



**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

**SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**COURSE CODE: ISL 412**

**COURSE TITLE: EXEGESIS OF SELECTED PASSAGES OF THE QURAN**



## **NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

**COURSE CODE/TITLE: ISL 412: *Tafsīr*: Exegesis of Selected Passages  
of the *Qur'ān***

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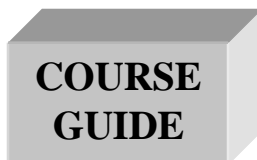
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## **Introduction**

**ISL412:** *Tafsīr* of Selected Passages of the *Qur'ān* is a two credit units, compulsory course, for the third year degree students of Islamic Studies at the National Open University of Nigeria. This Course Guide gives the reader a clear Introduction, text, translation and Commentary of *Sūratu 'n-Nisā'i* which is Chapter 4 of the Holy *Qur'ān*.

## **What You Will Learn In This Course**

In this Course you are going to learn the divine injunction and guidelines provided in the *Sūratu 'n-Nisā'i*. You will be exposed to such subject matters as solidarity of mankind, rights of women and orphan, implications of family relationship, holding women in honor and recognizing their right in marriage, and equitable distribution of property and inheritance. What you will learn also includes extending principle of goodness to all beings, not going after false gods; accepting the authority of the prophet and upholding his *Sunnah*. Other themes include how believers should organize themselves in self-defense against their enemies, caution about taking of life, dealing with justice and sincerity, moderation in speech and exposition of the errors of the people of the books.

## **The Aim and Objective of This Course**

The main aim of this course is to facilitate knowledge of the text, translation and Commentary of *Sūratu 'n-Nisā'i*. The course has fourteen units each of which has its instructional objectives. You are expected to read the objectives of each unit and bear them in mind as you go through the unit. Nevertheless, the following are overall objectives of the course.

After readers have gone through the whole of this Course they should be able to:

- (i) Recite the original Arabic text of *Sūratu `n-Nisā`i*.
- (ii) Translate *Sūratu `n-Nisā`i* into idiomatic English.
- (iii) Comment fully on the contents of the divine passages.
- (iv) Narrate the divine injunctions and guidelines contained in the *Sūratu`n-Nisā`i* .

## Working Through This Course

The major components of the Course which you are expected to work through without leaving one untouched are:

1. This Course Guide
2. The Study Units in this Course Material
3. Textbooks in form of references and further reading
4. Assessments

## The Study Units

There are fourteen units (of three modules) in this course. These are listed thus:

### **Module 1 : *TAFSĪR SŪRATU `N-NISĀ`I, VERSES 1 - 58***

Unit 1: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā`i*, Verses 1-10

Unit 2: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā`i*, Verses 11 -14

Unit 3: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā`i*, Verses 15 - 28

Unit 4: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā`i*, Verses 29 – 35

Unit 5: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā`i*, Verses 36 – 48

### **Module 2: *TAFSĪR SŪRATU `N-NISĀ`I, VERSES 49 - 125***

Unit 1: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā`i*, Verses 49 – 58

Unit2: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā`i*, Verses 59 – 70

Unit 3: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā`i*, Verses 71 – 92

Unit 4: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā`i*, Verses 93 – 115

Unit 5: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā`i*, Verses 116 – 125

### **Module 3: *TAFSĪR SŪRATU `N-NISĀ`I, VERSES 126 - 174***

Unit 1: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā`i*, Verses 126 – 134

Unit 2: *Tafsīr of Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, Verses 135 – 143

Unit 3: *Tafsīr of Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, Verses 144 – 159

Unit 4: *Tafsīr of Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, Verses 160 – 174

## References and Other Resources

Every unit has a list of references and further reading designed to enhance and deepen learner's knowledge on the course. These are some of them, try as much as possible to lay your hands on the materials.

1. Abdullah, A.Y (1999). *The Holy Qur'ān* (trans). London Publishers.
2. Muhammad , M. K. (1999). *The Noble Qur'ān*. English version; *Dāru 's-Salām*: Riyadh.
3. Muhammad, M.K. (2002), *Ṣaḥīḥ al– Bukhārī*, *Dāru 's-Salām*: Riyadh.
4. Muhammad, M.K (1998). *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. *Dāru 's-Salām*: Riyadh.
5. <http://www.Qur'ān.search.org>.
6. <http://www.tafseeronline.com>

It should be noted that there are also many relevant soft copy materials on the website.

## Assessments

Your assessment will be based on **Self Assessment Exercises (SAEs)**, **Tutor-marked Assignments (TMAs)** and a **Final Written Examination** at the end of the course.

## The Self Assessment Exercises

Though your answers to these **Self Assessment Exercises** questions do not add a credit to your overall grade in the course, it is advisable that you attempt all of them yourself as it serves as a demonstration of the level of understanding you are achieving as you go through the content.

## Tutor Marked Assignments

You will be provided with 4 online TMAs each of which will consist of twenty Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ). At least, three of the four TMAs must be answered before arrangements are concluded for the written examination. The three in which you perform best shall be selected to constitute 30% of your final grade.

## Final Examination and Grading

At the end of this course, you will write a final examination, which shall constitute 70% of your grade. In the examination, you will be required to answer three out of at least five questions.

Assessment	Marks
Four Assignments	Best three marks of the four assignments count as 30%
Final Examination	70% of overall marks
<b>Total</b>	100% of course marks

### Presentation Schedule

The Presentation Schedule included in this Course Guide gives you the important dates for the completion of tutor-marked assignments and attending tutorials. Remember, you are required to submit all your assignments by their due dates. You should guard against falling behind in your work.

### Course Overview and Presentation Schedule

Unit	Title of Work	Weeks	Assessment Activity
<b>Module 1 : <i>TAFSĪR SŪRATU 'N-NISĀ'I</i>, VERSES 1 - 58</b>			
Unit 1	<i>Tafsīr</i> of <i>Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i</i> , Verses 1-10	Week 1	
Unit 2	<i>Tafsīr</i> of <i>Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i</i> , Verses 11 – 14	Week 2	Assignment 1
Unit 3	<i>Tafsīr</i> of <i>Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i</i> , Verses 15 – 28	Week 3	
Unit 4	<i>Tafsīr</i> of <i>Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i</i> , Verses 29 - 35	Week 4	Assignment 2
Unit 5	<i>Tafsīr</i> of <i>Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i</i> , Verses 36 – 48	Week 5	
<b>Module 2: <i>TAFSĪR SŪRATU 'N-NISĀ'I</i>, VERSES 49 – 125</b>			
Unit 1	<i>Tafsīr</i> of <i>Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i</i> , Verses 49 – 58	Week 6	
Unit 2	<i>Tafsīr</i> of <i>Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i</i> , Verses 59 – 70	Week 6	Assignment 3
Unit 3	<i>Tafsīr</i> of <i>Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i</i> , Verses 71 – 92	Week 7	
Unit 4	<i>Tafsīr</i> of <i>Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i</i> , Verses 93-115	Week 8	
Unit 5	<i>Tafsīr</i> of <i>Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i</i> , Verses 116 – 125	Week 8	Assignment 4
<b>Module 3 <i>TAFSĪR SŪRATU 'N-NISĀ'I</i>, VERSES 126 – 174</b>			



Unit 1	<i>Tafsīr of Sūratu `n – Nisā`i, Verses 126 – 134</i>	Week 9	
Unit 2	<i>Tafsīr of Sūratu `n – Nisā`i, Verses 135 – 143</i>	Week 10	
Unit 3	<i>Tafsīr of Sūratu `n – Nisā`i, Verses 144 – 159</i>	Week 11	
Unit 4	<i>Tafsīr of Sūratu `n – Nisā`i, Verses 160 – 174</i>	Week 12	
Revision /Examination			

### **How to Get the Most from this Course**

In distance learning, the study units replace the university lecture. This is one of its great advantages. You can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace, and at a time and place that suits you best. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to the lecturer. In the same way a lecturer might give you some reading to do, the study units tell you when to read, and which are your text materials or set books. You are provided exercises to do at appropriate points, just as a lecturer might give you an in-class exercise. Each of the study units follows a common format. The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit, and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units and the course as a whole. Next to this is a set of learning objectives. These objectives let you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the unit. These learning objectives are meant to guide your study. The moment a unit is finished, you must go back and check whether you have achieved the objectives. If this is made a habit, then you will significantly improve your chances of passing the course. The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will usually be either from your set books or from a Reading section. The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If you run into any trouble, telephone your tutor. Remember that your tutor's job is to help you. When you need assistance, do not hesitate to call and ask your tutor to provide it.

1. Read this Course Guide thoroughly, it is your first assignment.
2. Organize a Study Schedule. Design a 'Course Overview' to guide you through the Course. Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units. Important information, e.g. details of your tutorials,

and the date of the first day of the Semester is available from the study centre. You need to gather all the information into one place, such as your diary or a wall calendar. Whatever method you choose to use, you should decide on and write in your own dates and schedule of work for each unit.

3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything to stay faithful to it. The major reason that students fail is that they get behind with their course work. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please, let your tutor know before it is too late for help.
4. Turn to Unit 1, and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
5. Assemble the study materials. You will need your set books and the unit you are studying at any point in time.
6. Work through the unit. As you work through the unit, you will know what sources to consult for further information.
7. Keep in touch with your Study Centre. Up-to-date course information will be continuously available there.
8. Well before the relevant due dates (about 4 weeks before the dates), keep in mind that you will learn a lot by doing the assignment carefully. They have been designed to help you meet the objectives of the course and, therefore, will help you pass the examination. Submit all assignments not later than the due date.
9. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them. If you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor.
10. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to pace your study so that you keep yourself on schedule.
11. When you have submitted an assignment to your tutor for marking, do not wait for its return before starting on the next unit. Keep to your schedule. When the Assignment is returned, pay particular attention to your tutor's comments, both on

the Tutor-Marked Assignment form and also the written comments on the ordinary assignments.

12. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in the Course Guide).

### **Tutors and Tutorials**

The dates, times and locations of these tutorials will be made available to you, together with the name, telephone number and address of your tutor. Your tutor will mark each assignment. Pay close attention to the comments your tutor might make on your assignments as these will help in your progress. Make sure that assignments reach your tutor on or before the due date. Your tutorials are important; therefore try not to skip any. It is an opportunity to meet your tutor and your fellow students. It is also an opportunity to get the help of your tutor and discuss any difficulties encountered on your reading.

### **Conclusion**

Much as I cannot promise you a too-easy ride on this course, I equally do not envisage much difficulty as long as you play the roles assigned to you in the whole exercise.

### **Summary**

In this Course Guide, we have provided you a general overview of *ISL 412: Tafsir* of Selected passages of the Holy *Qur'ān* with particular reference to Suratu `n-Nisā'i. The Course Aims and Objectives and what learners will gain working through the Course Material and its Study Units are stated clearly at the onset. We also provided you a list of textbooks and references for your further reading. As an inference in the Guide, to develop an active interest in the Course is a prerequisite for its successful completion. Assess yourself through the Self Assessment Exercises (SAEs). You will equally be assessed for grading purposes through the Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs). Thus to do well- in the course, you must get yourself organized and try to conform to the presentation schedule.

We wish you best of luck and success in the course.



## COURSE MATERIAL

### **MODULE 1 : *TAFSĪR SŪRATU `N-NISĀ'I*, VERSES 1 - 48**

Unit 1: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā'i*, Verses 1- 10

Unit 2: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā'i*, Verses 11 - 14

Unit 3: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā'i*, Verses 15 - 28

Unit 4: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā'i*, Verses 29 - 35

Unit 5: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n – Nisā'i*, Verses 36 - 48

### **UNIT 1: *TAFSĪR OF SŪRATU `N – NISĀ'I*, VERSES 1-10**

#### **CONTENTS:**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Contents
  - 3.1 *Tafsīr* of the Verses 1 – 4
  - 3.2 *Tafsīr* of the Verse 5 –10
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Readings.

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

A number of the Hadiths of the Prophet states that *Sūratu `n - Nisā'i* was revealed in Madinah. It deals with the social problems which were confronted by the Muslims after the battles of Uhud. This *Sūrah* begins with an appeal to the solidarity of mankind, elucidation of women and orphans rights, marriage and matters relating to custody and distribution of property and wealth of the minor. Come on board and let us subject the passages to some explanation and commentary.

#### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

- At the end of this Unit, you are expected to be able to:
- explain the cause of revelation of the Verses 1 – 4 of the *Sūrah* 4.
- highlight the subject matters treated in Verses 1 – 4 of the *Sūrah* 4.
- relate the divine injunctions and guidelines of the Verses 1 – 4 of *Sūrah* 4.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

#### 3.1 Tafsīr of verses 1– 4

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا  
وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا {النساء/1} وَأَتُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ أَمْوَالَهُمْ  
وَلَا تَبَدَّلُوا الْخَبِيثَ بِالطَّيِّبِ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَمْوَالِكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حُوبًا كَبِيرًا {النساء/2} وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا  
تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً  
أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَعُولُوا {النساء/3} وَأَتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدَقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً فَإِنْ طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ  
شَيْءٍ مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَّرِيئًا {النساء/4}

1. O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever and All-Watcher over you.
2. And give unto orphans their property and do not exchange (your) bad things for (their) good ones; and devour not their substance (by adding it) to your substance. Surely, this is a great sin.
3. And if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan-girls, then marry (other) women of your choice, two or three, or four but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one or (the captives and the slaves) that your right hands possess. That is nearer to prevent you from doing injustice.
4. And give to the women (whom you marry) their *Mahr* (obligatory bridal money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage) with a good heart, but if they, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it, and enjoy it without fear of any harm (as Allah has made it lawful).

#### COMMENTARY

*Sūratu'l - Nisā'i* is the fourth chapter of the *Qur'ān* in the order of its (*Qur'ān*) arrangement. Allah commands His creatures to have *taqwā* (piety) of Him by worshipping Him alone without partners. Allah also reminds man of his ability, in that man was created from a single person, Adam. Hawau was evolved from Adam's left rib while he was sleeping. From both of them, He (Allah) created many men and women and distributed them throughout the world in various shapes, characteristics, colours as well as languages. In the end, their return will be to Allah. By and large, men are obliged to worship Allah.

This part of the *Āyah* encourages having sense of certainty that Allah always watches, in a complete and perfect manner. Allah (S.W) commands that the property of the orphans be surrendered to them in full when they reach the age of adolescence. He forbids using or confiscating any part of it. This connotes that “do not devour their substance” because it is a great, major and substantial sin.

Moreover, the *Sūrah* enjoins the Muslims to marry females of their choices. It permits polygamous as well as monogamous marriage with a restriction on the polygamy. Not only this, Islam makes provision for those who are less privileged among the Muslims to also marry. This is succinctly stated: “And if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan – girls, and then marry (other) women of your choice. This particular verse also prohibits marrying orphans without giving a *mahr* (dower). Allah commands: “ when one of you is the caretaker of a female orphan and he fears that he might not give her a dower that is suitable for women of her status, he should marry other women, who are many as Allah has not restricted him”. So guardians were forbidden to marry an orphan girl unless he will treat her justly and give her the most suitable dower, otherwise he is ordered to marry a woman besides an orphan. The Arabs inquired so much about this marriage with orphan girls from the Prophet, so Allah revealed the *Āyah* “ They ask instruction concerning the women ( Q4: 12) Then, his response analyses that the verse refers to the guardian who does not desire to marry an orphan girls under his supervision because she is neither wealthy nor beautiful. The guardians were forbidden to marry their orphan girls possessing property and beauty without being just to them.

On polygamous marriage, *Āyah 3* specifies that men are prohibited from marrying more than four wives as Ibn Abbas and the majority of scholars stated. If it were allowed for a man to have more than four wives, the *Āyah* would have mentioned it. It was reported by Imam Ahmad that Salim said that his father, Ghilan bn Thaqafi had ten wives when he became Muslim and the Prophet said to him: “Choose any four of them and divorce the rest”. This Prophetic statement is an indication that men are not permitted to keep more than four wives at a time under any circumstance. Besides, Islam allows monogamous marriage. This is clearly stated as the *Qur’ān* says: “But if you fear that you will not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one or what your right hands possess”. Thus the *Āyah* implies, if you fear that you will not be able to do justice between your wives by marrying more than one, then marry only one wife or satisfy yourself with only female captives.

This passage also mentions *Mahr* which is synonymous to *Ṣadāq* and means nuptial gift as an obligatory amount to be given by the husband to his would-be wife. If the wife gives him part or all of that dowry with a good heart, her husband is allowed to take it as it is lawful for him in this case. That is why Allah says afterwards: “But if they, of their own pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it and enjoy it without fear of any harm.”

## Self Assessment Exercise

Give a comprehensive exegesis of Verses 1-4 of *Suratu 'n-Nisā'*.

### 3.2 Tafsīr of Verses 5 –10

وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَامًا وَارْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا وَاكْسُوهُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا {النساء/5}

وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ فَإِنْ آنَسْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ رُشْدًا فَادْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوهَا إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا أَنْ يَكْبَرُوا وَمَنْ كَانَ غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ وَمَنْ كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِذَا دَفَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فَأَشْهَدُوا عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ حَسِيبًا {النساء/6}

لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا {النساء/7} وَإِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ أُولُو الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينُ فَارْزُقُوهُمْ مِنْهُ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا {النساء/8} وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكَوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعَافًا خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا {النساء/9} إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيرًا {النساء/10}

## TRANSLATION

5. And give not unto the foolish your property which Allah has made a means of support for you, but feed and clothe them therewith, and speak to them words of kindness and justice.

6. And try orphans (as regards their intelligence) until they reach the age of marriage; if then you find sound judgement in them, release their property to them, but consume it not wastefully, and hastily fearing that they should grow up, and whoever amongst guardians is rich, he should take no wages, but if he is poor, let him have for himself what is just and reasonable (according to his work). And when you release their property to them, take witness in their presence; and Allah is All-Sufficient in taking account.

7. There is a share for men and a share for women from what is left by parents and those nearest related, whether, the property be small or large - a legal share.

8. And when the relatives and the orphans and *al-Masākīn* (the poor) are present at the time of division, give them out of the property, and speak to them words of kindness and justice.

9. And let those (executors and guardians) have the same fear in their minds as they would have for their own, if they had left weak offspring behind. So let them fear Allah and speak right words.

10. Verily, those who unjustly eat up the property of orphans, they eat up only a fire into their bellies, and they will be burnt in the blazing Fire!

## COMMENTARY

Allah prohibited giving the un – wise the freedom to do as they wish with wealth, which Allah has made as a means of support for people. This ruling applies to case of insanity, erratic behavior and having a weak intellect or religious practices. The verse particularly refers to children and women. Then Islam obliges man to spend on the un-wise with fear of God. This *Āyah* commands kind treatment in deed, with family and those under one’s care. One should spend on them for clothes, food and provision. Not only as this had the *Āyah* stated further: “And speak to them words of kindness and justice. This refers to keeping good relations.

Orphans’ property should be kept safe until he or she reaches the age of puberty “if then you find sound judgment in them, release their property to them”. This portion of the *Āyah* means when one finds them to be good in relation and wise with their property. The scholars of *fiqh* stated that when the child becomes good in the religion and wise concerning money, then the money which his care – taker was keeping for him should be surrendered to him.

On management of wealth and property of the orphans, Verse 6 laid emphasis: “And test orphans until they reach the age of marriage, if then you find judgment in them, release their property to them..... and whoever among the guardians is rich, he should take no wages, but if he is poor, let him have for himself what is just and reasonable. And when you release their property to them, take witness in their presence and Allah is All-Sufficient in taking account”.

Occasionally, poor care – takers are allowed to wisely spend from the property of the orphan under their care, to compensate their work. It was reported from Imam Ahmad that the Prophet was asked by a man as following: “I do not have money, but I have an orphan under my care”. The Messenger then replied; ‘eat from your orphan’s wealth without extravagance or wastefulness or mixing it, and without saving your money by spending his’. Allah also commands the guardians to surrender the orphan’s property who becomes consenting, in the presence of witnesses, so that none of them denies the fact that he receives his money.

In the period of ignorance, the idolaters used to give adult – men a share of inheritance and deprive women and children of it. Thus, it was revealed by Allah “There is a share for men from what is left by parents and those nearest in relation”. Thus, everyone is equal in Allah’s decision to inherit, even though their shares vary according to the degree of their relationship to the deceased. So , when poor relatives, who are ineligible for inheritance, orphans and the poor attend the division of the inheritance, which is sometimes substantial, their hearts will feel eager to have a share. Allah, the Most Kind commands that they should have a share in the inheritance as an act of kindness, charity, compassion and mercy for them.



Fairness should be observed in the “will”. This implies that justice should be maintained in the divisions of the will or the estate left by the deceased even to the orphans. Allah proclaims that those who deal unjustly with the wealth of the orphans will be consuming fire. That is why Allah states “Verily those who unjustly eat up the property of orphans, they eat up only a fire into their bellies and they’ll be burnt in the blazing fire.

### **Self Assessment Exercise**

Highlight the divine guidelines on management of the orphan’s and minors wealth and property as contained in verses 5-10 of *Suratu Nisā’i*.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Thus, *Sūratu n - Nisā’i*, in its opening reminds man of his single origin from Adam. The Surah also deals with social issues in form of marriage as well as kindness to the orphans. Marriage in Islam may be monogamous or polygamous marriage according to the divine passage. Not only this, the *Sūrah* restricts the permissible number of wives that a Muslim should have under the polygamous marriage to four. Also treated in this segment is emancipation of women from ill- treatment and unlawful means of inheriting them as practiced in the olden days of the Arabs.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit opens with an introduction to *Sūratu n - Nisā’i*. It suggests the means of creating conducive atmosphere for living in a society. The polygamous and monogamous kinds of marriage are treated briefly. Two of the essential requirements of marriage contract in Islam – consent and dowry - are mentioned in the Ayahs. So also are the rights of the orphans.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the divine guidance on marriage matters contained in Q.4: 3 – 4.

## **7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING**

- (1) Abdullah, Y.A. (1989). *The Holy Qur’ān*. Tran. London Publishers.
- (2) Muhammad, M.K (1998). *The Noble Qur’ān*. Saudi Arabia: Darusalam.
- (3) Muhammed, M.k ( 2003). *Ṣaḥīḥ al – Bukhārī*. Saudi Arabia: Darus – Salam Publications.
- (4) *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, English Fashion (abridged).
- (5) Httpllwww: *tafsīr.com* retrieved on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2011.

## UNIT 2: *TAFSĪR OF SŪRATU 'N – NISĀ'I*, VERSES 11-14

### CONTENTS:

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Contents

*Tafsīr of Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, Verses 11 - 14

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

7.0 References / Further Readings.

### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

The first segment of the Chapter treated in Unit 1 deals with fair dealings with women, orphans, marriage, custody of wealth and inheritance. This Unit, consisting of verses 11 - 14, *Sūrah* 4 of the Holy Book of Islam addresses issues relating to family and the community. It focuses on detailed injunctions and guidelines relating to inheritance and portions accruing to each heir. Welcome.

### OBJECTIVES

- At the end of this Unit, you are expected to be able to:
- Recite Verses 11 – 14 of *Sūratu 'n-Nisā'i*
- Do the exegesis of the Verses 11-14 of the *Sūratu 'n-Nisā'i*
- highlight the subject matters treated in the Verses 11-14 of *Sūratu 'n-Nisā'i*.
- Narrate the injunctions relating to inheritance as contained in the Verses.

### 3.1 *Tafsīr of the Verses 7- 14*

يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ فَإِنْ كُنَّ نِسَاءً فَوْقَ اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ وَاحِدَةً فَلَهَا النِّصْفُ وَلِأَبَوَيْهِ لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِنْ كَانَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَوَرِثَهُ أَبَوَاهُ فَلِأُمِّهِ الثُّلُثُ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُ إِخْوَةٌ فَلِأُمِّهِ السُّدُسُ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِي بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفْعًا فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا {النساء/11} وَلَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَزْوَاجُكُمْ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُن لَّهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَلِكُمُ الرُّبُعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِي بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ وَلَهُنَّ الرُّبُعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُن لَّكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ الثُّمُنُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ تُوصُونَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ وَإِنْ كَانَ رَجُلٌ يُورَثُ كَلَالَةً أَوْ امْرَأَةً وَلَهُ أَخٌ أَوْ أُخْتُ فَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ فَإِنْ كَانُوا أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ فِي الثُّلُثِ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَى بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ غَيْرِ مُضَارٍّ وَصِيَّةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ {النساء/12} تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ {النساء/13} وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَلَهُ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ {النساء/14}

## TRANSLATION

11. Allah commands you as regards your children's (inheritance); to the male, a portion equal to that of two females; if (there are) only daughters, two or more, their share is two thirds of the inheritance; if only one, her share is half. For parents, a sixth share of inheritance to each if the deceased left children; if no children and the parents are the (only) heirs, the mother has a third; if the deceased left brothers or (sisters), the mother has a sixth. (The distribution in all cases is) after the payment of legacies he may have bequeathed or debts. You know not which of them, whether your parents or your children, are nearest to you in benefit, (these fixed shares) are ordained by Allah. And Allah is Ever All-Knower, All-Wise.

12. In that which your wives leave, your share is a half if they have no child; but if they leave a child, you get a fourth of that which they leave after payment of legacies that they may have bequeathed or debts. In that which you leave, their (your wives) share is a fourth if you leave no child; but if you leave a child, they get an eighth of that which you leave after payment of legacies that you may have bequeathed or debts. If the man or woman whose inheritance is in question has left neither ascendants nor descendants, but has left a brother or a sister, each one of the two gets a sixth; but if more than two, they share in a third; after payment of legacies he (or she) may have bequeathed or debts, so that no loss is caused (to anyone). This is a Commandment from Allah; and Allah is Ever All-Knowing, Most-Forbearing.

13. These are the limits (set by) Allah (or ordainments as regards laws of inheritance), and whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad) will be admitted to Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise), to abide therein, and that will be the great success.

14. And whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad), and transgresses His limits, He will cast him into the Fire, to abide therein; and he shall have a disgraceful torment.

## COMMENTARY

Principles of inheritance are vividly presented in these verses of the Chapter of the Women. The shares of children, both males and females, are comprehensively expressed in the divine passage. "A male portion is equal to that of two females". The people of the *Jāhiliyah* used to give the males but not the females a share in the inheritance. Therefore, Allah commands that both males and females take a share in the inheritance, although the portion of the males is twice as much as that of the females. There is a distinction because men need money to spend on their dependants, commercial transaction, work and fulfilling their obligations. This Qur'ānic allusion testifies to the fact that Allah is more merciful with children than their own parents are with them.

Allah cancelled all the unjust manner of inheritance in the *Jāhiliyyah* period and He ordained that the male gets twice the amount inherited by the female, and for each parent, a sixth of the whole legacy, the wife takes eighth or a fourth while a husband takes a half or a fourth'' . If there is only one female, her share is half of the estate and two thirds is the share of the two daughters or sisters.

Parents share are classified in the share of the legacy. There are several forms of share that the parents get in the inheritance. If the deceased left behind children, the parents get a sixth each. If the deceased had only one daughter, she gets half of the estate and each of the parents gets sixth. When the parents are the only inheritors, the mother gets one third while the father gets the remaining two – thirds. In this case, the father's share will be twice that of the mother. If the deceased had a surviving spouse, the spouse gets half in the case of husband, or a fourth in the case of a surviving wife. In both cases, the mother of the deceased gets one – third of the remaining inheritance. This is because the remaining portion of the inheritance is treated just as the entire legacy in regard to the parents' share. Allah has given mother one – half of the father gets. Therefore, the mother gets a third of the remaining inheritance while the father gets two – thirds. If the deceased left behind surviving brothers and sisters, whether half brothers, half sisters or from the same father and mother, their presence does not cause reduction in the father's share. Yet, their presence reduces the share of the mother to one – sixth instead of one – third, and the father gets the rest, when there are no other heirs.

If the deceased left brothers or sisters, the mother has a sixth. ''Their presence will reduce the share of the mother, but they will not inherit. If there is only one surviving brothers, the mother's share of the mother, but they will not inherit. If there is only one surviving brother, the mother's share will remain one – third, but her share will be reduced if there is more than one surviving brother. Immediately a person dies, the debt will be first paid, then the will and the fixed inheritance. The distribution of the inheritance in all cases is after the payment of legacies he may have bequeathed or debts. The scholars agree that paying debts comes before fulfilling the will.

