

Surha 76, Al-Insan (Man), Period Uncertain

The Quran's Text & Yusuf Ali's translation:

يُوفُونَ بِالنَّذْرِ ... up

76: 7. They perform (their) vows ...

... وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُ مُسْتَطِيرًا (٧)

... and they fear a Day whose evil flies far and wide.

وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا (٨) up

76: 8. And they feed, for the love of God,

- the indigent,
- the orphan,
- and the captive --

إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا (٩) up

76: 9. (Saying),

"We feed you for the sake of God alone: No reward do we desire from you, nor thanks.

إِنَّا نَخَافُ مِنْ رَبِّنَا يَوْمًا عَبُوسًا قَمْطَرِيرًا (١٠) up

76: 10. "We only fear a Day of distressful Wrath from the side of our Lord."

Muhammad Asad's Translation:

76:7 **[The truly virtuous are] they [who] fulfil their vows, 9**
and stand in awe of a Day the woe of which is bound to
spread far and wide,

(76:8) **and who give food - however great be their own want
of it - unto the needy, and the orphan, and the captive,"**

(76: 9) [saying, in their hearts,] "We feed you for the sake of
God alone: we desire no recompense from you, nor thanks:

(76:10) behold, we stand in awe of our Sustainer's judgment
12 on a distressful, fateful Day!"

Ali's comments:

5836. They: i.e., the Righteous: they are known in the present
life by the virtues described in verses 7-10, and in the life of
the Hereafter they will enjoy the Bliss described in verses 11-
22.

5837. Cf. 22:29.

The vows must be vows of spiritual service, which of course includes service to humanity, such as is mentioned in the next verse. They are Devotees of Allah, and they must perform all vows and contracts (5:1 and n. 682). Vows of the Pagan sort, savouring of a sort of "bribe" to the Deity, are not approved.

5838. That is, they prepare for the Judgment to come, where the effects of Sin will not be transitory but far-reaching.

5839. The captive: when taken literally, it refers to the old state of things when captives of war had to earn their own food, or their own redemption; even ordinary prisoners in jail for criminal offences often starved unless food was provided for them by private friends or from their own earnings. But there is a further symbolic meaning, which applies to the indigent, the orphans, and the captives, viz, those who are so in a spiritual sense: those have no mental or moral resources, or have no one to look after them, or are held down in social or moral or economic captivity. they hunger for spiritual food, or perhaps their appreciate is deadened, but the righteous understand and supply their real needs. It has also been held that "captive" include dumb animals who are under subjection to man; they must be properly fed,

housed, and looked after; and the righteous man does not forget them.

5840. These words need not be actually uttered. They express the true motives of pious and unpretentious Charity.

5841. It is a Day of Distress for sin and evil. But the truly righteous are not self-righteous. They have the fear of Allah in their minds: they know they are human, and they fear lest they should be found wanting in the sight of Allah. But Allah in His Mercy gives them a bountiful Reward.

Asad's comments:

9 I.e., the spiritual and social obligations arising from their faith.

10 Or, as in 2:176, "however much they themselves may cherish [i.e., "need"] it"; cf. also 90:14- 16. It is to be noted that in this context the concept of "giving food" comprises every kind of help and care, both material and moral.

1 1 The term **asir** denotes anyone who is a "captive" either literally (e.g. a prisoner) or figuratively, i.e., a captive of circumstances which render him helpless; thus, the Prophet said, "Thy debtor is thy captive; be, therefore, truly kind to thy captive" (Zamakhshari, Razi, et al.). The injunction of kindness towards all who are in need of help - and therefore "captive" in one sense or another - **applies to believers and non-believers alike** (Tabari, Zamakhshari), **and apparently also to animals dependent on man.**

12 Lit" "we fear our Sustainer".