

# The importance of fulfilling promises & covenants and its impact on building the personality of individual and society In the light of Surah Al-Israa

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## *Abstract:*

Fulfilling the promises is the one of great moral value and a most required and desirable matter. It is considered one of the commendable characteristics in all divine and non-divine religions and even in the society of freethinkers and atheists. Islam has taken care of all the commendable qualities, including the fulfillment of the covenant. Moreover, it urged Muslims to act upon it. This research is an attempt to understand the concept of fulfilling the covenant, and to explain its provisions, divisions, and its importance in building the individual and society. This research also aims to clarify the matters that helped in fulfilling the promises. This research uses the objective and analytical approach with emphasis in the study on fulfilling the promises in Surat Al-Israa. The research reached the conclusion that fulfilling the promises is a commendable quality and great character, and it is required and obligatory for every person. The research also reached the affirmation that fulfilling the promise is a source to build a successful Muslim person and a happy social life.

*Keywords: fulfilling the promise - the Muslim person - social life.*

## **First: Defining the fulfillment of the covenant:**

**A covenant/promise in language Arabic:** with all those human has promised to Allah, and all that is between humans regarding to promises and covenants,

it is called covenant. In addition, The Covenant means The Will. (1)

## **The technical and idiomatic meaning of covenant:**

Preserving something and observing it time to time, this is its original meaning. Then it is used in the document that needs to be taken into account, which is what is meant. (2)

As for fulfillment/loyalty in the (Arabic) language, it is the antonym of treachery. (3)

### **The technical and idiomatic meaning of fulfillment:**

Al-Jurjani, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "fulfillment is staying constantly with the way of consolation and the preservation of the covenants of the participants. (4)

Fulfilling the covenant is a prophetic ethics and an Islamic behavior. It is an ethical and human quality of great significance, by which it reveals the sincerity and integrity of its holder.

### **Second: Evidence for the obligation to fulfill the covenant:**

There are many evidences about fulfilling the covenant in the Qur'an and Sunnah, including the following:

#### **Evidence from the Qur'an:**

- 1- "Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; [and who] establishes prayer and gives zakat; [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous."

Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, described in His Book al-Quran the person who fulfills the covenant with honesty, true heartedness and piety, which is one of the best qualities.

- 2- "So for their breaking of the covenant We cursed them and made their hearts hard. They distort words from their [proper] usages and have forgotten a portion of that of which they were reminded. And you will still observe deceit among them, except a few of them. But pardon them and overlook [their misdeeds]. Indeed, Allah loves the doers of good."

In contrast to the previous verse, Allah Almighty described breaking a covenant with bad qualities, because of bad morals that stem from it.

### **Evidence from the hadith:**

a) The Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him said, "Whoever has the following four (characteristics) will be a pure hypocrite and whoever has one of the following four characteristics will have one characteristic of hypocrisy unless and until he gives it up.

1. Whenever he is entrusted, he betrays.
2. Whenever he speaks, he tells a lie.
3. Whenever he makes a covenant, he proves treacherous.
4. Whenever he quarrels, he behaves in a very imprudent, evil and insulting manner."(5)

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, indicated in this hadith that breaking promises is one of the characteristics of the hypocrites.

b) In the Hadith Qudsi, the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said: "Allah says, 'I will be against three persons on the Day of Resurrection: -1. One who makes a covenant in My

Name, but he proves treacherous. -2. One who sells a free person (as a slave) and eats the price, -3. And one who employs a laborer and gets the full work done by him but does not pay him his wages.”(6)

In addition, The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him said, “A flag will be fixed on the Day of Resurrection for every betrayer, and it will be announced (publicly in front of everybody), 'This is the betrayal (perfidy) so-and-so.”(7)

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him Explained in these two hadiths that breaking covenants and promises results in a severe threat from Allah Almighty.

These are some of the evidence from the Qur’an and Sunnah insisting on that the covenant must be fulfilled, which indicates the interest of the Islamic religion in it.

### **Third: types of the Covenant in Islam:**

Covenants are divided into two types, they are:

- a) The covenants between Allah Almighty and the human being, which is the commitment of Muslims to the teachings of its religion, to follow its law and the Sunnah of his Messenger. Fulfilling the covenants between God and His creation is one of the highest and most important covenants. Allah said:

“And [recall, O People of the Scripture], when Allah took the covenant of the prophets, [saying], "Whatever I give you of the Scripture and wisdom and then there comes to you a messenger confirming what is with you, you [must] believe in him and support him." [ Allah ] said, "Have you acknowledged and taken upon that My commitment?" They said, "We have acknowledged it." He said, "Then bear witness, and I am with you among the witnesses."

