

ANSWER

وَإِنْ جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلَامِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

And if they tilt towards peace, you tilt towards it, and place your trust in Allah. Surely, He is the All-Hearing, All-Knowing [8:61]

COMMENTARY

Verse (61) takes up injunctions of peace and aspects related to it. It was said: **(And if they tilt towards peace, you tilt towards it)**. The word: (*salm*) with *fatha* on *sīn*, or: (*sil*) with *kasrah* on *sīn* are both used in the sense of peace. The meaning of the verse - as fairly evident from the translation - is that should the disbelievers incline towards peace on some occasion, you too should incline towards it. At this point, it should be borne in mind that the imperative form has been used here to carry the sense of choice. Thus, the intended sense is that at a time when disbelievers are inclined towards peace, the Holy Prophet ﷺ also has the choice of making peace, if he feels peace is in the best interest of Muslims.

And the restriction of: **(if they tilt)** tells us that peace can be made only when the desire to have peace comes from the disbelievers - because, should Muslims themselves start proposing peace without their desire to have it, then, this would be taken as a sign of their weakness.

However, should there arise a situation in which Muslims are totally encircled and find no way out except a peace for security deal, then, initiating a peace proposal is also permissible as ruled by Muslim jurists and as proved through hints given in the directives of the Holy Qur'ān and Sunnah (*nusūṣ*).

And since the proposal of peace initiated by the enemy does have the probability that they might use it as a strategy of deceit, make them negligent and then make a surprise attack, therefore, at the end of the verse, the instruction given to the Holy Prophet ﷺ was: **(and place your trust in Allah. Surely, He is the All-Hearing, All-Knowing - 61)**. It means that Allah Ta'ālā hears what they say and also knows the intentions and designs concealed in their hearts. He is sufficient to help you, therefore, do not base your decisions to do things on such probabilities which cannot be proved. The safest policy was to entrust all such apprehensions and scruples with Allah.

TAFSĪR IBN KATHĪR

The Command to Facilitate Peace when the Enemy seeks a Peaceful Resolution

Allah says, if you fear betrayal from a clan of people, then sever the peace treaty with them, so that you both are on equal terms. If they continue being hostile and opposing you, then fight them, **(But if they incline)**, and seek, **(to peace)**, if they resort to reconciliation, and seek a treaty of non-hostility,

(**you also incline to it**), and accept offers of peace from them. This is why when the pagans inclined to peace in the year of Hdaybiyah and sought cessation of hostilities for nine years, between them and the Messenger of Allah he accepted this from them, as well as, accepting other terms of peace they brought forth. `Abdullah bin Al-Imam Ahmad recorded that `Ali bin Abi Talib said that the Messenger of Allah said, *(There will be disputes after me, so if you have a way to end them in peace, then do so.)*

Allah said next, (**and trust in Allah.**) Allah says, conduct a peace treaty with those who incline to peace, and trust in Allah. Verily, Allah will suffice for you and aid you even if they resort to peace as a trick, so that they gather and reorganize their forces, (**then verily, Allah is All-Sufficient for you**).

End.

