must not be hostile or dispute with each other. They must not fight and kill each other. This is a contradiction of Shari'ah. God says: 'The believers are but a single brotherhood' (Partial Koranic verse, Al Hujurat, 49: 10). A believer is the brother of the believer. The Muslim is the brother of the Muslim wherever they are...Whether in your home country or not, near or far, rich or poor, sinner or righteous. As long this person still worships God Almighty, then there must be a link of brotherhood in faith. Yes, such a link becomes both weak and strong. If this person is pious and righteous, then we give him our loyalty, brotherhood, and love relative to the amount of faith, piety, and righteousness that he has. On the other hand, if his faith weakens and he commits sins, then our love and our brotherhood for him decreases relative to his disobedience to God's rulings. As for the complete severance of the link of brotherhood, this must not be between a Muslim and another Muslim. For this reason, this is the link which God Almighty desires between people. It is the link of faith. Those who now want to replace this link with other links, like those of nationalism, patriotism, or common interests, are the people who as God Almighty says: 'Exchange the better for the worse' (Partial Koranic verse, Al-Baqarrah, 2:61).

"God Almighty made for us one link, from which people will benefit on the Day of Judgment, for He says: 'Friends on that day will be foes, one to another, except the righteous' (Koranic verse, Al-Zukhruf, 43:67). If one's company and brotherhood with someone else is for the sake of worldly affairs, or for ethnic, patriotic, or national interests, then he will be an enemy to him on the Day of Judgment. He does not only part from him, but he will also be his enemy on that day. Indeed, the link through which we strengthen, fortify, maintain, defend, and make friends and enemies, is the link of the brotherhood of faith. Muslims are brothers. As God Almighty says, there is no brotherhood except between believers. The Prophet Muhammad (prayers and peace be upon him, his household, and companions) has mentioned this in many Hadiths: 'A believer to the believer is like one intact building' (Hadith). 'A Muslim is a brother to the Muslim: He

does not make injustice to him, does not disappoint him, and does not scorn or mock him' (Hadith). Therefore, this is the ideal relationship between a Muslim with his Muslim brother. Yes, there may be some hatred or disputes between them. However, the link of brotherhood remains intact. A Muslim must not treat his brother Muslim as he treats an infidel. For this reason, the Prophet Muhammad (prayers and peace be upon him) likened the fighting between a Muslim and his Muslim brother to apostasy, because such an act is that of non-believers between themselves. They do not have links between themselves, as the Prophet Muhammad (prayers and peace be upon him) said: 'Do not go back after me and be infidels, killing each other' (Hadith). He also said: 'Insulting a Muslim is a big sin, and fighting him is atheism' (Hadith). Therefore, this is the great link which we have to strengthen and maintain so as to gain God's mercy. God says that believers are brothers, so how can fighting, killing, bloodshed, and transgressions take place between them because of worldly affairs? We must make peace between our brothers. The fighting parties must know that they are brothers. The peace makers must know that they must seek reconciliation among their brothers, because God Almighty ordered us to make peace between our brothers. God talks about Muslim brothers like one body...One person and one group. Matters between brothers must be like affairs between brothers in one house. We know that if there is some dispute between brothers, there will be peacemakers. We must fear God Almighty and not take sides with one party against the other. Making peace must be with justice and fairness. The mercy of God can only be attained by piety and righteousness, brotherhood and communication. Tomorrow, I will talk about the other verse, because they are connected to each other. I did not want to spend so much time on these two verses, but I pray to God to reward you with goodness."
(Lesson Five)

"I seek refuge in God from the Satan the accursed. Thanks be to God. We praise Him, seek Him, and ask for His forgiveness. We seek the protection of God from the evils of our spirits and the sins of our deeds. He who is guided by God cannot be led astray by anyone, and he who is led astray by him cannot be guided by anyone. I bear witness that there is no god but God, alone, with no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is his slave and messenger. God has sent him with guidance and the religion of truth, to proclaim it over all religions, even though the pagans detest it. May the peace and blessings of God be upon him, his kin, all his companions, and those who follow his path and Sunnah until Judgment Day. Thereafter:

"Yesterday we talked about the verse that deals with reconciliation among Muslim communities. We have clarified that God Almighty has stated the general rule that unites the believers, which is the brotherhood of faith. Muslims should maintain, strengthen, and search for reasons to support this bond. They should reject everything that might make it weak, powerless, and lead to its fragmentation. God Almighty said: 'The believers are but a single brotherhood, so make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers and fear Allah, that ye may receive mercy' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:10). They are brothers whether they are in a state of forgiveness or a state of hostility, and despite the grudges or hatred in their hearts. They are still brothers united by a single creed and a single religion. Thus, this is the bond upon which a relationship between a human being and his believing brother is established...Whether that believer is near or far, whether he is honest or lowly, whether he is black or white, whether he is rich or poor...He is a believer who has a right to the brotherhood in faith. 'The believers are but a single brotherhood, so make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers and fear Allah, that ye may receive .ercy.' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:10).

"After these verses, God Almighty said, rather, He prohibited grave illnesses if a Muslim community is affected by them and if they spread them among its individuals. It would undoubtedly lead to that great illness and that bad result, which we had previously mentioned,

which is fighting between the believers. God Almighty said: 'O ye who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others. It may be that the (latter) are better than the (former). Nor let some women laugh at others. It may be that the (latter) are better than the (former). Nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other, nor call each other by (offensive) nicknames. Ill-seeming is a name connoting wickedness, (to be used of one) after he has believed. And those who do not desist are (indeed) doing wrong' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49: 11).

