

ANSWER

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا

And the slaves of the Rahmān are those who walk on the earth humbly [25:63]

COMMENTARY

At the end of the Sūrah it [Sūrah Al-Furqān] refers to those special servants of His who firmly believe in the Holy Prophet's ﷺ, prophethood and their beliefs, deeds and dealings are all in conformity with the will of Allah and His messenger and who follow the Sharī'ah.

The Holy Qur'ān has awarded the title of 'Ibād-ur-Rahmān to such special servants of Allah Ta'ālā, which is indeed the highest honour. Although all creatures are governed by His will compulsorily, but here the voluntary worship by free will is alluded. That is to surrender completely before Allah and to make all deeds and desires conforming to His pleasure with one's own choice. In these last verses of the Sūrah the special servants of Allah are described whom He has Himself called as His servants to grant them unique honour. Their traits and characteristics are mentioned in the last verses until the end of the Sūrah. In between this description repentance from infidelity and sins and its effects are also referred to.

By calling these pious persons as His own slaves, Allah Ta'ālā has given to them a great title of honour. But by selecting the name Rahmān (the All-Merciful) for Himself, out of all His Beautiful Names and attributes, the hint is perhaps given to the fact that these pious people, being the slaves of the All-Merciful, should reflect and demonstrate the quality of mercifulness through their general behavior.

Special traits of Allah Ta'ālā's favoured servants

In the verses under review thirteen traits and habits of the special and favoured servants of Allah Ta'ālā are mentioned. Included among them are correct beliefs, righteous acts, both physical and financial, to obey the command of Allah and His messenger, social dealings with other persons, Allah's fear in His worship, refraining from all sorts of sins and carrying along wife and children on the righteous path with oneself.

The first characteristic of such people is that they are "slaves" ('ibād) which is the plural of the word 'abd (slave). Here it means the slave who is the property of his Master. All his deeds and prerogatives together with his very life are dedicated to follow the command and will of the Master.

Only such a person can claim to be Allah's slave whose views and beliefs, thinking and desires, and deeds and actions are totally in line with the command and pleasure of his Rab (Master) and who keeps himself alert to carry out each and every command as soon as he is required to.

The second characteristic [25:63], that is **“they walk on the earth humbly”**. Here the word (*hawn*) is used in the sense of humbleness, modesty and decorum - that is one does not walk with pride or arrogance. It does not mean that one should walk very slowly, because it is against Sunnah if it is without any need. According to the description given in the books of his biography, the Holy Prophet ﷺ used not to walk slowly. Instead his walk was on quicker side. It is recorded in a Hadith, that is, is *"He used to walk in a manner as if ground was shrinking for him"*. (Ibn Kathīr) It is for this reason that the righteous elders have described the slow walk, like that of a sick person, as a symbol of arrogance, a sham habit, and something unwanted (*makruh*). Sayyidnā ‘Umar *radi’allahu ‘anhū* once saw a young man walking very slowly. He *radi’allahu ‘anhū* asked him, “Are you sick?”. He replied, "No". Then Sayyidnā ‘Umar *radi’allahu ‘anhū* raised his stick on him and commanded "Always walk robustly". (Ibn Kathīr)

Hasan Al-Basrī *rahimahullah* has said while explaining this verse **“they walk on the earth humbly”** that the organs of sincere believers are always humble before Allah, so much so that the one who is not familiar with them feels that they are sick or disabled, while they are fit and healthy. As a matter of fact it is the awe of God which has overtaken them and which has not struck the others. It is the fright of Hereafter which has refrained them from unnecessary mundane practices. Those who do not have faith in God and keep themselves engrossed in worldly affairs suffer only with disappointment (because they do not get the desired result in this world, and lose their share in the Hereafter as well). And those who regard sustenance as the only reward from Allah Ta‘ālā and neglect practising morality have indeed very little understanding and for them there is great punishment. (Ibn Kathīr)

TAFSĪR IBN KATHĪR

These are the attributes of the believing servants of Allah,

(**those who walk on the earth *Hawna***), meaning that they walk with dignity and humility, not with arrogance and pride. This is like the Ayah: (**And walk not on the earth with conceit and arrogance...**) (17:37). So these people do not walk with conceit or arrogance or pride. This does not mean that they should walk like sick people, making a show of their humility, for the leader of the sons of Adam (the Prophet) used to walk as if he was coming downhill, and as if the earth were folded up beneath him. What is meant here by *Hawn* is serenity and dignity, as the Messenger of Allah said: (*When you come to the prayer, do not come rushing in haste. Come calmly and with tranquility, and whatever you catch up with, pray, and whatever you miss, make it up.*)

End.

