

“And indeed We will definitely try you with something of fear and hunger, and diminution of riches, and selves, and products; and give glad tidings to the patient.” (TMQ¹, 2 : 155)

As we know, the concept of trial or test is not evil. The evil is when you fail this trial as each trial is but a test. No one has ever said that tests are evil; it is so in the vision of he who could not withstand the effort exerted to attain success. As for he who has exerted some effort and won the first position, he finds that tests are good for him. Thus, Allah’s translated word **“We will definitely try you”** means that He will create a test for the qualifiers for the new creed.

Allah, The Truth, has told us before this *ayah* (verse) the major trial, namely when man falls martyr in the cause of Allah. He (SWT)² informed us about the reward of the martyr: remaining alive at his Lord's. That was an introduction to lighter trials. The maximum trial within our cognition is the loss of life. The Truth (SWT) wants to provide the believers with immunity against trials below the loss of life; immunity against fear, hunger, shortage of wealth and lives and harvest. All that is below the loss of human life is but a luxury if compared. He who has not lost his life will have other trials less difficult than the loss of his life, like the tests mentioned above which are in things that man loves. The laws of *shariah*³ demands man to renounce some of the things he loves and these trials are within the frame of observing the laws of religion.

The first of these trials is fear. Fear is the feeling that the soul is disturbed, not at ease in apprehension of something evil. Fear is unnecessary because if you want to save yourself from something that frightens you, you need to use your means to ward off that fear. However, if you give in to anxiety you won't be able to face this cause of fear no matter what means you have got because you'll face this fear with a weak and disturbed

¹ Translation of the meaning of the Qur'an.

² Subhanahu was taalla (glorified and exalted be He)

³ *Shariah*) the ethical and moral code based on the Qur'an and sunnah.

character. You need to be in a calm state at times of fear so that you can provide yourself with what could dispel your fears. But if you let your anxiety exceed the limit, you further aid the source of this fear against you as you won't be facing the cause of fear with all your power nor with your intellect.

Hence, we say to the person who fears fear that by such action he helps that source of fear at the expense of himself, besides apprehension and anxiety won't stop this cause of fear. You should rather think of what could obstruct this fear and let things take their normal course without being anxious in advance. The problem of people is that they live their fears before they actually occur making the span of suffering longer for them. An affliction, for instance, could befall one in a month, so why should you expand its period by apprehension and fear of confrontation? If you let it be, you will shorten the suffering time.

Bear in mind that once an affliction befalls you, Allah (SWT), with His mercy, sends down alleviation along with it. Once you are in apprehension of an affliction before you actually go through it, you then experience it without the accompanying alleviation. On the other hand, if you remain patient hoping for Allah's reward and able to face your affliction, then you will go through it with the ease that comes along with it.

The call to Islam was still fledgling, thus the good preparation of the exemplary believers was incumbent. Fear was natural as the nemeses of Islam were conspiring and plotting against it. This is the trial. What is the reason behind trying the believer with fear? He has to make use of this fear through preparing the tools that help neutralize the cause of this fear. if he does this, he will surely pass the test.

The second trial in the noble ayah is hunger: It is an irresistible desire for food which is necessary to remain alive. It is Allah's mercy to man that He has guaranteed for him nourishment which can be stocked for him at times of need. Man stores excess food in the form of fat and flesh. When he is hungry and cannot find food, he takes his need from

this fat. When he consumes that fat, he consumes the flesh, then he takes his needs from the bones in order to remain alive.

There are multiple systems in the human body with the brain as their master. As long as there is life in the brain cells, then one is functional. But if these cells die, then this is the end of it. That is why it is sometimes said that person A is dead and when he is given a certain drug, he comes back to life. People are oblivious of the confirmed scientific fact that the body is dead only when the brain is lifeless. Hence, a man's heart could stop and be resuscitated with an electric shock that makes it function. However, when the cells of the brain die it means terminal death. Thus, all the body systems are at the service of this master, namely, the brain.

