



Characteristics of the Hypocrites

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Sifat al-Munafiqin

All praise and thanks are due to Allah, we praise Him, ask His aid, and ask His forgiveness. We take refuge with Allah from the evil of our souls and the evil of our deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide; and whoever Allah leaves to stray, none can guide. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

You who have faith! Fear Allah as is truly due Him and do not die except as Muslims.

(Ali 'Imarn (3): 102)

O mankind! Fear your Lord who created you from a single soul and created its mate from it and then disseminated many men and women from the two of them. Fear Allah in whose name you make demands of one another and also in respect of your families. Allah watches over you continually.

(an-Nisa (4):1)

You who have faith! Fear Allah and speak words that hit the mark. He will put your actions right for you and forgive you your wrong deeds. All who obey Allah and His Messenger have won a mighty victory.

(al-Ahzab (33): 70-71)

Hypocrisy is a deep rooted and all-pervading spiritual disease. A person's heart could be overflowing with it yet be oblivious of it due to its hidden and subtle nature; frequently does it lead a person to think he is acting rightly when in reality he is spreading corruption. It is of two types: major and minor; major hypocrisy leads to eternal punishment in the lowest depths of Hell;¹ it is to outwardly display faith in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day whereas inwardly one is devoid of such belief, indeed disbelieving in it. He does not believe that Allah spoke to a man amongst men who He appointed to be a Messenger: guiding them by His permission and warning them of His punishment.

In the Qur'an, Allah has revealed the machinations of the hypocrites, He has unveiled their beliefs, their qualities, and made their goals clear so that the believers can be aware of them.² He divided mankind into three groups in the beginning of *Surah al-Baqarah* : the believer, the disbeliever, and the hypocrite. He mentioned four verses concerning the believers, two verses concerning the disbelievers, and thirteen verses concerning the

hypocrites due to their plenitude and the great harm and tribulation they bring to Islam and Muslims.³ the harm they cause to Islam is truly severe for they claim to be Muslims, they claim to aid and support Islam, whereas in reality they are its enemies seeking to destroy it from within, covertly spreading their corruption and ignorance such that the unwary thinks that what they are upon is knowledge and right action.

By Allah! How many strongholds of Islam have they destroyed; how many fortresses have they rendered to ruin; how many signposts of Islam have they effaced; how many raised flags have they lowered; and how many seeds of doubt have they attempted to sow in order to uproot the religion!

Islam and the Muslims have always faced trial and tribulation from them, wave after wave of doubts do they assault at it, all the while thinking that they are doing right,

No indeed! They are the corrupters but they are not aware of it.

(al-Baqarah (2):12)

They desire to extinguish Allah's light with their mouths but Allah will perfect His light though the disbelievers hate it.

(as-Saff (61):8)⁴

Having agreed to abandon the revelation and follow a course other than the one directed by it,

But they disagreed and split up, dividing into sects, each party exulting in what it had.

(al-Muminun (23):53)

...who inspire each other with delusions by means of specious words.

(al-Anam (6):112)

And because of this,

...they took this Qur'an as something to be ignored.

(al-Furqan (25):30)

The characteristics of faith are not to be found in their hearts and hence they do not know them; oblivious are they to its pillars and hence do not take care of them; extinguished are the brilliant lights of its stars in their hearts and they do not try to

