

Fast 11: Obedience to the Holy Prophet

- Those who wish to love God are invited to follow the Holy Prophet. He is told to say to people:

“Say: If you love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you, and grant you protection from your sins. And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” — 3:31

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾

They will be purified by acting on his teachings, and thus receive the love of God which will protect them from sin.

- Obedience to the Holy Prophet is a part and parcel of Islam, as stated below:

“O you who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority from among you; then if you quarrel about anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. This is best and more suitable to (achieve) the end.” — 4:59

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۗ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴿٥٩﴾

In the first place Muslims must obey God and the Holy Prophet. Secondly, they must obey the authorities who are asking for obedience to them in the name of God and the Holy Prophet. The authorities are implementing the details of the principles taught by God and the Holy Prophet. The words “if you quarrel about anything” mean that if a disagreement arises with the authorities in regard to their interpretation or implementation of these principles, then the matter must be settled with reference to the Quran and Hadith.

- The high ranks that can be attained by those who obey God and the Holy Prophet are described here:

“And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, they are with those upon whom Allah has bestowed favours from among the prophets and the truthful and the faithful and the righteous, and a goodly company are they! Such is the grace from Allah, and Allah is sufficient as Knower.” — 4:69–70

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ ۗ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا ﴿٦٩﴾ ذَلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ عَلِيمًا ﴿٧٠﴾

Those who obey Allah and the Messenger are here told that they are *with* the perfect ones who belong to the four classes, the prophets, the truthful, the faithful and the

righteous. They have not attained to the high qualities of these four classes of the perfect ones, yet they are *with* them, i.e., they will be in their company in the life to come.

The Holy Prophet was asked about a person who loves a certain group of people but is not one of them in terms of their qualities and deeds. He replied: “A person is with those whom he loves” (Bukhari, hadith 6169, 6170). This means he is counted as, or included among, the people that he wanted to be like, but he could not reach their high rank and standard. A Companion of the Holy Prophet once said: “I love the Messenger of Allah and I love Abu Bakr and Umar and I hope that Allah will raise me (on the Day of Judgment) with them, though I have not done the deeds which they did” (Bukhari, hadith 3688).

- Importance of obedience to the Holy Prophet is indicated in this verse:

“Whoever obeys the Messenger, he indeed obeys Allah. And whoever turns away, We have not sent you as a keeper over them.” — 4:80

مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ تَوَلَّى فَوَآ
أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا ۝

Here obedience to the Holy Prophet is stated to be obedience to God. Whatever the Holy Prophet instructed Muslims to do, he did so through a command from God. Those commands came to him in two ways: (1) as revelation in specific words, which became a part of the Quran, and (2) as an idea put into his mind. For example, the way of saying prayers, their times, the postures to be adopted in them, and the words to be said, were taught to the Muslims by the Holy Prophet. These ways were revealed to him by God, but not in the form of words which could be incorporated in the Quran.

The Holy Prophet fulfilled his duty by teaching Muslims their religion as regards its beliefs and its practice. He fulfilled this duty both by his words of preaching and his practical actions which set an example for others. The duty on Muslims is to obey him in these matters. They will only go aright if they obey him, as stated below.

“Say: Obey Allah and obey the Messenger. But if you turn away, he is responsible for the duty imposed on him, and you are responsible for the duty imposed on you. And if you obey him, you go aright. And the duty of the Messenger is only to deliver the message clearly.” — 24:54

قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا
عَلَيْهِ مَا حَبِئَ وَعَلَيْكُمْ مَا حَبِئْتُمْ وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوهُ
تَهْتَدُوا وَمَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ ۝