"God Almighty described the believers with this attribute, which has requirements and requisites which they must achieve by their deeds; which are obedience to God Almighty and avoiding what God has prohibited. Among what God Almighty has prohibited to the believers, if they were truly believers, and which they should abide by, is mocking each other. Mockery is ridiculing others, and it is scorn and contempt to them. God Almighty said: 'O ye who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:11)...Which means no group should ridicule another group, and no group should scorn another group. This ridicule, whether it be by words or deeds or by gestures or all that points to an incompleteness of your Muslim brother or all that points to your contempt of your Muslim brother... All of this is prohibited by the words of God Almighty. Otherwise, this Muslim who you ridicule and scorn and think you are better than, he might be better than you (in the eyes of) God Almighty. Therefore, God Almighty said: 'It may be that the (latter) are better than the (former)' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:11), for true goodness is the status a worshipper to God Almighty. You might see this person as poor, weak, and perhaps disobeying God Almighty. You might see him as ugly and lowly in his honor, therefore you scorn him and think you are better than him. The status of such a person who fears and loves God Almighty is much more than you think. We give an example from the Sunnah of the prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) and we are talking about scorning a Muslim...Meaning, if a person commits a sin, that should not be a reason for another Muslim to scorn him and be arrogant with him. There was a companion who joked with the prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) and he was known for joking a lot and making the prophet laugh. This companion used to drink a lot of alcohol. He would drink alcohol and then the Shari'ah punishment of flogging would be applied upon him. He would return to drinking and he would be flogged again. One time he was brought while he was drunk and the prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) ordered the companions to implement the Shari'ah punishment upon him. One of the companions said: 'O Allah, curse him! How frequently he has been brought (to the prophet on such a charge)!' The prophet said: 'Do not curse him, for by Allah, I know he loves Allah and His apostle' (Hadith). Observe: A man who drinks alcohol and continues drinking alcohol...A companion curses that man out of zealousness for God, but the prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) tells the companion about something in that person's heart which God Almighty revealed to the prophet and the companion did not know: the man's love for God Almighty and for His messenger. All of this love prevented him from being cursed. You might see a person who disobeys God's orders, and you might be overcome by zealousness and say some words. What is harsher is your contempt for that Muslim. Contempt is different from renouncing...Meaning, you renounce this disobedient person and you warn of him and point out his disobedience to God and you abandon him if there is a need, but this is according to the standards of Shari'ah, its origins and ethics...But being in contempt of him is something else. Why? Because as we stated yesterday, to us, the faith of a person is words and deeds, which include the obvious deeds and the deeds of the heart. The real distinction between worshippers is according to what is in their hearts: love for God Almighty, fear of Him, observing and praising Him, depending on Him and being ashamed before God Almighty. These deeds are in the hearts and are not known to you or others. You might scorn someone according to what appears to you to be his obvious disobedience of the orders of God Almighty, but the deeds of the heart of that person are unknown to you.

"Therefore, we should be careful not to scorn others. How can you, if this scorn and disrespect is based on a worldly event and not because of jealousy for God Almighty? Meaning, a person who scorns another person because he is ugly, or his clothes are dirty, or he is poor, or he is uneducated, or because he comes from a poor family. All these characteristics have no value in God Almighty's evaluation of you. Each person must know his own value. Your ridicule and scorn of your Muslim brother is a disgrace to you. Why? Because you have committed an awful deed in the religion of God Almighty, for this person might be among those who repented, while at the same time, you are disobeying God by scorning him and you have lowered your status. God Almighty said: 'O ye who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49: 11)...Other sects should not laugh at others, and a man should not laugh at another man, why? Because they might be better than them. Meaning, maybe those people they laugh at are better than those who laughed at them, and are better to God Almighty. This is a matter that no one knows of except God Almighty, the most knowledgeable of all that is hidden. 'Nor let some women laugh at others. It may be that the (latter are better than the (former))' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:11)...Meaning, women should not laugh at other women. The scholars said that the word 'Qaum' (people) includes men and women. This is according to some of the people of linguistics who stated that this is according to the customs of Islamic law. When God addressed the believers and said: 'O ye who believe!' it included men and women, just like any Shari'ah obligation. Although, God in this verse, mentioned women separately. Why? Because women ridicule each other more than men do. God Almighty mentioned them because of the widespread scorn and ridicule among them. Here, God Almighty said: 'Nor let some women laugh at others' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:11)...Meaning, women should not laugh at each other, whether because of beauty, wealth, honor, family status, or for any other reason. Why? For one reason: 'The latter are better than the (former)' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:11). Here, and in the chapter on backbiting, some of the interpreters stated that Aisha (may God be pleased with her) said to the prophet (prayers and peace be upon him): 'She was nice and everything was good about her, but then Aisha made a gesture with her hand to show that Safiyyah was short. In response to this the prophet said: 'Just this word...If it was to be mixed with the waters of the sea, it would stain the whole ocean' (Hadith)...Meaning, that if this simple word was mixed with sea water, it would have changed its taste. Why? Because the matter she talked about is not a simple thing. Therefore, the person must avoid this bad behavior. Scorning believers is not among the manners of Muslim people.

"The prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) said: 'A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, so he should not oppress him, nor should he hand him over to an oppressor' (Hadith). The prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) said: 'It is enough evil for a Muslim to look down upon his (Muslim) brother' (Hadith)...Meaning, you have committed an adequate sin that makes you deserving of punishment from God Almighty by looking down upon your Muslim brother. You do not need another sin. This is testimony that scorning a believer is among the great sins. Thus, the person who commits this deed is dissipated, because a dissipated person is a person who commits great sin. The person must protect his religion. We said that a person must not con" The person should not be sarcastic towards his Muslim brother, 'Nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other, nor call each other by (offensive) nicknames' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:11)...Meaning, no one among you should call each other by offensive nicknames. As we know, nicknames could be used for praise or defamation. What is forbidden here is to call your Muslim brother by an offensive nickname. It also means that you should not call one another by offensive nicknames such as 'the crippled,' 'the bleary-eyed,' 'the short one,' 'the black one', etc. Here God Almighty said: 'Nor call each other by (offensive) nicknames' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:11). It also includes the calling of one Muslim to another by names that are not applicable to him, like 'O dissipate,' 'O non-believer,' 'O criminal'. The prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) said: 'If a man calls his brother a non-Muslim (kafir), it returns upon one of

them' (Hadith). Meaning, if one person conducts takfir (considering a Muslim as a non-Muslim) towards his Muslim brother, and in fact that person does not deserve to conduct takfir, then the person who accused him becomes a non-Muslim himself. The scholars disagree about the meaning of this Hadith, there are six or seven opinions. What is meant here is that the Muslim should not call his brother by an offensive nickname. God Almighty said: 'Nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other, nor call each other by (offensive) nicknames. Ill-seeming is a name connoting wickedness, (to be used of one) after he has believed' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:11). This as stated by the scholars has two meanings: Either it means it is harsh to portray your brother as non-believer after he has believed, or you became dissipated because you called your brother by an offensive nickname. This is the worst mistake you might make after your belief and piousness. 'And those who do not desist are (indeed) doing wrong' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:11). This means that those who know this and did not repent from their sins are unjust. God Almighty said: 'And those who do not desist are (indeed) doing wrong' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:11). You alone would become unjust by conducting this deed (takfir). This indicates the significance of these deeds, which is considered a mistake on behalf of people. To repent from these mistakes means that the accused person should give up his right by forgiving the person who accused him. Therefore, the person who looks down upon his Muslim brother, or calls his Muslim brother by offensive nicknames, needs to truly repent to God Almighty. He needs to determine not to do the same deed. He needs to abandon what he did and pray for his brother. We will stop here. Tomorrow, God willing, we will talk about the other verse. Prayers and peace be upon the prophet, and upon his family and companions." (Lesson Six)