relight them, and the darkness of their thoughts and beliefs has eclipsed the sun of faith such that they no longer see it. They do not accept the guidance of Allah with which He sent His Messengers, they attach no importance to it, and they see nothing wrong in leaving it for their own opinions and beliefs. They have wrenched the texts of revelation of their true status, they have detached them of their importance and definitiveness, and they have submerged them in the obscurity of false interpretations. Subterfuge after subterfuge do they launch against these texts, and it is as if they face them in the same way an unwilling host meets malevolent guests: devoid of acceptance and generosity, all the while forcing himself to host them, yet keeping his distance. They say to these texts, 'You have no way to pass by us,' and if they find no option but to accept them, they do so by propounding multifarious plots and concocting various principles. When these texts find way past their doors, they say, 'What have we to do with their literal meanings, they give us no certainty whatsoever!' and the general masses amongst them say, "Sufficient for us is what we find the latter people upon for they were more knowledgeable than the Righteous Predecessors, and firmer and more rightly guided in knowing the proofs and evidences!" In their view the way of the Salaf is the way of simplicity and soundness of heart because they did not busy themselves with investigating and laying out the principles of rhetoric; instead they merely devoted themselves to doing the obligatory and leaving the prohibited. Therefore the way of the latter people is more deeply rooted in knowledge and wiser whereas the way of the Salaf is greater in ignorance but safer.⁵

They treat the texts of the Book and Sunnah like the Khalifah is treated in these times: while his name is written on coins and gains superficial mention in the Friday sermons, he has no real authority and it is other men who govern, his judgment is neither heard nor adhered to. They have donned the robes of the people faith which cover their hearts of misguidance, deception and disbelief. Their tongues are tongues of Muslims but their hearts are the hearts of those fighting them. They say,

"We have faith in Allah and the Last Day' - but they are not believers.

(al-Baqarah (2):8)⁶

Their capital is deception and scheming, their merchandise is lies and treachery, and their intellect is one that is employed just for this world: believers and disbelievers alike are happy with them and they live in security amongst both,

They think to deceive Allah and those who believe but they deceive none save themselves but they are not aware of it.

(al-Baqarah (2):9)⁷

The disease of desires and doubts has consumed their hearts and destroyed them, and evil objectives have permeated their motivations and intentions and corrupted them. Their corruption is so severe that they are flung to perdition, and the doctors of the religion are unable to cure them,

There is a sickness in their hearts and Allah has increased their sickness. They will have a painful punishment on account of their lies. (Al-Baqarah (2):10)⁸

Whoever falls prey to the claws of their doubts will have his faith shredded to pieces; whoever allows his heart to open to their vile tribulations will find himself in a burning furnace; and whoever lends an ear to their deceptions will find them coming between him and firm belief, indeed the corruption they cause on is great but most people are unaware,

When they are told, 'Do not cause corruption on the earth,' they say, 'We are only putting things right.' No indeed! They are the corrupters but they are not aware of it.

(al-Baqarah (2): 11-12)⁹

When one of them follows the Book and Sunnah, he is doing so to keep up appearances, he is like a donkey carrying books: it understands none of what it is carrying. The revelation in their eyes is profitless merchandise and as such worthless. Those who truly follow it are fools in their eyes,

When they are told, 'Believe like the people have believed,' they say, 'What! Are we to believe like the fools have believed?' No indeed! They are the fools, but they do not know it.

(al-Baqarah (2): 13)¹⁰

Each one of them has two faces: a face with which he meets the Muslims and a face with which he meets his deviated associates. Each one of them has two tongues: a false tongue with which he meets the Muslims and a true tongue which expresses his actual beliefs,

When they meet those who have believed they say, 'We have believed.' But when they go apart with their devils they say, 'We are really with you. We were only mocking.'

(al-Baqarah(2): 14)¹¹

They have turned away from the Book and Sunnah, making mockery of those who follow them and looking down on them. They refuse to submit to the revelation, making do with what knowledge they have: and what knowledge? The increase of which only leads to more

evil and arrogance! You will always see them mocking those who follow the clear import of the revelation but,¹²

Allah is mocking them, and drawing them on, as they wander blindly in their excessive insolence. (al-Baqarah (2):15)

They ply their trade in oceans of darkness traversing vessels of doubts. Uncertainty and suspicion plagues them as they sail through waves of illusion. Strong winds play havoc with their boats and lead them to their destruction,

Those are people who have sold guidance for misguidance. Their trade has brought no profit and they are not guided.

(al-Baqarah (2): 16)¹³

The fire of faith alights for them and in its light they perceive guidance and misguidance, then that fire is extinguished and is left as red hot ashes. With that fire are they punished and in that darkness do they wander blindly,

Their example is that of people who light a fire, and then when it has lit up all round them, Allah removes their light and leaves them in darkness, unable to see.

