

33. And those who when they testify are exactingly true;

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِشَهَادَاتِهِمْ قَائِمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

- ***Shahadat***

- this, as in the previous word, is what the Arab grammarians call, “a noun in apposition that renames the first noun, but is only a subset of it.”
- the particular of the general; the particular is appended to the general
- used for some special emphasis
- the general category mentioned before is the *amanat* because giving testimony is an *amana*
- when one witnesses a *shahada*, it is a trust repositied with one, and when one testifies to it, it means one must deliver it fully and honestly

- ***Qa'imun***

- the root *qiyam* denotes many things: of them is the *qayyim*, a caretaker
- denotes conscious concern, protecting, and performance with the utmost of perfection
- this has been mentioned in the context of trusts because testifying honestly and accurately to what has happened accurately is an *amana* and it becomes a *wajib* to do so
- the active participle (*ism al-fa'il*) and the nominal sentence has more power and energy in it: a hyperbole that energizes and emphasizes the root meaning of excellence of performance, conscious concern, and protection

33. And those who when they testify are exactingly true;

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِشَهَادَاتِهِمْ قَائِمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

- *Qa'imun*

- more powerful construction of object preceding the verb, underscores the *ri'aya*, or attention, regard, consideration, custody, and care they take for their testimonies
- the active participle is as if this is their inevitable habit and custom
- *qa'imun* also entails their testimony is of the utmost completeness and excellence. Allah mentions this because it is hard on a person to deliver his testimony properly and would otherwise wish to wash his hands of the obligation to do so. So Allah encourages him to go through with it lest people's rights be overlooked
- Allah mentions it to extoll its merit and virtue, and to make all witnesses desirous of doing their duty

34. And those who always well perform their prayers:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

- Allah begins His list of the human traits with the greatest of them: prayer– the greatest of benefit to their possessors. Allah ends with prayer also to stress the concern and care that people of *tawfiq* have for prayer, and to emphasize His own concern for it and divine help for such people
- At the first of the list above (verse 23), the emphasis was on the “those who never miss their prayer” while here the emphasis is on *hifdh*, or guarding, keeping, maintaining, and preservation, namely of the prayer’s integrals (*arkan*) or conditions *shurut*
- Also their inward states:
 - worshipful humility, *khushu’*
 - the utmost fear and awe of Allah
 - *shukr*, gratitude
 - love of Allah
 - utter exaltation
 - knowledge of Allah
 - the intention of drawing near to Allah
 - sincerity, Allah being one’s sole concern
 - not making one’s prayer a mere habit
- **Allah has to be the main point**

34. And those who always well perform their prayers:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

- Imam al-Ghazali talks about *hudur*, that you have to be conscious of what you're saying and to Whom
- We want to get the most we can out of everything that we can. The best thing for it is *zuhd fi al-dunya*
- When the *adhan* goes, the Shaytan starts saying, "you can do this before you pray." The Hadramis say, "fifty needs will be fulfilled after the *salat*."
- The Prophet ﷺ said, "verily Allah has inscribed good deeds and bad deeds and then described that. Whoever is right on the verge of doing a good deed and it doesn't work out, you have the complete good deed. And if he is on the verge of doing it and actually does it, Allah inscribes it with Him in His records as 10 to 700 good deeds to that many times over. And when a person is on the verge of doing an ill deed and he stops, Allah inscribes that as a good deed. And if he's on the verge of doing an ill deed and ends up doing it, Allah inscribes it as one ill deed
- The good deeds are counted for at least 10, and the ill deeds are counted for just one. The Prophet ﷺ is saying that one and the same work outwardly could vary in its internal reality and its whole value in the sight of Allah
- These are not random happenings, for Allah is absolutely just. They are based on His divine knowledge of the state of the heart of the person performing the *salat* or other works by which we draw nearer to Allah.

34. And those who always well perform their prayers:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

- ***Yuhafidhun***

- they guard them, they protect their *salats* from anything that would vitiate their fullest perfection
- the verb is a form 3 verb, which often intensifies the meaning of the first form in a hyperbole
- the third form often indicates action directed towards another person, and hence, competition: people are competing in guarding their *salat*
- a hyperbole of *hifdh*, or protection, returning to the *salat*'s integrals, the necessary conditions that precede it, the inner states and circumstances, and its time
- the imperfect tense of the verb implies that this ever recurs from this person at all of his times
- the object “‘*ala salathim*” has been put before the verb denoting their tremendous concern and focus on it

34. And those who always well perform their prayers:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

- The first mention of *salat* in verse 23, which mentions the exceptionally beloved traits to Allah, is *da'imun* and it returns to times: someone who keeps the prayer at all times and never misses it
- While the mention of *salat* in this verse refers to always well-performing their prayers, and it returns to the states and circumstances of those praying
- Abu Su'ud says: mentioning the *salat* at the beginning and the end is to indicate its great merit and that it is the best of all acts of worship. And repeating *wa al-ladhina*, the relative pronoun, from verse to verse in these attributes is to treat the difference of the various traits mentioned as if they were like those of various different people
- What is meant is that all these traits are found in one and the same person, but speaking about them as if they were different people is part of the eloquence of the Quran. It is to appraise hearers like us that every single one of these characteristics in and of itself is a magnificent trait and an incomparable distinction from Allah to us, entailed by the attributes mentioned here individually, because each one merits it

35. Those shall be in incomparable lush groves of paradise exalted high in honor.

أُولَٰئِكَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ مُّكْرَمُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

