

(*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 26

Chapter 49

- 11 O you who believe, do not let people laugh at people, perhaps they may be better than they; nor let women (laugh) at women, perhaps they may be better than they. Neither find fault with one another, nor call one another by (offensive) nick-names. Evil is a bad name after faith; and whoever does not repent, these it is that are the wrongdoers.

Note: This verse and those that follow deal with some of the evils which are most rampant in civilized society, and which corrupt a society to its core. These evils mostly arise with wealth; for, living in ease, people are most concerned with seeking each other’s faults, and thus mutual hatred takes the place of brotherly love and friendly concord.

- 12 O you who believe, avoid most of suspicion, for surely suspicion in some cases is sin; and do not spy nor let some of you backbite others. Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You abhor it! And keep your duty to Allah, surely Allah is returning (to mercy) again and again, Merciful.

Note: The instruction “do not spy” is meant not only for individuals but also limits what state institutions can do. Hazrat Umar, while khalifa, was once passing outside a house, along with another companion of the Holy Prophet, when they stopped because they thought they could hear the occupants doing something un-Islamic inside. It then occurred to them that they had reached the limit of what was allowed by this verse and they walked away.

- 13 O mankind, surely We have created you from a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other. Surely the noblest of you with Allah is the most dutiful of you. Surely Allah is Knowing, Aware.

Note: The principle of the brotherhood of mankind laid down here is on the broadest basis. The address here is not to Muslims to people in general, who are told that they are all, as it were, members of one family, and their divisions into

nations, tribes and families should not lead to estrangement from, but to a better knowledge of, each other. Superiority of one over another in this vast brotherhood does not depend on nationality, wealth, or rank, but on the careful observance of duty, or moral greatness.

- 14 The dwellers of the desert say: “We believe”. Say: You do not believe, but say, “We submit”; and faith has not yet entered into your hearts. And if you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not diminish anything of your deeds. Surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

Note: Here the Muslims are enjoined to deal kindly and leniently, even with those who, being novices, were not yet really grounded in the faith, though they were members of the Muslim brotherhood. Faith had not yet entered into their hearts, but they were to be regarded as Muslims. The solidarity of Islam is being shattered today by narrow-minded Mullas who, on one pretext or another, issue *fatwas of kufr* against this or that party of Muslims.

- 15 The believers are those only who believe in Allah and His Messenger, then they do not doubt, and struggle hard with their wealth and their lives in the way of Allah. Such are the truthful ones.
- 16 Say: Would you apprise Allah of your religion, and Allah knows what is in the heavens and what is in the earth? And Allah is Knower of all things.
- 17 They presume to lay you under an obligation by becoming Muslims. Say: Do not lay me under an obligation by your Islam; rather Allah lays you under an obligation by guiding you to the faith, if you are truthful.
- 18 Surely Allah knows the unseen of the heavens and the earth. And Allah is Seer of what you do.