- b) Covenants and promises among humankind, which is the commitment of the individual to what he says or writes down. Moreover, not to revoke the oath he takes and to be careful to abide by and respect it. Moreover, fulfill the rights of Muslims absolutely. The prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, said: “Six are the rights of a Muslim over another Muslim. It was said to him: Allah's Messenger! What are these? Thereupon he said, when you meet him, offer him greetings, when he invites you to a feast accept it. When he seeks, your council give him. and when he sneezes and says:" All praise is due to Allah," you say Yarhamuka Allah (May Allah show mercy to you); and when he falls ill visit him; and when he dies follow his bier. (8)

### **Fourth: Study the will to fulfill the covenant in light of Surat Al-Israa:**

The commandment to fulfill the covenant is mentioned in Surat Al-Israa in verse 34. Allah Almighty said.

“And do not approach the property of an orphan, except in the way that is best, until he reaches maturity. And fulfill [every] commitment. Indeed, the commitment is ever [that about which one will be] questioned.”

A covenant: the matter, which is observed and preserved, such as a will and an oath. In addition, Allah’s covenant: His orders and prohibitions. A covenant of human being: what they undertake in terms of transactions, contracts, and other things that are required by the affairs of their lives. (9) And it is said: What is meant by the covenant is what a person commits to himself. It is said: The covenant is asked about the one, who made the covenant, so it is said, when a promise was broken

like a newborn baby girl, as it is asked for what reason was she killed. (10)

Sheikh As-Saadi said in his interpretation of this verse, "(And fulfill the covenant) with which you made a covenant with Allah and to whom you made a promise among human being.

{Indeed, the commitment is ever [that about which one will be] questioned.} It means, you (human kind) are responsible for fulfilling their promises. If you do fulfill, then you will deserve the great reward, and if you do not, then you have committed the great sin. " (11)

Al-Baidawi said, "(Fulfill the covenant) with what Allah obligated you of its commandments, or what you pledged to Allah and human kind. {Indeed, the commitment is ever [that about which one will be] questioned.} Will be questioned means it is required from a person who makes a covenant to fulfill it and not to break it. On the other hand, he will be questioned about it on the judgement day. The one who breaches his promise will be questioned and will be punished for why he broke the promise. Alternatively, the covenant will ask the one who broke it rebuking and disgracing him as mentioned (When the female (infant), buried alive, is questioned for what crime she was killed.) so it is considered and it is possible that the person who makes covenant will be questioned. (12) Ibn katheer said, (And fulfill (every) covenant.) meaning, everything that you promise people and the covenants that you agree to, because the person who makes a covenant or a promise will be asked about it. (13) (Verily, the covenant will be questioned about) means explanation for the obligation to fulfill the covenant. (14)

The general meaning of the verse: O believers fulfill your promises, by performing it completely and undiminished. Moreover, that you follow the required legal rights during performing it. Know that you are

responsible for it before Allah Almighty and human kind (on the day of resurrection).

#### **Fifth: Lessons learned from this commandment:**

After studying the verses about the obligation to fulfill the pledge in light of Surat Al-Israa, we can draw out from it the following lessons:

#### **1. The obligation to fulfill the covenant with everyone.**

Fulfillment of the covenant is a general ethics, which a Muslim adheres to with Muslims and non-Muslims, and among the dhimmis. The prophet Peace Be Upon Him said,

"He who kills a treaty will not smell the scent of Paradise, and while the scent of paradise can be smelt from the course of forty years.) (15)

#### **2. Fulfilling the covenant is important in building the personality of a successful Muslim.**

A successful Muslim person must behave with decent manners and should have commendable qualities. One of the most important of these qualities is fulfilling the covenant. It helps him not only in building his personality but also in implementing his plans. With it, he will also be a Muslim loved by his fellow brothers and will be respected in his community.

#### **3. Fulfillment of the covenant helps build a happy social life.**

A community made up of covenant-fulfilling individuals would be a happy and successful society. This is because they will respect each other and help each other. In addition, each of them looks after preserves the rights of others. The principle of "cooperation on righteousness and piety" will be their slogan. Thus, all members of society live in security

and peace. This is the importance of fulfilling the promises in building a happy social life.

#### **4- The prohibition of treachery and breaking vows.**

Treachery is the opposite of fulfilling the covenant, which is a blameworthy characteristic, and the Day of Resurrection he will receive the punishment of Allah Almighty as punishment for his crime. Imam al-Dhahabi considered treachery among the major sins, as he said, “The great forty-fifth: Treachery and failure to fulfill the covenant.” (16)

#### **5- Matters that help fulfill the covenant.**

- a) Devotion to Allah Almighty in all matters of life.
- b) Considering the Messenger Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, the ideal and following his life as an example.
- c) Accompanying the good people who help each other to adhere to the law of God.

#### **6- Fulfilling the covenant is a great quality.**

Fulfilling covenants and covenants is one of the great moral and human values, and it is a characteristic of the prophets and righteous people, and one of the characteristics of a Muslim, says Allah Almighty,

“And they who are to their trusts and their promises attentive.”

These are some of the lessons learned from the verses regarding the obligation to fulfill the covenant in the light of Surat Al-Israa. Now we will move on to discuss about the commandment in the obligation to fulfill fairly in the measurement, weighing and the balancing in the upcoming topic, with Allah Almighty willing.

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