"In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate...I seek refuge in God from the Satan the accursed. Thanks be to God. We praise Him, seek Him, and ask for His forgiveness. We seek the protection of God from the evils of our spirits and the sins of our deeds. He who is guided by God cannot be led astray by anyone, and he who is led astray by him cannot be guided by anyone. I bear witness that there is no god but God, alone, with no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is his slave and messenger. God sent him with guidance and the religion of truth, to proclaim it over all religions, even though the pagans detest it. May the peace and blessings of God be upon him, his kin, all his companions, and those who follow his path and Sunnah until Judgment Day. Thereafter:

"Yesterday, we talked about God Almighty's words: 'O ye who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others. It may be that the (latter) are better than the (former). Nor let some women laugh at others. It may be that the (latter) are better than the (former). Nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other, nor call each other by (offensive) nicknames. Ill-seeming is a name connoting wickedness, (to be used of one) after he has believed. And those who do not desist are (indeed) doing wrong' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:11). We said that this verse has prohibited three disgraceful behaviors that a Muslim must avoid. The first is to ridicule his Muslim brother. The second is to call each other by (offensive) nicknames, and the third is to scorn and be sarcastic towards each other, which is lead to defamation. We explained the meanings of these three flaws. We said it is not appropriate for a Muslim to scorn his Muslim brother while they are joined by the creed of Islam and the brotherhood of belief and the bond of monotheism.

"God Almighty says after that: 'O ye who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible), for suspicion in some cases is a sin. And spy not on each other behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Nay, ye would abhor it...But fear Allah. For Allah is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:12).

"As we mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, it explains the basis and foundations of the

Muslim society in dealing with each other and their relationships. It details the behaviors that Muslims should follow. God Almighty says: 'O ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:6). It banned behaviors and warned of those behaviors decreed to Muslims or believers to avoid. Among the disgraceful behaviors is mistrusting a Muslim brother. God Almighty says: 'O ye who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible), for suspicion in some cases is a sin' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:12). Thus, so that a human would not fall into that 'some cases...' That is an offense towards God Almighty, which is harmful to his Muslim brother. He must 'avoid suspicion as much (as possible)'. God Almighty, says: 'Avoid suspicion as much (as possible), for suspicion in some cases is a sin' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:12). The scholars mentioned three points about the disgraceful suspicions:

"First: That this suspicion is against a Muslim and not against a non-believer. God Almighty says here: 'Avoid suspicion as much (as possible)' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:12)...Meaning, towards your Muslim brothers.

"Second matter: This suspicion or this banned suspicion becomes (a matter) that settles in the heart and steadfast in it and the person who holds it becomes certain of it until it becomes what? Until it becomes a certainty. Thus he builds his behaviors and his relationships with his brothers upon it. As for the presentiments and the ventures that pass through one's self but do not settle, he does not arrive to conclusions based upon them. Then what is this matter? This human is not to be blamed in this matter.

"Third matter: This matter applies to those who appear to have goodness and piety. As for who openly commit sins and put themselves in the position of suspicions and doubt. He puts himself into what? Into the circle of accusations. God Almighty says: "Avoid suspicion as much (as possible)' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:12). The prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) said: 'Avoid suspicion, for suspicion is the gravest lie in talk' (Hadith). The human deals a lot with suspicions and illusions that come to his thoughts, and perhaps he builds judgments upon them. This judgment could be debauchery or a claim of disbelief or desertion of his Muslim brother and perhaps defamation and perhaps a warning against his Muslim brother and others that are built upon this suspicion. If he investigated this and examined it, he would find it a mere illusion with no basis in reality. God Almighty says: 'Avoid suspicion as much (as possible) for suspicion in some cases is a sin' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:12). Contemplate this verse...First it banned suspicion (which are the feelings that take place in the heart of the believer). Then what? If a person harbors suspicions against his Muslim brother, this suspicion will invite you to investigate it... Meaning, you will try to examine and investigate the verity of this suspicion. This will lead him to do what? To spy, it will lead him to spying! Therefore, God Almighty, after banning suspicion, banned spying. He says: 'And spy not' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:12)...Meaning, as long as your Muslim brother does not reveal his status, then leave him in his unrevealed status. As for the research, examination and the attempt to excavate matters that are none of your business this is banned.

"The prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) said: 'Do not spy or pry' (Hadith). Some scholars said that spying applies to evil matters and prying to good matters. As God Almighty says: 'O my sons! Go ye and enquire about Joseph and his brother' (Koranic verse, Yusuf, 12:87). Some scholars said they are interchangeable...that spying can be called prying and prying is also called spying. God Almighty here forbade spying, but which spying? It is the spying that would be against the believers: that which would reveal Muslims' faults. What does this search for? Muslims' flaws and attempts to take a look at the hidden mistakes of these Muslims. As for those who openly reveal, you are not spying on them because they have declared their disobedience

