

From the Shariah Rulings of the Tareeqah: The State's Relationship With Mushrikeen (Polytheists)

(Translated)

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Allah (swt) says, **﴿وَأَذَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى النَّاسِ يَوْمَ الْحَجِّ الْأَكْبَرِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ بَرِيءٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَرَسُولُهُ فَإِنْ تُبْتُمْ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللَّهِ وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ﴾** **“And a proclamation from Allah and His Messenger to the people on the day of the greater Hajj that Allah is disavowed from the mushrikeen (polytheists), and so is His Messenger. So if you repent, it is better for you; but if you turn away, then know that you will not escape Allah. And give tidings to those who disbelieve of a painful punishment”** [TMQ Surah At-Tawbah:3].

This verse is from Surah At-Tawbah, also known as Surah Bara'ah (Disavowal), because it begins by declaring Allah's and His Messenger's (saw) disavowal of the polytheists. It is named Surah At-Tawbah (The Repentance) because of the repeated mention of Allah's acceptance of His servants' repentance.

This surah begins with the declaration of Allah's disavowal of the mushrikeen and the disavowal of His Messenger (saw) of them as well. Surah At-Tawbah was revealed in the ninth year of the Hijrah. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) had appointed Abu Bakr (ra) as the Imam of the Hajj pilgrimage that year. When Surah At-Tawbah was revealed, the Prophet (saw) sent Ali ibn Abi Talib (ra) with it to recite to the people during the Hajj. The pilgrimage to the Kaaba had been open to all until that year. Surah At-Tawbah came to regulate the relationship between Muslims and polytheists. After reciting Surah At-Tawbah, Ali ibn Abi Talib (ra) announced four things to the pilgrims—as mentioned by Al-Qurtubi in his commentary, **﴿ألا يطوف بالبيت عريان، ومن كان بينه وبين النبي ﷺ عهد فهو إلى مدته، ومن لم يكن (that no one should circumambulate the Kaaba naked; that any treaty between the Prophet (saw) would remain in effect until its expiration and that no treaty would be enforced for four months; that only believers would enter Paradise; and that Muslims and polytheists would not gather together after that year.﴾** At-Tirmidhi said: This is a sound and authentic hadith, and it was also narrated by An-Nasa'i.

This surah came to eradicate the mushrikeen in the Arabian Peninsula and to expose the hypocrites, hence its names “The Exposer (الفاضحة)” and “The Shamer (المخزيّة).” It also offers repentance to the sincere believers, hence its name “The Purifier (المقشقة),” because it clears them of hypocrisy. The surah does not begin with the Basmala (البسملة) (the phrase “In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful”) because the Basmala implies mercy, and disavowal is incompatible with mercy.

Allah (swt) said, **﴿وَأَذَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ﴾** **“And a proclamation from Allah and His Messenger”** – meaning a declaration and announcement. This proclamation is attributed to Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw) because it is legislation, a legal ruling that must be followed, coming from Allah (swt) and conveyed by His Messenger (saw). The proclamation at the beginning of this verse is the predicate of an implied subject, meaning: this.

Allah (swt) said, ﴿إِلَى النَّاسِ﴾ **“To the people”** – meaning all those present at that season, Muslims and polytheists. The pilgrimage to the House (the Honored Kaaba) was open to all people, Muslims and mushrikeen alike, so the address was directed to them all. That season was the last in which mushrikeen were permitted to perform the pilgrimage while adhering to their religion.

Allah (swt) said, ﴿يَوْمَ الْحَجِّ الْأَكْبَرِ﴾ **“day of the greater Hajj.”** There is disagreement regarding the meaning of the day of the greater Hajj. Some say it is the Day of Arafah, the ninth of Dhul-Hijjah, a view held by a number of Companions (ra), Tabi’oon, and jurists. Others say it is the Day of Sacrifice, the tenth of Dhul-Hijjah, a view also held by a number of Companions (ra), Tabi’oon, and jurists. Perhaps the most preponderant opinion is that it is the Day of Arafah, the ninth of Dhul-Hijjah, due to the Prophet's saying, ﴿الْحَجُّ عَرَفَةٌ﴾ **“Hajj is Arafah,”** and because all Hujjaj (Shariah pilgrims) gather on Mount Arafah on that day. On the Day of Sacrifice, however, people proceed to the rituals of that day, dispersing between Mina, the stoning of the Jamarat, Tawaf, and Sa’i.

Allah (swt) said, ﴿أَنَّ اللَّهَ بَرِيءٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَرَسُولُهُ﴾ **“That Allah is disavowed of the mushrikeen, and so is His Messenger.”** This is the content of the announcement of the disavowal by Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw) of the polytheists, with the valuation (تقدير taqdeer) of a deleted “ba (ب)” related to the announcement, where the original valuation is: an announcement that (أَذَانٌ بَأَنَّ), and in this sentence is confirmation (توكيد) of the content of the first verse of the surah. All reciters read “His Messenger” in the nominative (رفع rafa) case, as a conjunction of two clauses, meaning “and His Messenger is also disavowed the polytheists.” Other readings have been suggested, but the meaning is the same. The claim by some commentators that “His Messenger” is in the genitive (جار) case and attributing this to Al-Hasan Al-Basri is incorrect, because it would mean that Allah disavowed from the polytheists and disavowed from His Messenger, which is clearly erroneous and contrary to what is correct.