(al-Baqarah (2): 17)

The hearing of their hearts is burdened by a heavy load and as such they are unable to hear the call to faith; the eyes of their spiritual sight are covered with a blinding wrapping such that they cannot see the realities of the Qur'an; and their tongues are mute to the truth such that they are unable to speak it,

Deaf, dumb, blind. They will not return.

(al-Baqarah (2):18)

The rain of revelation pours down upon them, it contains life for the hearts and souls, but they can hear of it is the thunder strikes of its threats, promises, and ordinances. They thrust their fingers in their ears and draw their garments over them, trying to run in earnest and desperately seeking their footprints so as to retreat. However they are summoned in public, and their secrets are made plain for all who can see, and two parables are propounded for them, each parable unveiling one of the two parties amongst them: those who debate and those who blindly follow.

Or that of a storm-cloud in the sky, full of darkness, thunder and lightning. They put their fingers in their ears against the thunderclaps, fearful of death. Allah encompasses the disbelievers.

(al-Baqarah (2): 19)

Their spiritual sight is too weak to bear what the rain contains: the lightning of its radiant proofs and the brightness of its meanings. Their ears are unable to accept the thunder strikes of its promises, orders, and prohibitions; as such they come to a halt in confusion, their faculty of hearing brings them no benefit and their sight is unable to guide them,

The lightning all but takes away their sight. Whenever they have light, they walk therein but whenever darkness covers them, they halt. If Allah wished, He could take away their hearing and sight. Allah has power over all things.

(al-Baqarah (2): 20)¹⁴

They have characteristic signs by which they can be known, explained in the Book and the Sunnah, and clear for all those who are enriched with faith to see. They are people, by Allah given to ostentation, and this is the worst station that man can reach. They are a people prone to laziness and laxity in fulfilling the orders of the All-Merciful, and because of this they find sincerity burdensome,

When they get up to pray, they get up lazily, showing off to people, and only remembering Allah a little.

(an-Nisa (4):142)¹⁵

They are like a sheep that has strayed and finds itself between two flocks, it goes to one and then the other and does not stay with any of them. They are standing between two groups of people, all the while searching as to which is the stronger and nobler,

They vacillate between the two, not joining these or joining those. If Allah misguides someone, you will not find any way for him to go.

(an-Nisa (4):143)

They are on the lookout to see what happens to Ahlus-Sunnah; if victory comes their way they say, 'Were we not with you?' and they swear their strongest oaths by Allah on this. If victory goes to the enemies of Ahlus-Sunnah they say to them, 'Do you not know that we

have a binding pact of brotherhood with you,' and they bring their closeness of lineage as proof for this.¹⁶

Whoever wishes to know them, let him take their descriptions from the words of the Lord of the worlds, and after that he will required no further proof,

Those who anticipate the worst for you say, 'Were we not with you?' whenever you gain a victory from Allah, but if the disbelievers have a success they say, 'Did we not have the upper hand over you and yet in spite of that keep the believers away from you?' Allah will judge between you on the Day of Judgment. Allah will not gives the disbelievers any way against the believers.

(an-Nisa (4):141)

One who listens to them will be astounded by the silkiness and softness of their speech, he will bring Allah to witness for what is in his heart of lies and deceit,

Among the people there is someone whose words about the worldly life excite your admiration, and he calls Allah to witness what is in his heart, while he is in fact the most hostile of adversaries.

(al-Baqarah (2):204)

What they enjoy upon their followers entails corrupting them and spreading corruption in the land. What they prohibit their followers from entails what would be better for them in this life and the Hereafter. You would see one of them amongst the believers praying and remembering Allah but,

When he leaves you, he goes about the earth corrupting it, destroying crops and animals. Allah does not love corruption.