It is wondrous, that the 'master' , the human brain, is located at the top of the body just as the animal's brain is, while the plants' master is in its roots. First, the leaves die, then the shoots, then the stem and finally the root when there is no water. When some water reaches the root, the plant regains its freshness and grows. Such is the way with the human brain, after man has depleted all his stock of nourishment from the fat, the flesh, then the bones, he can only be saved by providing the brain with nourishment. Therefore, an Arabian woman unaware of Anatomy once said, "We have experienced difficult years that have consumed the fat, the flesh and the bones."

We should realize that hunger adorns for us all kinds of sustenance in life. When you are hungry, you think of any food as delectable. What causes people to turn to prepare multiple sorts of dishes is actually lack of hunger. Man wants to make food delightful in order to eat it, yet if he were truly hungry he would have sufficed with any sort of food. Therefore, it is said that the food of the hungry is tasty and the bed of the tired is comfortable. When man is tired he could fall asleep on a rough ground and sleeps soundly. Whereas a man who is not tired keeps on turning in bed even if his beddings were made of silk.

Hence, the trial of hunger causes you to tolerate and eat what is necessary of food that keeps you alive. You then eat to merely provide yourself with energy not out of enjoyment and you become happy with any sort of food. Allah (SWT) has ordained fasting in order for us to tolerate hunger. The believers had to live for long hours in a battle without food. Had they not been prepared for withstanding hunger they would have been exhausted and would have collapsed. Thus, The Truth (SWT) wants the wellbeing of the believer and wants him to be fully prepared. A believer experiences fear so he prepares himself well, and suffers hunger so he takes only what is necessary of food.

Societies come to grips with economic difficulties by living in austerity, but some societies cannot do so. In such societies some people cannot lead an austere life, hence we address them saying that you are not preparing yourself for the twists of fate.

Ibrahim Ibn-Adham the poet said, I quote:

If an item is expensive for me I renounce it thus it turns very cheap when it is expensive

Namely, when a thing is expensive and he does not buy it then becomes the cheapest as he won't pay any money in it.

As to the third test, the lack of wealth, it arises from the fact that the believers may be occupied with the call to Islam, fighting the enemy, and could fall martyrs thus they will have to sacrifice their action in life that leads to gaining wealth that might deplete eventually. As a result they will suffer the lack in fruits, namely the yield of any work. The Truth (SWT) prepares us for such tests and if we pass them successfully we will have the glad tidings for being patient during these tests: times of fear, hunger, loss of life and lack of wealth. Consequently, a successful believer in all these trials will be able to face life with firmness and strength of character. Bearing in mind that life is but a passage not a destination. Thus, his passage will not distract him from his destination.

"Who, when an affliction afflicts them, say, "Surely we belong to Allah, and surely to Him we are returning." (TMQ, 2:156).

An affliction (*Museebah*) is the event that causes distress and pain to man. The Arabic term *Museebah* is derived from the stem *asaba al hadaf* (hitting the aim). When a believer is afflicted by a calamity, he is confident the more it hurts the more reward he receives. Therefore, when the disbelievers gloated at the calamities of some Muslims during the battles they fought, Allah (SWT) revealed the following verse to the believers, **"Say, "Never will anything afflict us except what Allah has prescribed for us..."**. (TMQ, 9: 51)

That is say O you who believe to these idiotic disbelievers that nothing will befall us except that which is prescribed by Allah (SWT). When we meditate on Allah's words **"what Allah has prescribed for us"**, we deduce that eventually things are going to be for our own gain. Moreover, we will have the best of rewards from Allah. The Truth (SWT) did not say **"what Allah prescribed against us"** because if this had been the case it would have been a punishment and retribution from Allah. Any affliction is caused either by man himself or he has nothing to do with it. If it is caused by man then he should not be in panic as he is the one who brought it about. Whereas if an affliction is caused by another, then one should examine the reason of this affliction; if it is out of divine retribution or because of the oppression of another. If it is out of divine retribution then he is recompensed for his misdeeds, while if it is an act of oppression by others, then Allah will avenge it on them. Thus, a believer is a winner in both cases.