''You know not which of them whether your parents or your children are nearest to you in benefit''. This *Āyat* means: we have appointed a share to the parents and children; contrary to the practice of the Jahiliyyah and the early Islamic Era. In those mentioned eras, the inheritance would go to the children and parents get a share only if they were named in the will (as Ibn. Abbas stated). Allah abrogated this practice and appointed a fixed a share for the children and the parents. One may derive benefits in this life or hereafter from hereafter from his parents, the likes of which he could not get from his children. That is why Allah says:''you know not which of them, whether your parents or your children are nearest to you in benefit could come from one or other of these relatives''. Hence, we appointed a fixed share of inheritance for each.

This is a commandment that He has decided and ordained. Share of the spouse in inheritance are divinely fixed. This is clearly said by the *Qur'ān* as Allah analyses it. A husband gets half of what his wife left behind if she does not have a child. If she had a child, he gets one – fourth of what she leave behind, after the payment of legacies that she may have bequeathed or her debts.

This portion of the Surah contains detailed explanation on the case of *Kalālah*. The word *Kalālah* is a derivative of *Iklīl* which means the crown that surrounds the head. The meaning of *Kalālah* in this *Āyah* is that the person's heir comes from other than the first degree of relative. According to the description of the word *Kalālah* by Abu Bakr, it refers to the man who has no descendants or ascendants. 'Umar bn. al – Khattāb argued that *Kalālah* refers to the person who has no child or parents'. This is also the opinion of Ali bn Abi Tālib, Ibn. Abbas, Ibn. Mas'ud, Zayd bn Thābit, the four Imāms of the schools of thought, and the scholars. By and large, then *Kalālah* will also be given some shares in the estate left by a deceased.

The children of the mother from other than the deceased father will also be catered for in the inheritance. ``if he has left a brother or a sister'' from his mother side (This is the exegesis of the scholars). Hence the two gets a sixth, but if more than two, they share a third. First, they get a share in the inheritance on account of their mother. Second, the males and females among them get the same share. Third, they only have a share in the inheritance when the deceased's estate is inherited in *Kalālah*, for they do not have a share if the deceased has a surviving father, grandfather, child or grandchild. Their share should not exceed a third no matter how numerous they may be.

Inheritance in Islam is the unit set by Allah and whosoever obeys Allah and his Messenger will be admitted to garden under which rivers flow (in paradise). And whosoever disobeys Allah and his Messenger, and transgresses His set limit will be cast into the Hellfire and he shall suffer a disgraceful torment.

The *Farā'id* (inheritance) are Allah's limits. It includes what Allah has allotted for the heirs, according to the degree of relation they have to the deceased, and their degree of dependency on him. Therefore, Allah's limit should not be violated. In the chapter on injustice in the will, Abu Dawud recorded in his *Sunan* that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said:

“A man or a woman might perform actions in obedience of Allah for sixty years. Yet, when he or she is near death, he or she leaves an unfair Will and he acquires the fire”.

### Self Assessment Exercise

Discuss the *Sharī'ah* principles of Inheritance as contained in verses 7 – 14 of *Sūratu n – Nisā'i*.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Allah abolished all forms of *Jahiliyyah* practices concerning inheritance in this segment of *Sūratu n - Nisā'i*. The segment outlines the principles of inheritance and teaches emancipation of women from ill- treatment and unlawful means of inheriting them.

#### **8.0 SUMMARY**

This unit presents the original Arabic text of Verses 11-14 of *Sūratu n - Nisā'i*. It contains an idiomatic English translation of the texts and exegesis of the passages. The exegesis (*tafsīr*) cites Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (S), opinions of the Sahabah and those of the Jurists of the four schools of Islamic law.

#### **9.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Highlight the general principles of Inheritance in Islam as contained in verses 7 – 14 of *Sūratu `n-Nisā`*.

#### **7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING**

- (6) Abdullah, Y.A. (1989). *The Holy Qur'ān*. Tran. London Publishers.
- (7) Muhammad, M.K (1998). *The Noble Qur'ān*. Saudi Arabia: Darusalam.
- (8) Muhammed, M.k ( 2003). *Ṣaḥīḥ al – Bukhārī*. Saudi Arabia: Darus – Salam Publications.
- (9) *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, English Fashion (abridged).
- (10) Httpllwww: *tafsīr.com* retrieved on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2011.

## UNIT 3: *TAFSĪR OF SŪRATU 'N-NISĀ'I, VERSES 15 – 28*

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Contents
  - 3.1 *Tafsīr* of Verses 15 -- 19
  - 3.2 *Tafsīr* of Verses 20 – 28
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References /Further Readings.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

You are welcome to unit three. In this unit, verses fifteen to twenty-eight of *Sūratun-Nisā'i* shall be discussed with a view of bringing out the lessons contained in them. It is hoped that you shall adopt them and make use of them in your day-to-day life.

### 2.0 Objectives

At the end of our discussion in this unit, you should be able to:

- Recite the Arabic text of verses 15 - 28 of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Give the English translation of verses 15 – 28 of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Comment fully on verses 15 – 28 of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Point out the divine guidelines derivable from verses 15 – 28 of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Arabi text of the Verses 15 – 19

وَاللَّاتِي يَأْتِينَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مِنْ نَسَائِكُمْ فَاَسْتَشْهَدُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ اَرْبَعَةً مِّنْكُمْ فَاِنْ شَهِدُوا فَاَمْسِكُوهُنَّ فِي الْبُيُوتِ حَتَّىٰ يَتَوَفَّاهُنَّ الْمَوْتُ اَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيلًا {النساء/15} وَاللَّذَانِ يَأْتِيَانِيهَا مِنْكُمْ فَاَذُوهُمَا فَاِنْ تَابَا وَاَصْلَحَا فَاَعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمَا اِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيمًا {النساء/16} اِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا {النساء/17} وَلَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ حَتَّىٰ اِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ اِنِّي تُبْتُ الْاَنَ وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ اُولَٰئِكَ اَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا اَلِيمًا {النساء/18} يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرْهًا وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ اِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبَيَّنَةٍ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَاِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا {النساء/19}

## TRANSLATION

15. And those of your women who commit illegal sexual intercourse, take the evidence of four witnesses from amongst you against them; and if they testify, confine them (i.e. women) to houses until death comes to them or Allah ordains for them some (other) way.

16. And the two persons (man and woman) among you who commit illegal sexual intercourse, punish them both. And if they repent (promise Allah that they will never repeat, i.e. commit illegal sexual intercourse and other similar sins) and do righteous good deeds, leave them alone. Surely, Allah is Ever the One Who accepts repentance, (and He is) Most Merciful.

17. Allah accepts only the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and foolishness and repent soon afterwards; it is they to whom Allah will forgive and Allah is Ever All-Knower, All-Wise.

18. And of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil deeds until death faces one of them and he says: "Now I repent;" nor of those who die while they are disbelievers. For them We have prepared a painful torment.

19. O you who believe! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will, and you should not treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of the *Mahr* you have given them, unless they commit open illegal sexual intercourse. And live with them honourably. If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing and Allah brings through it a great deal of good.

## COMMENTARY

At the beginning of Islam, the ruling concerning when a woman commits adultery is stipulated that she should be confined to her home without leaving it until she died. (Ibn. Abbas said, "The early ruling was confinement until Allah sent down *Sūrah* an- Nur (chapter 24) which abrogated that rule with the rule of flogging (for fornication) or stoning to death (for adultery). It was recorded by Imam Ahmad that 'Ubadah bn. As-Samir said; "when the revelation descends upon the Messenger of Allah, it would affect him and his face would show signs of strain. When Allah sent down a revelation to him and he was relieved of the strain, he said: Allah has made some other way for them; the married with the married, the unmarried with the unmarried.

The married gets a hundred lashes and stoning to death, while the unmarried gets a hundred lashes then banishment for a year.

"And the two persons among you who commit illegal sexual intercourse, punish them both). The punishments here include cursing, shaming them and beating them with sandals. This was the ruling until Allah abrogated it with flogging or stoning. Furthermore, the *Qur'ān* says:



“And they repent and do righteous good deeds” by refraining from that evil and thereafter their actions become righteous. Then, leave them alone, since he who repents is just like he who has no sin.

Allah states that He accept repentance of the servant who commit an error in ignorance and then repents even just before he sees the angel who captures the soul before his soul reaches the throat. This connotes that whoever disobeys Allah by mistake, or unintentionally is ignorant until he refrains from the sin. An authentic hadith of the Prophet says that ‘Allah accepts the repentance as long as the soul does not reach the soul. This is so, because when hope in continued living diminishes, the angel of death comes forth and the soul reaches the throat, approaches the chest and arrives at the state where it is being gradually pulled out, and then there is no accepted repentance or a way out of that certain end. Hence, that is the reason why Allah of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil deeds until death faces one of them and he says; ‘Now I repent.’

Islam forbids the practice of force inheritance of women as it was the order of day in the *Jahiliyyah* period. The practice was that when a man dies, his male relatives used to have the right to do whatever they wanted with his wife. If one of them wants, he would marry her, give her in marriage or prevent her from marriage for they had more right to her than her own family. Thereafter, this *Āyah* of the Holy Qur’ān was revealed about this: ‘O you who believe! You are not permitted to inherit women against their will’. ‘Nor prevents them from marriage in order to take part of what you have given them’. Allah commands that women should not be harshly treated so that she gives back all or part of the dowry that she was given or forfeits one of her rights by means of coercion and oppression. Unless, they commit open *Fāhishah*... The word *Fāhishah* in the verse according to the consensus of the scholars refers to an illicit sex. This means that if wife commits adultery, her husband is allowed to take back the dowry which he had given to her.

Men are enjoined to live with women honorably by being kind to them. That is why the Prophet urges a Muslim to be kind to his wife or wives. It was the practice of the Prophet to be kind, cheerful with his wives, compassionately spending on them and casting jokes with them. He did race with them especially with A‘ishah. Thus, a Muslim should not dislike his wife. This is exemplified by a number of traditions of the Prophet such as: No believing man should hate his believing wife. If he dislikes a part of her conduct, he would surely like another!

### **Self Assessment Exercise**

In what ways has Islam emancipated women in these verses of *Sūratu `n-Nisāi`*?

### 3.2 Text of Verses 20 - 28 of *Sūratu'n - Nisā'i*

وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ اسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَّكَانَ زَوْجٍ وَآتَيْتُمْ إِحْدَاهُنَّ قِنْطَارًا فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا مِنْهُ شَيْئًا أَتَأْخُذُونَهُ بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا **{النساء/20}** وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ وَقَدْ أَفْضَى بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ وَأَخَذْنَ مِنْكُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا **{النساء/21}** وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا مَا نَكَحَ آبَاؤُكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَمَقْتًا وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا **{النساء/22}** حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ وَعَمَّاتُكُمْ وَخَالَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُ الْأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ الْأُخْتِ وَأُمَّهَاتُكُمُ اللَّاتِي أَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمُ مِنَ الرَّضَاعَةِ وَأُمَّهَاتُ نِسَائِكُمْ وَرَبَائِبُكُمُ اللَّاتِي فِي حُجُورِكُمْ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمُ اللَّاتِي دَخَلْتُمْ بِهِنَّ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُونُوا دَخَلْتُمْ بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَحَلَائِلُ أَبْنَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَابِكُمْ وَأَنْ تَجْمَعُوا بَيْنَ الْأُخْتَيْنِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا **{النساء/23}** (الجزء الخامس)

وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأُحِلَّ لَكُمْ مَا وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحِينَ فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا تَرَايَيْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْفَرِيضَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا **{النساء/24}** وَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ طَوْلًا أَنْ يَنْكِحَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَمِنْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ مِنْ فَتَيَاتِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَانِكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَانكِحُوهُنَّ بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ وَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ مُحْصَنَاتٍ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحَاتٍ وَلَا مُتَّخِذَاتِ أَخْدَانٍ فَإِذَا أَحْصَيْتُمْ فَإِنْ أُتْنِيْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ فَعَلَيْهِنَّ نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ مِنْكُمْ وَأَنْ تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ **{النساء/25}** يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبينَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ **{النساء/26}** وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَيُرِيدَ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ أَنْ تَمِيلُوا مِيلًا عَظِيمًا **{النساء/27}** يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ وَخُلِقَ الْإِنْسَانُ ضَعِيفًا **{النساء/28}**

#### TRANSLATION

20. But if you intend to replace a wife by another and you have given one of them a *Cantar* (of gold i.e. a great amount) as *Mahr*, take not the least bit of it back; would you take it wrongfully without a right and (with) a manifest sin?

21. And how could you take it (back) while you have gone in unto each other, and they have taken from you a firm and strong covenant?

22. And marry not women whom your fathers married, except what has already passed; indeed it was shameful and most hateful, and an evil way.

23. Forbidden to you (for marriage) are: your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your father's sisters, your mother's sisters, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters, your foster mother who gave you suck, your foster milk suckling sisters, your wives' mothers, your step daughters under your guardianship, born of your wives to whom you have gone in - but there is no sin on you if you have not gone in them (to marry their daughters), - the wives of your sons who (spring) from your own loins, and two sisters in wedlock at the same time, except for what has already passed; verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

24. Also (forbidden are) women already married, except those (captives and slaves) whom your right hands possess. Thus has Allah ordained for you. All others are lawful, provided you seek (them in marriage) with *Mahr* (bridal money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage) from your property, desiring chastity, not committing illegal sexual intercourse,

so with those of whom you have enjoyed sexual relations, give them their *Mahr* as prescribed; but if after a *Mahr* is prescribed, you agree mutually (to give more), there is no sin on you. Surely, Allah is Ever All-Knowing, All-Wise.

25. And whoever of you have not the means wherewith to wed free, believing women, they may wed believing girls from among those (captives and slaves) whom your right hands possess, and Allah has full knowledge about your Faith, you are one from another. Wed them with the permission of their own folk (guardians, *Auliya'* or masters) and give them their *Mahr* according to what is reasonable; they (the above said captive and slave-girls) should not be unchaste, not adulterous, nor taking boy-friends. And after they have been taken in wedlock, if they commit illegal sexual intercourse, their punishment is half that for free (unmarried) women. This is for him among you who is afraid of being harmed in his religion or in his body; but it is better for you that you practice self-restraint, and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

26. Allah wishes to make clear (what is lawful and what is unlawful) to you, and to show you the ways of those before you, and accept your repentance and Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise.

27. Allah wishes to accept your repentance, but those who follow their lusts, wish that you (believers) should deviate tremendously away from the Right Path.

28. Allah wishes to lighten (the burden) for you; and man was created weak (cannot be patient to leave sexual intercourse with woman).

## COMMENTARY

The chapter reveals that the *Mahr* is a nuptial gift of a wife which should not be taken back unjustly. The *Āyah* on this *mahr* commands that when a Muslim wants to divorce a wife and marry another one, he must not take any portion of the *mahr* (dower) he gave to his wife, even if it were a *Qintār* (huge amount) of money. Allah says: “And how could you take it (back) while you have gone in unto each other and they have taken from you a firm and strong covenant. Be kind to women, for you have taken them by Allah’s covenant and earned the right to have sexual relations with them by Allah’s word.”

Another prohibition is the barbaric act of marrying one’s father’s wife. Allah prohibits this act in honour and respect to the fathers. A woman becomes ineligible for the son of her husband as soon as the marriage contract is conducted. Doing so is regarded as disgrace, unlawful and sin. All illicit acts are further forbidden. He thus says: “And come not near to unlawful sex. Verily, it is a *fāhishah* and an evil way. This was also revealed in another *Āyah* of the Qur’ān viz, Q6: 151: “come not near *al – fawāhish* (shameful acts) whether openly or secretly. Q17: 32”. And come not near to unlawful sex. Verily it is a *fāhishah* and an evil way”.

In another verse, Allah added the word *maqtan* to this sinful act. The word *maqtan* means offensive act. It is usual that whoever marries a woman dislikes those married her before him. This is a reason why the mothers of the faithful were not allowed for anyone in marriage after the Prophet.

Verse twenty – three (23) of the chapter establishes the degree of women relatives who are never eligible for one to marry because of blood relations, relations established by suckling or marriage. Ibn. Hatim recorded that Ibn. ‘Abbas said that Allah said: ‘ I have prohibited for you seven types of relatives by blood and seven by marriage’ He (Ibn Abbas) then cited this verse. “Forbidden to you (for marriage) are: your mother, your daughters, your sisters, your father’s sisters, your mother’s sister, your brother’s daughters, your sister’s daughters and these are the types prohibited by blood. Allah’s statement illustrates further: “Your foster mother who suckled you, your foster sisters”. This means just as your mother who bore you is prohibited for you in marriage, so is your mother from suckling prohibited for you. The hadith of the Prophet clarifies this prohibition as it says: “suckling prohibits what birth prohibits” and “suckling establishes prohibited degree just as blood does”.

However, less than five incidents of suckling will not establish prohibition of marriage. It was uttered by A’ishah that among the parts of the *Qur’ān* that were revealed is the statement: “Ten incidents of suckling establish prohibition (concerning marriage)”. It was later abrogated with five, and the Prophet died while this statement was still recited as part of the *Qur’ān*. It should be asserted that the suckling here must occur before the age of two years.

Besides, the step daughter is also prohibited in marriage even if she was not under the guardianship of her stepfather. The culture of adopted son was common in *Jāhiliyyah* period. This is clearly expressed in Q33 verse 37 as Allah says: “So when Zayd had accomplished his desire from her (i.e. divorced her), we gave her to you in marriage, so that (in future) there may be no difficulty to the believers in respect of (the marriage) of the wives of their adopted sons when the later have no desire to keep them (i.e. they had divorced her)

Marriages with two sisters are not permitted in Islam. This act was common in the ignorance period of the Arabs. “You are prohibited to take two sisters as rival wives or rival female servant except for what has already happened to you during the time of *Jāhiliyyah*. This is also condemned by the present Muslim scholars. They all maintained that taking two sisters as rival wives is prohibited and whoever embraces Islam while married to two sisters at the same time is given the choice to keep one of them and divorce the other. Imam Ahmad Ad- Dahhak bn. Fayruz said his father said; ‘ I embraced Islam while married two sisters at the same time and the Prophet commanded me to divorce one of them’.

Islam also had forbidden marriage with women that had already been married. “Also, (forbidden are) women already married, except those whom your right hands possess. This verse is an indication of warning Muslim against marriage of an already married woman. The exceptional case is on the captives of a war as exemplified in the verse; “ except those whom your right hands possess”. Those female – captives of war are allowed after making sure that they are not pregnant.

Islam prohibits temporary marriage. This is referred to as *Mut’ah* marriage. The verse “with those among them whom you have enjoyed, give them their required due” was revealed about the *Mut’ah* marriage. A *mut’ah* marriage is a marriage that ends upon a pre- determined date. Islam thus, prohibits *Mut’ah* marriage. The Prophet instructed his companions as thus; “O people! I allowed you the *Mut’ah* marriage with women before. Now, Allah has prohibited it until the day of resurrection. Therefore, anyone who has any woman in *Mut’ah* let him allow her to go and do not take anything from what you have given them”.

There is an established provision for a Muslim to marry a female slave if he cannot marry a free woman. The believing woman in this *Āyah* means free faithful, chaste women. So if one cannot afford to marry such women, he is permitted to wed believing slave girls owned by the believers. Allah knows the true and secrets of all things. Yet, those slave girls should be married with the permission of their owners. The Holy Qur’ān say “ wed them with the permission of their own folk”. This is an indication that the owner is responsible for the slave girl and consequently, she cannot marry without his permission. The owner is also responsible for the slave girl and consequently, she cannot marry without his permission. The owner is also responsible for his male slave and they cannot wed without his permission. This Qur’ān allusion is illustrated by a hadith of the Prophet. It states: “Any male slave marries without permission from his master is a fornicator. When the owner of a slave girl is a female, those who are allowed to give away the free woman in marriage, with her permission, become responsible for giving away her female slave in marriage. So, they too should be paid their dower with a good heart and do not keep any of it. The slave girls should be chaste and not among the fornicators. The fornicators refer to the dishonorable women, who do not refrain from illicit sexual relations. Ibn. ‘Abbas says that the fornicating women are those who do not object to having relations with whomever seeks it.

The slave girl’s punishment for adultery is half of a free woman. This is illustrated by the *Qur’ān* “ And after they have been taken in wedlock, if they commit *fāhishah*, their punishment is half of that for free (unmarried women), this is about the slave women who get married as indicated in the verse.

Then as Ibn ‘Abbas and others explained the verse: ( Their punishment is half of that of free (unmarried) women) indicates that the type of punishment prescribed here is the one that can be reduced to half and that is lashes, not stoning to death. The *Qur’ān* says that such a marriage indicates that marrying a slave is on the condition that one will be able to satisfy the required conditions. It is also for those who fear for their chastity and find it hard to be patient and to refrain from unlawful sex.

Allah makes what is lawful clear and He made what is forbidden clear. He also accepts the repentance of whoever commits sins out of ignorance. Man is hereby described as weak in nature.

### **Self Assessment Exercise**

Discuss the prohibited marriages in Islam stating the reasons for their prohibitions.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

From the discussions in this unit we hereby conclude that illicit sex is prohibited in Islam.

Giving of *mahr* to the wife by her husband is essential requirement of marriage in Islam. Consanguinity, affinity and fosterage are impediments to marriage. *Mut’ah* marriage was at a point in time permissible in Islam but was later abolished. Fornication and adultery are condemned with punishments attached to them in the Āyahs. Lastly, men are strongly urged to live with women honorably. They are enjoined to be kind to them.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This Unit takes you through the Arabic text of verses 15 to 33 of *Sūratu n - Nisā’i* whereby issues such as those that concern women were raised. The divine guidance studied in the Quranic passage include that women were to preserve their bodies and avoid promiscuity, giving of *Mahr* in marriage, prohibition of certain categories of women in marriage, and maintenance of justice. Relevant Qur’anic verses and hadiths of the Prophet were quoted in the course of the discussion.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Translate verses 15 and 16 of *Sūratu n - Nisā’i* into English Language

Discuss impediments to marriage as contained in verses 22 to 24 of *Sūratu n - Nisā’i*

## **7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING**

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4. *Tafsīr Ibn Kathir*; English Fashion (abridged).
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## UNIT 4: *TAFSĪR OF SŪRATU 'N – NISĀ'I, VERSES 29 - 35*

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### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

I hope you really enjoyed our discussions in the last unit. If so, then you are welcome to unit three. In this unit, verses twenty-nine to thirty-five of *Sūratun-Nisā'i* shall be discussed with a view of bringing out the lessons contained in them. It is hoped that you shall adopt them and make use of them in your day-to-day life.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of our discussion in this unit, students should be able to:

- Recite the Arabic text of verses twenty-nine to thirty-five of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Give the English translation of verses twenty-nine to thirty-five of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Comment on verses twenty-nine to thirty-five of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

#### 3.1 *Tafsīr* of the Verses 29 - 33

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْكُمْ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا {النساء/29} وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ عُدْوَانًا وَظُلْمًا فَسَوْفَ نُصْلِيهِ نَارًا وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا {النساء/30} إِنْ تَجَنَّبُوا كُنَايِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلَكُمْ مُدْخَلَ كَرِيمًا {النساء/31} وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ لِّلرَّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا اكْتَسَبُوا وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا اكْتَسَبْنَ وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا {النساء/32} وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِيَ مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلَّذِينَ عَقَدْتَ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَأَتَوْهُمْ نَصِيبُهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدًا {النساء/33}

29. O you who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves unjustly except it be a trade amongst you, by mutual consent. And do not kill yourselves (nor kill one another). Surely, Allah is Most Merciful to you.

30. And whoever commits that through aggression and injustice, We shall cast him into the Fire, and that is easy for Allah.

31. If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden to do, We shall remit from you your (small) sins, and admit you to a Noble Entrance (i.e. Paradise).

32. And wish not for the things in which Allah has made some of you to excel others. For men there is reward for what they have earned, (and likewise) for women there is reward for what they have earned, and ask Allah of His Bounty. Surely, Allah is Ever All-Knower of everything.

33. And to everyone, We have appointed heirs of that (property) left by parents and relatives. To those also with whom you have made a pledge (brotherhood), give them their due portion (by *Wasiya* - wills, etc.). Truly, Allah is Ever a Witness over all things.

## COMMENTARY

Concept of justice, equity and fear of Allah are examined in these Verses of *Sūratu 'n-Nisā'i* as well. Allah says: "O you who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves unjustly except it be a trade amongst you, by mutual consent. And do not kill yourselves (nor kill another). Surely, Allah is most merciful to you".

The verse prohibits unlawful manner of accumulating wealth. Allah prohibits His believing servants from illegally acquiring each others' property using various dishonest methods such as *Ribā*, gambling and other wicked methods which are unlawful. When this verses that forbade the accumulating of another person's property unjustly was revealed, some among the Arabs said "Allah has forbidden us from eating up of each other's property unjust and food is our best property. Therefore none of us is allowed to eat from anyone else's food. After this assumption, Allah then sent down Q24 verse 16.

The only medium by which another person's wealth or property can be touched or asked for by another is through the means of trades or business transaction. There is no harm in commercial transactions that transpire between the buyer and the seller with mutual consent. The money earned in a business transaction is lawful.

Mutual agreement in various transactions is attained when both parties have rights to uphold or dissolve the agreement before they part. A tradition of the Prophet Says: "The seller and the buyer retain the (right to change their minds) as long as they have not parted."

Life is sacrosanct in Islam. As the *Sūrah* reveals, suicide is forbidden. Allah says: "and do not kill yourselves surely, Allah is Most Merciful to you". The Prophet explained further that "whoever kills himself with an iron tool, then his tool will be in his hand and he will keep stabbing himself with it in the fire of *Jahannam*, forever and ever. Whoever kills himself with poison, then his poison will be in his hand and he will keep taking it in



the hell–fire forever and ever. Whoever kills himself by throwing himself from a mountain, will keep falling in the fire of *Jahannam* forever and ever”. Also, “whoever kills himself with an instrument, will be punished with it on the day of resurrection.”

In Islam, Sin is categorized into minor and major. The minor sin is pardonable if one refrains from the major ones. The *Qur’ān* says: “if you avoid the great sin which you are forbidden to do, we shall remit from you your (small sins)”. This means that if a man avoids the major evil deeds from which he was prohibited, he will be forgiven of his minor evil deeds and he will be admitted into the paradise. The major sins are also referred to as destructive sins. They are succinctly categorized into seven viz:

- i. to join other (partner) in worship along with Allah
- ii. to take the life which Allah has forbidden except for a just cause
- iii. to practice or believe in magic
- iv. to consume *Ribā*
- v. to consume an orphan’s wealth
- vi. to turn away from the enemy and flee from the battle – field when the battle begins and
- vii. to wrongly accuse chaste women who never think of anything that would tarnish their chastity.

It is also revealed in another hadith that the major sins include: false testimony and to be undutiful to one’s parents. The Prophet thus expatiated on abusing and cursing one’s father, which was categorized among the worst of the major sins. He explained that one can curse his own parents by cursing another person’s parents. We also read from the *Qur’ān*:

“And wish not the things in which Allah has made some of you to excel others. For men there is reward for what they have earned (and likewise) for women there is reward for what they have earned, And ask Allah of His bounty. Surely, Allah is Ever – All – Knower of everything (Q4 : 32).

This verse advocates that a man should not engage himself in any evil act in what some others have excelled. This verse was revealed in answering to the questions posed by Ummu Salamah to the Prophet. She went to the Prophet and narrated ‘‘ O Messenger of Allah! Men go to battle, but we do not go to battle and we earn one – half of the inheritance (that men get)’’. The verse also indicates that each person will earn his wages for his works; the reward for his deeds is good if his deeds are good and punishment if his deeds are evil. It was also reported that this *Āyah* is talking about inheritance and it is an indication that each person will get his due share of inheritance. Therefore, Allah directed His servants to what benefits them. The *Āyah* further states: “ Do not wish for what other people were endowed with, for this is a decision that will come to pass, and wishing does not change its decree!” However, Allah says: “ask me of my favour and I will grant it to you, for I am Most Generous and Most–Giving”.

Thus, Allah knows who deserves this life and He gives him riches and whoever deserves poverty, He makes him poor. He also knows who deserves the Hereafter, and He directs him to perform the deeds that will help him to be successful in it, and whoever deserves failure, He prevents him from achieving righteousness and what leads to it”.