and breach of the orders of God Almighty. Therefore the forbidden spying that is meant here is the spying that searches for and reveals Muslims' faults and flaws. The prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) said: 'O you who declare Islam with your tongues but whose hearts have not been reached by faith, do not annoy the Muslims nor seek out their faults, for he who seeks out the faults of his brother Muslim will have his faults sought out by Allah, and when Allah seeks out someone's faults, He exposes them, even though he should be in the interior of his house' (Hadith). Thus, a person is banned to look for what? Muslims' faults... He is banned from slandering the Muslims as well. We said that that which invites one to spy, what is it? Suspicion. Therefore, God Almighty says: 'And spy not on each other behind their backs' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:12). Then God Almighty forbade backbiting after that, which would be as a result of spying, because if the person had bad suspicions about his brother, then he would try to look into or to investigate the trueness of this suspicion. This will invite him to and lead him to talking about his Muslim brother, and this is backbiting. The prophet (prayers and peace be upon him) forbade backbiting. When he was asked about backbiting he said: 'Mentioning your brother with what he hates, it was said to him: If there were truth in what I said about my brother...' Meaning, if my brother did have the flaws that I mentioned, there are some flaws that I can talk about. 'He said: If there is in him of what you say, then you have backbitten him, and if there is not in him of what you say then you have claimed falsehood against him' (Hadith). Therefore, backbiting is worse than defamation, and defamation is quoted by more than one scholar as being one of the major sins and is forbidden, as agreed upon by all scholars by means of the guidance of the Koran and the clear Sunnah.

"God Almighty said: 'And spy not on each other behind their backs' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:12). There are many Hadiths about the forbiddance of backbiting. Yes, and God Almighty forbade backbiting and gave an example that repulses people from this ugly act. Back biting is the worst thing that damages relationships between Muslims. Backbiting and gossiping. Backbiting is when you say hateful things about your brother in gatherings, and gossiping is when a person conveys one person's sayings to another and conveys another person's saying to still another in order to damage their relationships. A person who backbites will not go to heaven, nor will a person who gossips go to heaven, as said by the prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him). Therefore, God Almighty openly forbade back biting. He said: 'And spy not on each other behind their backs' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:12). He then gave an example of this back biting saying: 'Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother?' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:12). This is the status of him who backbites. It is the status of a person who sat on the dead body of his brother and started to tear apart its flesh and eat it. This human being is eating a human being. Is there any human being who can? What? Find me the word because I lost it. This means this image, eh? Is there any human being who can accept such a situation, or even desire such flesh? This is the status of a Muslim who backbites his Muslim brother. Scholars have said that, and where does the comparison come from? First, you eat this brother's flesh, because when you talk about him, it is the same as when you talk about him. For the words that you say about him are like eating the flesh of your brother. The other thing is that this person is not present. He is not present in the gathering and is not aware of what you are saying about him. So also, this dead person is not aware of what is being said about him. Is it clear? As if that person who is not present is a dead person and you are in the process of eating his flesh and enjoying it. So just as a person hates this image of eating the flesh of his dead Muslim brother, so he should hate talking about or disgracing and finding fault with his Muslim brother who is not present. Is this clear, brothers?

"God Almighty said: 'And spy not on each other behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? 'Nay, ye would abhor it...But fear Allah.' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:12). Scholars have said that there are situations where backbiting is valid, and that

is if a legitimate purpose exists and there is no way to accomplish this legitimate purpose except through this manner. Is it clear? Therefore there are two criteria. The first criterion is when that person you will talk about and the fault that you will mention is for an absolutely legitimate purpose. The second criterion is when you cannot accomplish this purpose except by saying something about your brother which he would hate. Is it clear? Scholars have mentioned six examples of that, a few of which we will mention. The first case is that of a complaint from injustice. They (the scholars) said that if a person did injustice to another person, such as taking his money or unjustly beating him, then this person would have the right to talk about that other person who did him injustice in order to prove the injustice. For example, he would go to a judge and say that this person did an injustice to me, betrayed me, took my money, and other such things for which a proof is required. What is the legitimate purpose here? It is the recovery of his right. This is a legitimate purpose, right? The second case is when you want to prove the validity of this so that the judge or whoever will make a decision will be able to make the proper ruling. The prophet (may the prayers and peace of God be upon him) said: 'Procrastination of a rich person is unjust and legitimizes his honor and his punishment' (Hadith). This means that if a person is rich and could pay off his debt, and then starts to postpone its payment, ask for the, who? (as received) The creditor asks him, but the rich man postpones, eh...that means the rich man delays and postpones payment of this debt. Then it is that person's right to talk about the rich man and say that he did injustice to me, took my money, and delayed payment of the debt, and so on. Is this clear?

"Therefore, the first matter is complaining from injustice. The second case pertains to seeking legal advice. This means that if a person has something bad happen to him and goes to a scholar to seek his legal advice. He says such a person battered me or such a person betrayed me or such a person did injustice to me in so on...What then is the ruling? This is not judgment but seeking legal advice, which means that the person seeks a legitimate ruling. In this case, it is not considered backbiting, and the scholars have referenced this by stating that Hind (may God the Almighty be content with her) who was the wife of Abu Sufyan Ibn Harb (may God Almighty be content with him) came to the prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) and said: 'O messenger of God, Abu Sufyan is a stingy man who does not give me and my children what suffices us. So should I take from his money?' He said: 'Take what suffices you and your children' (Hadith). Is it clear? Thus, in this case, she came and described her husband as being stingy, which means miserly. The prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) did not deny her. Is it clear brothers? The second matter is informing others. If a person who comes up with an innovation, or an immorality, or iniquity...Or if a man came to you to ask your opinion about an individual with whom he will have business with and you know that he has a disgraceful attribute...Then in this case it is your duty to mention what you believe about this individual and show what his faults since it is based on a legitimate interest. A woman came to the prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) and told him that two people approached me...That is, she wanted to ask his opinion on which of the two she should marry. He told her about Mu'awiya Ibn Abu Sufyan and the other, who was he? No, the other was Abu Jahm. So the prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) said: 'As for Mu'awiya, he is a pauper and has no money.' He said what he knew about him, right? As for Abu Jahm, he was a man who did not remove the stick from his shoulder and was said to be a batterer of women. Thus what did the prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) mention? He mentioned the two attributes that pertained to those two companions and told her to marry Usama (may God be content with him).

"Also regarding this matter is the defamation of witnesses and visitors. If a judge wanted to be fair and asked about what people knew about the witness and you knew that he was immoral and does certain things... Why? Because on his testimony will be built a legitimate judgment.