A believer receives every affliction with good expectations. Every believer should assess himself realistically: Does he have a right upon Allah? Is he a bondsman who has not right upon Him (SWT)? I am but part of His dominion which He governs however He wishes. He who does not like this fact let him reject any affliction and order it saying, "Do not inflict me!" You will never be able to ward off any affliction. Hence, let's receive afflictions as true believers. The Truth (SWT) wants, by attributing us to Him, to honor and award us for He urges us to say, **" Surely we belong to Allah, and surely to Him we are returning"**. By such saying we attribute our possession to Allah and accept what

befalls us. For example, Allah is Exalted above all examples, no man ever wishes to ruin his possessions.

The owner of any possession does whatever is necessary to improve his possession even if people take it at face value as mischief, so how it is with Allah who owns us. He (SWT) would never expose His possession to any harm, but he preserves it according to His wisdom and goodness. The Prophet (SAWS)⁴ taught us to say, at any affliction, "**Surely we belong to Allah, and surely to Him we are returning**". Moreover, he advised us to further say, "O Allah, reward me for my affliction and give me something better than it in exchange for it."⁵ If one says it in the advent of any affliction he surely finds that what follows it is good. Even if a man forgets to say it then he remembers and says it later, he will still be rewarded as if he said it at the time it occurred.

There's a story of Umm Salamah (RA)⁶. When her husband Abu-Salamah died, who was a great man, she was in intense grief. So she was told to utter what the Prophet taught the Muslims when in distress:

Umm Salama, the wife of the Apostle of Allah (may peace be upon him), reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying, "We belong to Allah and to Him shall we return; O Allah, reward me for my affliction and give me something better than it in exchange for it," Allah will give him reward for affliction, and would give him something better than it in exchange." She said what was told to her, then after the lapse of her *iddah*⁷ the Prophet (SAWS) proposed to her. She was asked if she was rewarded someone better than Ubu-Salama or not, she responded that she never expected such a blissful situation.

What is the state of those who say the aforementioned words? The Truth (SWT) says,

⁴ Salla Allah alayhi wa salam (May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him)

⁵ Narrated in (Saheeh Muslim)

⁶ Radeyah Allah anaha/anh (May Allah be pleased with him/her)

⁷ The period prescribed by Islamic law for a woman during which she may not remarry after being widowed or divorced

"Upon those are the prayers from their Lord, and mercy; and those are they (who) are the right-guided." (TMQ, 2:157)

Let's reflect on the main objective for which Allah prepares us to uphold the call to Islam and protect the methodology of the truth and demolish the state of the wrong doers; this is an objective but not the ultimate one. The ultimate objective is that we are doing all this to enjoy the mercy of Allah and his blessings in the hereafter. To gain His satisfaction and mercy. The late Sayyed Quotb said, "Never let anything, even the victory of the creed, carry you away from the mercy and greetings of Allah."

The believer's objective is to be among those that Allah mentioned in the ayah above.

Salat (prayers) means supplication.

We all live by the mercy of Allah even the disbeliever uses the means in his life and enjoys its fruit with Allah's mercy. The believer takes from the favors of Allah Who increases them with blessing and assurance. Assurance is a supreme blessing as he who lives in this life and is assured that there is a better life than this one enjoys a great kind of assurance.

People pray, the angels pray and Allah prays. Allah almighty says, " " (TMQ, prayer from Allah is mercy and blessing, from the angels it is asking Allah for forgiveness, and from the believers means supplication. Asking Allah to grant Muhammad (SAWS) good, mercy and blessing, is supplication for our benefit. This is because any status the Prophet enjoys benefits his nation and the whole world. When we pray for the Prophet once Allah prays on us ten folds. Isn't this good for you? Who intercedes with Allah on the creation's behalf on the Day Judgment ? It is the Prophet (SAWS).

"...and those are they (who) are the right-guided." (TMQ, 2:157)

The '**right-guided**' are those who take the path that leads to the objective, namely the prayers and mercy from Allah. In addition, you enjoy the favors of Allah and in the hereafter you will enjoy the favors and the meeting of Allah.