“And to everyone, we have appointed *Mawālī*”. The word *Mawālī* in the verse connotes heirs, relatives and cousin. Therefore, the meaning of the *Āyah* become: To all of you, o people, we have appointed relatives (such as children) who will later inherit what you inherited from your own parents and relatives. Then, to those also whom you have made a pledge (brotherhood), give them due portion. This means give them their due inheritance. This practice was followed in the beginning of Islam, but was later on abrogated when Muslims were commanded to fulfill the pledge that they have already given, but to refrain from making any new pledge after that. When the emigrants came to Madinah, they would inherit from the *Ansār*, while the latter’s relatives would not inherit because of the bond of brotherhood which the Prophet established between them (the emigrants and the *Ansār*). Then, the verse: “To those with whom you have made a pledge (brotherhood), give them their portion” remains valid for cases of co-operation and mutual advice, while the matter of inheritance was excluded and it became permissible to assign something in one’s will to the person who had the right of inheriting before.

### Self Assessment Exercise

Comment on Verses 29 – 34 of *Sūratu `n-Nisā`i*

Discuss the concept of justice and equity in Islam as taught in this divine passage.

### 3.2 *Tafsīr* of the Verses 34 - 35

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّاتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ فَإِنِ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا {النساء/34} وَإِنِ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا إِن يُرِيدَا إِصْلَاحًا يُوَفِّقِ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا {النساء/35}

34. Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient (to Allah and to their husbands), and guard in the husband's absence what Allah orders them to guard (e.g. their chastity, their husband's property, etc.). As to those women on whose part you see ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly, if it is useful), but if they return to obedience, seek not against them means (of annoyance). Surely, Allah is Ever Most High, Most Great.

35. If you fear a breach between them twain (the man and his wife), appoint (two) arbitrators, one from his family and the other from her's; if they both wish for peace, Allah will cause their reconciliation. Indeed Allah is Ever All-Knower, Well-Acquainted with all things.

### COMMENTARY

Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other and because they spend (to support them) from their needs. This *Āyah* connotes that it is permissible for men to marry women, and that they are made to be better than them in performing some certain tasks. This is why Prophet-hood was exclusive of men, as well as other important positions of leadership.

The verse also expresses the significance of dowry (*mahr*), expenditure and various expenses that Allah ordained in His Book and the traditions of His Messenger for men spend on women. For these reasons, men are appointed as maintainers of women.

The verse further says: “the righteous women” (*Qānitāt*) are highly respected and they are preserved for Muslims to marry. They are characterized as the obedient to their husbands, those women who protect their honour and their husbands’ property when is absent. On this verse, the Prophet expatiates the qualities of righteous women. He says: “The best woman is she who makes you happy, obeys you, and when you are absent, she protects her honour and your property.”

The chapter narrates further, “As to those women on whose part you see ill – conduct...”). This verse refers to the woman from whom you see ill – conduct towards her husband, such as when she acts as if she is above her husband, disobeys him, ignores him and so forth. When these signs appear in a woman, her husband should advise her and remind her of Allah’s warning. Indeed Allah ordered the wife to obey her husband and prohibited her from disobeying him. This is so, because of enormity of his rights and all that he does for her. This is as well explained by the Prophet himself as he was quoted by Imam al – Bukhari as following “If I were to command anyone to prostrate before anyone, I would have commanded the wife to prostrate before her husband, because of enormity of his right upon her”.

More so, if the wife goes to sleep while ignoring her husband’s bed, the angels will keep cursing her until the morning. This is why the *Qur’ān* says: “As to those women, on whose part you see ill- conduct, admonish them, abandon them in beds”.

The abandonment refers to not having intercourse with her, to lie on bed with his back to her. The phrase ‘beat them’ in the *Āyah* means if advice and ignoring her in bed do not produce the desired results, you are allowed to discipline the wife, without severe beating. It was recorded in the fare – well sermon of the Prophet by Imām Muslims that they are your assistants. You have right on them; that they do not allow any person whom

you dislike to step on your mat. They have a right on you that you provide them with their provision and clothes, in reasonable manners”.

“When a wife obeys her husband” means annoyance against her is prohibited. This is said by Allah; but if they return to obedience, seek not against them (of annoyance). It means when the wife obeys husband in all that Allah has allowed, and then no means of annoyance from her husband are allowed against his wife. Therefore, in this case, the husband does not have the right to beat her or shun her bed.

“Surely, Allah is Ever Most high, Most Great”. This concluding part of the verse reminds men that if they transgress against their wives without justification, then, Allah is their protector and He will exert revenge on those who transgress against their wives and deal with them unjustly. *Āyah* thirty –five emphasizes the methods of reconciling or resolving a marital conflict. Allah first mentions the case of rebellion on the part of the wife. He then mentions the case of estrangement and alienation between the two spouses. The verse reads thus “if you fear a breach between the two, appoint (two) arbitrators, one from his family.”

The *Fuqahā’u* (scholars of *fiqh*) say that when estrangement occurs between the husband and wife, the judge should refer them to a trusted person who should examine their case in order to stop any wrong committed between them. If the matter continues or worsens, the judge should send a trust worthy person from the woman’s family and a trustworthy from the man’s family to meet with them and examine their case to determine whether it is best for them to part or remain together. Allah gives preference to staying together. He says: if they both wish for peace, Allah will cause their reconciliation; Allah commands that a righteous man from the husband’s side of the family and the wife’s side of the family are appointed so that they find out who among the spouses is in the wrong. If the arbitrators decide that the marriage should remain intact or be dissolved, then their decision is upheld. If they decide that the marriage remains intact, but one of the spouses disagree while the other agrees and one of them dies, then the one who agreed inherits from the other. The scholars agree that when the two arbitrators disagree, then the opinion that dissolves the marriage will not be adopted. They also agree that the decision of the arbitrators is binding, even if the two spouses did not appoint them as agents.

### **Self Assessment Exercise**

Discuss the methods of resolving marital discord in Islam.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Every contemporary society is replete with economic fraud. People are crazy for wealth; amassing wealth through heinous means without recourse to the interest of other members of the society.

Many people are duped of their money and property in the name of doing business. All these evil practices are forbidden in the *Qur'ān* as contained in the verses discussed above. *Ribā* is the modern way of cheating and defrauding. Some have taken the giving and taking of *ribā* as a legitimate business. The Qur'ānic passages above made us to know that the only means through which another person's property can be taken over is through trading and not by means of fraudulent activities.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

Issues discussed in this unit include the concept of justice, equity and fear of Allah. Also discussed is the prohibition of unlawful manner of accumulating wealth which includes the practice of *Ribā*, gambling and other wicked methods. However accumulating wealth through trading is described as legitimate. Other things discussed include condemnation of suicide, the implementation of rules of inheritance, issues on marriage including the giving of mahr.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the significance of prohibitions on *ribā* as an illegal means of accumulating wealth.

Discuss verses 34 and 35 of *Sūratu 'n-Nisāi* in relation to the responsibilities of husband over his wife.

## 7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

- (1) Abdullah, Y.A. (1989) *The Holy Qur'ān*. Tran. London Publishers.
- (2) Muhammad, M.K. (1998). *The Noble Qur'ān*. Saudi Arabia: Daru Salam.
- (3) Muhammed, M.K. ( 2003). *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Saudi Arabia: Darus – Salam Publications.
- (4) *Tafsīr Ibn Kathir*; English Fashion (abridged).
- (5) Httpllwww: Tafsīr.com retrieved on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2011.

## UNIT 5: *TAFSĪR OF SŪRATU 'N – NISĀ'I*, VERSES 36 - 48

### CONTENTS

#### 1.0 Introduction

#### 2.0 Objectives

#### 3.0 Main Contents

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##### 3.2 *Tafsīr* of verses 43 – 48

#### 4.0 Conclusion

#### 5.0 Summary

#### 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

#### 7.0 References /Further readings.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

I hope you really enjoyed our discussions in the last unit. If so, then you are welcome to unit five. In this unit, verses thirty-six to forty-eight of *Sūratun-Nisā'i* shall be discussed with a view of bringing out the lessons contained in them. It is hoped that you shall adopt them and make use of them in your day-to-day life.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of our discussion in this unit, you should be able to:

- Recite the Arabic text of verses thirty-six to forty-eight of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Give the English translation of thirty-six to forty-eight of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- List out and explain some of the lessons derivable from verses thirty-six to forty-eight of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

#### 3.1 *Tafsīr* of the Verses 36 - 42

وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا {النساء/36} الَّذِينَ يَخْلَوْنَ وَيَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ وَيَكْتُمُونَ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا {النساء/37} وَالَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَن يَكُنِ الشَّيْطَانُ لَهُ قَرِينًا فَسَاءَ قَرِينًا {النساء/38} وَمَاذَا عَلَيْهِمْ لَوْ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِهِمْ عَلِيمًا {النساء/39} إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ وَإِن تَكَ حَسَنَةً يُّضَاعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا {النساء/40} فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا {النساء/41} يَوْمَئِذٍ يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَعَصَوُا الرُّسُولَ لَوْ تُسَوَّى بِهِمُ الْأَرْضُ وَلَا يَكْتُمُونَ اللَّهَ حَدِيثًا {النساء/42}

## TRANSLATION

36. Worship Allah and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, *Al-Masakin* (the poor), the neighbour who is near of kin, the neighbour who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and those (slaves) whom your right hands possess. Verily, Allah does not like such as are proud and boastful;

37. Those who are miserly and enjoin miserliness on other men and hide what Allah has bestowed upon them of His Bounties. And We have prepared for the disbelievers a disgraceful torment.

38. And (also) those who spend of their substance to be seen of men, and believe not in Allah and the Last Day [they are the friends of *Shaitan* (Satan)], and whoever takes *Shaitan* (Satan) as an intimate; then what a dreadful intimate he has!

39. And what loss have they if they had believed in Allah and in the Last Day, and they spend out of what Allah has given them for sustenance? And Allah is Ever All-Knower of them.

40. Surely! Allah wrongs not even of the weight of an atom (or a small ant), but if there is any good (done), He doubles it, and gives from Him a great reward.

41. How (will it be) then, when We bring from each nation a witness and We bring you (O Muhammad) as a witness against these people?

42. On that day those who disbelieved and disobeyed the Messenger (Muhammad) will wish that they were buried in the earth, but they will never be able to hide a single fact from Allah.

## COMMENTARY

Allah orders that He be worshipped alone without partners. This is so because Allah is the creator and sustainer who sends His favour and bounties on His creatures in all situations and instances. He therefore deserves to be singled out, without associating anything or anyone with Him in worship from amongst His creations. Allah then commands the servants to be dutiful to their parents. Thus, in many places of the Qur'ān, Allah joins the order to worship Him with being dutiful to parents. He ordained kind treatment of relatives, males and females. A hadith of the Prophet emphasizes the kind treatment to the relatives and the poor. It states: "Charity given to the poor is *Sadaqah*, while charity given to relatives is both *Sadaqah* and *sillah* (keeping the relations); Then, to the orphans because they (orphans) lost their caretakers who could spend on them.

So, Allah commands that the orphans be treated with kindness and compassion. Then, to the poor (*al-Masākīn*) who have needs and cannot find what sustains these needs.

Allah commands that they should be helped in acquiring their needs in a sufficient manner that will end their inadequacy.

Rights of the neighbors are comprehensively mentioned in the verse. They (neighbors) are also categorized. The *Qur'ān* says: “the neighbor who is near of kin, the neighbor who is a stranger”. The neighbor who is near of kin means who is also a relative while the neighbor who is a stranger means the companions during travel. The *Qur'ān* thus commands kind treatment to the neighbors. This kindness is also treated by many *Ahādith* of the Prophet. It was reported that the Prophet said that “Jubril kept reminding me of the neighbour’s right, until I thought that he was going to give him a share of the inheritance”. He also said; “the best companions according to Allah are those who are best with their friends and the best neighbours according to Allah are the best with their neighbour”. The verse further addresses kindness to slaves and servants. It says; “And those (slaves) whom your right hands possess”.

This is an order to be kind to them because they are weak and being held as captives by others. An authentic hadith records that during the illness that preceded his death, the Messenger of Allah continued advising his companions to protect the prayer and to protect “those slaves whom your hands possess”. Kindness to slaves and servants is as important as kindness to one’s wife and children.

This is reiterated by a number of traditions of the Prophet; what you feed yourself with is a *sadaqah* (charity) for you, what you feed your children with is *sadaqah* for you, what you feed your wife with is *sadaqah* for you and what you feed your servant with is *sadaqah* for you”. So, the slave has the right to have food, clothing and are required to perform what he can bear of work. By and large, Allah dislikes arrogance and the arrogant. That is why the *Āyah* illustrates that Allah does not like such that are proud and boastful to others. Such a person thinks he is better than other people. The *Āyah* also indicates that such a person boasts with people about the bounty that Allah has given him, but he is actually ungrateful to Allah for his bounty. Similarly Allah says: ‘Those who are stingy and encourage people to be stingy and hide what Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounties. And we have prepared for the disbelievers a disgraceful torment’. This verse and the immediate subsequent ones address the censure of stingy behavior. Allah chastises the stingy behavior of those who refuse to spend their money on what Allah ordered them with, such as being kind to parents and compassionate to relatives, orphans, the poor, relatives who are also neighbors, the companion during travel, the needy, way farer, the slaves and servants. Such people do not give Allah’s right from their wealth and they assist in the spread of stingy behavior. On this act, the Messenger of Allah says: what disease is more serious than being stingy”.



He also explained further: “Beware of stinginess, for it destroyed those who were before you, as it encouraged them to cut their relation and they did and it encouraged them to commit sin and they did”.

Then, Allah says: “and hid what Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounties”. Therefore, the miser is ungrateful for Allah’s favour for its effect does not appear on him.

The concluding part of the verse says: And we have prepared for the disbelievers a disgraceful torment. “When Allah grants a servant a favour, he likes that its effects appear on him.” Some of the *salaf* stated that this *Āyah*, Q4:37 describe the Jews who hid the knowledge they had about the description of Muhammad. The apparent wording of this *Āyah* indicates that it is expressing stinginess with money, even though miserly conduct with knowledge is also included. The verse talks about spending on relatives and the weak, just as the *Āyah* after it; “And (also) those who spend of their wealth to be seen of men”, Allah first mentions the misers who do not spend; then, He mentions those who show off in order to be praised for being generous but not for the sake of Allah. On this account, a *hadith* of the Prophet clarifies that the first three persons who will be cast into hell fire: a Scholar, a Fighter and a Spender, who show off with their actions. For instance, “the wealthy will say ‘I did not leave any area that you like to be spent on, but I spent on it in your cause’. Allah will say: You lie, you only did that so that it is said ‘He is generous’, whereas your reward in the life and this is indeed what you sought with your action. This is why Allah says: “..... and believe not in Allah and the last Day”.

Thus, Shaytān encouraged and lured them by making the evil appear good. “And whoever takes shaytān as an intimate, then what a dreadful intimate he has. And what loss have they if they had believed in Allah and in the last Day and spend out of what Allah has given them for sustenance?”. This *Āyah* means, what harm would it cause them if they believe in Allah and await His promise in the Hereafter. So Allah says: “He is Ever Knower of them”. That is, He has perfect knowledge of their intentions whether good or evil. It also connotes that Allah knows those who deserve success and He grants them success and guidance, directing them to perform righteous actions that will earn His pleasure. He also knows those who deserve failure and expulsion from His great mercy.

Subsequently, verses forty to forty – two expatiate that Allah wrongs not even the weight of a speck and dusk. Allah states in the verse that He will not treat any of His servants with injustice on the Day of Resurrection; be it in the weight of a mustard seed or a speck of dusk. Rather, Allah shall reward them for their actions and will multiply the reward of good deed. Allah will therefore grant the Prophet the intercession on the day of resurrection. He (Prophet) will also be granted by Allah to intercede for his uncle, Abu – Tālib. It was said by the Prophet that ‘Allah does not forget the faithful concerning any good deed, for he will be rewarded for it with provisions in this life and will also be

rewarded for it in the hereafter. As for the disbeliever, his good actions will be rewarded in this life but on the day of resurrection, he will not have any good reward. Allah also described the horrors, hardship and difficulties of the day of resurrection.

That is why Allah says: “how will it be on that day when We bring from each nation a witness and We bring you (O Muhammad) as a witness against these people?.” It was reported that the Prophet asked Abdullah bn. Mas‘ūd to recite the Qur’ān for him. The text of the hadith reads thus: “Abdullah bin Mas‘ūd said; ‘The Messenger of Allah said to me, ‘Recite to me’. I said, O Messenger of Allah! Should I recite the Qur’ān to you, when it was revealed to you; he said ‘Yes’ for I like to hear it from other people. I recited *Suratu n – Nisā’i* until I reached; ‘How will it be then, when We bring from each nation a witness and We bring you (O Muhammad) as a witness against these people?’”. He then said ‘stop now’. I found that his eyes were tearful.”

On that Day of Judgment, those who disbelieved and disobeyed the Messenger will wish that they were buried in the earth, but will never be able to hide a single fact from Allah. This means that they will wish that the earth would open and swallow them because of the horror of the gathering and the dishonor and humiliation they will suffer on that day.

### Self-Assessment Exercise

Elaborate on the treatment of relatives and the concept of sincerity in worship as portrayed in these verses of *Sūratu n-Nisā’i*.

### 3.2 Tafsīr of verses 43 - 48

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَى حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّى تَغْتَسِلُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوْهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا {النساء/43} أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِنَ الْكِتَابِ يَشْتُرُونَ الضَّلَالَةَ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَضِلُّوا السَّبِيلَ {النساء/44} وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَعْدَانِكُمْ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ نَصِيرًا مِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَاسْمِعْ غَيْرَ مُسْمِعٍ وَرَاعِنَا لَيًّا بِالسِّتَةِمْ وَطَعْنًا فِي الدِّينِ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَاسْمِعْ وَانْظُرْنَا لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَأَقْوَمَ وَلَكِنْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا {النساء/46} يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ آمِنُوا بِمَا نَزَّلْنَا مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَطْمِسَ وُجُوهًا فَنَرُدَّهَا عَلَى أَدْبَارِهَا أَوْ نَلْعَنَهُمْ كَمَا لَعَنَّا أَصْحَابَ السَّبْتِ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا {النساء/47} إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَى إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا {النساء/48}

### TRANSLATION

**43.** O you who believe! Approach not *As-Salāt* (the prayer) when you are in a drunken state until you know (the meaning) of what you utter, nor when you are in a state of *Janaba*, (i.e. in a state of sexual impurity and have not yet taken a bath) except when travelling on the road (without enough water, or just passing through a mosque), till you wash your whole body. And if you are ill, or on a journey, or one of you comes after answering the call of nature, or you have been in contact with women (by sexual relations) and you find no water, perform *Tayammum* with clean earth and rub therewith your faces and hands (*Tayammum*) . Truly, Allah is Ever Oft-Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving.

**44.** Have you not seen those who were given a portion of the book (the Jews), purchasing the wrong path, and wish that you should go astray from the Right Path.

**45.** Allah has full knowledge of your enemies, and Allah is Sufficient as a *Waliyy* (Protector), and Allah is Sufficient as a Helper.

**46.** Among those who are Jews, there are some who displace words from (their) right places and say: "We hear your word (O Muhammad) and disobey," and "Hear and let you (O Muhammad) hear nothing." And *Ra'ina* with a twist of their tongues and as a mockery of the religion (Islam). And if only they had said: "We hear and obey", and "Do make us understand," it would have been better for them, and more proper, but Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, so they believe not except a few.

**47.** O you who have been given the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Believe in what We have revealed (to Muhammad) confirming what is (already) with you, before We efface faces (by making them like the back of necks; without nose, mouth, eyes, etc.) and turn them hind wards, or curse them as We cursed the Sabbath-breakers. And the Commandment of Allah is always executed.

**48.** Verily, Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with him in worship, but He forgives except that (anything else) to whom He pleases, and whoever sets up partners with Allah in worship, he has indeed invented a tremendous sin.

## COMMENTARY

This portion portrays the *Tafsīr* of verses forty – three to forty-eight. It opens with the prohibition of approaching prayer when drunk or in the “*Junub*” (state of impurity). Allah forbids His believing servants from praying while drunk.

This is so because one does not know the meaning of what he is saying in that state. Also, Allah forbade them (Arabs) from attending the *masjid* while sexually impure, except when one is just passing through the mosque. This *Āyah* was revealed before alcohol consumption was completely prohibited. When the *Āyah* “they ask you about alcohol and gambling”. The Messenger recited this *Āyah* to ‘Umar who said: “explain the ruling about *Khamr* (intoxicants) for us in a plain manner. When this *Āyah* (Q4: 43) was revealed, the Prophet recited it to ‘Umar who still said, “O Allah! Explain the ruling about *Khamr* (intoxicants) for us in a plain manner: After that, they would not drink alcoholic drinks, practise gambling and *Al- Azlām* because they are an abomination of Shatan’s handwork.

So, avoid that in order that you may be successful (Q5: 90) until (so, will you not then abstain) (Q5: 91) was revealed, Umar said, “we abstain. In another hadith, when the verse forty – three of the *Sūrah* Nisā’i was revealed, the Messenger of Allah would have

someone proclaim; let not any drunk approach the prayer's causes of the revelation of the verses.

Ibn. Abi Hatim recorded some reports about the incident of its revelation, Sa'd said, 'four *Ayat* were revealed concerning me. A man from the *Ansār* once made some food and invited some *Muhājirun* and Ansar men to it and we ate and drank until we became intoxicated. We then boasted about our status''. Then a man held a camel's bone and injured Sa'd nose, which was scared ever since. This occurred before *al-Khamr* was prohibited, and Allah later revealed the verse. Another reason was also narrated by Ibn Hatim that 'Ali bin Abi Talib said, "Abdur Rahman bin Awf made some food to which he invited us and served some alcohol to drink. When we became intoxicated and the time of prayer came, they asked someone to lead us in prayer. He recited "say o disbelievers! Do not worship that which you worship, but we worship that which you worship''. This is contrary to the content of the wordings of the *Sūrah* 109.

"Until you know what you are saying" in the verses is the best description of when one is intoxicated, that is when one does not know the meaning of what he is saying. When a person is drunk, he makes obvious mistakes in the recitation and will not be able to be humble during the *Salāt*. It was narrated that when some men of the *Ansar* whose doors literally opened into the *masjid* were sexually impure and they did not have water, their only way to get water was to pass through the *masjid*. Similarly, women are allowed to pass through *masjid* in their period of menstruation and the postnatal. Aisha was reported to have said that the Messenger of Allah said to her "Bring me the garment from the *masjid*". I replied: "I am having my period". He then said: "your period is not in your hand". This hadith indicates that the woman is allowed to pass through the *masjid* during menses or post-natal bleeding.

The verse also vividly talks on the description of *Tayammum*. It says "And if you are ill or on a journey or one of you come from the *Ghāit* (toilet) or *lāmastum* (you touch) women, but you do not find water, then perform *Tayammum* with clean earth, rubbing your face and hands. Truly, Allah is Ever Oft Pardoning, Oft Forgiving. As for the type of illness which would allow *tayammum*, it is an illness that one fears would be aggravated by using water, which could be detrimental to a part of the body, or when doing so would prolong an illness. The *ghāit* in the *Āyah* refers to the minor impurity while "*lāmastum*" refers to sexual intercourse. *Tayammum* is preferred to clean the body in lieu of ablution and ritual bath if a Muslim finds it difficult to use water. That is why the Prophet says: "clean earth is pure for the Muslim, even if he does not find water for ten years". When he finds water, let him use it for his skin, for this is better).

Allah says further “rubbing your faces and hands”. This indicates that *Tayammum* is a substitute for normal ablution, not that it involves cleaning the parts that normal ablution does. Therefore, it is sufficient in *Tayammum* to just wipe the face and hands, as the consensus occurs. This *Āyat* sanctifies the position of the *Salāt*. It is being too sacred than to be performed in a deficient manner, like in a state of drunkenness until one becomes aware of what he is saying, or sexually impure until he bathes (*Ghusl*) or after answering the call of nature, until he performs ablution. There are exceptions when one is ill or when there is no water. In this case, Allah allows us to use *Tayammum*, out of His mercy and kindness for His servants and to facilitate them.

In the same vein, the reason behind allowing *Tayammum* was expressed by Aisha as she said: ‘‘We set out with Allah’s Messenger on one of his journeys until we reached al- Bayda’ or Dhat al –Jaysh, where a necklace was broken (and lost). Allah’s Messenger stayed there to search for it and so did the people along with him. There was no water source or any water with them at that place, so the people went to Abu Bakr As- Sidiq and said ‘‘Don’t you see what Aishah has done! She made Allah’s Messenger and the people stay where there is no source of water and have no water ‘‘none shall enter paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian ‘‘. Not only this, they also used to say ‘‘ the fire will not hurt us but for a number of days. This is due to their reliance on the righteous deeds of their forefathers, whereas Allah has decreed that the good actions of the fathers do not help the children. Hence, the *Qur’ān* says that no one will receive the reward or punishment of another person.

### **Self Assessment Exercise**

Al-Qur’ān, Chapter 4, Verse 48 raises the issue of *shirk*. Comment fully on it from the theological point of view.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

A number of issues were raised and discussed in this unit which is of paramount importance to the life of every Muslim. The *Qur’ān* is a guidance for mankind especially Muslims. It is expected that every issue addressed therein must be accorded its due attention. Having gone through our discussion in this unit, it is our candid belief that you have gained a lot from what the Qur’anic passage was all about.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

Issues discussed in this unit include:

- Condemnation of associating deity with Allah
- Responsibility towards relatives
- Taking good care of orphan, needy and neighbours
- Recompense for disbelief
- Prohibition of taking alcohol
- Performance of Tayammum

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Give a detailed commentary on the verse 36 of *Sūratun-Nisāi*

## 7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

- (1) Abdullah, Y.A. (1989) *The Holy Qur'ān*. Tran. London Publishers.
- (2) Muhammad, M.K. (1998). *The Noble Qur'ān*. Saudi Arabia: Daru Salam.
- (3) Muhammed, M.K. ( 2003). *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Saudi Arabia: Darus – Salam Publications.
- (4) *Tafsīr Ibn Kathir*; English Fashion (abridged).
- (5) Httpllwww: Tafsīr.com retrieved on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2011.

## MODULE 2: *TAFSĪR SŪRATU 'N-NISĀ'I*, VERSES 59 - 125

Unit 1: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, Verses 49 – 58

Unit 2: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, Verses 59 – 70

Unit 3: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, Verses 71 – 100

Unit 4: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, Verses 93 – 115

Unit 5: *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, Verses 116 – 125

## UNIT 1 : *TAFSĪR OF SŪRATU 'N – NISĀ'I*, VERSES 49 - 58

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2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Contents

3.1 *Tafsīr* of verses 49 - 58

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

7.0 References /Further readings.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

I hope you really enjoyed our discussions in the last unit. If so, then you are welcome to unit five. In this unit, verses forty-nine to fifty eight of *Sūratun-Nisā'i* shall be discussed with a view of bringing out the divine injunctions and guidelines contained in them.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of our discussion in this unit, you should be able to:

- Recite the Arabic text of verses forty nine to fifty eight of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Give the English translation of verse forty nine to fifty eight of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- List out and explain some of the divine injunctions and guidelines derivable from verses forty nine to fifty eight of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

#### 3.1 *Tafsīr* of verses 49 - 58

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يُزَكُّونَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ بَلِ اللَّهُ يُزَكِّي مَن يَشَاءُ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا {النساء/49} انْظُرْ كَيْفَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَكَفَى بِهِ إِثْمًا مُّبِينًا {النساء/50} أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أَوْتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْجِبْتِ وَالطَّاغُوتِ وَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَؤُلَاءِ أَهْدَى مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا سَبِيلًا {النساء/51}

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ يَلْعَنِ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ نَصِيرًا {النساء/52} أَمْ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُلْكِ فَإِذَا لَا يُؤْتُونَ  
النَّاسَ نَقِيرًا {النساء/53} أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَى مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ فَقَدْ آتَيْنَا آلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ  
وَآتَيْنَاهُمْ مُلْكًا عَظِيمًا {النساء/54} فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ آمَنَ بِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ صَدَّ عَنْهُ وَكَفَىٰ بِجَهَنَّمَ سَعِيرًا {النساء/55} إِنَّ  
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَوْفَ نُصْلِيهِمْ نَارًا كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُمْ بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ  
عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا {النساء/56} وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ  
فِيهَا أَبَدًا لَّهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَنُدْخِلُهُمْ ظِلًّا ظَلِيلًا {النساء/57} إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا  
وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا {النساء/58}

## TRANSLATION

49. Have you not seen those who claim sanctity for themselves. Nay - but Allah sanctifies whom He pleases, and they will not be dealt with injustice even equal to the extent of a *Fatila* (A scallish thread in the long slit of a date-stone).