Regarding this matter also is what scholars of the Hadith do when they say for example that this narrator is a liar and this one is a culprit and so on. They mention certain things about the stories. Why? Because the things they mention are based on a legitimate interest, and that is the preservation of the Sunnah. Thus this is the third situation in which it is permitted to make a testimony in which backbiting is permitted. The fourth situation, according to the scholars, is when a person needs the assistance of another person in order to disavow an unlawful thing. That is, if a person did unlawful acts and you were not able to disavow him nor stop him from doing what he was doing. You knew a person who had the authority to stop him, then it would be permissible for you, and maybe even your duty, to go to that person and tell him that such a person is doing so and so. This is backbiting, right? Because you are telling things that the person detests you to say about him. In this case the Shari'ah permits a person to get assistance from someone in order to disavow an unlawful act, even if he would say things about that other person that are unlawful. These are some of the cases in which backbiting is permitted. We will leave you until tomorrow because my head has started to spin (laughter in the background). Prayers and peace of God be upon our master Muhammad and upon his family and all his companions."

(Lesson Seven)

"In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate...I seek refuge in God from the Satan the accursed. Thanks be to God. We praise Him, seek Him, and ask for His forgiveness. We seek the protection of God from the evils of our spirits and the sins of our deeds. He who is guided by God cannot be led astray by anyone, and he who is led astray by him cannot be guided by anyone. I bear witness that there is no god but God, alone, with no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is his slave and messenger. God sent him with guidance and the religion of truth, to proclaim it over all religions, even though the pagans detest it. May the peace and blessings of God be upon him, his kin, all his companions, and those who follow his path and Sunnah until Judgment Day. Thereafter:

"There is not enough time for interpreting the verses in detail. Consequently, we will only mention the meanings that show the general meaning of the verse, without really delving into the details and other matters that we might have been pointing to from time to time. We will try (God willing) to discuss what is remaining of the verses of the Al-Hujurat chapter. We paused at the words of God Almighty: 'O ye who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible), for suspicion in some cases is a sin. And spy not on each other behind their backs' (Partial Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:12). We said that this verse warned against three matters and obliged Muslims to follow this and avoid these. The first of these are bad suspicions about Muslims because, for the prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) said: 'The most untrue words' (Partial Hadith). The second matter is spying. This means searching and trying to see the privacies of Muslims. The prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) said in the Hadith that we mentioned yesterday: 'O people who believe with their tongues, faith has not entered your hearts. Do not spy on the believers, and do not follow their private matters. He who does so will be exposed by God, even in the midst of his home' (Hadith). The Muslim then is commanded to cover his Muslim brother, not to expose him, cause him scandal, mention his faults in gatherings, broadcast them among people and perhaps be happy about what he discovers of mistakes, faults, errors, and mishaps that a Muslim might fall into. This is your brother, you concealing (his mistakes) for him is concealment for you. You concealing him is concealment for you. As we mentioned in the verse before this one: 'Nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other, nor call each other by (offensive) nicknames' (Partial Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:11).

"The third matter prohibited by this verse is backbiting and we have said that this is a chronic disease. If this spreads in a society it will divide it and tear it apart what ties it has. It leads to conflicts, hatred, and enmity. It makes the human, the Muslim, spiteful of his Muslim brother and makes him push him to fall into what he hates. Because of this, God Almighty sternly warned against this, and the prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) sternly warned against this. There are numerous Hadiths about this that we do not have the time to mention and discuss. Yes. We all know the Hadith, such as the saying of the prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) during the farewell speech: 'Your blood, wealth, honor is forbidden to you like the sanctity of this day, this month, and this country' (Hadith). The prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) then made the sanctity of these matters equal: blood, meaning do not spill it unjustly; wealth: do not take it unjustly; and honor: do not violate it. Therefore, as mentioned by the Shaykh of Islam (Ibn-Taymiyah) and others, you will find a person to be very hesitant to spill the blood of his Muslim brother and hesitant to unjustly seize the wealth of his Muslim brother...But he is not hesitant to do what? To tear apart the honor of Muslim brother. Meaning, you will find him in a gathering discussing the private affairs of this person and the private affairs of that person, mentioning the faults of this one and the mistakes of that one, not knowing that by doing this he has committed a forbidden act that is barely less in its forbidden level than the spilling of the blood of a Muslim. Is this clear brothers? There are many people who would be willing to be killed but not have their honor spoken about. This is why the prophet (prayers and peace of God be upon him) said: 'Your blood, wealth, honor is forbidden to you' (Hadith).

"Yes, the God said, and we mentioned yesterday, some of the verses which the scholars exempted and allowed in backbiting a Muslim. We said that the constraints of this is that there must be a legal benefit that requires this fault to be mentioned, and that this benefit cannot be achieved except through what? Except through backbiting. If these two conditions are present, then it is allowed, perhaps even required, if it results in the prevention of harm from befalling Muslims.

"Yes. God Almighty then said after this, at the end of the verse: 'Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Nay, ye would abhor it...But fear Allah. For Allah is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful' (Partial Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:12).

"He ordered first that God Almighty be obeyed, and we have repeatedly seen this in this chapter and in other chapters. God Almighty calls for obedience to him, why? Because this is the barrier between the Muslim and the violation of what God Almighty has forbidden. You make a hindrance, a barrier between you and it that prevents you from entering it. This barrier is the fear of God Almighty and the observation of God Almighty. It is the knowledge and certainty that you will be shown, that you will come before God Almighty, and that He will ask you about every little and large deed by you, whether they be those relating to the rights of God Almighty or those relating to the rights of people. The human is thus commanded to obey God Almighty. After this, He ordered repentance...He ordered repentance. God Almighty commanded repentance in His book and said: 'And O ye believers! Turn ye all together towards Allah' (Partial Koranic verse, Al-Nur, 24:31). He also said: 'O ye who believe! Turn to Allah with sincere repentance' (Partial Koranic verse, Al-Tahrim, 66:8). There are two kinds of repentance. There is a general repentance, meaning that a person repents for all the sins he has committed. A person cannot recall all his sins every time, but he can intend, with his heart, not to disobey God Almighty as much as he can, and that he will relinquish the sins he committed. This is a general repentance. There is also special repentance, which is about a certain sin that the person knows. The scholars said that repentance is necessary...Repentance is necessary...And that repentance is correct for some sins, with no repentance for some... Meaning, a person might not repent

from a sin, but repent from a certain sin. Is this clear brothers? God Almighty ordered believers to repent 'Turn ye all together towards Allah...' There is not a believer on this earth who does not need repentance. Why? Because there is no one who is immune from disobeying God Almighty. The least of this is not doing enough for the sake of God Almighty. The Muslim, no matter how much he worships God Almighty, how much he prays, how much he fasts, how much he kneels, or how much he mentions (God)...He has done nothing to thank for the blessings of God Almighty. The blessings of God Almighty are great. 'If ye would count up the favors of Allah, never would ye be able to number them' (Partial Koranic verse, Al-Nahl, 16:18). If you are unable to count the blessings of God, then how will you adequately thank him for them? How will you adequately thank Him for them? Here, Anas (may God be content with him) said that: 'On the Day of Judgment, three books will be placed: a book for good deeds, a deed for sins and mistakes, and a book for blessings.' A book for the blessings of God Almighty.