- ***Ula 'ika*** has three implications:

- 1) loftiness of rank (*'uluw al-rutba*)
- 2) that they are distinguished from other people to the utmost
- 3) those characterised by these traits deserve what is mentioned after the demonstrative pronouns

- ***Jannatin***

- root meaning of *janna* is a lush, shaded grove of trees whose shade is so dense that it blacks out all sunlight, while the indefinite of the plural signifies *ta 'dhim wa takthir*

- modifier of *mukramun*

- it is more eloquent to have this modifier precede *mukramun*, which the translation has emphasised by a line break

- ***Ikram***

- the opposite of humiliation, insult or slight. It means the reverential respect (*ta 'dhim*) being well-met and received and a blissful luxurious existence (*tan 'im*)

- the passive participle of *mukramun* implies *thabat*, or honour without cease. It means honoured by all: their Creator, their fellow creatures, and by the angels and by the servants of paradise

36. So how then do those who disbelieve
rush up headlong in your face with eyes astare;

فَمَالِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا قِبَلَكَ مُهْطِعِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

- It is important to remember that the unbelievers used to come and listen to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when he was reciting the Quran and form circles with each other and say, “if these Muslims are going to enter paradise, we are sure to enter a paradise better than they.”
- ***Fa mal***
 - *Fa* is *fa al-tafri* ‘, the conjunctive fa of details deriving from what has been previously said. In this case, about the attributes and rewards of the believers
 - it is as though to say, “these are who deserve to enter paradise, so why do these disbelievers deserve to?”
 - modern orthography would write these as two words, *Ma* and *liladhina*. But in the *mushaf* of Uthman and as we see here, it has been written with the lam of li separated from *lilahdhina*. The orthography of the *mushaf* is adopted by us just as it was received
- ***Qibal***
 - distribution of war
 - towards you, in your direction
 - the word mentions this way of coming up to him in wonder and surprise (*ta’jib*) that they would hasten to criticize and heckle the Prophet ﷺ rather than to listen and believe in the Prophet. So the meaning is that there is surprise in the behaviour of the disbelievers in rushing towards him and forming groups to vent their sarcasm on him (*yatahakamuna bihi*)

36. So how then do those who disbelieve
rush up headlong in your face with eyes astare;

فَمَالِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا قِبَلَكَ مُهْطِعِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

- ***Muhti`in***

- to speed headlong with eyes wide open, and leaning your neck forward, not looking left or right
- the word appears in surat al-Qamar where it means on *yawm al-Qiyama*. In the present context, it means to mock and to jeer the Prophet ﷺ, which the Quran condemns them for

- ***Izin***

- the root is *‘aza*: to be ascriptively tied (*intisab*) or to belong to something
- *‘izin* is a group whose members are all connected to each other
- the essence or *mada* of the word indicates connection, *itisal* and the strength of belonging and solidarity with each other, in this case against the Prophet ﷺ
- there is a strong correlative and contrast between *‘izin* and verses 11-14, where the criminal would gladly sacrifice everyone he knows and his whole family to be saved from the punishment of Allah

37. Parting right and left to sit round you in heated cabals;

عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ عِزِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

- *‘An al-Yamīn w ‘an al-Shimal*

- this means *ihata*, being surrounded, so that these groups encompassed the Prophet ﷺ around
- so first they rush towards him with glaring eyes and craning necks, then they sit down around him to mock and threaten him
- This verse is a *hal* or adverbial of circumstance to describe how they rush up towards him
- Allah is showing us a snapshot of one of the scenes of the *da‘wa* with which Islam began and the Prophet’s noble and difficult efforts to summon mankind to Allah
- Allah condemns their rushing up thus because they are not seeking to be guided by their steps

38. Does every man of them idly think to enter a garden of bliss?

أَيَطْمَعُ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ مِّنْهُمْ أَنْ يُدْخَلَ جَنَّةَ نَعِيمٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

- They used to tell themselves, “if paradise is real, we are better entitled to it than these Muslims.” But also because they did not seek to be guided, which is the necessary condition to enter paradise

- ***Yatma ‘u***

- *tama* ‘ means to hope for something; be really attached to it; really want it, while not doing any works to gain it or to deserve it

- ***Kullu imrin minhum***

- Allah did not say “they all hope” (*yatma ‘un*) in order to emphasize that every single man of them was thus deluded (*mughtarr*) and each one of them would say to himself, “if these are to enter paradise, we are certainly going to enter it before they do.”

- ***Jannata na ‘im***

- the ascription of *janna* to bliss means that there is nothing in it except bliss
- the form of this verse is that of a rhetorical question in which one asks for another purpose besides getting an answer
- the purpose is to deny what is being asked about (*istifham inkari*). Allah is condemning their idle wishes to enter paradise without true faith. The question is to make them despair of all hope of ever doing so and to tell them how ignorant they are to imagine such a thing.

38. Does every man of them idly think to enter a garden of bliss?

أَيُّطْمَعُ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ أَن يُدْخَلَ جَنَّةَ نَعِيمٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

- “Garden of bliss” has been left indefinite because the unbelievers didn’t believe in a particular place of paradise, as believers do, but rather they summon to mind some vague idea of an imaginary place filled with bliss
- “Garden” is used here instead of “groves” because this is the usual rendering in English and one that carries the idea of heaven, because groves has been used in the two verses preceding it
- the Bible also uses “garden.” So it is the imagery of non-Muslims