(al-Baqarah (2):205)

They are similar, enjoining the evil after having committed it themselves and prohibiting the good after having left it themselves. They are miserly in giving their wealth in the way of Allah, in ways that He loves it to be spent.¹⁷ How many times has Allah reminded them of the blessings He has conferred upon them yet they turn away and abandon Him! Listen, believers, to what He says about them,

The men and women of the hypocrites are as bad as one another. They command what is wrong and forbid what is right and keep their fists tightly closed. They have forgotten Allah so He has forgotten them. The hypocrites are deviators.

(at-Tawbah (9):67)

If you invite them to judge by the clear import of the revelation you will see them turn away in aversion. If you could see their reality you would see a vast gulf between them and the truth, and you would see the stringency with which they turn away from the revelation.

When they are told, 'come to what Allah has sent down and to the Messenger,' you see the hypocrites turn away from you completely.

(an-Nisa (4):61)¹⁸

How can they be successful and guided after their intellects and religion have been afflicted so, truly unlikely is it that they will be saved from the mire and misguidance they are in. They have bought disbelief as the expense of faith and what trade is there as profitless as this?! They have exchanged the choicest sealed wine for blazing fire,

How will it be when a disaster strikes them because of what they have done, and then they come to you swearing by Allah: 'We desired nothing but good and reconciliation.'

(an-Nisa' (4):62)

The vileness of doubts and suspicion cling firmly to their hearts and they can find no way of absolution from them,

... Allah knows what is in such people's hearts so turn away from them and warn them and speak to them with words that take effect.

(an-Nisa (4):63)

May they perish! How distant they are from the reality of faith and how false their claim to cognisance is! They are one thing and the followers of the Messenger (peace be upon him) are something totally different.

Allah, Mighty and Magnificent, has taken an oath in His Book upon Himself; the greatness of which will be realized by those endowed with spiritual insight, those whose hearts are fearful of Him by way of magnification and exaltation. Allah, Exalted is He, says, warning His friends and alerting us to the state of these people,

No, by your Lord, they are not believers until they make you their judge in the disputes that break out between them, and then find no resistance within themselves to what you decide and submit themselves completely.

(an-Nisa' (4): 65)

You will find one of them taking oaths before commencing his words, without anyone even objecting to what he says, because he knows that the hearts of the believers do not find tranquility in what he says.¹⁹ therefore he uses the oaths as a way of securing himself from any suspicions that may come his way. It is in the same way that people given to doubts and misgivings lie, making oaths in order to beguile the listener into thinking they are telling the truth,

They made their oaths a cloak and barred the Way of Allah. What they have done is truly evil.

(al-Munafiqun (63):2)

May they perish! They embarked upon the journey across the great white plain with the caravan of faith, then seeing the length of the journey and how far its destination was, they turned on their heels and returned. They think they have found a good life and they sleep comfortably in their beds, but neither in that life have they really lived, and neither in the that slumber have they found any real benefit. It is not long till when a caller will give a single cry and they will all stand forth, leaving their life behind, hungry, not feeling any form of satiation... what will their state be at the time of the Meeting? They knew then they rejected, they saw the truth then they became blinded to it,

That is because they have believed and returned to disbelief. So their hearts are sealed up and they cannot understand.

(al-Munafiqun (63):3)

The best of men in physical appearance, the most enchanting of tongues, the nicest words, yet the most vile of hearts. They are like propped up planks of wood devoid of fruit. They have been severed from the source of their growth and as such rest on a wall to keep them upright so that people do not walk over them.

When you see them, their outward form appeals to you, and if they speak you listen to what they say. But they are like propped-up planks of wood. They imagine every cry to be

against them. They are the enemy, so beware of them. Allah fight them! How they are perverted!