"Surely, As-safa and Al-Marwah (i.e. two hills near the Kacbah) are among the way marks of Allah. So whoever makes the Pilgrimage (i.e. Hajj) to the Home, or makes the Visitation, (Umrah, sometimes called the minor pilgrimage) then there is no fault in him to circumambulate them; and whoever volunteers any (optional) charity, then surely Allah is Thankful, Ever-Knowing." (TMQ, 2:158)

As-Safa and al-Marwa are small hills well known for the visitors of the sanctified precepts. Lady Hajar was moving back and forth between those hills in quest for water to her infant after Prophet Ibrahim (AS)⁸ (Abraham) had left them near the Sanctified House.

There, Hajar said her famous words, "Why are you leaving us? Is it the command of Allah ?"

Prophet Ibrahim replied, "Yes".

She responded, "Then He will never neglect us?"

She has sufficed with the Creator rather than with the created. Allah has indeed inspired her to say so. Note the backdrop of this event when Ibrahim supplicated his Lord saying what can be translated as, "**Our Lord, surely I have made (some) of my offspring to dwell in a valley that is not under cultivation (Literally: other than that “owning” plantation) at Your Inviolable Home, our Lord, that they may keep up the prayer.**

⁸ *Alayhe as-Salam* [All Peace of Allah be upon him].

So make heart-sights of mankind yearn towards them and provide them with products, that possibly they would thank (You)." (TMQ, 14:37)

The words " **a valley that is not under cultivation**" mean that the land was arid as whenever there's water there would exist plants. Water is the basis for life, so how would it be if a mother and her infant have no water?

Her infant was thirsty and she looked for a spring or a traveling caravan but found none. Let's imagine her situation: a woman at her age, as lonely as she was, without water, striving between the two hills seven times, indeed she must have been thirsty as her infant was. Feeling exhausted, she returned to her infant. Had her *sa'i*⁹ been fruitful, we would have said that it would have lead her to find water. However, she was the very person who said, " Then He will never neglect us."By this saying she has attached herself to the Causer not to the cause. If Allah (SWT) has granted her quest directly because of her *sa'i* in searching for water, it would not have been proof of the truthfulness of her trust in Allah.

The Truth (SWT) wanted her *sa'i* for seven times to bring no result. Then she returned to her infant only to find water near his feet. Thus, Hajar proved that her trust in Allah was true as she was certain that Allah would never abandon them. Allah, The Truth, wanted to prove this to her and fulfilled her quest not by means of her own endeavor but through an unexpected cause; her infant who struck the earth with his feet causing the water to gush out of it. This is not usually a valid cause but Allah wants it as such to stress the importance of cause and effect aspect even if it yielded not fruits. *Sa'i* remained a ritual of hajj¹⁰ to maintain the faith in the Causer yet without neglecting the causes.

We should differentiate between *tawakkul* (placing one's trust in Allah) and *tawaakul*. The former is an action of the heart, whereas the latter means the failure to use one's

⁹ Striving between the two hills of Safa and Marwa in Makkah

¹⁰ The pilgrimage to Makkah during the first half of the month of Dhul-Hijjah, and is the fifth pillar of Islam.

limbs (being productive). In Islam there should be no *tawaakul*, rather both the heart and the limbs work together.

When people ceased to worship Allah and idolatry was disseminate in Arabia, an idol named 'Isaaf' was placed on as-Safa and another one named 'Na'elah' on al-Marwah. Pagans were striving between the two idols not between the hills. Thus, they transformed the ritual of pure monotheism to polytheism. With the advent of Islam the Muslims faced the Sanctified House in their prayer but only after the House was purified from idols and was purely Allah's. At first the Muslims did not feel at ease to observe *sa'i* so Allah revealed the above-mentioned ayah (verse) allowing them to observe the ritual free of guilt since their intention was that the *sa'i* was solely for Allah's sake.