It is said that a Bedouin heard a man recite, “That Allah is disavowed from the polytheists and His Messenger,” with the word “Messenger” in the genitive case. The Bedouin remarked, “If Allah is disavowed from His Messenger, then I am disavowed from him!” He only intended to draw the reader’s attention to his error. The man then seized him by the collar and dragged him to Umar, the Khaleefah (Caliph). The Bedouin recounted his recitation, whereupon Umar ordered the study of Arabic grammar. It is also narrated that Abu al-Aswad al-Du’ali heard this and reported the matter to Ali (ra). This was the reason for the establishment of the discipline of grammar (النحو), and this story is mentioned in some grammar books when discussing the origin of the discipline of grammar.

This verse, which declares that Allah (swt) is disavowed from the polytheists and that His Messenger is likewise disavowed from the polytheists, is in the form of information (صيغة الخبر seeghatul khabr), but it is one of those matters that can be interpreted as an imperative command (أمر amr). That is, inform the mushrikeen of this warning, and Allah's disavowal of something is one of the strongest contextualization of the prohibition (تحريم tahreem) of that matter from which He disavows Himself, namely, polytheism (شرك shirk).

Allah (swt) said, ﴿فَإِنْ تَابْتُمْ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللَّهِ﴾ **“If you repent, it is better for you; but if you turn away, then know that you will not escape Allah.”** This part of the verse details the state of the mushrikeen after this announcement. Whoever among them repents of their shirk and believes in Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw), it is better for them. However, whoever turns away and persists in their turning away and aversion should know that they will not escape the grasp of Allah (swt), that they will not be able to escape Him, and thus they deserve Allah's punishment.

Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ﴾ **“And give tidings to those who disbelieve of a painful punishment.”** This sentence is connected to the first sentence in the verse because the first sentence carries an imperative command. It is as if it were said, “Inform the people of Allah (swt) and His Messenger’s disavowal of the polytheists, and that whoever repents among them will be saved, and whoever turns away is close to punishment.” Then it says: “And also give tidings to the disbelieving polytheists of a painful punishment.”

The original meaning of “tidings (بشارة basharah)” is to inform of a matter that is pleasing, but here it is used metaphorically to warn and inform of a matter that unpleasant, in a mocking tone towards those being given the tidings of punishment.

The painful punishment is the punishment of killing, capture, enslavement, and the confiscation of wealth, as Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَأَنْزَلَ جُنُودًا لَمْ تَرَوْهَا وَعَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾ **“And He sent down forces you did not see and punished those who disbelieved. And that is the recompense of the disbelievers”** [TMQ Surah At-Tawbah:26]. Their punishment on the day of Hunayn was partly through killing, and partly through capture, enslavement, and the confiscation of wealth. That is, warn the polytheists that you will fight them and defeat them after the sacred months have passed, as indicated by His saying, ﴿فَإِذَا انْسَلَخَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرْمُ فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَخُذُوهُمْ وَأَحْصُرُوهُمْ﴾ **“Then when the sacred months have passed, kill the polytheists wherever you find them and capture them and besiege them and sit in wait for them in every place of ambush”** [TMQ Surah At-Tawbah:5]. The term punishment encompasses both worldly and otherworldly punishments, unless there is contextualization to specify otherwise, as in Surah Al-Qalam, after recounting the story of the owners of the garden, where Allah (swt) follows with, ﴿كَذَلِكَ الْعَذَابُ وَلَعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ﴾ **“Such is the punishment, but the punishment of the Hereafter is greater”** [TMQ Surah Al-Qalam:33].

This noble verse, along with the preceding and following verses, includes some Shariah rulings on foreign policy, which are part of the rulings of the Method (الطريقة At-Tareeqah). It regulates the relationship of the Islamic state within the Abode of Islam (دار الإسلام Dar ul Islam) with other entities in the Arabian Peninsula. The foundation of foreign policy in Islam is the carrying of the Dawah. Therefore, relations between the Khilafah (Caliphate) and other states are established in a way that serves the interests of the Dawah and does not contradict them. It is a Shariah obligation upon Muslims and the rulers of Muslims today to base their relations with existing states in non-Muslim lands on this principle: they must not ally with them against Muslims, nor can they take them as allies instead of the believers. The original principle is that all Muslims must be in one political entity, as the Messenger of Allah (saw) did, and they must be ruled by one, single Khaleefah (Caliph). We ask Allah (swt) to change the condition of Muslims to the best condition.