50. Look, how they invent a lie against Allah, and enough is that as a manifest sin.

51. Have you not seen those who were given a portion of the Scripture? They believe in *Jibt* and *Tāghūt* and say to the disbelievers that they are better guided as regards the way than the believers (Muslims).

52. They are those whom Allah has cursed, and he whom Allah curses, you will not find for him (any) helper,

53. Or have they a share in the dominion? Then in that case they would not give mankind even a *Naqira* (speck on the back of a date-stone).

54. Or do they envy men (Muhammad and his followers) for what Allah has given them of His Bounty? Then We had already given the family of Ibrahim (Abraham) the Book and *Al-Hikmah* (*As-Sunnah* - Divine Inspiration to those Prophets not written in the form of a book), and conferred upon them a great kingdom.

55. Of them were (some) who believed in him (Muhammad), and of them were (some) who averted their faces from him (Muhammad); and enough is Hell for burning (them).

56. Surely! Those who disbelieved in Our *Āyahs* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) We shall burn them in Fire. As often as their skins are roasted through, We shall change them for other skins that they may taste the punishment. Truly, Allah is Ever Most Powerful, All-Wise.

57. But those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and do deeds of righteousness, We shall admit them to Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), abiding therein forever. Therein they shall have *Azawajun Mutahharatun* [purified mates or wives (having no menses, stools, urine, etc.)] and We shall admit them to shades wide and ever deepening (Paradise) .



58. Verily! Allah commands that you should render back the trusts to those, to whom they are due; and that when you judge between men, you judge with justice. Verily, how excellent is the teaching which He (Allah) gives you! Truly, Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All-Seer.

## COMMENTARY

This verse forty– nine narrates the judgment that will be given to those Jews and the non-believers on the Day of Resurrection. It further says that the justice will be exercised on that Day. “And they will not be dealt with injustice even equal to the extent of a *fatīl*”. This connotes that Allah does no injustice with anyone’s compensation in any part of his reward even if it was the weight of *Fatīl*. ‘ ‘ The word *fatīl* denotes the scallish thread in the long slit of the date –stone”. The verse fifty debunks the lie of the infidels against Allah. Those people claim purity for themselves; they equally claim that they are Allah’s children and His loved ones. Allah calls the attention of the Prophet to those who disbelieve in the scriptures that were sent to them by Allah. ‘ ‘ Have you not seen those who were given a portion of the scripture.

They believe in *Jibt* and *Tāqhūt*”. ‘ ‘ *Jibt* is sorcery and *Tāqhūt* is the Shaytān. *Jibt* also denotes soothsayer and sorcerer while *Tāqhūt* means a devil in the shape of man and they refer to him for judgment. It also connotes every object that is worshipped instead of Allah. Not only this, they also say to those who disbelieve “these people are guided on the way than the believers”. This is so, because they prefer the disbelievers to Muslims because of their ignorance, un-religions nature and disbelief in Allah’s Book which is before them. Allah’s curse on the Jews as portrayed in the verse fifty – two inform them that they have no supporter in this life or the hereafter, because they sought the help of the idolaters. They also lured the disbelievers into supporting them, and they ultimately gathered their forces for battle of *Al- Ahzāb*, forcing the Prophet and his companions to dig a defensive tunnel around al-Madinah, but Allah saved the Muslims from their evil.

The envy and miserly conduct of the Jews are narrated in the verse fifty- three to fifty five. Allah asked the Jews if they have a sphere in the dominion. This is a statement of rebuke, since they do not have any share in the dominion. Allah then described them as **misers**”. Then in that case they would not give mankind even a *Naqīr*”. This means that if they had a share in the sovereignty and dominion, they would not give anyone anything, especially Muhammad, even if it was the speck on the back of a date–stone which is the meaning of *Naqīr* according to Ibn Abbas and the majority of the scholars. The next *Āyah* reveals their envy of the Prophet for the great Prophet Hood that Allah entrusted with him. Their envy made them reject him, because he was an Arab and not from the children of Israel. They also have a notion of ‘ ‘we are the worthy people”. Then Allah revealed “. We have already given the family of Ibrahim the Book and *al- Hikmah* and conferred upon them a great kingdom”. This means, we gave the Prophet-hood to the tribes of the children of Israel, who are among the offspring of Ibrahim and sent down the books to them.

The Prophets ruled the Jews with the Prophetic traditions and we made kings among them. Yet, the Qur'ān says further, ‘‘of them were (some) who believing it (i.e referring to Allah’s bounty, Prophets, Books and Kingship) and of them were (some) who disbelieved in him, (Muhammad) and of them were (some) who rejected him. Therefore, the fire is pronounced as a just punishment for them because of their belief rebellion and defiance of Allah’s book and Messengers. The verses fifty-six and fifty-seven discuss the punishment of those who disbelieve in Allah’s book and Messengers. Allah describes the torment in the fire of *Jahannam* for those who disbelieve in His *Āyat* and hinder from the path of His Messengers.

The verse says that they shall be placed in the fire which will encompass every part of their bodies. Allah then states that their punishment and torment are everlasting and their skins will be roasted. It expresses further: “As often as their skins are roasted through, we shall change them for other skin that they may taste the punishment. It was reported from al-Nās that Umar said “When their skins are burned, they will be given another skin in replacement and this skin will be as white as paper. It was also narrated by Ibn Hatim that “As often as their skins are roasted through” means whenever the fire has roasted them through and consumed their flesh, they will be told, ‘‘Go back as you were before and their skins will be roasted through, seventy thousand times every day.

This verse refers to those who breached the sanctity of the Sabbath, using deceit for the purpose of doing more work. Allah changed these people into apes and swine.

In verse fifty-eight, it is categorically expressed that Allah dislikes associating partner with Him in any form. He says that He does not forgive *shirk*, except after repenting from it. This associating partner with Allah is explained by a number of *Qur’ān* verses as well as the hadiths of the Prophet which says: “Verily joining others in worship with Allah is a great *Zulm* (wrong) indeed.” Chastising and cursing the Jews for claiming purity for themselves and believing in ‘*Jibt*’ and ‘*Tāghūt*’ was extensively discussed in the verses forty –nine to fifty –two. These *Āyat* were revealed about the Jews and Christians when they said: ‘we are Allah’s children and His loved ones. Hence, the *Āyat* were revealed concerning their statements “we are the children of Allah..... and that “none shall enter paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian”’.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

Why did the people of the Book misconstrue the truth about the revealed knowledge given to them about the Prophet Muhammad?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

A number of issues were raised and discussed in this unit which is of paramount importance to the life of every Muslim. The *Qur’ān* is a guidance for mankind especially Muslims. It is expected that every issue addressed therein must be accorded its due attention. Having gone through our discussion in this unit, it is our candid belief that you have gained a lot from what the Qur’anic passage was all about.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

Issues discussed in this unit include:

- Condemnation of associating deity with Allah
- Responsibility towards parents
- Taking good care of orphan, needy and neighbours
- Recompense for disbelief
- Prohibition of taking alcohol
- Performance of Tayammum

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Give a detailed commentary on the verse 58 of *Sūratun-Nisāi*

## 7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

- (6) Abdullah, Y.A. (1989) *The Holy Qur'ān*. Tran. London Publishers.
- (7) Muhammad, M.K. (1998). *The Noble Qur'ān*. Saudi Arabia: Daru Salam.
- (8) Muhammed, M.K. ( 2003). *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Saudi Arabia: Darus – Salam Publications.
- (9) *Tafsīr Ibn Kathir*; English Fashion (abridged).
- (10) Httpllwww: Tafsīr.com retrieved on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2011.

## UNIT 2: *TAFSĪR* OF *SŪRATU 'N – NISĀ'I*, VERSES 59 – 70

### CONTENT

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Contents
  - 3.1 *Tafsīr* of verses 59 – 70
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Readings.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Welcome to module two. In module one above, text, translation and commentaries of verses one to fifty-eight of *Sūratu-n - Nisā'i* were studied. In it, Qur'anic injunctions and guidance on various issues affecting the life of mankind were discussed. Our discussions in this module will follow suit as other verses of the same Sūrah will also be discussed starting with verses 59 to 70 which will form our unit one. Are you ready? Then let's go.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of our discussions in this unit, you should be able to:

- Recite the Arabic text of verses fifty-nine to seventy of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Give the English translation of fifty-nine to seventy of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Do the exegesis of verses fifty-nine to seventy of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 *Tafsīr* of the Verses 59 – 70

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا {النساء/59}

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ قَدْ أُمِرُوا أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا {النساء/60}

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ رَأَيْتُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَنْكَ صُدُودًا {النساء/61}

فَكَفَيْتَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ جَاءُوكَ يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَا إِلَّا إِحْسَانًا وَتَوْفِيقًا {النساء/62}

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُلْ لَهُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا {النساء/63}

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا {النساء/64}

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّى يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِي مَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا {النساء/65}

وَلَوْ أَنَّا كَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَنْ اقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ أَوْ أَخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ مَا فَعَلُوهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ مِنْهُمْ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوا مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَأَشَدَّ تَنْبِيئًا {النساء/66}

وَإِذَا لَاتَيْنَاهُمْ مِنْ لَدُنَّا أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا {النساء/67}

وَلَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا {النساء/68} وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا {النساء/69} ذَلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ عَلِيمًا {النساء/70}

## TRANSLATION

**59.** O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger (Muhammad), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad), if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.

**60.** Have you seen those (hypocrites) who claim that they believe in that which has been sent down to you, and that which was sent down before you, and they wish to go for judgment (in their disputes) to the *Taghut* (false judges, etc.) while they have been ordered to reject them. But *Shaitan* (Satan) wishes to lead them far astray.

**61.** And when it is said to them: "Come to what Allah has sent down and to the Messenger (Muhammad)," you (Muhammad) see the hypocrites turn away from you (Muhammad) with aversion.

**62.** How then, when a catastrophe befalls them because of what their hands have sent forth, they come to you swearing by Allah, "We meant no more than goodwill and conciliation!"

**63.** They (hypocrites) are those of whom Allah knows what is in their hearts; so turn aside from them (do not punish them) but admonish them, and speak to them an effective word (i.e. to believe in Allah, worship Him, obey Him, and be afraid of Him) to reach their inner selves.

**64.** We sent no Messenger, but to be obeyed by Allah's Leave. If they (hypocrites), when they had been unjust to themselves, had come to you (Muhammad) and begged Allah's Forgiveness, and the Messenger had begged forgiveness for them: indeed, they would have found Allah All-Forgiving (One Who accepts repentance), Most Merciful.

**65.** But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.

**66.** And if We had ordered them (saying), "Kill yourselves (i.e. the innocent ones kill the guilty ones) or leave your homes," very few of them would have done it; but if they had done what they were told, it would have been better for them, and would have strengthened their (Faith);

**67.** And indeed We should then have bestowed upon them a great reward from Ourselves.

**68.** And indeed We should have guided them to a Straight Way.

**69.** And whoso obeys Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad), then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets, the *Siddiqun* (those followers of the Prophets who were first and foremost to believe in them, like Abu Bakr Siddiq), the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these companions are!

**70.** Such is the Bounty from Allah, and Allah is Sufficient as All-Knower.

## COMMENTARY

The necessity of obeying the Rulers is in obedience to Allah. This is highly emphasized in the verse Fifty – nine. It says: “O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority”. This verse was revealed about ‘Abdullah bin Hudhayfah bn Qays whom the Messenger of Allah sent on military expedition. It was also recorded by Imam Ahmad that ‘Ali said: “the Messenger of Allah sent a troop under the commander of a man from the Anṣārs. When he left, he became angry with them for some reasons and said to them, “has not the Messenger of Allah commanded you to obey me”, they said: “Yes”. He said collect some wood and then he started a fire with the wood saying: “I command you to enter the fire”. The people almost entered the fire, but a young man among them said, “you only ran away from the fire to Allah’s Messenger. Therefore, do not rush until you go back to Allah’s Messenger and if he commands you to enter it, then enter it”. When they went back to Allah’s Messenger, they told him what had happened and the Messenger said; had you entered it, you would never have departed from it. Obedience is only in righteousness”.

The explanation of this verse was also recorded from another authentic hadith of the Prophet that; “The Muslim is required to hear and obey in that which he likes and dislikes, unless he was commanded to sin”. When he is commanded with sin, then there is no hearing or obeying. So obey Allah means adhere to His Book (The *Qur’ān*), and obey the Messenger implies adhere to his *Sunnah* ‘ and those of you who are in authority means; in obedience to Allah which they command you, not what constitutes disobedience of Allah, for there is no obedience to anyone in disobedience to Allah. Then, the *Qur’ān* Verse concludes that “And if you differ in anything amongst yourself refer it to Allah and His Messengers.” This phrase refers to the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger”. This is a command from Allah that whatever areas the people dispute about, whether major or minor areas of the religion, they are required to refer to the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah* for judgment concerning these dispute. Then, “if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day”, it means refer the dispute and conflict that arise between you to the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet for judgment. It also indicates that those who do refer to the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah* for judgment in their disputes are not believers in Allah or the Last Day. Allah says: “that is better and more suitable for final determination”. This denotes that referring to the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Messenger for judgment in various disputes is better and has better end.

Verses 60 – 63 expose the lie of the hypocrites and their claim. They call the attention of the Prophet to their claims. “Have you not seen those (hypocrites) who claim that they believe in that which has been sent to you and that which was sent down before you and they wish to go for judgment ( in their disputes) to the Taqḥūt while they have been

ordered to reject them. But Shaytān wishes to lead them far astray”. “And when it is said to them “come to what Allah has sent down and to the Messenger, you see the hypocrites turn away from him with aversion” Allah chastises those who claim to believe in what Allah has sent down to His Messenger and to the earlier Prophets, yet they refer to other than the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet for judgment in various disputes.

The reason behind the revelation of this *Āyah* was that a man from the *Anṣār* and Jew has a dispute and the Jew said let us refer to Muhammad to judge between us. However, the Muslim said: let us refer to Ka‘b bn al- Ashraf (a Jew) to judge between us”. It was also reported that the *Āyah* was revealed about some hypocrites who pretended to be Muslims, yet they sought to refer to the judgment of *Jāhiliyyah*. However, the *Āyah* has a general meaning as it chastises all those who refrain from referring to the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah* for judgment and prefer the judgment of whatever they chose of falsehood, which befits the description of Ṭaghūt. Their conduct is different from the conduct of the faithful believers. The next verse pronounces the judgment that will be given to the hypocrites. It says: “How then, when a catastrophe befalls them because of what their hands have sent forth?”. This means how about if they feel compelled to join you because of disaster they suffer due to their sins then they will be in need of you, apologizing and swearing that they only sought goodwill and reconciliation when they referred to other than the Prophet for judgment, not that they believe in such alternative judgment as they claim. Allah describes them further as those in whose hearts there is a disease (of hypocrisy). Allah knows what is in the hearts of the hypocrites and He will punish them accordingly. He has perfect knowledge of their apparent and hidden affairs. This is the reason why He says: “turn aside from them” (do not punish them because of what is in their hearts. Advise them against hypocrisy and evil which reside in their hearts and speak to them an affective word to reach their inner selves that might benefit them.

Necessity of obeying the Messenger of Allah is vividly examined in the verses 64 - 65. Obeying the Prophet was ordained for those to whom Allah sends the Prophet. Hence, Allah says “by my eaves”. It means: “none shall obey, except by leave. This *Āyah* indicates that the Prophet is only obeyed by whomever Allah directs to obedience. This means by His command, decree, will and because He granted the Prophet superiority of all others. This verses states further, if they (hypocrites) when they were unjust to themselves had come to you and begged Allah’s forgiveness and the Messenger had begged for them, indeed they would have found Allah all-Forgiving , Most Merciful”.

Allah swears in Verse 65 that no one shall attain faith until he refers to the Messenger for judgment in all matters. Thereafter, whatever the Messenger commands is the plain truth that must be submitted to inwardly and outwardly. “ And find in themselves no resistance against your decision and accept (them) with full submission” as explained in the verse, means they adhere to your judgment, and thus do not feel any hesitation over your decision and they submit to it completely. i.e with total submission without any rejection, denial or dispute. Al- Hafiz, Abu Ishaq, Ibrahim bn Abdur Rahman bn Ibrahim recorded that two men took their dispute to the Prophet and he gave a judgment to the benefit of whoever among them had the right. The person who lost the dispute said: “ I do not

agree”. The other person asked him “What do you want?” Then, he said “Let us go to Abu Bakr as- Siddīq. Then they went to the Abu Bakr and the person who won the dispute said: “we went to the Prophet without dispute and he issued a decision in my favour.” Abu Bakr said: “then, the decision is that which the Messenger of Allah issued”. This is so because, the Prophet judged based on the commands of Allah as was revealed in the *Qur’ān* and the *Hadīth*. This concept of total submission to the obedience of Allah and His Messenger runs to the subsequent verse 60 - 70. Similarly, the reward for those who comply with the commands of Allah and His Apostle is also spelt out. “And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, then they will be in the company of those whom Allah has bestowed His grace, of the Prophets, the Şiddiqs, the matyrs and the righteous... and how excellent these companions are! “Such is the bounty from Allah, and Allah is sufficient as All –Knower”.

The indication of these verses is that whoever implements what Allah and His Messenger have prohibited will be granted a dwelling in al-Jannah, the Residence of Honour. There, Allah will place such a person in the company of the Prophets, the true believers, the matyrs and the righteous. Allah then praised this company. “And how excellent these Companions are!

On the cause of revelation of this *Āyah* , An Anşār came to the Messenger of Allah while feeling sad. The Prophet said to him: why do I see you sad?” He said O Allah’s Prophet I was contemplating about something. The Prophet said: “what is it?”. He said: “we come to you day and night, looking at your face and sitting by you. Tomorrow, you will be raised with the Prophets, and we will not be able to see you”. The Prophet did not say anything, but later, Angel Jibril came down to him with this *Āyah* : “and whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His grace. The Prophet sent the good news to the Anşār. The *Āyah* calls every Muslim to abide by the *Qur’ān* strictly and to follow the *Sunnah* of the Prophet. These are pre-requisites for entering the paradise with the Prophet.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

Write appropriate commentary on Verses 69 - 70 of *Sūratu `n- Nisāi*.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The claims of the Jews and Christians are exposed in this divine passage. So also does the Holy *Qur’ān* depicts the real picture of the People of the Paradise as the only true believers who depend absolutely in Almighty Allah. Not only this, this *Qur’ānic* passage also describes the mode of obedience to a leader as only in what does not negate commandment of Allah command. The necessity of obeying the ruler by the servant is conditioned by the obedience to Allah and His Messenger, Prophet Muhammad.



## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit gives vivid description of the argument of the People of the Scriptures on what constitutes true religion. Such people offend Allah and they will be punished on the Day of Resurrection. Allah also commands His servants to do justice and to return the trusts to their rightful owners. This was practiced by the Prophet on the Day of the Conquest of Makkah. Compliance with Allah, His Messenger and the People in Authority is also made a requirement in this Unit. Certain limits are set in the obedience of servants to those in position of authority in both the Holy *Qur'ān* and the Hadith of the Prophet.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Comment on what should be our attitude to trust and justice as stipulated in this unit.
2. Analyze the concept of obedience to the constituted authority in Islam.

## **7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING**

- (1) Abdullah, Y.A. (1989) *The Holy Qur'ān*. Tran. London Publishers.
- (2) Muhammad, M.K. (1998). *The Noble Qur'ān*. Saudi Arabia: Daru Salam.
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## UNIT 3: *TAFSĪR OF SŪRATU 'N – NISĀI, VERSES 71 – 92*

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Contents
  - 3.1 *Tafsīr* of Verses 71 – 83
  - 3.2 *Tafsīr* of Verses 84 - 92
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Readings.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The necessity for taking some precautions, commandments of Allah on *Jihād*, as well as warning against an intentional murder are elaborated upon in this Unit which is continuation of our discussions in the previous one. In the Unit also, Allah admonishes the Muslims not to be coward but courageous, the religion of Islam is presented here as a religion that encompasses all aspects of man's life, be it political, social, economic and so on and so forth.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Render the text of the Verses into English.
2. Provide necessary exegesis of the passages.
3. Highlight the divine injunctions contained in the unit.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 *Tafsīr* of the Verses 71 – 83

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا خُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ فَانْفِرُوا ثُبَاتٍ أَوْ بَنَاتٍ أَوْ انْفِرُوا جَمِيعًا {النساء/71} وَإِنَّ مِنْكُمْ لَمَنْ لَيُبْتَطِنَنَّ فَإِنْ أَصَابَكُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا قَدْ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا إِذْ لَمْ أَكُنْ مَعَهُمْ شَاهِدًا {النساء/72} وَلَئِنْ أَصَابَكُمْ فُضْلٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لَيَقُولَنَّ كَأَن لَّمْ تَكُنْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُ مَوَدَّةٌ يَا لَيْتَنِي كُنْتُ مَعَهُمْ فَأَفُوزَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا {النساء/73} فَلْيُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يَشْرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ وَمَن يُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيُقْتَلْ أَوْ يَغْلِبْ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا {النساء/74} وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَاجْعَلْ لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيًّا وَاجْعَلْ لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ نَصِيرًا {النساء/75} الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ الطَّاغُوتِ فَقَاتِلُوا أَوْلِيَاءَ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا {النساء/76} أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ قِيلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوا أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا لِمَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْنَا الْقِتَالُ لَوْ لَا أَخَّرْتَنَا إِلَى أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ قُلْ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ اتَّقَى وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا {النساء/77} أَلَيْسَ تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكُكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّشِيدَةٍ وَإِنْ تُصِيبْهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ وَإِنْ تُصِيبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِندِكَ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ فَمَّا لِهَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا {النساء/78} مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ وَمَن سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنَ نَفْسِكَ وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا {النساء/79}

تَوَلَّى فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا {النساء/80} وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ فَإِذَا بَرَزُوا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ بَيَّتَ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي تَقُولُ وَاللَّهُ يَكْتُبُ مَا يُبَيِّنُونَ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا {النساء/81} أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا {النساء/82} وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوِ الْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا بِهِ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَى أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنْبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَاتَّبَعْتُمُ الشَّيْطَانَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا {النساء/83}

**71.** O you who believe! Take your precautions, and either go forth (on an expedition) in parties, or go forth all together.

**72.** There is certainly among you he who would linger behind (from fighting in Allah's Cause). If a misfortune befalls you, he says, "Indeed Allah has favoured me in that I was not present among them."

**73.** But if a bounty (victory and booty) comes to you from Allah, he would surely say - as if there had never been ties of affection between you and him - "Oh! I wish I had been with them; then I would have achieved a great success ( a good share of booty)."

**74.** Let those (believers) who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter fight in the Cause of Allah, and whoso fights in the Cause of Allah, and is killed or gets victory, We shall bestow on him a great reward.

**75.** And what is wrong with you that you fight not in the Cause of Allah, and for those weak, ill-treated and oppressed among men, women, and children, whose cry is: "Our Lord! Rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from You one who will protect, and raise for us from You one who will help."

**76.** Those who believe, fight in the Cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve, fight in the cause of *Taghut* (Satan, etc.). So fight you against the friends of *Shaitan* (Satan); Ever-feeble indeed is the plot of *Shaitān* (Satan).

**77.** Have you not seen those who were told to hold back their hands (from fighting) and perform *As-Salāt* (*Iqamat-as-Salāt*), and give *Zakat*, but when the fighting was ordained for them, behold! a section of them fear men as they fear Allah or even more. They say: "Our Lord! Why have you ordained for us fighting? Would that you had granted us respite for a short period?" Say: "Short is the enjoyment of this world. The Hereafter is (far) better for him who fears Allah, and you shall not be dealt with unjustly even equal to the *Fatila* (a scallish thread in the long slit of a date-stone).

**78.** "Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high!" And if some good reaches them, they say, "This is from Allah," but if some evil befalls them, they say, "This is from you (O Muhammad)." Say: "All things are from Allah," so what is wrong with these people that they fail to understand any word?

**79.** Whatever of good reaches you, is from Allah, but whatever of evil befalls you, is from yourself. And We have sent you (O Muhammad) as a Messenger to mankind, and Allah is Sufficient as a Witness.

**80.** He who obeys the Messenger (O Muhammad), has indeed obeyed Allah, but he who turns away, then we have not sent you (O Muhammad) as a watcher over them.

**81.** They say: "We are obedient," but when they leave you (O Muhammad), a section of them spend all night in planning other than what you say. But Allah records their nightly (plots). So turn aside from them (do not punish them), and put your trust in Allah. And Allah is Ever All-Sufficient as a Disposer of affairs.

**82.** Do they not then consider the Qur'an carefully? Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much contradiction.

**83.** When there comes to them some matter touching (public) safety or fear, they make it known (among the people), if only they had referred it to the Messenger or to those charged with authority among them, the proper investigators would have understood it from them (directly). Had it not been for the Grace and Mercy of Allah upon you, you would have followed *Shaitan* (Satan), save a few of you.

#### COMMENTARY

“O you who believe! Take your precautions and either go forth (on an expedition) in parties, or go forth all together....” Allah commands His faithful servants to take precautions against their enemies by being prepared with the necessary weapons and supplies, and increasing the number of troops fighting in His cause.

The *Āyah* also cautions the believers against the antics of the hypocrites among them. It says: “There is certainly among you he who would linger behind....” To linger behind means, “stay behind and not joining *Jihād*. It is also possible that a person lingers behind while luring others away from joining *Jihād*. For Instance, Abdullah bn Ubayy bn Salul used to linger behind and lure other people to do the same and discourage them from joining *Jihād*. The clause, “if a misfortune befalls you” means death, dying as a martyr or being defeated by the enemy, he says “Indeed Allah has favoured me that I was not present among them”. This is so because he considers his not being in the battle is Allah’s favour on him, unaware of the reward that he might have gained from enduring war or martyrdom, if he was killed. The *Qur’ān* says further “But if a bounty comes to you from Allah “such as victory, triumph and booty, he would surely say as if he was not a follower of your religion. Then, he will lament “Oh! I wish I had been with them, then I would have achieved a great success” by being assigned a share of the bounty and taking possession of that share.

Allah then commands the Muslims “so fight those who trade the life of this world with the hereafter”. This verse refers to those who sell their religion for the meager goods of the world.

The *Āyah* says further that whoever fights in the Cause of Allah, whether he was killed or triumphant, he will earn an immense compensation and a great reward with Allah. *Āyah* 75 and 76 encourage *Jihād* to defend the oppressed. They also explain the features of those who fight for Allah's sake. Therefore, the believers fight in obedience to Allah and to gain His (Allah) pleasure, while the disbelievers fight in obedience to Satan. Allah encourages the believers to fight His enemies. "So, fight against the friends of Satan, ever feeble indeed is the plot of Satan! *Jihād* is also expatiated by the verses of this unit.

In the beginning of Islam, Muslims in Makah were commanded to perform the prayer (*Salāt*) and pay some charity, so as to comfort the poor among them. They were also commanded to be forgiving with the idolaters and to observe patience with them at the time. The situation at that time did not permit armed conflicts for many reasons. For instance, Muslims were few at that time, compared to their enemies. The Muslims city was a sacred one and the most honored area on the earth and that is why the command to fight was not revealed in Makkah until they got their own town in Medina and had strength, power and support. Then, *Jihād* was legislated. Still, some of the Muslims became weary and were very fearful of facing the idolaters in battle. They said "we wish that *Jihād* was delayed until a later time. In a similar *Āyah*, Allah says: "those who believe say: "why is not a *Sūrah* sent down (for us). The reward of those people was also mentioned in the segment of the *Āyah* "and you shall not be dealt with unjustly even equal to the *fatīl*". This promise of Allah directs the focus of believers away from life and makes them eager for the hereafter, all the while encouraging them to fight in *Jihād*.

