Surah 3. Al-i'Imran

Asad: And it was by God's grace that thou [O Prophet] didst deal gently with thy followers: for if thou hadst been harsh and hard of heart, they would indeed have broken away from thee. Pardon them, then, and pray that they be forgiven. And take counsel with them in all matters of public concern; then, when thou hast decided upon a course of action, place thy trust in God: for, verily, God loves those who place their trust in Him.

Malik: O Muhammad, it is a great Mercy of Allah that you are very gentle with them; had you been rough or hard-hearted, they would have deserted you. Therefore pardon them and ask Allah's forgiveness for them. Consult them in the conduct of affairs; and when you make a decision to do something, then put your trust in Allah (hold fast to your decision). Allah loves those who put their trust in Him.

Pickthall: It was by the mercy of Allah that thou wast lenient with them (O Muhammad), for if thou hadst been stern and fierce of heart they would have dispersed from round about thee. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult with them upon the conduct of affairs. And when thou art resolved, then put thy trust in Allah. Lo! Allah loveth those who put their trust (in Him).

Yusuf Ali: It is part of the Mercy of Allah that thou dost deal gently with them. Wert thou severe or harsh-hearted they would have broken away from about thee; so pass over (their faults) and ask for (Allah's) forgiveness for them; and consult them in affairs (of moment). Then when thou hast taken a decision put thy trust in Allah. For Allah loves those who put their trust in Him.

Khattab: It is out of Allah’s mercy that you ?O Prophet? have been lenient with them. Had you been cruel or hard-hearted, they would have certainly abandoned you. So pardon them, ask Allah’s forgiveness for them, and consult with them in ?conducting? matters. Once you make a decision, put your trust in Allah. Surely Allah loves those who trust in Him.

Author Comments

121 - Lit., "with them" - i.e., with those of his followers who had failed in their duty before and during the disaster at Uhud. According to all available accounts, the Prophet did not even reproach any of them for what they had done.

122 - This injunction, implying government by consent and council, must be regarded as one of the fundamental clauses of all Qur'anic legislation relating to statecraft. The pronoun “them” relates to the believers, that is, to the whole community; while the word al-amr occurring in this context - as well as in the much earlier-revealed phrase amruhum shura baynahum in 42:38 - denotes all affairs of public concern,
including state administration. All authorities agree in that the above ordinance, although addressed in the first instance to the Prophet, is binding on all Muslims and for all times. (For its wider implications see State and Government in Islam, pp. 44 ff.) Some Muslim scholars conclude from the wording of this ordinance that the leader of the community, although obliged to take counsel, is nevertheless free to accept or to reject it; but the arbitrariness of this conclusion becomes obvious as soon as we recall that even the Prophet considered himself bound by the decisions of his council (see note [90] above). Moreover, when he was asked - according to a Tradition on the authority of ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib - to explain the implications of the word ‘azm ("deciding upon a course of action") which occurs in the above verse, the Prophet replied, "[It means] taking counsel with knowledgeable people (ahl ar-ra'y) and thereupon following them [therein]" (see Ibn Kathir’s commentary on this verse).

471 - The extremely gentle nature of Muhammad endeared him to all, and it is reckoned as one of the Mercies of Allah. One of the Prophet's titles is "A Mercy to all Creation." At no time was this gentleness, this mercy, this long-suffering with human weaknesses, more valuable than after a disaster like that at Uhud. It is a quality, which then, as always, bound and binds the souls of countless men to him.