

and your lives in the cause of Allāh. That is better for you, if you only knew.

42. Had it been a near [i.e., easy] gain and a moderate trip, they [i.e., the hypocrites] would have followed you, but distant to them was the journey. And they will swear by Allāh,<sup>444</sup> "If we were able, we would have gone forth with you," destroying themselves [through false oaths], and Allāh knows that indeed they are liars.
43. May Allāh pardon you, [O Muḥammad]; why did you give them permission [to remain behind]? [You should not have] until it was evident to you who were truthful and you knew [who were] the liars.
44. Those who believe in Allāh and the Last Day would not ask permission of you to be excused from striving [i.e., fighting] with their wealth and their lives. And Allāh is Knowing of those who fear Him.
45. Only those would ask permission of you who do not believe in Allāh and the Last Day and whose hearts have doubted, and they, in their doubt, are hesitating.
46. And if they had intended to go forth, they would have prepared for it [some] preparation. But Allāh disliked their being sent, so He kept them back, and they were told, "Remain [behind] with those who remain."<sup>445</sup>
47. Had they gone forth with you, they would not have increased you except in confusion, and they would have been active among you, seeking [to cause] you fitnah [i.e., chaos and dissension]. And among you are avid listeners to them. And Allāh is Knowing of the wrongdoers.
48. They had already desired dissension before and had upset matters for you<sup>446</sup> until the truth came and the ordinance [i.e., victory] of Allāh appeared, while they were averse.

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<sup>444</sup>When you return from the Tabūk expedition.

<sup>445</sup>i.e., the women and children.

<sup>446</sup>Or "turned matters related to you over [in their minds, considering how to cause you failure]."

49. And among them is he who says, "Permit me [to remain at home] and do not put me to trial." Unquestionably, into trial they have fallen.<sup>447</sup> And indeed, Hell will encompass the disbelievers.
50. If good befalls you, it distresses them; but if disaster strikes you, they say, "We took our matter [in hand] before,"<sup>448</sup> and turn away while they are rejoicing.
51. Say, "Never will we be struck except by what Allāh has decreed for us; He is our protector." And upon Allāh let the believers rely.
52. Say, "Do you await for us except one of the two best things [i.e., martyrdom or victory] while we await for you that Allāh will afflict you with punishment from Himself or at our hands? So wait; indeed we, along with you, are waiting."
53. Say, "Spend willingly or unwillingly; never will it be accepted from you. Indeed, you have been a defiantly disobedient people."
54. And what prevents their expenditures from being accepted from them but that they have disbelieved in Allāh and in His Messenger and that they come not to prayer except while they are lazy and that they do not spend except while they are unwilling.
55. So let not their wealth or their children impress you. Allāh only intends to punish them through them in worldly life and that their souls should depart [at death] while they are disbelievers.
56. And they swear by Allāh that they are from among you while they are not from among you; but they are a people who are afraid.
57. If they could find a refuge or some caves or any place to enter [and hide], they would turn to it while they run heedlessly.
58. And among them are some who criticize you concerning the [distribution of] charities. If they are given from them, they approve; but if they are not given from them, at once they become angry.

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<sup>447</sup>By avoiding their obligation, they fell into destruction.

<sup>448</sup>The hypocrites claim to have protected themselves by remaining behind.