

Tafseer Al-Baqarah (2: 243-245)

From the Book, Introduction to the Tafseer of the Quran,

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﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ فَقَالَ لَهُمُ اللَّهُ مُوتُوا ثُمَّ أَحْيَاهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ (243) وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ (244) مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْسُطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ (245)﴾

“Have you not reflected upon those who fled their homes in the thousands, fearing death? Allah said to them, “Die!” then He gave them life. Surely, Allah is ever Bountiful to humanity, but most people are ungrateful. (243) Fight in the cause of Allah, and know that Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (244) Who will lend to Allah a good loan so that Allah will multiply many times over? It is Allah Who decreases and increases. And to Him you will be returned. (245)” [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah 2:243-245]

In these verses, Allah (swt) explains:

1. Allah (swt) addresses the Messenger of Allah (swt) and the believers to consider the people who left their homes in thousands, for fear of fighting an enemy, advancing towards their homes. So they left the homes and fled before the enemy in order to preserve their lives. When they reached a place they thought was safe, they encamped there, to preserve their lives. When they settled within it, the death from which they fled surprised them, in their safe haven. Then Allah (swt) resurrected them after a while, so that they knew that it is Allah (swt) Alone Who is the Granter and Taker of life. When their lifespan comes to an end, they cannot delay or advance it for even an hour.

Within this, He (swt) urged the believers to strive in the Path of Allah (swt) and that there is no escape from death. Allah (swt) said, ﴿أَيُّمَّا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُشِيدَةٍ﴾ “Wherever you may be, death will overcome you, even if you were in fortified towers.” [TMQ Surah An-Nisaa 4:78]. So the believer hastens to fight in order to obtain one of the good deeds, victory or martyrdom, without being among those who remain behind. He knows that abstaining does not prevent the end of the lifespan, when it is due. Allah (swt) said, ﴿الَّذِينَ قَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ وَقَعَدُوا لَوْ أَطَاعُونَا مَا قُتِلُوا ۗ قُلْ فَادْرَءُوا عَنْ أَنْفُسِكُمُ الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾ “Those who sat at home, saying about their brothers, “Had they listened to us, they would not have been killed.” Say, ‘O Prophet “Try not to die if what you say is true!”” [TMQ Surah Aali Imran 3:168]

Then Allah (swt) explains at the end of the verse that Allah (swt) grants great bounty to the people. Then He (swt) draws parables for them. He (swt) reminds them of His Signs. He (swt) informs them of what is for them, regarding their victory in both worlds. However, those who consider are but a few, and those who are thankful for His grace are far less than the disbelieving kafiireen. Allah (swt) said, ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ﴾ “Surely Allah is ever Bountiful to humanity, but most people are ungrateful.”

As for ﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ﴾ “Have you not reflected?,” it is an interrogative form of reporting and exclamatory surprise. It can be used for those who saw a reality with their own eyes. So he remembers what he saw, so as to report what he saw, whilst marvelling at it. It is also used for whom you relate a matter, so that he perceives it as if he saw it in reality, whilst marvelling at it in surprise. This is the case here. Allah (swt) informed His Prophet Muhammad (saw) about the people, regarding whom the parable was given, as if they were in front of him. This is for consideration and being struck by wonder, at their condition. For

which people will return to their Lord. Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَاللَّهُ يَفْقِضُ وَيَبْسُطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ﴾ **“It is Allah Who decreases and increases. And to Him you will be returned.”**

As for ﴿مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُفْرِضُ اللَّهُ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفُهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً﴾ **“Who will lend to Allah a good loan so that Allah will multiply many times over?”** This means that regarding the one who lends Allah (swt) a good loan, He will multiply it for him. So ﴿يُضَاعِفُهُ﴾ **“he multiplies”** is in the accusative منصوب, in answer to the question. It is as if you say من أخوك فنكرمه “who is your brother, so we honour him.” The most eloquent answer to the استفهام interrogative is with the fa’ “so that.” If there is no future tense verb before it that is in addendum to it, it is in the accusative form.

Abu Hatim narrated from ibn Umar who said, when it was revealed, ﴿مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ﴾ **“The example of those who spend their wealth in the cause of Allah is that of a grain that sprouts into seven ears, each bearing one hundred grains”** [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah 2:261], the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «رَبِّ زِدْ أُمَّتِي» **“O my Lord, increase for my Ummah.”** Then it was revealed, ﴿مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُفْرِضُ اللَّهُ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفُهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً﴾ **“Who will lend to Allah a good loan so that Allah will multiply many times over?”** The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «رَبِّ زِدْ أُمَّتِي» **“O my Lord, increase for my Ummah.”** Then it was revealed, ﴿إِنَّمَا يُوفَى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ﴾ **“Only those who endure patiently will be given their reward without limit.”** [TMQ Surah Az-Zumar 39:10].

So there is a great reward for one who spends in the Path of Allah (swt), out of sincerity to Allah (swt) and honesty with the Messenger of Allah (saw).

Regarding, ﴿وَاللَّهُ يَفْقِضُ وَيَبْسُطُ﴾ **“It is Allah Who decreases and increases.”** It means that He (swt) Alone determines and expands the Rizq (sustenance.) For this reason, the believer strives on earth in search of Rizq, whilst being reassured and content with what Allah (swt) has apportioned, for sustenance is in His Hand (swt) Alone. Allah (swt) said, ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ﴾ **“Indeed, Allah Alone is the Supreme Provider, Lord of all Power, Ever Mighty.”** [TMQ Surah Adh-Dhaariyaat 51:58].