The first intention of *sa'i* by Hajar was faith in Allah while employing the causes, but idolatry overturned the pinnacle of faith to the nadir of disbelief. It was incumbent for the Muslims to regain the first faithful intention in their *sa'i*. We, in Islam, submit to the commands of the Commander, Allah Who ordered us to kiss the black stone and commanded us to pelt the stone which symbolizes Iblees (Satan). Thus, the crux of the matter is the obedience to Allah and the 'intention' that resides in the heart while doing the outward actions. Allah in His revelation most probably meant that as-Safa and al-Marwah are rituals observed solely for Allah not for Isaaf and Na'elah. The Polytheists wanted to protect their idolatry by placing their idols on sanctified sites; as-Safa and al-Marwah.

Following this revealed notion, Allah manifests to the believers that the occupiers of a pure site do not cause impurity to it. The evidence is that when faith prevailed, the idols were demolished and removed from al Ka'bah purifying it. The word 'Safa' means the smooth stone, acquiring this quality because plenty of people have been treading it throughout the times. It is said that this word is attributed to the choice of Adam. As for 'Al-Marwa' denotes, Eve. But we will not argue this as it is a knowledge that neither benefits nor harms if unknown.

The word *sha'aer* (rituals) also indicates the places of worship. The word *mash'ar* in Arabic means the site where there's a specific worship observed. Therefore, as-Safa and al-Marwah are *sha'aer* of Allah (places of worship). In this context the ayah says, **"So whoever makes the Pilgrimage (i.e. Hajj) to the Home, or makes the Visitation, (Umrah, sometimes called the minor pilgrimage) then there is no fault in him to circumambulate them..."** we deduce that hajj and umrah¹¹ can either be obligatory or voluntary. If a Muslim observes hajj and umrah once, this means that he has accomplished the mandatory act. Nevertheless, this does not stop a Muslim from re-observing hajj and umrah which then becomes a voluntary act of worship for which Allah is thankful.

Allah said, "...*yatawafa (to circumambulate) them...*". In Arabic there is a difference between the following words: *tafa*, *jala*, *dara*. '*Tafa*' means to circumambulate something, so where is the round area at as-Safa and al-Marwah which Allah indicated in the word *tafa*? *Tawaaf* or circumambulation means to go from a starting point back to it, only to start from it again. Every movement from a point to the same point makes a circle. It is true that he who makes *sa'i* between as-Safa and al-Marwah does not circumambulate a point but he goes from as-Safa to al-Marwah back to as-Safa again, thus it becomes a *tawaf* or circumambulation. An example of this from our daily life is the cop who patrols an area at night. This act is called *tawaf*, as he goes back and forth in an area several times.

" and whoever volunteers any (optional) charity, then surely Allah is Thankful, Ever-Knowing" This part denotes that the 'thankful' has got something good from the 'thanked', so what is Allah thankful for? A believer observes mandatory acts of worship because Allah has made them obligatory. But when he does extra acts of worship out of

¹¹ The pilgrimage to Makkah during the first half of the month of Dhul-Hijjah, and is the fifth pillar of Islam.

Umrah: voluntary short pilgrimage that can be performed at any time of the year

love and passion then this is an excess in worship for which Allah is thankful.

Thankfulness from Allah entails a reward and endless favours.

"Surely (the ones) who keep back whatever supreme evidences and guidance We have sent down even after We have made them evident to mankind in the Book, Allah curses those (people), and the cursers (also) curse them" (TMQ, 2:159)

Allah (SWT) reveals in this ayah the recompense of those who keep back Allah's revelations. Some of the people of the Book have kept back the evidences that Allah sent down in their scripture. Those evidences are proof of the Prophecy of Prophet Muhammad (SAWS). This holding back of evidence leads to evil and the more evil the world suffers because of this, the more curse those people will receive. 'Curse' means to distance and banish someone away from the mercy of Allah.