Death is analyzed in the next verse as un-escapable thing in life of a man. "Wheresoever you may be death will overtake you even if you are in fortress built up strong and high". This is an indication that you shall certainly die and none of you shall ever escape death. It also connotes no caution or fortification can ever avert death whether entrenched, fortified or towering high. Therefore, every soul shall taste death and nothing can save any person from it, whether he took part in *Jihād* or not. Everyone has an appointed time.

The hypocrites sense a bad omen because of the Prophet. The *Āyah* says: And if some good reach them " This means fertile year, provision of fruits, farm produce children etc., "they say, this is from Allah, but if some evil befall them "such as drought famine, shortages of fruits and produce, death that strike their children or animals and so forth. " This is from you" in their comments means because of you and because we followed you and embraced your religion.

Consequently, Allah revealed: "say: All things are from Allah." It means everything occurs by the decision and decree of Allah. His decision shall come to pass for the righteous, the wicked, the faithful and the disbelievers. It is thus obvious in this verse that whatever misfortune befalls a man is because of what his hands have earned.

Verses 80 and 81 reiterate obeying the Messenger of Allah. Allah states that whoever obeys His servants and Messenger, Muhammad, obeys Allah, and whoever disobeys him,

disobeys Allah. The *Āyah* states further that ‘‘But he who turns away, then we have not sent you as a watcher over them’’ means do not worry about him. Your own role is to convey the messages of Allah to them.

‘‘The hypocrites say: ‘‘we are obedient but they leave you..’’ This connotes that the hypocrites pretend to be loyal and obedient.

Affirmation of the truthfulness of the *Qur’ān* is vividly expressed in the verses 82 and 83. Allah commands them to contemplate about the *Qur’ān* and He forbids them from ignoring it. Allah states that there are no inconsistencies, contradictions, conflicting statements or discrepancies in the *Qur’ān*. This is because it is a revelation from Allah. The *Āyah* also says that if it (*Qur’ān*) is been fraudulent and made up, as the ignorant idolaters and hypocrites asserts in their hearts, they would surely have found therein contradictions, discrepancies and inconsistencies.

The next *Āyah* discusses the prohibition of disclosing unreliable and uninvestigated news. It reveals the false statement against the Prophet that he has divorced his wives. ‘‘When there comes to them some matters touching (public) safety or fear, they make it known (among the people). The verse chastises those who indulge in things before being sure of their truth, disclosing them, making them known and spreading their news, even though such news might not be true at all. This *Āyah* refers to proper investigation or extraction of matters from their proper sources. ‘‘You would have followed shaytān except a few of you. This refers to the believers, as Ali bin Abi Talhah reported from Ibn Abbas.

### Self-Assessment Exercise.

Provide necessary exegesis of the Verses 71 – 83.

### 3.2 Tafsīr of Verses 84 --- 92.

فَقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ إِلَّا نَفْسَكَ وَحَرِّضَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَكُفَّ بَأْسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَاللَّهُ أَشَدُّ بَأْسًا وَأَشَدُّ تَنكِيلًا {النساء/84} مَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ نَصِيبٌ مِنْهَا وَمَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ كِفْلٌ مِنْهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُقَبِّلًا {النساء/85} وَإِذَا حُيِّيتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا أَوْ رُدُّوها إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَسِيبًا {النساء/86} اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لِيَجْمَعَ بَيْنَكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَدِيثًا {النساء/87} فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِتْنَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَرَكْسَهُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوا أَنْتُمْ يَدُونَ أَنْ تَهْذُوا مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا {النساء/88} وَدُّوا لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَاءً فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ حَتَّى يُهَاجِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَخُذُوهُمْ وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا {النساء/89} إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ إِلَى قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ أَوْ جَاؤُكُمْ حَصِرَتْ صُدُورُهُمْ أَنْ يَقَاتِلُوكُمْ أَوْ يُقَاتِلُوا قَوْمَهُمْ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَقَاتِلُوكُمْ فَإِنْ اعْتَرَلُوكُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ وَأَلْقَوْا إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامَ فَمَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا {النساء/90} سَتَجِدُونَ آخَرِينَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَأْمَنُوكُمْ وَيَأْمَنُوا قَوْمَهُمْ كُلٌّ مَا رَدُّوا إِلَى الْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكِسُوا فِيهَا فَإِنْ لَمْ يَعْتَزِلُوكُمْ وَيُلْقُوا إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامَ وَيَكْفُرُوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَخُذُوهُمْ وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ تَقْبَلُوهُمْ وَأُولَئِكَ جَعَلْنَا وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَنْ يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا إِلَّا خَطَأً وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَأً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَدِيَّةٌ مُسْلَمَةٌ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَصَدَّقُوا فَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٌّ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ فِدْيَةٌ مُسْلَمَةٌ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا {النساء/92}

**84.** Then fight (O Muhammad) in the Cause of Allah, you are not tasked (held responsible) except for yourself, and incite the believers (to fight along with you), it may be that Allah will restrain the evil might of the disbelievers. And Allah is Stronger in Might and Stronger in punishing.

**85.** Whosoever intercedes for a good cause will have the reward thereof, and whosoever intercedes for an evil cause will have a share in its burden. And Allah is Ever All-Able to do (and also an All-Witness to) everything.

**86.** When you are greeted with a greeting, greet in return with what is better than it or (at least) return it equally. Certainly, Allah is ever a Careful Account-Taker of all things.

**87.** Allah! *La ilāha illā Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He). Surely, He will gather you together on the Day of Resurrection about which there is no doubt. And who is truer in statement than Allah?

**88.** Then what is the matter with you that you are divided into two parties about the hypocrites? Allah has cast them back (to disbelief) because of what they have earned. Do you want to guide him whom Allah has made to go astray? And he whom Allah has made to go astray, you will never find for him any way (of guidance).

**89.** They wish that you reject Faith, as they have rejected (Faith), and thus that you all become equal (like one another). So take not *Awliya'* (protectors or friends) from them, till they emigrate in the Way of Allah (to Muhammad). But if they turn back (from Islam), take (hold) of them and kill them wherever you find them, and take neither *Awliya'* (protectors or friends) nor helpers from them.

**90.** Except those who join a group, between you and whom there is a treaty (of peace), or those who approach you with their breasts restraining from fighting you as well as fighting their own people. Had Allah willed, indeed He would have given them power over you, and they would have fought you. So if they withdraw from you, and fight not against you, and offer you peace, then Allah has opened no way for you against them.

**91.** You will find others that wish to have security from you and security from their people. Every time they are sent back to temptation, they yield thereto. If they withdraw not from you, nor offer you peace, nor restrain their hands, take (hold) of them and kill them wherever you find them. In their case, We have provided you with a clear warrant against them.

**92.** It is not for a believer to kill a believer except (that it be) by mistake, and whosoever kills a believer by mistake, (it is ordained that) he must set free a believing slave and a compensation (blood money, i.e. *Dīya*) be given to the deceased's family, unless they remit it. If the deceased belonged to a people at war with you and he was a believer; the freeing of a believing slave (is prescribed), and if he belonged to a people with whom you

have a treaty of mutual alliance, compensation (blood money - *Dīya*) must be paid to his family, and a believing slave must be freed. And whoso finds this (the penance of freeing a slave) beyond his means, he must fast for two consecutive months in order to seek repentance from Allah. And Allah is Ever All-Knowing, All-Wise.

## COMMENTARY

Verses 84 – 87 elaborate on the commandment of Allah on the *Jihād* and the intercession of the Prophet. Allah commands His servant and Messenger Muhammad to fight in *Jihād* and not to be concerned about those who do not join *Jihād*. Then, “incite the believers to fight” i.e. by encouraging them strengthening their resolve in this regard. ”It may be that Allah will restrain the evil might of the disbelievers” by encouraging them to fight to defend Islam. The *Āyah* concludes that “Allah is stronger in might and stronger in punishing”. This means that He is above over them in this life and the hereafter.

The next verses explain the interceding for a good or an evil cause. Allah says “whosoever intercedes for a good cause will have the reward thereof”. This connotes that whosoever intercedes in a matter that produces good results, will acquire a share in that good. “And whosoever intercedes for an evil cause, will have a share in its burden. This means he will carry a burden due to what resulted from his intercession and intention. This *Āyah* was revealed about the intercession of people on behalf of each other. Allah then says: “And Allah is Ever *Muqīt* over everything. The word ‘*Muqīt*’ means watcher, witness and able to do”.

Returning the salutation (*Salām*) with a better *salām* is the theme of verse 86. “When you are greeted with a greeting, greet in return with what is better than it or (at least) return it equally”. This means that if a Muslim greets you with the *salām*, then return the greeting with a better *salām* or at least equal to the *salām* that was given. Therefore, the better *salām* is recommended while returning it equally is an obligation. Greeting with “*Assalām Alaykum Wa Rahmatullah*” is highly emphasized by a number of *ahādith* of the Prophet. He said: “By He in whose hand is my soul, you will not enter Paradise until you believe and you will not believe until you love each other. Should I direct you to an action that would direct you to love each other: spread the ‘*salām*’ among yourselves?”. More so, the verse explains that Allah swore that He would gather everybody on the Day of Judgment in one area and each person will be rewarded according to his or her actions.

Censuring the Companions for disagreeing over the hypocrites who returned to the city of Madinah before the battle of Uhud is the subject matter of verses 88-91. Allah criticizes the believers for disagreeing over the hypocrites. There are conflicting opinions over the reason behind revealing the *Āyah*. Imam Ahmad recorded that Zayd bn Thabit said that the Messenger of Allah marched towards Uhud. However, some people who accompanied him went back to Madinah, and the Companions of Allah’s Messenger divide into two groups concerning them. A group said that hypocrites should be killed while the other groups object to it. Then, Allah sent down the verse: “Then what is the matter with you that you are divided into parties about the hypocrites”.



“Allah has cast them back of what they have earned”. This means that He made them revert to and fall into error because of their defiance and disobedience to the Messenger and following falsehood. Then, Allah makes it clear that the hypocrites cannot be cast back from going astray. The next *Āyah* introduces their rejection of the Islamic monotheism and their plot to mislead the Prophet. “ They wish that you reject faith as they have rejected, and thus that you all become equal”. They wish that you too fall into misguidance, so that you and they are equal in that regard. This is because of their extreme enmity and hatred for you. Therefore Allah says: “so take not ‘*Awliyā*’ from them till they migrate in the way of Allah”. Verse 90 further explains that “except those who join and take refuge with who you have peace”. It was reported that Ibn Abbas said that this *Āyah* was later abrogated by Allah’s statement: “ Then when the sacred months have passed, kill the idolaters wherever you find them”.

The *Āyah* further says “or those who approach you with their breasts restraining”. This refers to another type of people covered by the exclusion from fighting. They are those who approach the Muslims with hesitation in their heart because of their aversion to fighting the Muslims. They do not have the heart to fight with the Muslims against their own people. Therefore, they are neither with nor against Muslims. “Had Allah willed, indeed He would have given them power over you and they would have fought you”. Thus, they are neither with nor against Muslims. So, it means it is for Allah’s mercy that He has stopped them from fighting you. “if they withdraw from you, and fight not against you, and offer you peace, then Allah has opened no way for you against them”. This connotes that you do not have right to kill them, as long as they take this position of peace. This was the position of Banu Hashim “the tribe of the Prophet”. Such as Al- Abbas, who accompanied the idolaters in the battle of Badr, for they joined the battle with great hesitation? This is why the Prophet commands that Al- Abbas not be killed, but only captured.

The Verse ninety refers to a type of people who on the surface appear to be like the type we just mentioned. It says: “You will find others that wish to have security from you and security from their people”. However, the intention of each type is different for the latter are hypocrites. They pretend to be Muslims with the Prophet and his Companion, so that they could attain safety with the Muslims for their blood, properties and families. They however, support the idolaters in secret and worship what they worship, so that they are at peace with them also. The *Āyah* furthers explain: “Every time they are sent back to *Fitnah*, they yield thereof” i.e. they dwell in *Fitnah*. This *fitnah* mentioned here refers to shirk. The *Āyah* was revealed about a group from Makkah who used to go to the Prophet in al- Madinah pretending to be Muslims. However, when they went back to Quraysh, they reverted to worshipping idols. They wanted to be at peace with both sides. Allah commanded that they should be fought against, unless they withdraw from combat and resort to peace. This is the reason why Allah says: no “if they withdraw from you or offer you peace” i.e if they revert to be peaceful and complacent behavior or refrain from fighting you, “take hold of them” capture them.

Verses 92 and 93 explain the ruling concerning killing a believer by mistake. Allah states that the believer is not allowed to kill his believing brother under any circumstances. “except by mistakes”. There are divergence of opinions behind this part of *Āyah* . It was recorded that Ayyāsh killed a man called al- Hārith bn Yazīd out of revenge for torturing him and his brother because of Islam. The man later embraced Islam and performed Hijrah, but ‘Ayyash did not know this fact. On the day of the Makkah conquest: Ayyash saw that man and thought that he was still a disbeliever, so, he attacked and killed him.

When this matter was conveyed to the Prophet of Allah, the Prophet said to Him: “Have you opened his heart”. Allah then says: “And whosoever kills a believer by a mistake, he must set free a believing slave and submit compensation (blood money) to the deceased family, thus ordaining two requirements for murder by mistakes.

The first is the *kaffārah* (fine). This is to free a Muslim Slave, not a non- Muslim slave. “...and submit compensation (blood) money to the deceased family is the second obligation. This involves the killer and the family of the deceased, who will receive the blood money as compensation for their loss. Allah says further ‘unless they remit it’.

The ‘Diyah’ must be delivered to the family of the deceased, unless they forfeit their right. “if the deceased belonged to a people at war with you and he was a believer, the freeing of a believing slave (is prescribed). It means if the murdered person was a believer yet his families were combatant disbelievers, they will receive no ‘Diyah’. In this case, the murderer only has to free a believing slave. If the families of the deceased were from Ahl Adh- Dhimmah or with whom there is peace treaty, then they deserve his Diyah. And whosoever finds this beyond his means, he must fast for two consecutive months.

If the fast is broken without justification such as illness, menstruation, postnatal bleeding, then, he has to start all over again. This is how one kills by mistakes can repent. Allah is Ever All –Knowing, All- Wise.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

1. Render the meaning of Verses 81 – 92 into English.
2. Give the exegesis of select expressions from the Verses 81-92.

## **3.0 CONCLUSION**

Verses 70 - 92 of *Sūratu `n-Nisāi* provide for mankind the guidance needed for promotion of peace, love and unity. Murder, which has now become a household crime in every society, is prohibited as murderers are made liable to entering hell fire. Fighting in order to establish and promote ideals and to subdue injustice has been made worthwhile as we read in the passage above.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, various issues were looked into as they form the contents of the different Qur'anic verses discussed. The issues included taking precaution against the antics of the hypocrites, the necessity for fighting a jihad, and respecting the faith and life of whoever declares the *shahādah*, among others.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Write the text of the Ayahs which deals with spreading falsehood, translate it and comment fully on it.
2. Select the Ayahs that deal with Jihad from these passages and write full commentaries on them.

## 7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

- (1) Abdullah, Y.A. (1989) *The Holy Qur'ān*. Tran. London Publishers.
- (2) Muhammad, M.K. (1998). *The Noble Qur'ān*. Saudi Arabia: Daru Salam.
- (3) Muhammed, M.K. ( 2003). *Ṣaḥīḥ al–Bukhārī*. Saudi Arabia: Darus – Salam Publications.
- (4) *Tafsīr Ibn Kathir*; English Fashion (abridged).
- (5) Httpllwww: Tafsīr.com retrieved on 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2011.

## UNIT 4: *TAFSĪR* OF *SŪRATU 'N – NISĀ'I*, VERSES 93 – 115

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Contents
  - 3.1 *Tafsīr* of the Verses 93 – 100
  - 3.2 *Tafsīr* of Verses 101 - 115
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Readings.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

I hope you really enjoyed our discussions in the last unit. If so, then you are welcome to unit three. In this unit, verses ninety-three to one hundred and fifteen of *Sūratun-Nisā'i* shall be discussed with a view of running commentaries on selected expressions and explaining some words in it. It is hoped that you shall adopt the lessons injunctions in them in your day-to-day life.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of our discussion in this unit, students should be able to:

- Recite the Arabic text of verses ninety-three to one hundred and fifteen of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Give the English translation of verses ninety-three to one hundred and fifteen of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- List out and explain some of the lessons derivable from verses ninety-three to one hundred and fifteen of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

#### 3.1 *Tafsīr* of the Verses 93 --- 100

وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمَّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا {النساء/93} يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَتَبَيَّنُوا وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ أَلْقَى إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامَ لَسْتُ مُؤْمِنًا تَبْنَعُونَ عَرْضَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَعَانِمُ كَثِيرَةٌ كَذَلِكَ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَمَنْ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَتَبَيَّنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا {النساء/94} لَا يَسْتَوِي الْقَاعِدُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ أُولِي الضَّرَرِّ وَالْمُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ دَرَجَةً وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَى وَفَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا {النساء/95} دَرَجَاتٍ مِّنْهُ وَمَغْفِرَةً وَرَحْمَةً وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا {النساء/96} إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا فِيمَ كُنْتُمْ قَالُوا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا فَأُولَئِكَ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا {النساء/97} إِلَّا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ

وَالْوَلَدَانِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا {النساء/98} فَأُولَئِكَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا {النساء/99} وَمَنْ يُهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُرَاعِمًا كَثِيرًا وَسَعَةً وَمَنْ يَخْرُجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا {النساء/100}

## Translation

**93.** And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell to abide therein, and the Wrath and the Curse of Allah are upon him, and a great punishment is prepared for him.

**94.** O you who believe! When you go (to fight) in the Cause of Allah, verify (the truth), and say not to anyone who greets you (by embracing Islam): "You are not a believer"; seeking the perishable goods of the worldly life. There are much more profits and booties with Allah. Even as he is now, so were you yourselves before till Allah conferred on you His Favours (i.e. guided you to Islam), therefore, be cautious in discrimination. Allah is Ever Well-Aware of what you do.

**95.** Not equal are those of the believers who sit (at home), except those who are disabled (by injury or are blind or lame, etc.), and those who strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah with their wealth and their lives. Allah has preferred in grades those who strive hard and fight with their wealth and their lives above those who sit (at home). Unto each, Allah has promised good (Paradise), but Allah has preferred those who strive hard and fight, above those who sit (at home) by a huge reward;

**96.** Degrees of (higher) grades from Him, and Forgiveness and Mercy. And Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

**97.** Verily! As for those whom the angels take (in death) while they are wronging themselves (as they stayed among the disbelievers even though emigration was obligatory for them), they (angels) say (to them): "In what (condition) were you?" They reply: "We were weak and oppressed on earth." They (angels) say: "Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to emigrate therein?" Such men will find their abode in Hell - What an evil destination!

**98.** Except the weak ones among men, women and children who cannot devise a plan, nor are they able to direct their way.

**99.** For these there is hope that Allah will forgive them, and Allah is Ever Oft Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving.

**100.** He who emigrates (from his home) in the Cause of Allah, will find on earth many dwelling places and plenty to live by. And whosoever leaves his home as an emigrant unto Allah and His Messenger, and death overtakes him, his reward is then surely incumbent upon Allah. And Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

## COMMENTARY

The verse ninety-three opens with the warning against an intentional murder – “And whoever kills a believer intentionally”. This *Āyah* carries a stern warning and promise for those who commit such a grave sin. “...his recompense is hell”. Ibn ‘Abbas held the view that repentance of one who intentionally murders a believer will not be accepted. Abu Hurayrah and several among the *Salaf* said that this is his punishment, if Allah decides to punish him.

The subsequent *Āyah* admonishes Muslims that greeting with the *salām* is a sign of being a Muslim. It starts with “O you who believe! When you go (to fight) in the cause of Allah verify (the truth), and say not to anyone who greets you: ‘you are not a believer’ seeking the perishable goods of the worldly life...” It was recorded by Imam Ahmad that Ibn Abbas said: “A man from Bani Sulayman, who was tending a flock of sheep, passed by some of the Companions and said *salām* to them. They said (to each other): ‘He only said *salām* to protect himself from us’. They then attacked and killed him. They brought his sheep to the Prophet and this *Āyah* was revealed.

“And say not to anyone who greets you: You are not a believer.” Ibn Abbas also narrated that the Messenger of Allah sent a military expedition under the authority of al-Miqdad bn al-Aswad and when they reached the designated area found that the people have dispersed. However a man with a lot of wealth did not leave and he said: I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah.” Yet, al-Miqdad killed him. When they went back to the Prophet, they said al-Miqdad killed a man who testified that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah. The Prophet said: Summon al-Miqdad before me. And he asked him “O Miqdad! Did you kill a man who said there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah? What would you do when you face Allah tomorrow? Allah then revealed this verse.

The Messenger of Allah then said to al- Miqdad: “He was a believing man who hid his faith among disbelieving people, and he announced his faith to you, but you killed him, although you used to hide your faith before, in Makkah. Allah’s statement “there is much more benefit with Allah”, this means better than what you desire of worldly possession which made you kill the one who greeted you with the *salām* and pronounced his faith to you . Still, you ignored all this and accused him of hypocrisy, to acquire the gain of this life. However, the pure wealth with Allah is far better than what you acquire.” Therefore, be cautious in discriminations, Allah is Ever well- Aware of What you do.

Verses ninety- five and the ninety – six revealed that those who join Jihād and those who do not join are not the same – “Not equal are those of the believers (who sit at home)”. When this *Āyah* was revealed, the Prophet commanded Zayd to write it. Then, ibn. Umm Makhtum came and mentioned that he was blind. Allah revealed: “except those who are disabled (by injury or are blind or lame)”. The *Āyah* refers to those who did not go to the battle of Badr and those who went. When the battle of Badr was about to commence, Abu Ahmad bin Jahsh and ibn. Umm Makhtum said: “we are blind O Messenger of Allah! Do we have an excuse? Allah then revealed the *Āyah* . Allah places those who fight in His cause above those who sit in their homes not hindered by disability (by

promising them huge reward). So, whoever has a disability such as illness, blindness, limp or an illness that prevents them from joining Jihād, they are not compared to the Mujahhidin who strive in Allah's cause with their selves and wealth as those who are not disables and did not join the Jihād are.

“Unto each, Allah has promised good” i.e. paradise and tremendous rewards. This verse indicates that *Jihād* is not *fard* (compulsory) on each and every individual but it is *fard kifāyah* (collective duty). Allah mentions that He has given those who strive, rooms in paradise, along with His forgiveness and the descent of mercy and blessing on them as a favour and honour from Allah. And Allah is ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful”. There are a hundred grades in paradise that Allah has prepared for the Mujāhidīn in His Cause between each two grades is the distance between heaven and earth”. (Hadith).

Prohibition of residing among the disbelievers while one is able to migrate out of their society centres as the subject matter of the Verses 97 – 100. It says ‘Verily, as for those whom the Angels take (in death) while they are wronging themselves’.

This *Āyah* was revealed about some hypocrites who did not join Prophet but remained in Makkah and went with the idolaters for the battle of Badr. They were killed among those who were killed. Thus, this verse was revealed about those who reside among the idolaters, while able to perform Hijrah and unable to practice the faith. Such people will be committing injustice against themselves and falling into a prohibition according to the consensus and also according to this *Āyah*. They (the angel) say “in what condition were you?” meaning, why did you remain here and not perform *Hijrah*. “They reply: “we were weak and oppressed on the earth”. That is we are unable to leave the land or move about in the earth. The Angels then say “was not the earth of Allah spacious for you?”. It is on this account that the Messenger of Allah was reported to have said: “whoever mingles with the idolater and resides with him, he is just like him”.

This is so because, such people will not be able to migrate or be able to free themselves from the idolaters. Even if they do, they would not know which way to go. The *Qur’ān* says further “these are they whom Allah is likely to forgive them and Allah is ever Oft-Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving. Then, He who migrates in the cause of Allah will find on earth many dwelling places and plenty to live by.” This denotes that he will find a way out of what he dislikes and Allah will take him out from misguidance and from poverty to richness.

*Āyah* one –hundred concludes the story of the emigrants. Allah mentions the rewards that will be given to the *Mujahhidin* on His path. “And whoever leaves his home as an emigrant unto Allah and His Messenger and death overtakes him, his reward is then surely incumbent upon Allah”.

This is an indication that whoever starts emigrating and dies on the way, he will acquire the reward of those who migrate for Allah. This is corroborated by a number of the Prophetic traditions, such as “the reward of deeds depends upon the intention, and every person will be rewarded according to what he has intended”.

## Self-Assessment Exercise

Provide the translation and exegesis of these divine verses of *Sūratu `n-Nisāi*.

### 3.2 Tafsīr of the Verses 101 -- 102

وَإِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ إِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ كَانُوا لَكُمْ عَدُوًّا مُبِينًا {النساء/101} وَإِذَا كُنْتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَلْتَقُمْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا أَسْلِحَتَهُمْ فَإِذَا سَجَدُوا فَلْيَكُونُوا مِنْ وَرَائِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ طَائِفَةٌ أُخْرَى لَمْ يُصَلُّوا فَلْيُصَلُّوا مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ وَذَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَيْلَةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ بِكُمْ أَدَى مِّنْ مَّطَرٍ أَوْ كُنْتُمْ مَّرْضَى أَنْ تَضَعُوا أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ وَخُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا {النساء/102}

## TRANSLATION

**101.** And when you (Muslims) travel in the land, there is no sin on you if you shorten your *Salāt* (prayer) if you fear that the disbelievers may attack you, verily, the disbelievers are ever unto you open enemies.

**102.** When you (O Messenger Muhammad) are among them, and lead them in *As-Salāt* (the prayer), let one party of them stand up [in *Salāt* (prayer)] with you taking their arms with them; when they finish their prostrations, let them take their positions in the rear and let the other party come up which has not yet prayed, and let them pray with you taking all the precautions and bearing arms. Those who disbelieve wish, if you were negligent of your arms and your baggage, to attack you in a single rush, but there is no sin on you if you put away your arms because of the inconvenience of rain or because you are ill, but take every precaution for yourselves. Verily, Allah has prepared a humiliating torment for the disbelievers.

## COMMENTARY

*Salātu `l- Qaṣr* (shortened prayer) with its conditions is expatiated in verse 101. The word “*darabtum*” as used in the verse here connotes “travel in the land” there is no sin on you if you shorten the *Salāt* (prayer) by reducing (the unit of the prayer from four to two) it says further..... If you fear that the disbelievers may put you in trial (attack you). This segment of the *Āyah* refers to the typical type of fear prevalent when this verse was revealed. In the beginning of Islam and after the *Hijrah*, Muslims used to experience fear of their enemies during most of their travels. As it is compulsory for them to observe their *Ṣalāt*, Allah made it simpler by permitting them to shorten it. Annas reported that “we went out with the Messenger of Allah from Madina to Makkah; he used to pray two *rak-‘ah* until he went back to Madinah. “When he was asked how long they remained in Makkah, he said: we remained in Makkah for ten days”.

The description of the fear prayer is comprehensively analyzed in the verse 102. The reason behind the revelation of this *Āyah* was as Imam Ahmad explained that Abu ‘Ayyad Az-Zaruq said: we were with the Messenger of Allah in the area of ‘Usfan (a well-known place near Makkah), when the idolaters met us under the command of Khalid bn Al- Walīd, and they were between us and the Kiblah. The Messenger of Allah led us in Zuhr prayer, and the idolaters said “they were busy with something during which we



had a chance to attack them”. They then said: Next, there will come a prayer (Asr) that is dearer to them than their children and themselves. However, Jibril came down with these *Āyah* between the prayers (*ṣalātayn*) of Zuhr and the ‘Aṣr, “When you (O Messenger of Allah) are among them, and lead them in *ṣalāh* (prayer)”. When the time of prayer came, the Messenger of Allah commanded Muslims to hold their weapons and he made us stand in two lines behind him, when he bowed, we all bowed behind him. When he raised his head, we all raised our heads. The Prophet then prostrated with the line that was behind him while the rest stood in guard.

When they finished with the prostration and stood up the rest sat and performed prostration, while those who performed it stood up in guard after the two lines exchange position. The Prophet then bowed until they all bowed after him, and then raised their heads after he raised his head. Then the Prophet performed prostration with the line that was behind him, while the rest stood in guard. When those who made prostration sat, the rest prostrated.

