

Sura 8 - The Spoils

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THE CHAPTER OF THE SPOILS

(VIII. Medinah.)

IN the name of the merciful and compassionate God. They will ask thee about the spoils. Say, 'The spoils are God's and the Apostle's; fear God and settle it amongst yourselves; obey God and the Apostle if ye do believe.'

Verily, the believers are those who, when God's name is mentioned, their hearts sink with fear; and when His signs are rehearsed to them they increase them in faith; and on their Lord do they rely; who are steadfast in prayer, and of what we have bestowed upon them give in alms; these are in truth believers; to them are degrees with their Lord, and forgiveness, and a generous provision. As thy Lord caused thee to go forth from thy house with the truth, although a sect of the believers were averse therefrom. They wrangled with thee about the truth after it was made plain, as though they were being driven on to death and looked thereon; and when God promised you that one of the two troops should be yours, and ye would fain have had those who had no arms. God wished to prove the truth true by His words, and to cut off the hindermost parts of those who misbelieve- to prove the truth true, and to make vain the vain, although the sinners are averse.

When ye asked for succour from your Lord, and He answered you, I will assist you with a thousand angels, with others in reserve.' God made it only glad tidings to quiet your hearts therewith; for victory is only from God! verily, God is mighty and wise. When drowsiness covered you as a security from Him, and He sent down upon you from the heavens water to purify you withal, and to take away from you the plague of Satan, and to tie up your hearts and to make firm your footsteps.

When your Lord inspired the angels- 'Verily, I am with you; make ye firm then those who believe; I will cast dread into the hearts of those who misbelieve,- strike off their necks then, and strike off from them every finger tip.'

That is, because they went into opposition against God and His Apostle; for he who goes into opposition against God and His Apostle- verily, God is keen to punish.

There, taste it! since for the misbelievers is the torment of the Fire.

O ye who believe! when ye meet those who misbelieve in swarms, turn not to them your hinder parts; for he who turns to them that day his hinder parts, save turning to fight or rallying to a troop, brings down upon himself wrath from God, and his resort is hell, and an ill journey shall it be!

Ye did not slay them, but it was God who slew them; nor didst thou shoot when thou didst shoot, but God did shoot to try the believers from Himself with a goodly trial; verily, God both hears and knows. There! verily, God weakens the stratagem of the misbelievers. If ye wish the matter to be decided, a decision has now come to you; but if ye desist, it is better for you; and if ye turn back we will turn too, and your troop shall avail nothing, great in number though it be, since God is with the believers!

O ye who believe! obey God and His Apostle, and turn not from Him while ye hear, and be not like those who say, 'We hear,' and yet they hear not.

Verily, the worst of beasts in God's sight are the deaf, the dumb who do not understand. Had God known any good in them, He would have made them hear; but had He made them hear, they would have turned back and have swerved aside.

O ye who believe! answer God and His Apostle when He calls you to that which quickens you; and know that God steps in between man and his heart; and that to Him ye shall be gathered. And fear temptation, which will not light especially on those of you who have done wrong; but know that God is keen to punish.

Remember when ye were few in number and weak in the land, fearing lest people should snatch you away; then He sheltered you and aided you with victory, and provided you with good things; haply ye may give thanks.

O ye who believe! be not treacherous to God and His Apostle; nor be treacherous to your engagement while ye know! Know that your wealth and your children are but a temptation, and that God- with Him is mighty hire!

O ye who believe! if ye fear God He will make for you a discrimination, and will cover for you your offences, and will forgive you; for God is Lord of mighty grace.

And when those who misbelieve were crafty with thee to detain thee a prisoner, or kill thee, or drive thee forth; they were crafty, but God was crafty too, for God is best of crafty ones!

But when our verses were rehearsed to them they said, 'We have already heard.- If we pleased we could speak like this; verily, this is nothing but tales of those of yore.'

When they said, 'O God! if this be truth, and from Thee, then rain upon us stones from heaven or bring us grievous woe!' But God would not torment them while thou art amongst them; nor was God going to torment them while they asked Him to forgive. But what ails them that God should not torment them while they turn folk away from the Holy Mosque, though they are not the guardians thereof- its guardians are only the pious?- but most of them know not. Their prayer at the House was naught but whistling and clapping hands!- taste then the torment for that ye misbelieved! Verily, those who misbelieve expend their wealth to turn folk from the path of God; but they shall spend it, and then it shall be for them sighing, and then they shall be overcome! Those who misbelieve, into hell shall they be gathered!- that God may distinguish the vile from the good, and may put the vile, some on the top of the other, and heap all up together, and put it into hell!- These are those who lose! Say to those who misbelieve, if they desist they will be forgiven what is past; but if they return,- the course of those of former days has passed away.