Allah, The Truth, admonishes the believers that this cursing is not confined to the people of the Book but it includes everyone who keeps back any of Allah's revealed evidences. Those who do so will be doomed just as well to the same fate; deserving Allah's curse. It is worth mentioning that the term '*la'n*' (curse) has occurred in the Qur'an 41 times.

A 'curse' may indicate chastisement or wrath and deprivation from Allah's mercy where there's no hope for the cursed to be saved. In addition it could denote disciplining the cursed, in this case it is an indication of anger *for* and not against the cursed. A curse that is a result of wrath entails that there can be no chance for redemption. When man is exposed to the fire of hell which is a non-living thing, he might think that there will be someone who might feel for him and bring him out of hell. Yet, how would it be if the curse is from Allah, the angels, and all people as in the following verse, "**...upon those is the curse of Allah and the Angels and mankind all together.** " (TMQ, 2:161).

In the ayah which we have displayed earlier the word "**cursters**" includes people and other creatures. It is as if everything in the existence takes part in cursing the above mentioned people. For instance, if Allah deprives disobedient people from water, then the plant, animals, and all places curse these people for their disobedience that caused this deprivation. As to the curse in the hereafter it will be from Allah, the angels and all people from Adam until those in Doomsday. Among those who invoke the curse, there is the believer and disbeliever.

In this world, there are deceivers who deceive some regarding the religion of Islam. Yet, in the Hereafter everything will unfold and the deceivers will be exposed and the deceived will be remorseful. There, the followed will repudiate the followers and the deceivers will repudiate the deceived. Every time a nation is cast into hellfire, it curses the other nations which lead on to this doom. Allah (SWT) says, "**As (the ones) who were closely followed acquitted themselves of (the ones) who closely followed (them), and see the torment, and their means (of escape) are cut off**" (TMQ, 2:166)
"**...Whenever a nation enters, it curses its sister-nation...**" (TMQ, 7:38)

Hence, curse is invoked by disbelievers against one another and from the oppressed and the believers against the infidels, as well.

A curse that entails banishment and wrath is different from the disciplinary action which takes the form of shunning the one who erred. We saw this when the Prophet (SAWS) shunned the three who stayed behind and did not take part in the battle of Tabouk. It was called the battle of distress, as it was difficult in every aspect: The distance was long, the Muslims were short of beasts that carried them, there was shortage of provisions and water and the weather was scorching hot. The Muslims faced great distress to the extent that every ten Muslims had to take turns in riding the camels or horses that carried them. Moreover, they suffered shortage of food that they had to eat spoilt dates with worms in it and had to eat rancid fat. In order to compensate for the shortage of water, they had to

slaughter camels to drink from its stored water. All these distressful factors made it clear that only the truthful in his faith and conviction were those who set out for the battle.

Therefore, some believers gave in to the insinuations in their soul to the effect that they stayed behind under the lush shades of Madinah . One said to himself, "Am I staying here under the shades in comfort and the Prophet of Allah is in the heat of the sun? By Allah, this will never be the case!" then he stood to his feet and followed the army. Another believer, who had a garden with lots of fruits and trees, contemplated his garden and said, "Is it you who stop me from following the Prophet of Allah? By Allah! you will no longer be in my possession, you will go in charity for the sake of Allah."

A third one sat at his home with his beautiful wife before lush greenery and water around him. He said, "Would I sit under the shades with water around me and a beautiful woman, while the Prophet of Allah is in the scorching heat! By Allah, this will never be!" and he set off riding his horse to join the army in the desert.

When the Prophet (SAWS) returned victorious, those who had not joined him apologised justifying themselves that they did not have the necessary war gear. Allah's Apostle accepted the excuses they had expressed and left the secrets of their hearts for Allah to judge. Only three of them were honest with the Prophet and admitted that they were in welfare and had war gear when they refrained from setting out with the Prophet (SAWS). Upon this, the Prophet ordered the people to boycott them. Two of them complied and remained at their homes. They are: Helal Ibn-Imayyah and Mararah Ibnur-Rabee'. As to Ka'b Ibn-Malik, he would go out and meet the people except that no one spoke to him nor did anyone deal with him. He attended congregational prayers with the Prophet (SAWS) and when he greeted the Prophet, the Prophet did not reply to his greeting nor did he glance his way. Ka'b narrated this and said, "... and I would come to Allah's Apostle and greet him while he was sitting in his gathering after the prayer, and I would wonder whether the Prophet did move his lips in return to my greetings or not."¹²

¹² Saheeh Muslim, Volume 5, Book 59, Number 701.

