

Sūrat al-Hud Verse 92

قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ أَرَأَيْتُمْ لِيَ قَوْمٍ أَعَزُّ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاتَّخَذْتُمُوهُ وَرَاءَكُمْ ظَهْرِيًّا ۗ إِنَّ رَبِّي بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ

11:92 - He said, 'O my people! Is my tribe more esteemed in your sight than Allah, and you put Him behind your back? Indeed, my Lord encompasses whatever you do.

Questions for Reflection

- 1) Why would people have more awe of a group of human beings than of Allah?
- 2) What does it mean to put something behind your back?
- 3) How does Allah encompass all we do? (He knows about it, is in full control, has a record of it, we will face consequences of it as cause and effect is part of the system Allah created).

Commentary

Prophet Shu‘ayb does not respond angrily to the insulting words of the people. Instead he continues to reason with them and appeal to their minds and souls. He counters what they said about stoning him by asking them why they are afraid of a small group of people (as they called his tribe) but not afraid of the mighty Creator. The Prophet showed them the flaw of logic in their thinking. You should be afraid of the One who is all powerful and controls everything, not of those who have no power of their own and are dependent for their strength and power on Allah.

The Prophet is very focused on his message – It is only Allah who must be worshipped and obeyed, who should be the focus and priority. This principle applies to all social and political matters. Allah is the focus, and no-one takes priority over Him. No authority, however powerful, should intimidate believers to overlook the laws of Allah and obey others.

To put something behind your back is to;

- ignore it
- not give it much importance
- forget about it

All of these could apply in this verse. The people put Allah’s commands behind their backs and were only interested in materialism and worldly progress. They paid no attention to the message from Allah.

The Prophet reminds them that Allah encompasses their actions. Nothing escapes Him. He is aware of all that human do, even actions that seem small to them. Everything is recorded and will be presented to the human being on the Day of Judgement for accounting.

Lessons

- 1) Fear must only be of Allah, not of people.
- 2) Allah is the focus of attention for believers. His laws are in front of their eyes all the time, not on the side or behind them.

Cross reference verses

- 1) Fear only Allah, not people – 9:13.

2) Laws of Allah are to be heard and obeyed – 2:285

Connecting topics

Fearing other than Allah

<https://academyofislam.com/quranic-reflection-no-339-ayat-5913-fearing-other-than-allah-swt/>

Story

Prophet Shu‘ayb’s love for Allah

It is narrated from the Prophet of Islam (s) that Prophet Shu‘ayb (AS) cried so much for the love of Allah until he became blind. Then, Allah granted his sight back to him, and this situation happened four times. On the fourth time, it was revealed to him: “O’ Shu‘ayb, How long do you want to carry on like this? If you fear the hellfire, Allah has saved you from that, and if it is due to having desire for paradise, God has granted that to you.” Shu‘ayb (a) replied: O’ Allah, You are aware that I do not cry for fear of hell fire nor for my desire for paradise; rather my heart is attached to Allah’s love, I cannot see You and cannot wait. It was revealed to Shu‘ayb (a): Now that you feel like this, I will send you My Kalim, Musa ibn Imran to serve you.

(Source: <https://en.shafaqna.com/126995/how-prophet-shuaib-was-affected-by-gods-love/>)