

Surah 5. Al-Maida

Asad: O you who have attained to faith! Offend not against the symbols set up by God, nor against the sacred month [of pilgrimage], nor against the garlanded offerings,⁴ nor against those who flock to the Inviolable Temple, seeking favour with their Sustainer and His goodly acceptance; and [only] after your pilgrimage is over⁵ are you free to hunt. And never let your hatred of people who would bar you from the Inviolable House of Worship lead you into the sin of aggression:⁶ but rather help one another in furthering virtue and God-consciousness, and do not help one another in furthering evil and enmity; and remain conscious of God: for, behold, God is severe in retribution!

Malik: O believers! Do not violate the sanctity of the Symbols of Allah: the Sacred Month, the animals brought for sacrifice, the garlands that mark such animals, and those people visiting the Sacred House (Ka'bah) to seek the grace and good pleasure of their Rabb. When you put off your Ihram (pilgrimage is over) then you are allowed to hunt. Let not the hatred of some people - who once hindered you from the Sacred Mosque - incite you to commit transgression. Cooperate with one another in righteousness and piety, and do not cooperate in sin and transgression. Have fear of Allah. Allah is stern in punishment.

Pickthall: O ye who believe! Profane not Allah's monuments nor the Sacred Month nor the offerings nor the garlands, nor those repairing to the Sacred House, seeking the grace and pleasure of Allah. But when ye have left the sacred territory, then go hunting (if ye will). And let not your hatred of a folk who (once) stopped your going to the Inviolable Place of Worship seduce you to transgress; but help ye one another unto righteousness and pious duty. Help not one another unto sin and transgression, but keep your duty to Allah. Lo! Allah is severe in punishment.

Yusuf Ali: O ye who believe! violate not the sanctity of the Symbols of Allah nor of the Sacred Month nor of the animals brought for sacrifice nor the garlands that mark out such animals nor the people resorting to the Sacred House seeking of the bounty and good pleasure of their Lord. But when ye are clear of the Sacred Precincts and of pilgrim garb ye may hunt and let not the hatred of some people in (once) shutting you out of the Sacred Mosque lead you to transgression (and hostility on your part). Help ye one another in righteousness and piety but help ye not one another in sin and rancor: fear Allah: for Allah is strict in punishment. [686 687 688 689 690](tel:686687688689690)

Transliteration: Ya ayyuha allatheena amanoo la tuhilloo shaAAaira Allahi wala alshshahra alharama wala alhadya wala alqalaida wala ammeena albayta alharama yabtaghoona fadlan min rabbihim waridwanan waitha halaltum faistadoo wala yajrimannakum shanaanu qawmin an saddookum AAani almasjidi alharami an taAAatadoo wataAAawanoo AAala albirri waalttaqwa wala taAAawanoo AAala alithmi waalAAudwani waittaqoo Allaha inna Allaha shadeedu alAAiqabi

Khatab:

O believers! Do not violate Allah's rituals ?of pilgrimage?, the sacred months, the sacrificial animals, the ?offerings decorated with? garlands, nor those ?pilgrims? on their way to the Sacred House seeking their Lord's bounty and pleasure. When pilgrimage has ended, you are allowed to hunt. Do not let the hatred of a people who once barred you from the Sacred Mosque provoke you to transgress. Cooperate with one another in goodness and righteousness, and do not cooperate in sin and transgression. And be mindful of Allah. Surely Allah is severe in punishment.

Author Comments

4 - Lit., "nor against the offerings, nor the garlands" - a reference to the animals which are brought to Mecca at the time of pilgrimage, to be sacrificed there in the name of God and most of their flesh distributed among the poor. In order to mark out such animals, and to prevent their being inadvertently used for profane (e.g., commercial) ends, garlands are customarily hung around their necks. See also [2:196](#). - The term sha'a'ir Allah (lit., "God's symbols), occurring earlier in this sentence, denotes the places reserved for particular religious rites (e.g., the Ka'bah) as well as the religious rites themselves. (Cf. [2:158](#), where As-Safa and Al-Marwah are described as "symbols set up by God"). In the above context, the rites of pilgrimage, in particular, are alluded to.

5 - Lit., "when you have become free of the obligations attaching to the state of pilgrimage" (idha halaltum).

6 - Inasmuch as this surah was undoubtedly revealed in the year 10 H. (Tabari, Ibn Kathir), it is difficult to accept the view of some of the commentators that the above verse alludes to the events culminating in the truce of Hudaibiyyah, in 6 H., when the pagan Quraysh succeeded in preventing the Prophet and his followers from entering Mecca on pilgrimage. At the time of the revelation of this surah Mecca was already in the possession of the Muslims, and there was no longer any question of their being barred from it by the Quraysh, almost all of whom had by then embraced Islam. We must, therefore, conclude that the above injunction cannot be circumscribed by a historical reference but has a timeless, general import: in other words, that it refers to anybody who might endeavour to bar the believers - physically or metaphorically - from the exercise of their religious duties (symbolized by the "Inviolable House of Worship") and thus to lead them away from their faith. In view of the next sentence, moreover, this interpretation would seem to be the only plausible one.

686 - Cf. ii. 158, where Safa and Marwa are called "Symbols (sha'a'ir) of Allah". Here the Symbols are everything connected with the Pilgrimage, viz., (1) the places (like Safii and Marwa, or the Ka'ba or 'Arafat, etc.); (2) the rites and ceremonies prescribed; (3) prohibitions (such as that of hunting, etc.); (4) the times and seasons prescribed. There is spiritual and moral dimension in all these. See notes on ii. 158, ii. 194-200.

687 - The month of pilgrimage, or else, collectively, the four sacred months (ix. 36), viz., Rajab (7th). Zul-qa'dah (11th), Zul-hijjah (12th, the month of Pilgrimage), and Muharram (the first of the year). In all these months War was prohibited. Excepting Rajab the other three months are consecutive.

688 - The immunity from attack or interference extended to the animals brought as offerings for sacrifice and the garlands or fillets or distinguishing marks which gave them immunity. They were treated as sacred symbols. And of course every protection or immunity was enjoyed by the Pilgrims.

689 - This is the state opposite to that described in n. 684, i.e., when ye have left the Sacred Precincts, and have doffed the special pilgrim garb, showing your return to ordinary life.

690 - See n. 205 to ii. 191. In the sixth year of the Hijra the Pagans, by way of hatred and persecution of the Muslims, had prevented them from access to the Sacred Mosque. When the Muslims were re-established in Makkah, some of them wanted to retaliate. Passing from the immediate event to the general principle, we must not retaliate or return evil for evil. The hatred of the wicked does not justify hostility on our part. We have to help each other in righteousness and piety, not in perpetuating feuds of hatred and enmity. We may have to fight and put down evil, but never in a spirit of malice or hatred, but always in a spirit of justice and righteousness.

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