

(Note: Wherever the word “you” or “your” is singular and refers to one human being, it is printed with an italic y, as in: you. Wherever such a word refers to God, the letter y is printed in capital, as in: You.)

## For Fast 25 – September 15

### Chapter 42

- 36 So whatever you are given is but a provision of this world’s life, and what Allah has is better and more lasting for those who believe and rely on their Lord;
- 37 and those who shun the great sins and indecencies, and whenever they are angry they forgive;<sup>1</sup>
- 38 and those who respond to their Lord and keep up prayer, and whose affairs are (decided) by counsel among themselves, and who spend (on good works) out of what We have given them;<sup>2</sup>
- 39 and those who, when great wrong afflicts them, defend themselves.
- 40 And the recompense of evil is punishment like it; but whoever forgives and brings about reform, his reward is with Allah. Surely He does not love the wrongdoers.<sup>3</sup>
- 41 And whoever defends himself after his being oppressed, these it is against whom there is no way (of blame).
- 42 The way (of blame) is only against those who oppress people and revolt in the earth unjustly. For such there is a painful punishment.
- 43 And whoever is patient and forgives — that surely is an affair of great resolution.<sup>4</sup>

Notes:

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- 1 (v. 37) The teaching that a Muslim should forgive when he is angry is so fundamental that it is here mentioned in the same category as the teaching to refrain from great sins and indecencies. Elsewhere it is stated that forgiveness from God and the garden of the afterlife (*janna*) is prepared for “those who spend in ease as well as in adversity and **those who restrain (their) anger** and pardon people” (3:134).
- 2 (v. 38) Muslims are here enjoined as usual to observe prayer and to spend out of what Allah has given them, yet between these two injunctions, which always go together in the Quran, is placed a third: *whose affairs are decided by counsel among themselves*. At the early period when this verse was revealed, the Muslims had no important matters to decide for which they might have stood in need of counsel. The injunction is clearly meant to prepare them for transacting the momentous affairs of State and all matters connected with national weal or woe. All affairs of the Islamic state must be transacted by counsel. In this Islam has laid the basis of

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Government by parliaments, and the idea found a clear practical expression in the early days of the Caliphate, when the *Khalifa* had to refer every important affair to counsel.

- 3 (v. 40) Punishment must be proportionate to the evil committed, a very just and necessary restriction. Forgiveness here is not neglected, nor preached in such a manner as to make it impracticable. There is in Islam neither the one extreme of *an eye for an eye* or the opposite one of *turning the other cheek*. It teaches the golden and beautiful mean that forgiveness may be exercised, if forgiveness will mend the matter and do good to the wrongdoer himself. The object to be kept in view is to *bring about reform*, whether it is attained by giving proportionate punishment or by exercising forgiveness.
- 4 (v. 43) This is the third time, within these verses 37–43, that Muslims are urged to forgive.