"God Almighty says to compare His blessings and the prayers of His slaves, meaning: Look, are they equal? What action can be sufficient for the blessings of God Almighty? None. They overtake...The blessings of God overtake all of the prayers, so the sins will remain. What will these sins require? They require good deeds. Therefore, no one will enter paradise with their deeds, but with the mercy of God. Even so, a person is required to repent, and repentance, like the scholars said, has conditions. Repentance is not just a word that a person utters and repeats. It is a deed in which the emotions and actions of the heart are combined. The first of these actions, or the first of the things required by the person to repent...What are these? It is the intent to never return to this sin...Whether this sin is regarding the rights of God or the rights of people. The person makes a decisive vow in his heart to never return to this sin. The second is regret for what he has committed, meaning embarrassment and shame about why he committed this sin against God Almighty or against one of his subjects. The third matter is renunciation of the sin. To renounce...It is not correct for someone to be immersed in a sin and take from it and then say: I repent to God Almighty. Repentance must have what? All the emotions to cut ties with this sin. That is why...Are you with me? That is why the man who killed 99 lives and then stopped was guided by the cleric to do what? To exit from this land where he committed this sin, renouncing it and moving away from it. Because it was a land of wrongdoing. Yes...

"The scholars said about these conditions that if the sin was against God Almighty, but if the sin was against people, then another condition is added, and that is amnesty by the owner of that right, meaning, asking for the forgiveness from the owner of that right, whether this right is material, such as money that you unjustly took from him, or non-tangible, such as backbiting, rumors, or lying to him. About backbiting...The scholars said that mentioning your brother, going to him and asking for his forgiveness might lead to an increase in enmity. In this instance, they said, it is sufficient for a person to praise and mention the good of the person about whom he spoke ill about in those same gatherings in order to absolve himself from what he committed, and to pray for him in private. Therefore, God Almighty said here at the end of the verse: 'But fear Allah. For Allah is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful' (Koranic Verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:12). This means that a person should despair (because) God's mercy is great. He should repent to God Almighty from every sin before (his) repentance (is accepted). If a person leaves this world with the weight of his sins against others or against God, he will be held accountable for those actions. If you are still in this world and have the ability and capacity to repent, abandon, and regret, ask God's forgiveness and increase good deeds that will atone for the bad ones, then the doors are open for you. What is stopping you? Good deeds atone for bad ones. Following a bad deed with a good one atones for the bad one. Therefore, brothers, it is clear that we are in need of repentance and of piety to God Almighty... Which He ordered us with. God Almighty ordered both those before (us) and those after (us) when He stated: 'Verily we have directed the People of the Book before you, and you (O Muslims) to fear Allah' (Koranic Verse, An-Ni sa, 4:131).

"After that, God Almighty said: 'O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)' (Koranic Verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:13). This verse illustrates the measure through which God Almighty evaluates the different statuses of people.

"God Almighty said in the beginning that all people are equal whether they are red, black, white, a master or a servant, near or far. God Almighty said (pay close attention to how He addressed them): 'O mankind,' as opposed to 'O ye who believe.' This was an address to all people. This address 'O mankind' is specific to the Makkiyyah (chapters of the Koran that were revealed in Mecca and prior to his migration to Madinah) chapters and is not present in the Madaniyyah (chapters that were revealed in Madinah) verses. Makkiyyah chapters are the ones where you will find 'O mankind,' because the address was general and the Muslims did not have a private community just for them that was void of non-believers... 'O mankind! Fear your Lord! For the con"Then God revealed the true measure (by which He) evaluates people. This is the measure that dictates the status of a person to God and the one that we all must strive for. 'Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you' (Partial Koranic Verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:13). Thus, it is not he who possesses money, power, beauty (who is the most honored to God)... Rather, the most honored to God Almighty is he who is righteous. This is a deed that every person can strive for. Everyone can strive for these levels by being devoted to God Almighty. You have the capability. The deeds are there for you to do, and God, to whom belongs might and majesty, is there for you to seek help in doing good deeds and avoiding bad ones. What is stopping you from being devout to God so that you would be among the most honored to Him? This will place you among the forefront. This is why God said: 'Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you' (Partial Koranic Verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:13).

"There were many Hadiths narrated about the prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) that confirmed this. The prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) was asked by his companions: 'Who is the most honored of men?' He said: 'He who is most righteous.' The most righteous to God Almighty! Righteousness is comprised of fulfilling duties and avoiding sin. The way to fulfilling duties and obligations is immense and it is where the competitors compete to fulfill the obligatory or voluntary duties, what is recommended, and to avoid what is questionable... And to avoid sins. Thus, this is the reality of how people are differentiated. As for he who wishes to compare people based on nationalities, popularity, money, power, strength, brainpower, or other such attributes... These attributes have no significance or weight to God Almighty. (The prophet said): 'An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab except by piety and good action.' An Arab has no superiority over a red person or black person except by piety and good action. This is where competitors should compete. This is why we always reiterate the meaning of this. Those who wish to instill haughtiness in the hearts of their people, Arab or not, over other people based on the fact that they belong to (this certain group of) people, have contradicted the legitimate measure that was stated in God's Book... The measure that was in God's book is piety to God Almighty. As for money, looks, beauty, power, nationalism, patriotism, common interest, and other such things... They have no significance to God Almighty. God Almighty said: 'O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other)). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you' (Partial Koranic Verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:13). I recall here a Hadith that illustrates for us that the good deeds performed by the worshipper determines his status to God Almighty. The prophet (peace and