The Prophet then performed the *taslīm* and ended the prayer. The Prophet performed this *Salāt* twice, once in ‘Uṣfan and once in the land of Banu Sulaym”. (Hadith by Abu Dawud and An- Nasa’ī). There is another hadith that gives the description of the fear-prayer performed by the Prophet. The Messenger of Allah led one group and prayed one *raka‘ah*, while the second group faced the enemy. Then the second group that faced the enemy came and Allah’s Messenger led them, praying one *raka‘ah*, and then said the *salām*. Each of the two groups then stood up and prayed one more *raka‘ah* each (While the other group stood in guard)”. As for the command of Allah that instructs them to hold the weapons during the fear prayer, the scholar said that it is obligatory according to the *Āyah* .

This statement explains further “but there is no sin on you if you put away your arms because of the inconvenience of rain or because you are ill, but take every precaution for yourselves so that you will be able to get to your weapons easily. Verily, Allah has prepared a humiliating torment for the disbelievers”.

### Self-Assessment Exercise

Describe how the *Salātu’-l Khawf* (prayers observed under fearful situation) should be carried out by Muslim with references from the Qur’ānic verses and hadiths of the Prophet.

#### 3.3 Tafsīr of the Verses 103 -- 115

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْفُوتًا {النساء/103} وَلَا تَهِنُوا فِي ابْتِغَاءِ الْقَوْمِ إِنْ تَكُونُوا تَأْلَمُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْلَمُونَ كَمَا تَأْلَمُونَ وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا {النساء/104} إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِمَا أَرَاكَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَكُنَ لِلْخَائِنِينَ خَصِيمًا {النساء/105} وَاسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا {النساء/106} وَلَا تُجَادِلْ عَنِ الَّذِينَ يَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ خَوَانًا أَثِيمًا {النساء/107} يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مَعَهُمْ إِذْ يُبَيِّتُونَ مَا لَا يَرْضَىٰ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطًا {النساء/108} هَآأَنْتُمْ هَآءَآ جَادَلْتُمْ عَنْهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فَمَن

يُجَادِلِ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَمْ مَنْ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيلًا {النساء/109} وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا {النساء/110} وَمَنْ يَكْسِبْ إِثْمًا فَإِنَّمَا يَكْسِبُهُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا {النساء/111} وَمَنْ يَكْسِبْ خَطِيئَةً أَوْ إِثْمًا ثُمَّ يَرْمِ بِهِ بَرِيئًا فَقَدْ احْتَمَلَ بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُبِينًا {النساء/112} وَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَهَمَّتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ أَنْ يُضِلُّوكَ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَضُرُّونَكَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُنْ تَعْلَمُ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا {النساء/113} لَا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ نَّجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا {النساء/114} وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَى وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّى وَنُصْلِهِ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا {النساء/115}

## TRANSLATION

**103.** When you have finished *As-Salat* (the prayer - congregational), remember Allah standing, sitting down, and lying down on your sides, but when you are free from danger, perform *As-Salat* (*Iqamat-as- Salat*). Verily, the prayer is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours.

**104.** And don't be weak in the pursuit of the enemy; if you are suffering (hardships) then surely, they (too) are suffering (hardships) as you are suffering, but you have a hope from Allah (for the reward, i.e. Paradise) that for which they hope not, and Allah is Ever All-Knowing, All-Wise.

**105.** Surely, We have sent down to you (O Muhammad) the Book (this Qur'ān) in truth that you might judge between men by that which Allah has shown you (i.e. has taught you through Divine Inspiration), so be not a pleader for the treacherous.

**106.** And seek the Forgiveness of Allah; certainly, Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

**107.** And argue not on behalf of those who deceive themselves. Verily, Allah does not like anyone who is a betrayer of his trust, and indulges in crime.

**108.** They may hide (their crimes) from men, but they cannot hide (them) from Allah, for He is with them (by His Knowledge), when they plot by night in words that He does not approve, and Allah ever encompasses what they do.

**109.** Lo! You are those who have argued for them in the life of this world, but who will argue for them on the Day of Resurrection against Allah, or who will then be their defender?

**110.** And whoever does evil or wrongs himself but afterwards seeks Allah's Forgiveness, he will find Allah Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

**111.** And whoever earns sin, he earns it only against himself. And Allah is Ever All-Knowing, All-Wise.

**112.** And whoever earns a fault or a sin and then throws it on to someone innocent, he has indeed burdened himself with falsehood and a manifest sin.

**113.** Had not the Grace of Allah and His Mercy been upon you (O Muhammad), a party of them would certainly have made a decision to mislead you, but (in fact) they mislead none except their own selves, and no harm can they do to you in the least. Allah has sent down to you the Book (The Qur'an), and *Al-Hikmah* (Islamic laws, knowledge of legal and illegal things i.e. the Prophet's *Sunnah* - legal ways), and taught you that which you knew not. And Ever Great is the Grace of Allah unto you (O Muhammad).

**114.** There is no good in most of their secret talks save (in) him who orders *Sadaqah* (charity in Allah's Cause), or *Ma'rūf* (Islamic Monotheism and all the good and righteous deeds which Allah has ordained), or conciliation between mankind, and he who does this, seeking the good Pleasure of Allah, We shall give him a great reward.

**115.** And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger (Muhammad) after the right path has been shown clearly to him, and follows other than the believers' way. We shall keep him in the path he has chosen, and burn him in Hell - what an evil destination.

#### COMMENTARY

The need to remember Allah after the completion of the fear prayer features in the Verse 103. Allah commands “*dhikr*” after the completion of the prayer of fear, though, such *Dhikr* is encouraged after other types of *salawāt* (prayers) in general. In the case of fear prayer, *Dhikr* is encouraged even more because the pillars of the prayers are diminished. The *Āyah* says “when you have finished the *Salāt*, remember Allah standing, sitting down and on your sides”. This denotes in all conditions. “But when you are free from danger, perform *Salāt*”. This means when you are safe, tranquil and your fear subsides. Then “perform *Salāt*” by performing it as you were commanded, fulfilling its obligations with humbleness, completing the bowing and prostration positions. “Verily, the *Salāt* is a *Kitābah mawqutan* (something made compulsory) on the believers at fixed hours”. It means that the prayers are enjoined and has a fixed time.

The *Āyah* 104 encourages Muslims to pursue the enemy despite their having been injured. It is introduced with: “and don’t be weak in the pursuit of the enemy”. This means do not weaken your resolve in pursuit of your enemy. Rather, pursue them vigorously, fight them and be wary of them. “If you are suffering then surely they are suffering as you are suffering” i.e. just as you suffer from injuries and death. However, you hope for Allah’s reward, victory and aid just as He (Allah) has promised you in His Book and the words of his Messenger. On the other hand your enemies do not have hope for any of this. So, it is you, not they who should be eager to fight so that you establish the word of Allah and raise it high. “Allah is Ever All- Knowing, All- Wise”. Allah is most knowledgeable and wise in all what He decides, decrees will and acts on concerning various worldly and religion ordainments. He is worthy of praise in all conditions.

The Āyahs 105 – 109 explain the necessity of referring to what Allah has revealed for judgment. Allah says: “surely, we have sent down to you the Book in truth”. This means that the Book came from Allah and its narrations and commandments are true. Then Allah says “that you might judge between men by that which Allah has shown you” There are many instances where the Prophet Judge the people based on the Book of Allah and the Ahadith. Allah says further “they may hide (their crimes) from men, but they cannot hide them from Allah. Allah chastises the hypocrites because they hide their evil works from the people so that they may not criticize them. Yet the hypocrites disclose this evil with Allah, who has perfect watch over their secret and knows what is in their hearts.

This is the reason why Allah says: “ for He is with them (by His knowledge), when they plot by night in words that He does not approve. And Allah ever encompasses what they do by threatening and warning them. “ The verse says: “Lo you are those who have argued for them in the life of this world”. This connotes: suppose these people gain verdict from the rulers in their favour in this life since the rulers judge according to what is apparent to them. However, what will their condition be on the day of resurrection before Allah Who knows the secret and what is even more hidden and none will support them (hypocrites) on that day, and there is no one to defend them.

More so, Āyahs 110 - 113 reveal the encouragement to seek Allah’s forgiveness; the verses also warn those who falsely accuse innocent people. Allah says: “and whoever does evil or wrongs himself but afterwards seeks Allah’s forgiveness, he will find Allah oft-forgiving, Most Merciful”. Ibn Abbas commented on this Āyah that Allah informs His servants of His forgiveness, forbearing, generosity and expensive mercy. So, whoever commits a sin, whether minor or major “but afterwards seeks Allah’s forgiveness, he will find Allah Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful” even if his sins were greater than the heavens, earth and the mountains. It was reported by Abu Bakr that the Prophet said: “ No Muslim commits a sin and then perform ablution, pray two raka‘ahs and beg Allah for forgiveness for that sin, but He forgives him”. Then, he recited the verse. “And those who, when they have committed *Fāhishah* or wronged themselves with evil”, and whoever earn a sin, he earns it only against himself”. This means that no one will avail anyone else.

Rather, every soul and none else shall carry its own burdens. Hence, Allah says “And Allah is Ever All –Knowing, All Wise”. This occurs due to His Knowledge, wisdom, fairness and mercy. Had not the grace of Allah and His mercy been upon you, a party of them would certainly have made a decision to mislead you, but they mislead none except their own selves and no harm can they do to you in the least. Allah has sent down to you the Book and the *Hikmah* (wisdom) and taught you that which you knew not. And ever great is the grace of Allah unto you”. The book in the verse refers to the *Qur’ān*. This is a grace of Allah unto the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W).

Verses 114 and 115 center on the righteous *Najwā* (secret talk). The verses say:

“There is no good in most of their talks” i.e. what people may say to each other “save him who orders *Sadaqah* (charity) or goodness or reconciliation between mankind”. That is the reason why the prophet says: “He who brings about reconciliation between people by embellishing good or saying good things is not a liar. “Spoiling the relationship between people is the destroyer” (Hadith). The verse goes further “..and he who does this, seeking the good pleasure of Allah with sincerity and awaiting the reward with Allah We shall give him a great reward”. These are immense, enormous and tremendous rewards from Allah.

The next *Āyah* articulates the punishment for contradicting and opposing the Messenger and following a path other than that of the believers. It says: “ And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger after the right path has been shown clearly to him”. This clause refers to whoever intentionally takes a path other than the path of the law revealed to the Messenger, after the truth has been made clear and plain to him. “And follows other than the believers’ way”. This means a type of conduct that is closely related to contradicting the Messenger of Allah. This contradiction could be in the form of contradicting a text (from the *Qur’ān* or *Sunnah*) or contradicting what the *Ummah* of Muhammad had agreed on .this is so because, the Ummah (community) of Muhammad is immune from error when they all agree on something. Allah thus warned against the evil of contradicting the Prophet and his traditions. Whoever goes on the wicked path will be punished and such a bad path will be beautified for him so that he will be tempted to further and completely go astray. The *Āyah* says further that Allah will make the fire his destination in the Hereafter.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

Provide an exegesis of Q.4:103 – 114.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Thus, we conclude in this unit that the prayer is highly important in life of Muslims. They are even obliged to perform the prayer (Salāt) in any condition they find themselves even during the war, when traveling or during a sickness. Next, after the prayer is the remembrance of Allah, adh- Dhikr. By this it is an obligation on Muslims to comprehend the teachings of the Holy *Qur’ān* and the Islamic Jurisprudence.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

Issues discussed in this unit include:

- Injunction of Allah against committing murder
- Forbidding of false allegation against people
- The need to partake in jihad
- Injunctions on shortening of prayer
- The remembrance of Allah

## 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

1. With the aid of relevant Qur'anic verses, discuss both *Ṣalātu 'l-qaṣri* and *Salātu 'khawf*.
2. “When you have finished *Ṣalāt* (the prayer - congregational), remember Allah standing, sitting down, and lying down on your sides, but when you are free from danger, perform *Ṣalātu (Iqāmat-as- Ṣalāt)*. Verily, the prayer is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours.” Q4:103. Write *tafsīr* of this Verses.

## 7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READINGS

1. Abdullah, A.Y (1999). The Holy *Qur'ān* (trans). London Publishers.
2. Muhammad , M. K. (1999), *The Noble Qur'ān*. English version; *Dāru 's-Salām*: Riyadh.
3. Muhammad, M.K. (2002), *Ṣaḥīḥ al- Bukhārī*, *Dāru 's-Salām*: Riyadh.
4. Muhammad, M.K (1998). *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. *Dāru 's-Salām*: Riyadh.
5. <http://www.Qur'an.search.org>.
6. <http://www.tafseeronline.com>

## UNIT 5: *TAFSĪR* OF *SŪRATU 'N – NISĀ'I*, VERSES 116 – 125

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Contents
  - 3.1 *Tafsīr* of Verses 116 – 125
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Readings.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

You are welcome to Unit 4 of Module 2 of this Course. In it we shall focus on the text, translation and commentary of *Sūratu 'n-Nisā'i* Āyahs 116 – 125 with a view of properly elucidating the passages, digest the injunctions and other divine guidance in them.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of our discussion in this unit, students should be able to:

- Recite the Arabic text of the Verses 116 – 125 of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Give the English translation of Verses 116 – 125 of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Provide commentary on Verses 116 – 125 of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

#### 3.1 *Tafsīr* of the Verses 116 -- 125

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا {النساء/116} إِنْ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا إِنَاتًا وَإِنْ يَدْعُونَ إِلَّا شَيْطَانًا مَرِيدًا {النساء/117} لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَقَالَ لَأَتَّخِذَنَّ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ نَصِيبًا مَفْرُوضًا {النساء/118} وَلَا ضِلَّتْهُمْ وَلَا مَنِيَّتْهُمْ وَلَا مَرَنَتْهُمْ فَلْيَبْتَئِكُنْ آذَانَ الْأَنْعَامِ وَلَا مَرَنَتْهُمْ فَلْيَغَيِّرُنْ خَلْقَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذِ الشَّيْطَانَ وَلِيًّا مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُّبِينًا {النساء/119} يَعِدُهُمْ وَيُمَنِّيهِمْ وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا {النساء/120} أُولَئِكَ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ عَنْهَا مَحِيصًا {النساء/121} وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ حَقًّا وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ قِيلًا {النساء/122} لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِي أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا {النساء/123} وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا {النساء/124} وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِّمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا {النساء/125}

## TRANSLATION

**116.** Verily! Allah forgives not (the sin of) setting up partners in worship with Him, but He forgives whom he pleases sins other than that, and whoever sets up partners in worship with Allah, has indeed strayed far away.

**117.** They (all those who worship others than Allah) invoke nothing but female deities besides Him (Allah), and they invoke nothing but *Shayṭān* (Satan), a persistent rebel!

**118.** Allah cursed him. And he *Shayṭān* (Satan)] said: "I will take an appointed portion of your slaves;

**119.** Verily, I will mislead them, and surely, I will arouse in them false desires; and certainly, I will order them to slit the ears of cattle, and indeed I will order them to change the nature created by Allah." And whoever takes *Shaitan* (Satan) as a *Wali* (protector or helper) instead of Allah, has surely suffered a manifest loss.

**120.** He [*Shayṭān* (Satan)] makes promises to them, and arouses in them false desires; and *Shaitan's* (Satan) promises are nothing but deceptions.

**121.** The dwelling of such (people) is Hell, and they will find no way of escape from it.

**122.** But those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and do deeds of righteousness, We shall admit them to the Gardens under which rivers flow (i.e. in Paradise) to dwell therein forever. Allah's Promise is the Truth, and whose words can be truer than those of Allah? (Of course, none).

**123.** It will not be in accordance with your desires (Muslims), nor those of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), whosoever works evil, will have the recompense thereof, and he will not find any protector or helper besides Allah.

**124.** And whoever does righteous good deeds, male or female, and is a true believer in the Oneness of Allah (Muslim), such will enter Paradise and not the least injustice, even to the size of a *Naqira* (speck on the back of a date-stone), will be done to them.

**125.** And who can be better in religion than one who submits his face (himself) to Allah (i.e. follows Allah's Religion of Islamic Monotheism); and he is a *Muhsin* (a good-doer - see V.2:112). And follow the religion of Ibrahim (Abraham) *Hanīfan* (Islamic Monotheism - to worship none but Allah Alone). And Allah did take Ibrahim (Abraham) as a *Khalīl* (an intimate friend).

## COMMENTARY

Shirk, associating partners with Allah in worship is forbidden by Allah as explicitly stated in Verses 116 -120. Allah says:



“Verily, Allah forgives whom He wills of sins other than that...and whoever sets up partners in worship with Allah, has indeed strayed away”. This *Āyah* means, whoever takes other than the true path, deviates from guidance and righteousness has destroyed himself in this life and the life after.

The idolaters claimed that the angels are Allah’s daughters and for this reason they worshipped them. They say: “we only worship them so that they bring us closer to Allah”. So, they took the angels as gods, made the shapes of girls and decided, “These (idols) resemble the daughters of Allah (i.e. the angels) whom we worship”. Whereas Allah says that on the day of resurrection, the Angels shall disclaim the idolaters who worshipped them in this life. Nay but they used to worship the jinni; most of them were believers in them”. Then, “Allah cursed him”. This means that He expelled him and banished him from His mercy and His grace. “I will take an appointed portion of your servant” means a fixed known share. The verse says “Verily, I will mislead them from the truth path and they will be tempted to feign repentance, arousing false hopes in them, encouraging them to delay and procrastinate with righteous deeds and they will be deceived”. *Shayṭān* even made pledge that he would mislead such people in all their directions so that they would completely offend Allah.

Allah then says “And whosoever takes *Shayṭān* as a *waliyy* (protector or helper) instead of Allah, has surely suffered a manifest loss”. This means that he will have lost this life and the life after. *Shayṭān* deceitfully promises his supporters and tempts them to believing that they are winners in this world and the hereafter. Allah says: “Verily, there is a painful torment for the wrongdoers and the dwelling of such people is hell”. These statements of Allah are also referring to those who like and prefer what *Shayṭān* is promising and assuring them of and the destination and abode of them is the hell-fire. “And they will find no way of escape from it”. It means that they will not be able to avoid, avert, evade or elude the hellfire.

The rewards of the righteous believers are comprehensively described in Verses 123 - 126. Allah mentions the conditions of the righteous believers and perfect honour they will earn in the end. The *Qur’ān* says: “And those who believe and do righteous good deeds”. This means those that their hearts are truthful and their limbs are used in righteous act that they were commanded, abandoning the evil they were prohibited from doing, “We shall admit them to gardens under which river flows” (paradise). They will think of where they want these rivers to flow and they will flow their “to dwell therein forever” i.e. the believers will be dwelling in the paradise perpetually.

This verse explains further that none is more truthful in a statement and narration than Allah. This is also proclaimed by a number of the prophetic statements such as: “The most truthful speech is Allah’s speech and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad. The worst matters are the newly invented (in religion), every newly invented matter is an innovation and every innovation is a heresy and every heresy is in the fire”.

The next Verse affirms that success is only achieved by performing righteous deeds and not by wishful thinking. On the cause of revelation of verse 123 Qatadah said “we were told that the Muslims and the People of the Scriptures mentioned their own virtues to each other. People of the Scriptures said, “Our Prophet came before your Prophet and our book before your book. Therefore, we should have more right to Allah than you have”. The Muslims said, “Rather, we have more right to Allah than you, our Prophet is the final Prophet and our Book supersedes the entire book before it”. Then, Allah sent down: “It will not be in accordance with your desires (Muslims), nor those of the people of scripture (Jews and Christians) whosoever works evils, will have the recompense thereof”. This verse is expressed vividly by another verses of the Qur’ān such as “And who can be better in religion than one who submits his face (himself) to Allah and he is a *Muhsin*”.

Allah says again “and who can be better in religion than one who submits his face to Allah”. This indicates who performs the good action in sincerity for his Lord with faith and awaiting the reward from Allah “....and he is a Muslim” i.e. he follows the correct guidance that Allah legislated in the religion of truth which He sent His Messenger with. The verse continues and says: “and follows the religion of Ibrahim, the *ḥanīf* (monotheism). This is referring to Muhammad and his traditions until the Day of Resurrection.

This verse further discusses how Allah took Prophet Ibrahim as His intimate friend. He was referred to by Allah Himself as His “*Khalīl*”. Allah says: And Allah did take Ibrahim as a *Khalīl*. He encourages following Ibrahim. This is so because he (Ibrahim) was an Imam whose conduct should be followed and imitated. Indeed, Ibrahim reached the ultimate closeness to Allah. He attained the grade of *Khalīl* which is the highest grade of love. He acquired all this due to his obedience to His Lord, just as Allah has described him; “And of Ibrahim, the one who fulfilled” and also, “Verily, Ibrahim was an Ummah, obedient to Allah , a *Hanīf* and he was not one of the *Mushrikin*”. Then next *Āyah* says: “and to Allah belongs all that is in the heaven and all that is in the earth”.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

Recite and provide *tafsīr* of *Sūratu `n-Nisāi*, Verses 116 – 125.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Allah forgives not (the sin of) setting up partners in worship with Him, but He forgives whom he pleases sins other than that, and whoever sets up partners in worship with Allah, has indeed strayed far away.

Whosoever takes *Shaytan* (Satan) as a *Wali* (protector or helper) instead of Allah, has surely suffered a manifest loss. The dwelling of such (people) is Hell, and they will find no way of escape from it.

But whoever does righteous deeds, male or female, and is a true believer in the Oneness of Allah (Muslim), such will enter Paradise and not the least injustice, even to the size of a *Naqira* (speck on the back of a date-stone), will be done to them.

Prophet Ibrahim was embodiment of the *Hanīfiyyah* (Islamic Monotheism – upright faith and worship of none but Allah Alone). And Allah did take Ibrahim (Abraham) as a *Khalīl* (an intimate friend).

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This Unit provides the original Arabic text of Verses 116 – 125 of *Sūratu `n-Nisāi* followed thereafter by English translation of the texts. The Unit also contains full commentaries on the passages supported by reasons for their revelation, related Hadiths and views of reputable Quranic exegetes. As you have seen in the Unit, the *Qur'ān* is a book of guidance containing what man needs to live a fulfilled life in form of faith and practices ; and man is not left in the dark on issues that occur in his day-to-day activities.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT.**

Write original Arabic text and English translation of Verses 116 – 125 of *Sūratu `n-Nisāi*.

## **7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READINGS**

1. Abdullah, A.Y (1999). The Holy Qur'ān (trans). London Publishers.
2. Muhammad , M. K. (1999), The Noble *Qur'ān*. English version; *Dāru `s-Salām*: Riyadh.
3. Muhammad, M.K. (2002), *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Dāru `s-Salām*: Riyadh.
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## Module 3: *TAFSĪR SŪRATU 'N-NISĀ'I*, VERSES 126 - 174

Unit 1: *Tafsīr of Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, Verses 126 – 134

Unit 2: *Tafsīr of Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, Verses 135 – 143

Unit 3: *Tafsīr of Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, Verses 144 – 158

Unit 4: *Tafsīr of Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, Verses 159 – 174

### UNIT 1: *TAFSĪR OF SŪRATU 'N – NISĀ'I*, VERSES 126 – 134

#### CONTENT

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main contents

3.1 *Tafsīr* of verses 126 – 127

3.2 *Tafsīr* of verses 128 – 134

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

7.0 References / Further Readings.

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Welcome to module three of this *tafsīr* study of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*. In this first unit of the module, verses one hundred and twenty-six to one hundred and thirty-four of the *Sūrah* shall be focused with a view of bringing out the divine injunctions and guidance contained in them. It is hoped that you will really enjoy the discussions.

#### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of our discussion in this unit, you should be able to:

- Recite the Arabic text of Verses 126 – 134 of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Give the English translation of Verses 126 – 134 of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Provide an exegesis of Verses 126 – 134 of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Enumerate the divine injunctions and guidance contained in Verses 126 – 134 of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*

#### 3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

##### 3.1 *Tafsīr* of the Verses 126 – 127

وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطًا {النساء/126} وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِي النِّسَاءِ قُلِ اللّٰهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِيْهِنَّ وَمَا يُتْلٰى عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتٰبِ فِيْ يَتٰمٰى النِّسَاءِ اَللّٰتِي لَا تُؤْتَوْنَھُنَّ مَا كُتِبَ لَھُنَّ وَتَرٰغِبُوْنَ اَنْ تَنْكَحُوْھُنَّ وَالمُسْتَضْعٰفِيْنَ مِنَ الْوُلْدَانِ وَاَنْ تَقُوْمُوْا لِلْيَتٰمٰى بِالْقِسْطِ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوْا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ بِهٖ عَلِيْمًا {النساء/127}

## TRANSLATION

**126.** And to Allah belong all that is in the heavens and in the earth. And Allah is Ever All-Encompassing

**127.** They ask your legal instruction concerning women, say: Allah instructs you about them, and about what is recited unto you in the Book concerning the orphan girls whom you give not the prescribed portions (as regards *Mahr* and inheritance) and yet whom you desire to marry, and (concerning) the children who are weak and oppressed, and that you stand firm for justice to orphans. And whatever good you do, Allah is Ever All-Aware.

## COMMENTARY

This means everything and everyone is His property, servant and creature and He has full authority over all of these. There is no one who can avert Allah's decision or question His judgment. "And Allah is Ever All-encompassing". This denotes that His knowledge encompasses everything and nothing is ever hidden from him. Verse 127 stipulates ruling concerning women and female orphans. It firstly says: "They ask you instruction concerning women, say: Allah instructs you about them.... whom you desire to marry". It is about the man who is taking care of a female orphan, being her caretaker and inheritor, her money is joined with his money to such an extent that she shares with him even the branch of a date that he has. So, he likes (for material gain) to marry her himself, and hate to marry her to another man who would have a share in his money, on account of her share in his money. Therefore, he refused to let her marry anyone else. So, this *Āyah* was revealed. Also, the Prophet was also asked about orphan girl, so Allah revealed "they ask your instruction concerning women. Say: "Allah instructs you about them and about what is recited unto you in the Book." What is recited to you in the Book refers to the former verse which says: "if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan girls, then marry (other) women of your choice". It also refers to the desire of the guardian not to marry an orphan girl under his supervision when she lacks property or beauty. The guardian was forbidden to marry to them, as they are generally refrained from marrying them (when they are neither beautiful nor wealthy).

Consequently, when a man is the caretaker of a female orphan, he might like to marry her himself. In this case, Allah commands him to give her a suitable dowry that other women of her status get. If he does not want to do that, then let him marry other women, for Allah has made this matter easy for Muslims. Allah forbids the caretaker from preventing the female orphan from marrying another man for fear that her husband would share in the money that is mutually shared between the caretaker and the girl. It was reported by Ali bin Talhat that during the *Jahiliyyah* period, the caretaker of a female orphan would cover her with his rope so that no man would marry her. If he found her beautiful and thus decided to marry her, he would marry her and take control of her wealth. If she was not beautiful, he would not marry her until she died and when she died, he would inherit her money. Allah prohibited and out-lawed this practice. Allah also talked about the children of the weak and oppressed. This is so because, during the time of *Jahiliyyah*, they used to deny young children and females a share of inheritance.

Thus, Allah prohibited this practice and designated a fixed share for each. ‘‘....and that you stand firm for justice to orphans’’. Just as when she is beautiful and wealthy that you would want to marry her for yourself. Allah says: ‘‘.....and whatever good you do, Allah is Ever All-Aware of it’’. This statement encourages performing the good deeds and fulfilling the commandments and also states that Allah is Knowledgeable of all of this and He will reward for it in the best and most perfect manner.

### Self Assessment Exercise

Write a *tafsir* of the Verses 126 – 127

### 3.2 Tafsir of the Verses 128 -- 134

وَإِنْ امْرَأَةٌ خَافَتْ مِنْ بَعْلِهَا نُشُورًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحًا وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ وَأُحْضِرَتِ الْأَنْفُسُ الشُّحَّ وَإِنْ تُحْسِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا {النساء/128} وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعُوا أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ فَلَا تَمِيلُوا كُلَّ الْمِيلِ فَتَدْرُوا كَالْمِغْلَقَةِ وَإِنْ تُصْلِحُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا {النساء/129} وَإِنْ يَتَفَرَّقَا يُغْنِ اللَّهُ كُلًّا مِّنْ سَعَتِهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ وَاسِعًا حَكِيمًا {النساء/130} وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنْ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَإِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَنِيًّا حَمِيدًا {النساء/131} وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكٍ قَدِيرًا {النساء/132} إِنْ يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ وَيَأْتِ بِآخَرِينَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكٍ قَدِيرًا {النساء/133} مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ ثَوَابُ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا {النساء/134}

### TRANSLATION

**128.** And if a woman fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part, there is no sin on them both if they make terms of peace between themselves; and making peace is better. And human inner-selves are swayed by greed. But if you do good and keep away from evil, verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do.