Fight them then that there should be no sedition, and that the religion may be wholly God's; but if they desist, then God on what they do doth look. But if they turn their backs, then know that God is your Lord; a good Lord is He, and a good help; and know that whenever ye seize anything as a spoil, to God belongs a fifth thereof, and to His Apostle, and to kindred and orphans, and the poor and the wayfarer; if ye believe in God and what we have revealed unto our servants on the day of the discrimination,- the day when the two parties met; and God is mighty over all. When ye were on the near side of the valley,

and they were on the far side, and the camels were below you; had ye made an appointment then ye would have failed to keep your appointment- but it was that God might accomplish a thing that was as good as done! that he who was to perish might perish with a manifest sign; and that he who was to live might live with a manifest sign; for, verily, God hears and knows! When God showed thee them in thy dream as though they were but few; but had He shown thee them as though they were many, ye would have been timid, and ye would have quarrelled about the matter;- but God preserved you; verily, He knows the nature of men's breasts! And when He showed them to you, as ye encountered them, as few in your eyes; and made you seem few in their eyes; that God might accomplish a thing that was as good as done; for unto God do things return! O ye who believe! when ye encounter a troop, then stand firm and remember God; and haply ye may prosper! and fear God and His Apostle, and do not quarrel or be timid, so that your turn of luck go from you; but be ye patient, verily, God is with the patient. And be not like those who went forth from their homes with insolence, and for appearance sake before men, and to turn folks off God's way; for all they do God comprehends.

And when Satan made their works appear seemly to them, and said, 'There is none amongst mankind to conquer you to-day, for, verily, I am your neighbour!' and when the two troops came in sight of each other, he turned upon his heels and said, 'Verily, I am clear of you! verily, I see what you see not! verily, I fear God, for God is keen to punish!

And when the hypocrites and those in whose hearts was sickness said, 'Their religion hath beguiled these men, but he who relies upon God, verily, God is mighty and wise.'

Couldst thou see when the angels take away the souls of those who misbelieve; they smite them on their faces and hinder parts.- 'Taste ye the torment of burning! that is for what your hands have sent on before; and for that God is no unjust one towards his servants.' As was the wont of Pharaoh's people and those before them! they disbelieved in the signs of God, and God overtook them in their sins; verily, God is strong and keen to punish. That is because God is not one to change a favour He has favoured a people with, until they change what they have in themselves, and for that God both hears and knows.

As was the wont of Pharaoh's people and those before them! they said our signs were lies, and we destroyed them in their sins, and drowned Pharaoh's people; and all of them were evildoers. Verily, the worst of beasts in God's eyes are those who misbelieve and will not believe; with whom if thou dost make a league, they break their league each time, for they fear not God; but shouldst thou ever catch them in war, then make those who come after them run by their example, haply they may remember then. And shouldst thou ever fear from any people treachery, then throw it back to them in like manner; verily, God loves not the treacherous. Deem not that those who misbelieve can win; verily, they cannot make (God) powerless!

Prepare ye against them what force and companies of horse ye can, to make the enemies of God, and your enemies, and others beside them, in dread thereof. Ye do not know them, but God knows them! and whatever ye expend in God's way He will repay you; and ye shall not be wronged. But if they incline to peace,

incline thou to it too, and rely upon God; verily, He both hears and knows. But if they wish to betray thee, then God is enough for thee! He it is who supports thee with His help and with the believers; and reconciles their hearts! Didst thou expend all that is in the earth thou couldst not reconcile their hearts, but God reconciled them, verily, He is mighty and wise!

O thou prophet! God is sufficient for thee, with those of the believers who follow thee! O thou prophet! urge on the believers to fight. If there be of you twenty patient men, they shall conquer two hundred; if there be of you a hundred, they shall conquer a thousand of those who misbelieve, because they are a people who did not discern.- Now has God made it light for you; He knows that there is a weakness amongst you: but if there be amongst you but a patient hundred, they will conquer two hundred; and if there be of you a thousand, they will conquer two thousand, by the permission of God,-for God is with the patient!

It has not been for any prophet to take captives until he hath slaughtered in the land! Ye wish to have the goods of this world, but God wishes for the next, for God is mighty, wise! Were it not for a book from God that had gone before, there would have touched you, for that which ye took, a mighty punishment. Eat of what spoils ye have taken, what is lawful and good; and fear God, verily, God is forgiving and merciful. O thou prophet! say to such of the captives as are in your hands, 'If God knows of any good in your hearts, he will give you better than that which is taken from you, and will forgive you; for God is forgiving and merciful.

But if they desire to betray thee,- they have betrayed God before! but He hath given you power over them; for God is knowing, wise! Verily, those who believe and have fled and fought strenuously with their wealth and persons in God's way, and those who have given refuge and help, these shall be next of kin to each other. But those who believe, but have not fled, ye have naught to do with their claims of kindred, until they flee as well. But if they ask you for aid for religion's sake, then help is due from you, except against a people between whom and you there is an alliance; for God on what ye do doth look.

And those who misbelieve, some of them are next of kin to others-unless ye act the same there will be sedition in the land, and great corruption.

Those who believe and have fled and fought strenuously in God's cause, and those who have given a refuge and a help, those it is who believe; to them is forgiveness and generous provision due. And those who have believed afterwards and have fled and fought strenuously with you; these too are of you, but blood relations are nearer in kin by the Book of God. Verily, God all things doth know.