prayers be upon him) was on his way to an invasion. A man came to him and said: 'O messenger of God, I am a man who is black in color, hideous in sight, rancid in smell.' This is what this man was saying about himself. Then he said: 'If I fight these people, and I am killed, where would I go?' (The prophet) said: 'To heaven.' So this man fought them and was killed. The prophet (peace and prayers be upon him) said: 'He who takes himself into his own hands will be among the kings of heaven.' He will be among the kings of heaven! This is a man who does not wear a tie, lightens his beard, brushes his hair left or right, or is enamored with Western culture and delusional progress. His only action was fighting those people and being killed and asking where he would go. He said those things about himself: I am black in color, hideous in sight, rancid in smell...Therefore, those who try to differentiate between people with these worldly attributes that they were cursed with and that have overwhelmed them, from materialistic people that give significance to other based on money, beauty, and power...They do not realize what God's Book has revealed. 'Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)' (Partial Koranic Verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:13). God knows who is pious and righteous, just as He knows who is corrupt. Only God knows what is in the hearts.

"As we have said, piety is divided among intent and action. This is where the competitors should compete. God Almighty said (it is not a problem if we take a little more time): 'The desert Arabs say: We believe. Say: Ye have no faith, but ye (only) say: We have submitted our wills to Allah, for not yet has faith entered your hearts. But if ye obey Allah and His messenger, He will not belittle aught of your deeds, for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful' (Koranic Verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:14). The desert Arabs are people who came and entered Islam. Upon entering Islam, they claimed that they learned the truth of what it is to have faith. This means that faith has been firmly established in their hearts and that they had arrived at its truths. God Almighty said: 'The desert Arabs say: We believe' (Partial Koranic Verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:14). This means that they now have a firmly established faith and have believed. God Almighty said: 'Say: Ye have no faith' (Partial Koranic Verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:14). This does not mean that they are non-believers. It means that faith, with all its truths, that is firmly established in the hearts, has not yet come to you. He said: 'The desert Arabs say: We believe. Say: Ye have no faith, but ye (only) say: We have submitted our wills to Allah' (Partial Koranic Verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:14). Say: We have submitted our wills to Allah! With this verse, many scholars have come to the conclusion that faith and submitting your will to God are very different and that faith is more special than submitting your will to God. Every believer is a Muslim, and every almsgiver is a believer, but not every Muslim is a believer and not every believer is an almsgiver. Is this clear brothers? Faith is more special than submitting your will to God. As we previously stated, if faith and submitting your will to God are united, then you become a real Muslim. God said: 'The desert Arabs say: We believe. Say: Ye have no faith, but ye (only) say: We have submitted our wills to Allah, for not yet has faith entered your hearts' (Partial Koranic Verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:14). This means that the firmly established faith has yet to enter your hearts...the firmly established faith that leads to true faith. Is this clear? 'For not yet has faith entered your hearts. But if ye obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not belittle aught of your deeds' (Partial Koranic Verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:14)...This means that if you obey God Almighty and His prophet, your deeds will not be disparaged. As God Almighty said: 'Nor shall we deprive them (of the fruit) of aught of their works' (Partial Koranic Verse, At-Tur, 52:21). This means that we have not decreased any of their deeds. 'But he who works deeds of righteousness and has faith will have no fear of harm nor of any curtailment (of what is his due)' (Koranic verse, Taha, 20:112). God does not hinder your rights. So if you were to be obedient to God and his messenger (peace and blessings upon him) and in the manner that you were ordered to, you have nothing to fear in terms of your good deeds going unwarranted.

"God almighty here says: 'The desert Arabs say: We believe. Say: Ye have no faith, but ye (only)

say: We have submitted our wills to Allah, for not yet has faith entered your hearts. But if ye obey Allah and His messenger, He will not belittle aught of your deeds, for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:14). This verse is proof that a man may not judge himself. A person must not judge himself to be something or another. This is because you do not know the reality of your heart. 'Hast thou not turned thy vision to those who claim sanctity for themselves? Nay, but Allah doth sanctify whom He pleaseth. But never will they fail to receive justice in the least little thing' (Koranic verse, Al-Nisa, 4:49). Only God Almighty knows what lays hidden or secret. He is the true judge of your level of piety and whether you are sincere. He is the only one that knows your belief and its strength and whether you are sincere. People must not become arrogant with their actions. First, because this action may be part of another action that may not be accepted by God Almighty, and you are unaware of that. Secondly, you do not know if this action will last, after you have done so, or not. You may commit a sin that wipes out this action. Thirdly, you do not know whether or not you will die in a state of belief. So then, people must not become arrogant with a good deed that they have done but rather, they must thank God for guiding him to undergoing such an action. Whether the action is prayer, supplication, recitations, striving, jihad, preparation, giving advice, promoting virtue, preventing vice, teaching, or learning...All the good deeds that God guides you to completing...You have to thank the Almighty. Moreover, you must increase your tokens of gratitude and not become arrogant. Do not become arrogant with this action, but be pleased that God Almighty has facilitated for you to accomplish it.

"The Almighty says: 'The desert Arabs say: We believe. Say: Ye have no faith, but ye (only) say: We have submitted our wills to Allah. For not yet has Faith entered your hearts. But if ye obey Allah and His messenger, He will not belittle aught of your deeds, for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:14). The Almighty goes on to say: 'Only those are believers who have believed in Allah and His messenger and have never since doubted, but have striven with their belongings and their persons in the cause of Allah: Such are the sincere ones. (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:15). Those are the true believers who have fulfilled their faith. Those are the ones who had their hearts settled in a state of belief. Those true believers have believed in the deity and the oneness of God, His names, and His attributes, and as well as believing in His messenger. They have accepted the prophet of God (peace and blessings upon him) with respect to what he has brought forth, acted in accordance with his decrees, and abstained from what he has forbidden. They have strived in the obedience of God. It is they whose hearts have settled on a state of belief. They have no doubt, hesitation, or uncertainty. Their hearts have settled in the truth of belief. It remains in this state whether situations are difficult or easy. It remains in this state when things are tough or when they are pleasant. It is in this state whether sadness looms, or when salvation comes. Their hearts are settled, bound with God Almighty. They are fully aware that it is only God that has control of what life throws at him. He knows that he has not been afflicted to be deceived or to distress him. Such is a true believer.