**129.** You will never be able to do perfect justice between wives even if it is your ardent desire, so do not incline too much to one of them (by giving her more of your time and provision) so as to leave the other hanging (i.e. neither divorced nor married). And if you do justice, and do all that is right and fear Allah by keeping away from all that is wrong, then Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

**130.** But if they separate (by divorce), Allah will provide abundance for everyone of them from His Bounty. And Allah is Ever All-Sufficient for His creatures' need, All-Wise.

**131.** And to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And verily, We have recommended to the people of the Scripture before you, and to you (O Muslims) that you (all) fear Allah, and keep your duty to Him, But if you disbelieve, then unto Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, and Allah is Ever Rich (Free of all wants), Worthy of all praise.

**132.** And to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And Allah is Ever All-Sufficient as a Disposer of affairs.

**133.** If He wills, He can take you away, O people, and bring others. And Allah is Ever All-Potent over that.

**134.** Whoever desires a reward in this life of the world, then with Allah (Alone and none else) is the reward of this worldly life and of the Hereafter. And Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All-Seer.

### COMMENTARY

The ruling concerning the desertion on the part of the husband is dealt with in the verses 128-130. In the first case, when the wife fears that her husband is steering away from her or from desiring her, she is allowed to forfeit all or part of her right, such as provision, clothing dwelling and so forth. Hence, the husband is allowed to accept such concession from her. There is no harm if she offers such concession and if her husband accepts them. This is why Allah says: “there is no sin on them both if they make terms of peace between themselves”. Allah then says again ... “and making peace is better” than divorce, the verse says: “And if a woman fears cruelty or desertion on her husband’s part, there is no sin on them both”. This connotes that whatever (legal agreement) the spouses mutually agree to is allowed. Allah also adds “and making peace is better”. This shows that divorce is not preferred with Allah. The statement “And if you do good and have taqwa, verily, Allah is Ever Well- Acquainted with what you do”. This is possible if you are patient with the wife you dislike and treat her as other wives are treated. Then Allah knows what you do and will reward you for it perfectly.

The next verse says “you will never be able to do perfect justice between wives even if it is your ardent desire”. This means that you will never be able to be perfectly just between wives in every aspect. Even when one divides the nights justly between wives, there will still be various degree concerning love, desire and sexual intimacy. “So do not be incline too much to one of them” This means, when you like one of your wives more than others, do not exaggerate in treating her that way “so as to leave the other hanging”. That is why the Prophet says “whoever have two wives and inclines to one of them (too much will come on the day of resurrection with one of his sides dragging”.

And if you do justice, and do all that is right and have taqwa then Allah is Ever- oft forgiving, Most Merciful”. This *Āyah* mentions the need for justice and to divide (things) equally in what you have power over. Then, fear Allah in all conditions. Allah says further “but if they separate” i.e. divorce, Allah will provide abundance for every one of them from His bounty. This is the third case between husband and wife, in which divorce occurs. Allah states that if the spouses separates by divorce, then Allah will suffice them by giving him a better wife and her a better husband. The favour and bounty of Allah are enormous.

Necessity of *taqwa* of Allah is well analyzed in the Verses 132 – 134. Allah says that He is the owner of the heavens and earth and He is the Supreme authority over them. The verse continues “and verily, we have recommended to the People of the Scripture before you and to you”.

This means that we have recommended to you what we recommended to the People of the Scriptures, *Taqwa* of Allah, by worshipping Him alone without partners....” But if you disbelieve, then unto Allah belongs all that is in the heaven and all that is in the earth and Allah is Rich (free from any need). This means that He is far rich than to need His servants and He is worthy of all praise in all His decisions and commandments. He has a perfect watch over all that is in the heaven and all is in the earth and every soul. “ If He wills, He can take you away, O people, and bring others. Allah is Ever All potent over that “. So, He is able to take you away and replace you with other people if you disobey Him”. Allah says in the Verse 133 that “whosoever desires the rewards of this life, then with Allah is the reward of this worldly life and of the hereafter”. This indicates those whose ultimate desire is this life, know that Allah own the rewards of this life and the hereafter. Therefore, if you ask Allah for both, He will enrich you, award you and suffice you. The verse ends with “ And Allah is Ever All- Hearer, All- Seer”.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

Discuss the divine guidance on matrimonial relation laid down in this passage.  
Expatriate on the concept of justice and piety as exemplified in this passage.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

If a woman fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part there is no sin if she seeks divorce but making peace is better. Verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with the good deeds of the righteous and the evils of the devilish. In a polygamous setting man must do his best to do perfect justice between wives by not inclining too much to one of them so as to leave the other hanging. Piety is an injunction of Allah to the people of the Scripture before Islam and to the Muslims. It is in the power of Allah to take any nation away and bring others.

## **4.0 SUMMARY**

This Unit provides the original Arabic text of Verses 126 – 134 of *Sūratu `n-Nisāi* followed thereafter by English translation of the texts. The Unit also contains full commentaries on the passages supported by reasons for their revelation and related traditions. As you have seen in the Unit, the *Qur`ān* is a book of guidance relating to matrimonial matters and encouraging piety and justice, and it does not leave man in the dark on issues pertaining to God's power.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

“You will never be able to do perfect justice between wives even if it is your ardent desire, so do not incline too much to one of them (by giving her more of your time and provision) so as to leave the other hanging (i.e. neither divorced nor married). And if you do justice, and do all that is right and fear Allah by keeping away from all that is wrong, then Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” Q4:129. Provide commentary on this divine passage.



## 7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READINGS

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## UNIT 2: *TAFSĪR OF SŪRATU 'N – NISĀ'I*, VERSES 135 – 143

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Contents
  - 3.1 *Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, Verses 135 – 143
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Readings.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Welcome to unit two of this Module three of the Course, Selected Passages from the Holy *Qur'ān*. In this unit, verses 135 – 143 of *Sūratun-Nisā'i* shall be discussed with a view to bringing out the divine injunctions and guidance contained in them for human day-to-day affairs. I hope you will enjoy the interesting discussions.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of our discussion in this unit, students should be able to:

- Recite the Arabic text of verses 135 – 143 of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Give the English translation of verses 135 – 143 of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*
- Identify and explain some of the divine injunctions and guidance derivable from 135 – 143 of *Sūratun-Nisā'i*

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

#### 3.1 Tafsīr of the Verses 135 --- 143

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِنْ يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا وَإِنْ تَلَوُّوا أَوْ نَعَرَضُوا فَقَانَ اللَّهُ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا {النساء/135} يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا آمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا {النساء/136} إِنْ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا ثُمَّ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا ثُمَّ أَرَادُوا كُفْرًا لَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيُغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ سَبِيلًا {النساء/137} بَشِّرِ الْمُنَافِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا {النساء/138} الَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَبِيتُّعُونَ عِنْدَهُمُ الْعِزَّةَ فَإِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا {النساء/139} وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ أَنْ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ آيَاتَ اللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا فَلَا تَقْعُدُوا مَعَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ إِنَّكُمْ إِذَا مَثَلْتُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَامِعُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْكَافِرِينَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيعًا {النساء/140} الَّذِينَ يَتَرَبَّصُونَ بِكُمْ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَعَكُمْ وَإِنْ كَانَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نَصِيبٌ قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَسْتَحِذْكُمْ وَنَمْنَعْكُمْ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا {النساء/141} إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كَسَالَىٰ يُرَآؤُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا {النساء/142} مُدْبِذِينَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ لَا إِلَىٰ هَؤُلَاءِ وَلَا إِلَىٰ هَؤُلَاءِ وَمَنْ يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا {النساء/143}

## TRANSLATION

**135.** O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, be he rich or poor, Allah is a Better Protector to both (than you). So follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest you may avoid justice, and if you distort your witness or refuse to give it, verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do.

**136.** O you who believe! Believe in Allah, and His Messenger (Muhammad), and the Book (the *Qur'ān*) which He has sent down to His Messenger, and the Scripture which He sent down to those before (him), and whosoever disbelieves in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Last Day, then indeed he has strayed far away.

**137.** Verily, those who believe, then disbelieve, then believe (again), and (again) disbelieve, and go on increasing in disbelief; Allah will not forgive them, nor guide them on the (Right) Way.

**138.** Give to the hypocrites the tidings that there is for them a painful torment.

**139.** Those who take disbelievers for *Auliya'* (protectors or helpers or friends) instead of believers, do they seek honour, power and glory with them? Verily, then to Allah belongs all honour, power and glory.

**140.** And it has already been revealed to you in the Book (this Qur'an) that when you hear the Verses of Allah being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they engage in a talk other than that; (but if you stayed with them) certainly in that case you would be like them. Surely, Allah will collect the hypocrites and disbelievers all together in Hell,

**141.** Those (hypocrites) who wait and watch about you; if you gain a victory from Allah, they say: "Were we not with you," but if the disbelievers gain a success, they say (to them): "Did we not gain mastery over you and did we not protect you from the believers?" Allah will judge between you (all) on the Day of Resurrection. And never will Allah grant to the disbelievers a way (to triumph) over the believers.

**142.** Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but it is He Who deceives them. And when they stand up for *As-Salat* (the prayer), they stand with laziness and to be seen of men, and they do not remember Allah but little.

**143.** (They are) swaying between this and that, belonging neither to these nor to those, and he whom Allah sends astray, you will not find for him a way (to the truth - Islam).

## COMMENTARY

*Āyah* 135 and 136 deal with commanding justice and conveying witness for Allah. Allah commands His believing servants to stand up for justice and fairness and not to deviate from it. They should not fear being blamed by anyone or allow anyone to prevent them from doing something for the sake of Allah. They are required to help, support and aid each other for Allah's sake. The verses also state that believers should establish testimony for Allah. Testimony should be delivered precisely for the sake of Allah. That is why Allah says: "even though it is against yourselves". This means giving correct testimony and saying the truth without minding its consequences. Indeed, Allah shall make a way out and give relief for those who obey Him in every matter. As for Allah's statement: "or your parents or your Kin", it means that you should be steadfast in saying the truth and giving the correct testimony even if it has to be against your parents and kin. The verse expatiates further that one should not favour someone (while giving testimony) because the person is rich, or out of pity because the person is poor. "So, follow not the lusts lest you may avoid justice". This connotes that you should not allow your self-desire, lust or the hatred you have against others lure you into injustice in your affairs. Rather, stand for justice in all situations. "And if you distort your testimony and change it" this also includes distortion and intentional lying. On this, the Prophet says: "the best witness is he who discloses his testimony before being asked to do so. "Verily Allah is ever well-acquainted with what you do". He will reward or punish you accordingly.

Verse 136 discusses the necessity to stand by one's faith in Allah. Allah commands His faithful servants to adhere to all the elements of faith, its branches, pillars and cornerstones. This is for the view of completing faith and the continual maintenance of it. In this *Āyah*, Allah commands the believers to believe in Him and His Messenger as well as the books (scriptures) and the Qur'ān. "He says: O you who believe! have Taqwa of Allah, believe in His Messenger and the Book which He has sent down to His Messenger and the scriptures which He has sent down to those before him". He then says: .... And whosoever disbelieves in Allah, His angels, His books, Messengers and the Last Day, then indeed he has strayed far away". This means that such a person have deviated from the correct guidance and strayed away from its path.

Characteristics of the hypocrites and their destination are pointed out vividly in verses 137-140. Allah states that whoever embraces the faith, reverts from it, embraces it again, reverts from it and remains on disbeliefs and increases in it until death, then he will never have a chance to repent after death. Nor will Allah forgive him or deliver him from his plight to the path of correct guidance. This is a reason why Allah says: "...and Allah will not forgive them or guide them onto the right path". This is so, because they remain on disbelief until they die. Then, the next verse says. "Give the hypocrites the tidings that there is for them a painful torment". Allah describes the hypocrites as taking the disbelievers as friends rather than the believers. This means that they are the disbelievers' supporters in reality. They give them their loyalty and friendship secretly. The *Āyah* continues: "Give to the hypocrites the tidings that there is for them a painful torment". Allah addresses those who take disbelievers for friend instead of believers because of honour. He states "do they seek honour, with them". Allah then says that honour and glory is for Him alone without partners. "Whoever desires honour, then, to Allah belong

all honours”. This statements is meant to encourage the servants of Allah to adhere to their servitude to Allah and to be among His faithful servants who will gain victory in this life and on the day of resurrection. It says further, “And it has already been revealed to you in the Book that when you hear the verses of Allah being denied and mocked at then sit not with them, until they engage in other than that, certainly in that case you would be like them”. The *Āyah* connotes: if you still engage in doing this prohibited acts (i.e. sitting where Allah’s verses are being rejected, mocked and denied) after being aware of prohibition against such, then you have participated in doing the forbidden things. “surely, Allah will collect the hypocrites and disbelievers all together in Hell”. This means just as the hypocrites participate in the kufr of disbelievers, Allah will join them all together to reside in the fire for eternity, dwelling in torment, punishment, enchained, restrained and will be made to drink boiling water.

In Verse 141 Allah mentions that the hypocrites watch and await the harm that occurs to the believers, waiting the time when the Muslim circumstances and religion are dissolved and the state of Kufr takes over. Then Allah says: “If you gain a victory from Allah” i.e. becoming triumphant over your enemies, “they say: “were we not with you?” They say this to make themselves come closer to the believers. “But if the disbelievers gain success by gaining victory over the believers sometimes.... they say to them “did we not gain mastery over you and did we not protect you from the believers?”. This means did we not help you in secret and try our best to confuse the believers and weaken their resolve, until you gain victory over them? This statement of the hypocrites is an attempt to strengthen relations with the disbelievers. In this way, they cover their weak faith by pretending to be friendly with both parties.

The verse concludes that “Allah will judge you (all) on the Day of Resurrection and never will Allah grant to the disbelievers a way (to triumph) over the believers”. This means Allah will judge between you on the Day of Resurrection and He will not grant victory for the disbelievers over the believers. The final triumph will be for the believers in this Life and the Hereafter. Further statements about the hypocrites are expressed in the subsequent verse. The hypocrites try to deceive Allah and sway between the believers and disbelievers. “Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but it is He who deceives them”. There is no doubt that Allah can never be deceived, for He has perfect knowledge of the secrets and of what the hearts conceal.

Allah says “And when they (hypocrites) stand up for salah, they stand with laziness”. This is the characteristics of the hypocrites. They are often absent-minded from their prayers (salawat) especially during the ‘Isha and the dawn prayers that are observed in the dark periods. On this the Prophet says: “the heaviest prayers on the hypocrites are the ‘Isha and dawn prayers. If they know their rewards, they will attend them even if they have to crawl....(Hadith).

“And they do not remember Allah but little”. This means that during the prayer, they do not feel pay attention to what they recite. Rather, during their prayer, they are inattentive, jesting and thus miss the good rewards meant to be received from prayer.

The hypocrites are swaying between faith and disbelief. So, they are either with the believers outwardly and with the disbelievers inwardly. Allah says “.....and He whom Allah sends astray, you will not find him a way”. This means that no one can guide aright whosoever Allah leads astray from His guidance. The hypocrites whom Allah has led astray from the path of safety will never find a guide to direct them, nor someone to save them.

### **Self - Assessment Exercise**

Give some explanatory comments on Verses 135 – 136 above.

Analyze the features of a hypocrite as contained in Verses 137 – 143 above.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Hypocrisy is a very bad attitude. For this reason Islam totally abhors it as evident in our discussions in this unit. The Prophet was reported to have given the three signs by which a hypocrite can be identified as including lying, failing in promise, and betrayal of trust. These three characteristics are clearly noticeable among people of different status and their effects are always negative on the society at large. It is for this reason that Allah the Creator, who always wants good things for His creatures, revealed some verses in the Qur'an as we have seen in this unit, to guide against hypocrisy.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

Our discussions in this Unit centered on:

- Importance of doing justice
- Avoidance of lying
- The characteristics of hypocrites
- The evils of hypocrisy
- The Prophetic exhortation against hypocrisy

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Using Q4:138-143, discuss hypocrisy and its consequences on the society.

## **7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READINGS**

1. Abdullah, A.Y (1999). The Holy Qur'an (trans). London Publishers.
2. Muhammad, M. K. (1999), The Noble *Qur'an*. English version; *Dāru `s-Salām*: Riyadh.
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## UNIT 3: *TAFSĪR* OF *SŪRATU 'N – NISĀ'I*, VERSES 144 – 159

### CONTENT

#### 1.0 Introduction

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#### 4.0 Conclusion

#### 5.0 Summary

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#### 7.0 References / Further Readings.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Our discussions in this Unit centers on avoiding taking hypocrites as intimate friends; avoiding invoking the name of Allah unnecessarily and some teachings of the *Qur'ān* on Jesus Christ and his mother, Maryam.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Recite the Arabic texts of *Sūratu 'n-Nisā'i*, Verses 144-158
- Render the texts of the Verses 144-158 of *Sūratu 'n-Nisā'i* into English medium
- Comment fully on Verses 144-158 of *Sūratu 'n-Nisā'i* them.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

#### 3.1 *Tafsīr* of the Verses 144 -- 154

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عَالِيَكُمْ سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا {النساء/144} إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا {النساء/145} إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِاللَّهِ وَأَخْلَصُوا دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِي اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا {النساء/146} مَا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ إِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ وَآمَنْتُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيمًا {النساء/147} (الجزء السادس) لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا عَلِيمًا {النساء/148} إِنْ تَبَدُّوا خَيْرًا أَوْ خُفُّوا أَوْ تَعَفَّوْا عَنْ سُوءِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفْوًا قَدِيرًا {النساء/149} إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا {النساء/150} أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا {النساء/151} وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ أُولَئِكَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرَهُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا {النساء/152} يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تَنْزِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَى أَكْبَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالُوا أَرِنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّاعِقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَعَفَوْنَا عَنْ ذَلِكَ وَأَتَيْنَا مُوسَى سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا {النساء/153} وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَهُمُ الطُّورَ بِمِيثَاقِهِمْ وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ ادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ لَا تَعْدُوا فِي السَّبْتِ وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا {النساء/154}

## TRANSLATION

**144.** O you who believe! Take not for *Auliyā'* (protectors or helpers or friends) disbelievers instead of believers. Do you wish to offer Allah a manifest proof against yourselves?

**145.** Verily, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depths (grade) of the Fire; no helper will you find for them.

**146.** Except those who repent (from hypocrisy), do righteous good deeds, hold fast to Allah, and purify their religion for Allah (by worshipping none but Allah, and do good for Allah's sake only, not to show-off), then they will be with the believers. And Allah will grant to the believers a great reward.

**147.** Why should Allah punish you if you have thanked (Him) and have believed in Him. And Allah is Ever All-Appreciative (of good), All-Knowing.

**148.** Allah does not like that the evil should be uttered in public except by him who has been wronged. And Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All-Knower.

**149.** Whether you (mankind) disclose (by good words of thanks) a good deed (done to you in the form of a favour by someone), or conceal it, or pardon an evil... verily, Allah is Ever Oft-Pardoning, All-Powerful.

**150.** Verily, those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers and wish to make distinction between Allah and His Messengers (by believing in Allah and disbelieving in His Messengers) saying, "We believe in some but reject others," and wish to adopt a way in between.

**151.** They are in truth disbelievers. And We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating torment.

**152.** And those who believe in Allah and His Messengers and make no distinction between any of them (Messengers), We shall give them their rewards, and Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

**153.** The people of the Scripture (Jews) ask you to cause a book to descend upon them from heaven. Indeed they asked Musa (Moses) for even greater than that, when they said: "Show us Allah in public," but they were struck with thunder clap and lightning for their wickedness. Then they worshipped the calf even after clear proofs, evidences, and signs had come to them. (Even) so We forgave them. And We gave Musa (Moses) a clear proof of authority.



**154.** And for their covenant, We raised over them the Mount and (on the other occasion) We said: "Enter the gate prostrating (or bowing) with humility;" and We commanded them: "Transgress not (by doing worldly works on) the Sabbath (Saturday)." And We took from them a firm covenant.

## COMMENTARY

In Verses 144-147 Allah forbids His believing servants from taking the disbelievers as friends instead of the believers. This includes being friends and associates of the disbelievers, advising them, intimating with them and exposing secrets of the believers to them. "Allah says "Let not the believers take the disbelievers as friends instead of the believers and whoever does that, will never be helped by Allah in any way, except if you indeed fear a danger from them. And Allah warns you against Himself". He warns you against His punishment if you fall into what He has prohibited.

The next *Āyah* says further: "Verily, the hypocrites will be in the lowest dept of the fire". This will be on the Day of Resurrection due to their tremendous Kufr (disbelief). The in-depth of fire means the bottom of the fire. It was narrated by Ibn Mas'ūd that the hypocrites will be placed in coffins made of fire and they will be closed in them in the lowest dept of the fire and there will be no helper to save them from their misery and painful torment. Then, Allah says "Except those who repent (from hypocrisy), do righteous deeds and purify their religion for Allah, replacing showing off with sincerity, so that their good deeds will benefit them, even if they were very minute. He says further "...then they will be with the believers" on the Day of Resurrection. "And Allah will grant to the believers a great reward."

Allah then states that He is too rich to need anyone and that He only punishes the servants because of their sins. Why should Allah punish you if you have thanked (Him) and believed in Him? This is by correcting your actions and having faith in Allah and His Messenger. "And Allah is all appreciative (of good), All-Knowing." Allah appreciates those who appreciate Him, and He has knowledge of those whose hearts believe in Him, and He will give them perfect reward.

The permission to invoke Allah in public for one who was wronged is narrated in the Verses 148 and 149. The former says: "Allah does not like that the evil should be uttered in public". This means that Allah does not like that anyone should invoke Him against anyone else, unless one was wronged. In this case, Allah allows one to invoke Him against whoever wronged Him. Hence the *Āyah* continues "except by him who has wronged. Yet, it is better for one if he observes patience." On this verse, Hassan Al-Basri commented that: One should not invoke Allah (for curses) against whoever wronged him. Rather, he should supplicate, O Allah! Help me against him and take my right from him."

Allah states further that: "whether you disclose a good deed, or conceal it, or pardon an evil, verily, Allah is Ever-Pardoning, All- Powerful." This means when you, mankind, admit to a good favour done to you or conceal it, and forgive those who wrong you, then, this will bring you closer to Allah and increase your reward with Him. Among Allah's attributes is that He forgives and pardons His servants, although, He is able to punish them. That is why Allah says "Verily, Allah is Ever- Pardoning, All Powerful".

### Self Assessment Exercise

Recite *Sūratu `n-Nisāi*, Verses 144 - 154. Translate the passage into English and comment briefly on it.

### 3.2 *Tafsīr* of the Verse 155

فَبِمَا نَقْضِهِمْ مِيثَاقَهُمْ وَكَفَرِهِمْ بآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَقَتْلِهِمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا {النساء/155}

#### TRANSLATION

**155.** Because of their breaking the covenant, and of their rejecting the *Ayat* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of Allah, and of their killing the Prophets unjustly, and of their saying: "Our hearts are wrapped (with coverings, i.e. we do not understand what the Messengers say)" - nay, Allah has set a seal upon their hearts because of their disbelief, so they believe not but a little.

#### COMMENTARY

The concept of Islamic monotheism (*at – Tawhid*) is succinctly discussed in this segment. Allah threatens those who disbelieve in Him and His Messenger, such as the Jews and Christians. These sets of people differentiate between Allah and His Messenger regarding faith. They believe in some Prophets and reject others, following their desires, lusts and the practices of their forefathers. The Jews believe in the Prophets except ‘Isa and Muhammad. The Christian believe in the Prophets but reject their final and seal and the most honoured among the Prophets, Muhammad. In addition, the Suamirah (Samaritan) do not believe in any Prophet after Yusha‘ (Joshua), the successor of Musa bn ‘Imrān. The Majus (Zoroastrians) are said to believe only in a prophet called Zoroaster, although, they do not believe in the law that he brought them. Therefore, whoever rejects only one of Allah’s Prophets, he will have disbelieved in all of them. This is the reason why the verse explains: “Verily those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messenger, saying: we believe in some but rejects others, and wish to adopt a way in between”. It means those infidels. Allah says that the punishment has been prepared for disbelieving the prophets whom they disbelieved in, by ignoring what the prophet brought to them from Allah and because they are interested in the significant possessions of this world. The Jews envied the Prophet because of the great Prophet-hood that Allah gave him, and as a consequence, they denied the Messenger and defied him. Also, they became his enemies and fought him against him. Allah sent humiliation upon them in this life and they shall be disgraced in the Hereafter. These people are described by the *Qur’ān* as the true disbelievers.

Then, “those who believe in Allah and His Messenger and make no distinction between any of them”. This refers to the Ummah of Muhammad who believes in every Book that Allah revealed, and in every Prophet whom Allah has sent. Allah states that He has prepared great rewards for them. and Allah is Ever Forgiving, Most Merciful” for their sin, if they have any.

The acts and stubbornness of the Jews are analyzed in Verses 153 and 154 respectively. “The people of the scripture (Jew) ask you to cause a book to descend upon them from heaven. Indeed, they asked Musa for even greater than that, when they said: ‘Show us Allah in public’. But they were struck with a bolt of lightning for their wickedness. Then, they worshipped the calf even after *al-Bayyinah* has come to them (even) so we forgave them. And we gave Musa a clear proof of authority”. Those people (Jews) witnessed the tremendous miracles and unequivocal proofs at the hand of Musa in Egypt. They also witnessed the demise of their enemy, Fir‘awn and his soldiers, when they all drowned in the sea. Yet, soon after, when they passed by a people who were worshipping idols, they said to Musa: “make for us a god as they have gods”. After which Musa went to meet with His Lord, when he returned, Allah decreed that in order for the Jews to earn acceptance, those who did not worship the calf would have to kill who worshipped it. They complied with this command, and Allah resurrected them afterwards.

Allah then says: “and for their covenant, we raised over them the mount”. This was when they refrained from implementing the rulings of the Tawrah and refused what Musa brought them from Allah. Allah raised the mountain above their heads and they were ordered to prostrate for fear that the mountain might fall on them. “And (remember) when we raised the mountain over them as if it had been a canopy and they thought that it was going to fall on them. And we said: ‘enter the gate prostrating (or bowing) with humility’. This means that they also defied this command in word and action. They were commanded to enter Bayt al- Quds (in Jerusalem) while bowing and saying: “HITTAH”, meaning: O Allah! Take from us our sin of abandoning Jihād. But instead, they were saying HINTAH (i.e. wheat grain). And “this was the cause of their wandering. And we commanded them: ‘transgress not on the Sabbath (Saturday)’. We commanded them to honour the Sabbath and honour what Allah has prohibited thee on that day. The verse concludes with the statement: “And we took from them a firm covenant”. This is a strong covenant but they rebelled, transgressed and committed what Allah prohibited by using deceit and mockery.

### Self-Assessment Exercise

Write a *Tafsīr* of the Verse 155 of *Sūratu `n-Nisāi*.

### 3.3 *Tafsīr* of the Verses 156 -- 159

وَبِكْفَرِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَانًا عَظِيمًا {النساء/156} وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا {النساء/157} بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا {النساء/158} وَإِنْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا {النساء/159}

## TRANSLATION

**156.** And because of their (Jews) disbelief and uttering against Maryam (Mary) a grave false charge (that she has committed illegal sexual intercourse);

**157.** And because of their saying (in boast), "We killed Messiah Īsā (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), the Messenger of Allah," - but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but the resemblance of Īsā (Jesus) was put over another man (and they killed that man), and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no (certain) knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely; they killed him not [i.e. Īsā (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary)].

**158.** But Allah raised him [Īsā (Jesus)] up (with his body and soul) unto Himself (and he is in the heavens). And Allah is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise.

**159.** And there is none of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), but must believe in him ['Isā (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), as only a Messenger of Allah and a human being], before his ['Isā (Jesus) or a Jew's or a Christian's] death (at the time of the appearance of the Angel of death). And on the Day of Resurrection, he 'Isā (Jesus)] will be a witness against them.

