

(*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 y is printed in capital, as in: You.)

## For Fast 11

### Chapter 9

115 And it is not (attributable to) Allah that He should lead a people astray after He has guided them, so far so that He makes clear to them what they should guard against. Surely Allah is Knower of all things.

*Note:* The verse establishes in clear words that Allah never leads a people astray; and how could He lead astray, says the Holy Quran, when He it is Who gives them guidance, and makes clear to them the evils they should guard against?

116 Surely Allah’s is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He gives life and causes death. And besides Allah you have no friend nor helper.

117 Certainly Allah has turned in mercy to the Prophet and the Emigrants and the Helpers who followed him in the hour of hardship, after the hearts of a group of them were about to deviate; then He turned to them in mercy. Surely to them He is Compassionate, Merciful;

*Note:* *Taubah* on the part of Allah means His turning to His servant and changing one state to another which is higher than it. The context, in fact, throws clear light upon the meaning of *taubah*, for Allah’s turning mercifully is in relation to the Prophet and those sincere believers who are plainly stated to have followed the Prophet in the hour of hardship, thus showing that it was in relation to those who were obedient under the severest difficulties and not to those who were disobedient; the latter being dealt with in the next verse. The expedition to Tabuk is known as *the expedition of hardship*, because of the excessive heat, and scarcity of food and water and the hardships of the long journey with scanty means. Really the whole period of about twenty-one years from the preaching of the Prophet had been one of the severest difficulties for the Muslims. The party whose hearts were about to deviate is referred to in the next verse.

118 and (He turned in mercy) to the three who were left behind; until the earth, vast as it is, became narrow to them and their souls were also narrowed to them; and they knew that there was no refuge from Allah but in Him. Then He turned to them in mercy that they might turn (to Him). Surely Allah — He is the Oft-returning to mercy, the Merciful.

*Note:* The three men were from among the *Ansar*. The words *were left behind* are explained as meaning either *left behind at the time of the expedition* or *left behind with respect to the commandment of Allah concerning them*, being, it is said, the persons referred to in v. 106: “And others are made to await Allah’s command, whether He punish them or turn to them mercifully”. The latter explanation was given by Ka‘b himself, one of the three men. They remained cut off from all connection with the Muslims for fifty days. Ka‘b was a man of importance, and when he received a letter from the king of Ghassan, offering him a position under him if he deserted the Prophet, he burned the letter, showing his contempt for the offer, and gave no reply.