"There will be those that add to this effort by the verse 'but have striven with their belongings and their persons in the Cause of Allah: Such are the sincere ones' (Koranic verse, al-Hujurat, 49:15). Then jihad is the very definition of the true belief. The Almighty says: 'Such are the sincere ones' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:15). It is they who have combined their belief in God and the messenger of God (peace and blessings upon him)...They know that this by itself will not suffice. They know that they have to show that some how. There must be a clear proof of this claim. That is jihad for the sake of God. This is true since jihad is the only field where a human being offers the goods that God Almighty has ordered him to offer. 'Allah hath purchased of the believers their persons and their goods, for theirs (in return) is the garden (of paradise). They fight in His cause, and slay and are slain: a promise binding on Him in truth, through the

Law, the Gospel, and the Koran. And who is more faithful to his covenant than Allah? Then rejoice in the bargain which ye have concluded. That is the achievement supreme' (Koranic verse, Al-Tawbah, 9:111). If you are a true believer in God and his messenger, as God says: 'Allah hath purchased of the believers their persons and their goods' (Koranic verse, Al-Tawbah, 9:111)...The return for their sacrifice is heaven, and the only place to make that offer is in the field of jihad. If you are successful in this, and if you offer yourself in complete acceptance, and as you seek martyrdom through your jihad for the sake of God, such is truly out of God's facilitation, and is a clear sign of your sincerity. Is this understood?

"Only those are Believers who have believed in Allah and His messenger, and have never since doubted, but have striven with their belongings and their persons in the Cause of Allah: Such are the sincere ones. (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:15). The true action that takes doubt from one's heart and strengthens his sincerity in support of the faith of God, in his belief in God, and in his love for God Almighty, is jihad for sake of God. This is true because that individual has offered himself, the most precious item he owns, to God Almighty, and it is because he has completely abandoned this life for the sake of pleasing God Almighty. He has left his home, family, business, abode, children, degrees, certificates, occupation, and much more, in order to prove that he is willing and ready to offer himself seeking the pleasure of God Almighty. As God Almighty says: 'Say: If it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred; the wealth that ye have gained; the commerce in which ye fear a decline; or the dwellings in which ye delight, are dearer to you than Allah, or His messenger, or the striving in His cause; then wait until Allah brings about His decision, and Allah guides not the rebellious' (Koranic verse, Al-Tawbah, 9:24).

"So, is there anything else more important than all these issues, which God Almighty has referred to, of which people hold dear? My brothers, there is no one who shies away from jihad or offers excuses not to take part in jihad, unless it was one of those issues that God Almighty has referred to. He may use the excuse of serving his household, children, family, ccupation, or his trade...Or he may use the excuse of providing for the land or the home, or somethinglike that. As long as there is something of this life that holds him back, he must realize that he is a state of unrest and must find a way to substantiate his belief. The Almighty says: 'Only those are believers who have believed in Allah and His messenger, and have never since doubted, but have striven with their belongings and their persons in the cause of Allah: Such are the sincere ones' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:15). This is a reference to those whose faith has been fulfilled. Those whose actions match their words...Whose actions match their belief in God and in the messenger (peace and blessings upon him). The Almighty goes on to say: 'What! Will ye instruct Allah about your religion? But Allah knows all that is in the heavens and on earth. He has full knowledge of all things' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:16). This is a direct response to: 'The desert Arabs say: We believe' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:14). God is asking: Are you going to inform God about the truth of your faith while it is only God who knows whether you have truly believed? God is asking: Ae you going to inform God about the truth of your faith (meaning your belief) when God knows what takes place across the heavens and earth and nothing is beyond his knowledge? He knows whether you are true believers and whether your belief is weak, or if you were true Muslims, or if there are deficiencies in your belief, for there is nothing beyond His knowledge, whether it is on land or across the heavens.

"The Almighty goes on to say: "They im press on thee as a favor that they have embraced Islam. Say: Count not your Islam as a favor upon me. Nay, Allah has conferred a favor upon you that He has guided you to the faith, if ye be true and sincere' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:17). This means that there are those people who celebrate the fact, to the prophet, that they have accepted Islam. They will say that while the Arabs fought you, we did not. They are acting to gain favor

with the messenger of God (peace and blessings upon him). God Almighty corrected this misunderstanding by saying that it was they who are fortunate and they should be thankful to God. If they were to find themselves in any other position, they have only themselves to blame.

'They impress on thee as a favor that they have embraced Islam. Say: Count not your Islam as a favor upon me. Nay, Allah has conferred a favor upon you that He has guided you to the faith, if ye be true and sincere' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:17). Yes, truly, it is only God that has favored his servant by opening the gates of guidance to him and thrust the light of faith upon his heart and has taken him out of the darkness and into the light, saving him from non-belief with the salvation of faith. It is only He who has taken him from disobedience to obedience...All through the grace of God Almighty and through His help and facilitation. It is he who favors his servant so that they may be grateful to him for his blessing. 'They impress on thee as a favor that they have embraced Islam. Say: Count not your Islam as a favour upon me. Nay, Allah has conferred a favor upon you that He has guided you to the faith, if ye be true and sincere' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:17).

"The Almighty then goes on to say: 'Verily Allah knows the secrets of the heavens and the earth, and Allah Sees well all that ye do' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:18). This is part of the general rule. This, as with his previous statement: 'They impress on thee as a favor that they have embraced Islam. Say: Count not your Islam as a favor upon me. Nay, Allah has conferred a favor upon you that He has guided you to the faith, if ye be true and sincere' (Koranic verse, Al-Hujurat, 49:17)...This is a reference to what takes place in their hearts, whether it is faith or not. Here, God states openly that He is all knowing of all things unknown, across the heavens and earth. It is He who is aware of their actions. He knows if it is compatible with the truth or if it is against it. He knows whether you are sincere or not. It is only God that knows what lays secret and what is hidden. We ask that God Almighty benefit us with what He has taught us, and to make us sincere and grant us all martyrdom for His sake...For He is all-knowing and always near. Peace and blessings upon the messenger of God, His greatest creation, Muhammad, and upon all his kin and companions. God bless you all. Praise be to God. I bear witness that there is no god but God, and I seek his forgiveness and I offer my repentance."