## COMMENTARY

The sins mentioned in the Verses 155-158. are among the many sins that the Jew committed, which caused them to be cursed and removed far away from right guidance. They broke the promises and vows that Allah took from them. They also rejected Allah's *Āyah*, meaning His signs, proofs and miracles that they witnessed at the hands of their Prophets. Allah says: "and their killing the prophets unjustly" due to their many crimes and offenses against the prophets of Allah unjustly" and they say: "our hearts are under coverings (screened) from that to which you invite us". "Nay, Allah has sent a seal upon their hearts because of their disbeliefs." This is as if they had given an excuse that their hearts do not understand what the Prophet says since their hearts are wrapped with coverings, so they claim. Allah says that their hearts are sealed because of their disbelief. "So they believe not but a little" for their hearts became accustomed to *Kufr*, transgression and weak faith". The evil accusations the Jews uttered against Maryam and their claim that they killed 'Īsā; "And because of their (Jews) disbelief and uttering against Maryam of false charge".

This is apparent as the Jews accused Maryam and her son of grave accusations: They accused her of fornication and they claimed that 'Īsā was an illegitimate son. They also said " We killed Al-Masīh, Īsā son of Maryam, the Messenger of Allah. The Jew only uttered these words in jest and mockery, just as the polytheist said. Allah clarifies the issue of Īsā: "And because of their saying; we killed Al-Masīh, 'Īsā the son of Maryam, the Messenger of Allah. When Allah sent 'Īsā with proofs and guidance, the Jews envied him because of his prophet-hood and obvious miracles; curing the blind and leprous and bringing the dead back to life, by Allah's leave.

He also used to make the shape of a bird from clay and blow it, and it became a bird and flew. 'Īsā performed other miracles that Allah honoured him. He did travel from one place to another with his mother. The Jews were not satisfied with 'Īsā and they went to the King of Damascus at time, a Greek-polytheist who worshipped the stars. They told him that there was a man in Bayt Al-Maqdis misguiding and dividing the people in Jerusalem and stirring unrest among the king's subjects. The king was angry and wrote to his deputy in Jerusalem to arrest the rebel, stop him causing unrest, crucify him and make him wear a crown of thorns. The king's deputy went with some Jews to the house that 'Isa was residing in and he ('Īsā) was then with twelve, thirteen or seventeen of his companions. That day was a Friday, in the evening. They surrounded 'Īsā in the house. When he felt that they would soon enter the house, he said to his companions who volunteered, but 'Īsā thought he was too young. He asked the question second and third times, each time the young man volunteering.

This prompted 'Īsā to say: Well then, you will be that man". Allah made the young man to look exactly like Isa, Then, a hole opened in the roof of the house and 'Īsā was made to sleep and ascend to heaven while asleep. Allah says; "And remember when Allah said: 'O 'Īsā! I will take you and raise you to myself". After his ascension, the enemies who surrounded the house saw a man who looked like 'Īsā and they mistook him for 'Īsā. The Jews then boasted that they killed him and some Christians accepted their false claim. As for those who were in the house with Isa, they witnessed his ascension to heaven, while the rest thought that he was killed by the Jews by crucifixion. They even said that Maryam sat under the corpse of the crucified man and cries. They even said that the dead man spoke to her. All this was a test from Allah for His servants out of His wisdom. This was explained in the *Qur'ān* by Allah to Prophet Muhammad. "and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no certain knowledge, following nothing but conjecture". This statement refers to the Jews who claimed to have killed 'Isa and those Christians who believed them. Indeed they are in confusion, misguidance and bewilderment. "For surely, they killed him not". This means that they were not sure that Isa was the one whom they killed. They are in doubt and confusion over this matter. "But Allah raised him up unto Himself. Allah is Ever All-Powerful.". This means that Allah is Mighty and He is never weak, nor will those who seek refuge in Him ever be subjected to disgrace. "All wise". Indeed Allah's is the clearest wisdom, unequivocal proof and to Him is the most glorious authority.

Verses 159 of the *Sūrah* states: "and there is none of the people of the scripture, but must believe in him, before his death" i.e before the death of Isa, son of Maryam. This belief will occur after the return of him and before he dies. There is a number of Ahadith on the descent of 'Isā just before the Day of Judgment and his mission. These include: the Prophet says: " By Him in whose Hands my Soul is, the son of Maryam ('Isā) will shortly descend among you as a just ruler, and will break the cross, kill the pig and abolish the *Jizyah*. Then, there will be an abundance of wealth and nobody will accept charitable gift anymore. At that time, one prostration will be better for them than this life and all that is in it".

### Self Assessment Exercise

Write the Arabic text of *Sūratu `n-Nisāi* Verses 156 and 157. Translate it and comment fully on it.

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

Show me your friend and I will tell you the type of person you are. The type of friend a person associates with greatly influences the life of such a person. It is for this reason that Allah commands the believers not to take hypocrites as friends. This is so because no one can predict what they will do or where they belong. As discussed above, hypocrites will always tell lies, fail in their promises and betray any trust reposed in them. It is also very important to avoid associating any deity with Allah because according to Him, it is an unforgiveable offence. The Christian doctrines of the son-ship of Jesus Christ and the Trinity are regarded as *shirk* (idolatry) in Islam. Islam reveres Jesus Christ as one of the beloved Prophets of Allah who was saved from the humiliation of crucifixion. It also exonerates his mother, Maryam from allegation of promiscuity leveled against her by the Jews.

### 5.0 SUMMARY

This segment reveals the deeds of the hypocrites and the punishment that will be given to them on the Day of Resurrection. Muslims are also warned against evil tasks in public. They are to investigate any matter before such a matter should be uttered. Islamic monotheism is also expressed in the segment with references from the verses of the *Qur'ān*. As the deeds of the hypocrites are treated in the *Sūrah* so also the crimes of the Jews are expressed. All these and other issues are discussed in the segment.

### 6.0 TUTOR- MARKED ASSIGNMENT

With reference to Q4:155-158, explain how Islam refutes the Christians' claim of crucifying Jesus Christ.

### 7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READINGS

1. Abdullah, A.Y (1999). The Holy *Qur'ān* (trans). London Publishers.
2. Muhammad , M. K. (1999), The Noble *Qur'ān*. English version; *Dāru `s-Salām*: Riyadh.
3. Muhammad, M.K. (2002), *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Dāru `s-Salām*: Riyadh.
4. Muhammad, M.K (1998). *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. *Dāru `s-Salām*: Riyadh.
5. <http://www.Qur'ān.search.org>.
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## UNIT 4: *TAFSĪR OF SŪRATU 'N – NISĀ'I, VERSES 160 – 174*

### CONTENT

#### 1.0 Introduction

#### 2.0 Objectives

#### 3.0 Main Content

3.1 *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu 'n-Nisāi* Verses 160- 162.

3.2 *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu 'n-Nisāi* Verses 163 – 170

3.3 *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu 'n-Nisāi* Verses 171 - 173

3.4 *Tafsīr* of *Sūratu 'n-Nisāi* Verse 174-176

#### 4.0 Conclusion

#### 5.0 Summary

#### 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The selected people that were given divine scriptures bear the two titles of Prophets and Messengers together in the Islamic theology. This Unit touches on the Messengers and reward of abiding with their teachings. It also mentions the Scriptures and the reward of believing in them. You will also learn about the intransigence of the people of Israel and how they were dealt with by Allah in the unit. The last part of the divine passage expatiates on the case of *kalālah*, an aspect of Islamic law of inheritance (*mīrāth*).

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Render the text of *Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, verses 159 – 174 into English language
- Comment fully on the passages of *Sūratu 'n – Nisā'i*, verses 159 – 174
- Relate occasions of revelation of the passages.
- Identify the divine injunctions or tenets derivable from the passages.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

#### 3.1 *Tafsīr* of the Verses 160 -- 162

فَيُظْلَمُ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ طَيِّبَاتٍ أُحِلَّتْ لَهُمْ وَبِصَدِّهِمْ عَنِ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا {النساء/160} وَأَخَذَهُمُ  
الرَّبُّ وَقَدْ نَهَوْا عَنْهُ وَأَكْلِهِمْ أَمْوَالَ النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا {النساء/161} لَكِنِ الرَّاسِخُونَ  
فِي الْعِلْمِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَالْمُقِيمِينَ الصَّلَاةَ وَالْمُؤْتُونَ  
الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أُولَئِكَ سَنُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا {النساء/162}

## TRANSLATION

**160.** For the wrong-doing of the Jews, We made unlawful to them certain good foods which has been lawful to them, and for their hindering many from Allah's Way;

**161.** And their taking of *ribā* (usury) though they were forbidden from taking it and their devouring of men's substance wrongfully (bribery, etc.). And We have prepared for the disbelievers among them a painful torment.

**162.** But those among them who are well-grounded in knowledge, and the believers, believe in what has been sent down to you (Muhammad) and what was sent down before you, and those who perform *Ṣalāt* and give *Zakāt* and believe in Allah and in the Last Day, it is they to whom We shall give a great reward.

## COMMENTARY

Some foods are unlawful for the Jews because of their injustice and wrong doing. This was discussed in detail in the verses 160 - 162. Allah states that because of the injustice and transgression of the Jews, demonstrated by committing major sins, He prohibited some of the lawful, pure things which were previously allowed for them. They thus, out of exaggeration and extremism in their religion, prohibited some things for themselves. It could also mean that in the *Tawrah*, Allah prohibited things that were allowed for them before. Allah says: "All foods were lawful to the children of Israel, except that Israel made unlawful for himself before the *Tawrah* was revealed". This *Āyah* means that all types of foods were allowed for the children of Israel before the *Tawrah* was revealed, except the camel's meat and milk that Israel prohibited for himself.

Allah says: "for the wrongdoing of the Jews, we made unlawful to them certain good foods which had been lawful to them and for their hindering many from Allah's way". This *Āyah* states that they hindered themselves and others from following the truth, and this is the behavior that they brought from the past to the present. This is why they were enemies of the Messengers, killing many Prophets. They also denied Muhammad and Isa.

"And their taking of *Ribā* though they were forbidden from taking it". Allah prohibited them from taking *Ribā*, yet they did so by using various kinds of tricks, ploys and cons, thus devouring people's property unjustly. "And we prepared for the disbelievers among them a painful torment". Allah then says "But those among them who are well – grounded in knowledge ....". They are those that are firm in the religion and full of beneficial knowledge. "And the believers, believe in what has been sent down to you and what was sent down before you". Ibn Abbas said that this *Āyah* was revealed concerning 'Abdullah bn Salam, Tha'labah bn Sha'yā', Zayd bn Sha'yā' and Asad bn 'Ubayd who embraced Islam and believed what Allah sent Muhammad with. "And give Zakah".



This refers to the obligatory charity due on one's wealth and property. "...and believe in Allah and in the Last Day". These are the people who believe that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah. They equally believe in resurrection after death and the reward and punishment for the good or evil deeds. Then the concluding part of the verse says "it is they to whom we shall give a great reward". The great reward here means the Paradise.

### Self Assessment Exercise

Comment fully on Q.4:159 – 162.

### 3.2 Tafsīr of the Verses 163 -- 170

إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ  
وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَى وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُونُسَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا {النساء/163} وَرُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَاهُمْ  
عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا لَمْ نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا {النساء/164} رُسُلًا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنْذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا  
يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا {النساء/165} لَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ  
أَنْزَلَهُ بِعِلْمِهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَشْهَدُونَ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا {النساء/166} إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قَدْ  
ضَلُّوا ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا {النساء/167} إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَظَلَمُوا لَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ طَرِيقًا  
{النساء/168} إِلَّا طَرِيقَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا {النساء/169} يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ  
جَاءَكُمْ الرَّسُولُ بِالْحَقِّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَآمِنُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ وَإِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا  
حَكِيمًا {النساء/170}

### Translation

**163.** Verily, We have inspired you (O Muhammad) as We inspired Nuh (Noah) and the Prophets after him; We (also) inspired Ibrahim (Abraham), Isma'il (Ishmael), Ishaq (Isaac), Ya'qub (Jacob), and al-Asbat [the twelve sons of Ya'qub (Jacob)], Isā (Jesus), Ayub (Job), Yunus (Jonah), Harun (Aaron), and Sulaiman (Solomon), and to Dawud (David) We gave the Zabur (Psalms).

**164.** And Messengers We have mentioned to you before, and Messengers We have not mentioned to you, - and to Musa (Moses) Allah spoke directly.

**165.** Messengers as bearers of good news as well as of warning in order that mankind should have no plea against Allah after the Messengers. And Allah is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise.

**166.** But Allah bears witness to that which He has sent down (the Qur'an) unto you (O Muhammad), He has sent it down with His Knowledge, and the angels bear witness. And Allah is All-Sufficient as a Witness.

**167.** Verily, those who disbelieve [by concealing the truth about Prophet Muhammad] and his message of true Islamic Monotheism written with them in the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)] and prevent (mankind) from the Path of Allah (Islamic Monotheism), they have certainly strayed far away. (*Tafsir Al-Qurtubi*). (See V.7:157)

**168.** Verily, those who disbelieve and did wrong [by concealing the truth about Prophet Muhammad] and his message of true Islamic Monotheism written with them in the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)], Allah will not forgive them, nor will He guide them to anyway, - (*Tafsir Al-Qurtubi*).

**169.** Except the way of Hell, to dwell therein forever, and this is ever easy for Allah.

**170.** O mankind! Verily, there has come to you the Messenger (Muhammad) with the truth from your Lord, so believe in him, it is better for you. But if you disbelieve, then certainly to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth. And Allah is Ever All-Knowing, All-Wise.

## COMMENTARY

The verses 163-165 examine this mode of divine communication to the Prophets of Allah. Ibn Abbas narrated that “Sukayn and Adi bn Zayd said: ‘O Muhammad! We do not know that Allah sent down anything to any human after Musa’. Allah then sent down a rebuttal of their statement: “Verily, we have inspired you (O Muhammad) as we inspired Nuh and the Prophets after him. In this verse 163 Allah says: ‘we have sent the revelations to you as we sent the revelation to Nuh and the Prophets after him, we (also) sent revelations to Ibrāhim, Ismā‘īl, Ishāq, Ya‘qūb and Al-Asbāt (the offspring of the twelve sons of Ya‘qūb, Īsā, Ayyūb, Hārūn, Sulayman and to Dāwud we gave Zabūr’’. By and large, the *Qur’ān* mentions twenty-five Prophets: They are: Adam, Idrīs, Nūh (Noah), Hud, Sālih, Ibrāhim (Abraham), Lūt, (Lot), Ismā‘īl (Ishmel), Ishāq (Isaac), Ya‘qūb (Jacob), Yusuf (Joseph), Ayyūb (Job), Shuayb (Jethro), Musā (Moses), Hārūn (Aaron), Yūnus (Jonah), Dāwud (David), Sulayman (Solomon), Ilyās (Elias), Al-Yasā’ (Elisha), Zakariya (Zachariya) Yahya (John), and Isa (Jesus) and Muhammad. Several scholars of *Tafsīr* also listed Dhul – Kifl among the prophets. “Allah says: ‘And the Messengers we have mentioned to you before and Messengers we have not mentioned to you’. This means in addition to the above mentioned Prophets there are still other Prophets whom Allah did not mention their names in the *Qur’ān*. “and to Musa Allah spoke directly’’. This is an honour to Prophet Musa and this is why he is called the *Kalīm*, he whom Allah spoke directly with.”

The next *Āyah* says: “Messengers as bearers of good news as well as warning” This means that the Prophets brought good news to those who obey Allah and practice the good things that please Him. They also warn against His punishment and torment for those who defy His commandments. Allah says next “..... in order that mankind should have no plea against Allah after the Messengers.

And Allah is Ever All Powerful, All –Wise’’. Allah sent down His Books and sent His Messengers with good news and warnings. He explained what He is pleased with what He disliked.

This concept of the Messenger-ship of Allah’s Prophet is analyzed in the subsequent verses. Verse 166 says’’ But Allah bears witness to that which He has sent down unto you, He has sent it down with His knowledge, and the Angels bear witness. Allah is All-Sufficient as a witness. This verse means that if they deny and disbelieve in you, (O Muhammed), Allah testifies that you are His Messenger to whom He sent down His Book, the *Qur’ān*. Allah then says ‘‘He has sent it down with His knowledge’’. The knowledge of His that He willed His servants to have access to knowledge about the clear signs of guidance and truth, what Allah likes and pleased with, what He dislikes and displeased with, and knowledge of the unseen, such as the past and the future. He says further, ‘‘ Verily, those who believe and prevent (others) from the path of Allah, they have certainly strayed far away’’.

This is so, because they are disbelievers themselves and they do not follow the truth. They also strive to prevent people from following and embracing Allah’s path. Allah also mentions His judgment against those who disbelieves in His *Ayat* (verse), Book and Messenger, those who wrong themselves by their disbelief and hindering others from His path, committing sins and violating His prohibitions. Allah says that He will not forgive them, ‘‘nor will He guide them to a way (that is good). Except the way of Hell, to dwell therein forever’’ (vs.169). Verse 170, says ‘‘O mankind! Verily there has come to you the Messenger with the truth from your Lord, so believe in him, it is better for you’’. This *Āyah* means, Muhammad has come to you with guidance, the religion of truth and clear proof from Allah.

Therefore, believe, in what he has brought you and follow him, for this is better for you. Allah says: ‘‘But if you disbelieve, then certainly to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth’’ and Allah is Ever-Knowing, All Wise.’’ This means that Allah is far too rich than to need you or your faith, and no harm could ever affect Him because of your disbelief. He knows those who deserve to be guided and He will guide them and He is All wise in His statements, actions, legislations and all that He decrees.

### Self Assessment Exercise

1. Write short comments on the above verses of the Holy Qur’ān.
2. Highlight the treatment that will be meted to the infidels on the Day of Resurrection.

### 3.3 Tafsīr of the Verses 171 --- 173

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةٌ انْتَهُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا {النساء/171} لَنْ يَسْتَنْكِفَ الْمَسِيحُ أَنْ يَكُونَ عَبْدًا لِلَّهِ وَلَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ وَمَنْ يَسْتَنْكِفْ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَيَسْتَكْبِرْ فَسَيَحْشُرُهُمْ إِلَيْهِ جَمِيعًا {النساء/172}

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدُهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْتَنكَفُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فَيُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا وَلَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا {النساء/173}

## TRANSLATION

**171.** O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Do not exceed the limits in your religion, nor say of Allah aught but the truth. The Messiah Īsā (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), was (no more than) a Messenger of Allah and His Word, ("Be!" - and he was) which He bestowed on Maryam (Mary) and a spirit (*Ruh*) created by Him; so believe in Allah and His Messengers. Say not: "Three (trinity)!" Cease! (it is) better for you. For Allah is (the only) One *Ilāh* (God), Glory be to Him (Far Exalted is He) above having a son. To Him belong all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And Allah is All-Sufficient as a Disposer of affairs.

**172.** The Messiah will never be proud to reject to be a slave to Allah, nor the angels who are near (to Allah). And whosoever rejects His worship and is proud, and then He will gather them all together unto Himself.

**173.** So, as for those who believed (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and did deeds of righteousness, He will give their (due) rewards, and more out of His Bounty. But as for those who refuse His worship and were proud, He will punish them with a painful torment. And they will not find for themselves besides Allah any protector or helper.

## COMMENTARY

Verse 171 prohibits the People of the Book from going to extremes in religion which is common trait of theirs. They exaggerate over Īsā until they elevated him above the grade that Allah gave him. This is why Allah says: ‘O people of the Scripture’ do not exceed the limits in your religion, nor say of Allah except the truth’. This statement warns the people not to lie and claim that Allah has a wife or son. Allah is far holier than what they attribute to Him. Allah is glorified, praised and honoured in His might, grandeur and greatness and there is no deity worthy of worship but Him. Allah says ‘Al- Masīh ‘Isa, son of Maryam, was (no more than) a Messenger of Allah and His word, which He bestowed on Maryam and a spirit from Him, created by Him This means Isa is only one of Allah’s servants and one of His creatures. Allah said to him, ‘Be’ and he was. Allah sent him as a Messenger. He was a word from Allah that He bestowed on Maryam’ means He created him with the word ‘Be’ that He sent with Jibril to Maryam. Jibril blew the life of Isa into Maryam by Allah’s leave and Isa came to existence as a result.

This is why Isa was a word and a Ruḥ (spirit) created by Allah as he had no father to conceive him. Rather, he came to existence through the word that Allah uttered, ‘Be’ and he was, through the life that Allah sent with Jibril. ‘‘So believe in Allah and His Messenger ‘. This is an indication to believe that Allah is one and alone and that He does not have a son or wife. Also, to know and be certain that Īsā is the servant and Messenger of Allah. Allah says after that ‘‘say not: ‘‘Three’’ do not elevate Īsā and his Mother to be gods with Allah. ‘‘ for Allah is (the only) one God, hallowed be He above having a son’’. To him belong all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And Allah is All- sufficient as a Disposer of affairs’’. Hence all the creatures, properties and servants are under His control and disposal. And He is the Disposer of the affairs.

Verse 172 states that the Prophets and Angels are never too proud to be a servant of Allah, that is, they will never be arrogant. Allah says further’’ And whosoever rejects His worship and is proud, then He will gather them all together unto Himself’’. This will be on the Day of Resurrection. Then, Allah will judge between them with His just judgment that is never unjust or wrong. The next verse reads ‘‘So as for those who believe and did deeds of righteousness, He will award them their full rewards for their righteous actions and He will give them more of His bounty, kindness, ample mercy and favour’’. But as for those who refused His worship and were proud’’ i.e out of arrogance, they refused to obey and worship Him. He will punish them with a painful torment. And they will not find for themselves besides Allah any protector or helper.

### Self Assessment Exercise

Compare the creation of the Prophet Isa with that of Prophet Adam.

Describe how Prophet Isa was created by Allah as contained in this *Sūrah*.

### 3.4 Tafsīr of the Verse 174-176

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بُرْهَانٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا مُّبِينًا {النساء/174} فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِهِ فَسَيُدْخِلُهُمْ فِي رَحْمَةٍ مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلٍ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ {النساء/175} يَسْتَفْتُونَكَ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِي الْكَلَالَةِ إِنِ امْرُؤٌ هَلَكَ لَيْسَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَهُ أُخْتٌ فَلَهَا نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ وَهُوَ بِرِثَتِهَا إِن لَّمْ يَكُن لَهَا وَلَدٌ فَإِن كَانَتَا اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُمَا الثُلُثَانِ مِمَّا تَرَكَ وَإِن كَانُوا إِخْوَةً رِّجَالًا وَنِسَاءً فَلِلَّذَكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثَيْنِ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ أَن تَضِلُّوا وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ {النساء/176}

### TRANSLATION

**174.** O mankind! Verily, there has come to you a convincing proof (Prophet Muhammad) from your Lord, and We sent down to you a manifest light (this Qur'an).

**175.** Then those who believe in Allah, and hold fast to Him, soon will He admit them to Mercy and Grace from Himself, and guide them to Himself by a straight Way.

**176.** They ask you for a legal decision, say: Allah directs (thus) about those who leave no descendants or ascendants as heirs. If it is a man that dies, leaving a sister but no child, she shall have half of the inheritance: (if such a deceased was) a woman who left no child, her brother takes her inheritance:

if there are two sisters, they shall have two thirds of the inheritance (between them): if there are brothers and sisters, (they share), the male having twice the share of female, thus does Allah make clear to you (His Law), lest you err, and Allah has the knowledge of all things.

## COMMENTARY

Verses 174 and 175 respectively say: O mankind, verily, there has come to you a convincing proof from your Lord; We sent down to you a manifest light”. This means the truth and this is the *Qur’ān*. The next verse says further “So, for those who believed in Allah and held fast to (depend on) Him”. This is by worshipping Him and relying on Him for each and everything. The *Āyah* also means to believe in Allah and hold fast to the *Qur’ān*. Allah then says: “He will admit them to His mercy and grace”. This means that He will grant them mercy and admit them into Paradise. He will also increase and multiply their ranks, as a favour and bounty from Him. Not only these, “He will also” guide them to Himself, His straight path”. This is a clear path that no crookedness in it nor deviation. This, indeed is the description of the believers in this life and the hereafter. They are on the straight path of Allah that leads to the gardens of paradise.

The ruling on the “*Kalālah*” case was revealed in the next verse. It says: “they ask you for a legal verdict. Say: Allah directs (thus) about *al-Kalālah*. If a man that dies leaves a sister, but no child, she shall have half of the inheritance, and in her case, he will be her heir if she has no children. If there are two sisters, they shall have two thirds of the inheritance, if there are brothers and sisters, the male will have twice the share of sisters, they shall have two thirds of the inheritance, if there are brothers and sisters, the male will have twice the share of the female. (Thus) does Allah make clear to you (His law) lest you go astray? And Allah is the knower of everything”. The wordings of the *Āyah* indicates that the question was about the *Kalālah*. *Al-Kalālah* means the crown that surrounds the head from all sides. This is why the scholars stated that *al-Kalālah* pertains to one who dies and leaves behind neither descendants nor ascendants.

Some said that it pertains to one who has no offspring as the *Āyah* states: “if it is a man that dies, leaving no child”. Thus, the *Āyah* refers to the person who has neither children nor parents as it says “leaving a sister, she shall have half the inheritance had there been a surviving ascendant, the sister would not have inherited anything, and there is a consensus on this point. This is because when there is a surviving parent, the sister does not inherit anything, let alone half of the inheritance. Allah says further: if there are two sisters, they shall have two- thirds of the inheritance. This connotes that if the person who dies in *kalālah* condition has two sisters, they get two- thirds of the inheritance. More than two sisters share in the two – thirds. From this verse, the scholars took the ruling regarding two daughters or more, that they share in the two thirds, just as the share of the sisters (two or more) was taken from the *Āyah* about the daughters. Thus, Allah clarifies His legislation “Lest you go astray” i.e from the truth after this explanation. “Allah is the All Knower of everything”.

Allah has perfect knowledge in the consequences of everything and in the benefit that each matter carries for His servants. He also knows what each of the relatives deserves from the inheritance, according to the degree of relation he or she has with the deceased. It was recorded that Abu Bakr used to say that the *Kalālah* is the person who has no descendants or ascendants''. Abu Bakr's saying is what the majority of scholars among the Companions, their followers and the later Imams agree with. This is also the ruling that the *Qur'ān* indicates. Allah stated that He has explained and made plain the ruling of *Kalālah*, when He says: (Thus) does Allah make clear to you (His law) lest you go astray. And Allah is the All- Knower of everything''.

### Self Assessment Exercise

Explain the meaning and the share of the *Kalālah* in the Islamic law of inheritance.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

Allah made unlawful to the Jews certain good foods which had been lawful to them due to their intransigence. Such intransigence included hindering many from Allah's Way; animosity with Messengers of Allah and killing them; and taking of *ribā* (usury) and bribery, etc.). The divine revelation that was made to the Prophet Muhammad just as it was made to the Prophets before him is a plain, unequivocal proof that eradicates all possibility of having an excuse or falling prey to evil doubts. The ruling on inheritance of the *Kalālah* brings the Chapter to an end.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

This unit marks the end of Chapter four of the *Qur'ān*. We thus conclude the *Qur'ān* is embodiment of divine guidance and wisdom. On the other hand the Course involves providing the original Arabic text and translation of the Chapter and commenting on the divine passages with citation of Prophetic traditions and opinions of reputable exegetes as much as available. The conclusions and summaries highlight the subject matters, injunctions and guidelines in the divine passages.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Highlight issues relating to belief in Messenger of Allah in the light of this *Sūratu `n-Nisā`*.
2. Expiate on the Quranic attitude to the Christian belief in Prophet Īsā as depicted in this *Sūrah*.
3. Give an overview of the Islamic law of inheritance as highlighted in this *Sūrah*.

## 7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READINGS

1. Abdullah, A.Y (1999). *The Holy Qur'ān* (trans). London Publishers.
2. Muhammad , M. K. (1999), *The Noble Qur'ān*. English version; *Dāru `s-Salām*: Riyadh.
3. Muhammad, M.K. (2002), *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Dāru `s-Salām*: Riyadh.
4. Muhammad, M.K (1998). *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. *Dāru `s-Salām*: Riyadh.
5. <http://www.Qur'ān.search.org>.
6. <http://www.tafseeronline.com>