The Prophet wanted to discipline the mentioned three by not dealing with or speaking with them. Thus, the world became strait for them. Then, Ka'b went to his cousin and climbed the wall of his house. He knew that if he knocked at his cousin's door he would not open the door to receive him. Despite this, his cousin refrained to speak to him. Ka'b said pleadingly, " O Abu Qatada! I beseech you by Allah! Do you know that I love Allah and His Apostle!" He asked him three times to no avail. His cousin did not reply. Ka'b kept pleading and inquired about the time the boycotting ended. Abu-Qatadah replied that only Allah knew better.

Forty nights passed since this punishment had started. To further step up this punishment, the Prophet ordered the three men not to come near their women. The Prophet has tightened the noose of isolation on them to reach their closest circle of people, i.e. their spouses. Ka'b inquired if he should divorce his wife, the Prophet ordered him not to come near her only. Some people advised Ka'b to let his wife ask the Prophet's to let her remain with Ka'b to serve him like Helal Ibn-Umayyah's wife whom the Prophet allowed her to remain in her house to serve her husband. Nonetheless, the Prophet warned her against being intimate with Helal. Helal's wife replied that Helal did not have the energy or will to do any thing. However Ka'b was a young man and feared that if he asked the Prophet permission, the Prophet would not allow him.

Thus was the moral disciplinary banishment or *la'n* in another connotation. It was not quite an ousting from the fold of faith. Evidence of that is the fact that the disciplined three were still eligible to receive orders from the Prophet (SAWS). The glad tiding was revealed in ten days when Allah (SWT) revealed, **"And to the three who were left staying behind, until, when the earth, spacious as it is, became strait for them, and their selves became strait for them, and they expected that there was no shelter from Allah except in Him; thereafter He relented towards them that they might repent; surely Allah, He, Ever He, is The Superbly Relenting, The Ever-Merciful."** (TMQ,

9:118) Allah did not close the door to repentance but left it open before man whether a believer or a disbeliever.

He (SWT) said, " **Except (the ones) who repent and act righteously and ascertain the evidence; then, to those I relent, and I am The Superbly Relenting, The Ever-Merciful.**" (TMQ, 2:160)

Namely, the sinners who declared their repentance, reformed what they have corrupted, and revealed to people the evidence which they concealed Allah will forgive them. Holding back the truth does not only affect the relationship between the bondsman and his Lord, but it harms other people as well. Allah has opened the door for repentance when He revealed, "**He relented towards them that they might repent...**".

The term '*taba*' (to repent) means to return to Allah asking for his forgiveness. When Allah 'relents' towards someone it means that He has accepted his repentance and forgave him. He (SWT) will not chastise the repentant after it was destined for him to be punished.

There are three facts regarding repentance:

- 1- Allah has prescribed repentance for us.
- 2- The bondsman embarks to repent.
- 3- Allah accepts his repentance.

All of the above points indicate refraining from sin and disobedience.

The word '*Tawwab*' (Superbly Relenting) is an exaggerative term denoting repetition and continuity in being Relenting.

He who trespasses a bound of Allah should reform by reversing the sin which he did. If he commits a sin privately, then it is sufficient for him to repent privately. Whereas, if he publicly violated Allah's orders setting a bad example for people encouraging them to follow suit, then it is not right for him to repent in private. He should rather repent in

public. Moreover, penalties cannot be carried out if based upon suspicion only. However, a person who boasts of his sin should not be left without punishment. For instance, a person who committed adultery and four people witnessed his sinful act must be punished. Such a person must have done it repetitively and carelessly until four people witnessed the act.