(al-Munafiqun (63):4)

They delay the prayer to the last possible time: Fajr at sunrise and 'Asr at sunset at which time they quickly peck the ground as does a crow. This is because their prayer is a prayer in body but not of heart.²⁰ while praying they look left and right as does a fox being certain that it is being hunted and chased. They do not attend the congregational prayer, rather they make do with praying in their homes or shops. When they argue they behave uncouthly, when they are entrusted with something they break the trust, when they speak they lie, and when they promise they break it. This is how they deal with creation and Creator. Read their descriptions in the beginning of al-Mutaffifin and the end of at-Tariq for none can describe to you the characteristics of someone better than one who knows him well,

O Prophet! Do Jihad against the disbelievers and hypocrites and be harsh with them. Their refuge is Hell, what an evil destination.

(at-Tahrim (66):9)

They may think they are many but in reality they are few. They may think they are strong but in reality they are weak and despicable. They are ignoramuses thinking themselves high and mighty. They are misled about Allah for they are ignorant of His greatness,

They swear by Allah that they are of your number, but they are not of your number. Rather they are people who are scared.

(at-Tawbah (9): 56)²¹

When Ahlus-Sunnah meet with easy times, aid and victory, hard does it bear down on them and depressed do they become; and when Ahlus-Sunnah meet with straitened times and are tried by Allah so that their sins may be expiated, jubilant do they become and exultant. This is their legacy and in no way do those who inherit from the Messenger (peace be upon him) compare to those who inherit from the hypocrites,

If good happens to you it galls them. If a mishap occurs to you, they say, 'We made our preparations in advance,' and they turn away rejoicing. Say, 'Nothing can happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is Our Master and it is in Allah that the believers should put their trust.'

(at-Tawbah (9):50-51)

If something good happens to you, it galls them. If something bad strikes you, they rejoice at it. But if you are patient and have taqwa, their scheming will not harm you in any way. Allah encompasses what they do.

(Ali Imran (3):120)

Allah abhors their obeying Him because of the filth of their hearts and impure intentions; as such He held them back and impeded them from obeying Him. He hates to have them close to Him and in His vicinity due to their love of His enemies; as such He distanced them and discarded them. They turned away from His revelation so He turned away from them and decreed misery for them. He judged them with pure justice and they have no hopes for victory unless they become of penitent,²²

If they had really desired to go out, they would have made proper preparation for it, but Allah was averse to their setting out so he held them back and they were told: 'Stay behind with those who stay behind.'

(at-tawbah (9): 46)

Then He mentions the wisdom behind His doing what has previously been mentioned, He is the Wisest of the wise,

If they had gone out among you, they would have added nothing to you but confusion. They would have scurried about amongst you seeking to cause conflict between you, and among you there were some who would have listened to them. Allah knows the wrongdoers.

(at-Tawbah (9): 47)²³

The texts of the revelation bore down heavily on them so they found them abhorrent, and being unable to carry them, they renounced them. They were unable to preserve the Sunnah, so they ignored it. They found the texts of the Book and Sunnah combating their desires so they laid down laws and principles by which they could reject them or weaken them. Allah has unveiled their secrets and propounded parables for them. Know that each generation that succeeds them is like them and so He has described them for His friends that they may be aware of them. He says,

That is because they hate what Allah has sent down, so He has made their actions come to nothing.

(Muhammad (47):9)

This holds true for all who find the texts burdensome and see them coming between him and his innovations and desires; it seems to him that he has come across an unbreakable solid structure, so he trades them for false rhetoric, exchanging reality for illusion. This leading to the corruption of his inner and outer,

That is because they said to those who hate what Allah has sent down, "We will obey you in part of the affair.' But Allah knows their secrets. How will it be when the angels take them in death, beating their faces and their backs? That is because they followed what angers Allah and hated what pleases Him. So He made their actions come to nothing.

(Muhammad (47) : 26-28)

They think that if they hide their disbelief and display their faith they will have acquired a great profit, but how can this be so when the All-Seeing has unveiled their secrets?

Or did those with sickness in their hearts imagine that Allah would not expose their malevolence? If We wished, we would show them to you and you would know them by their mark and know them by their ambivalent speech. Allah knows your actions.

(Muhammad (47): 29-30)

How will they be when they are gathered on the Day of at-Talaq, and Allah, Mighty and Magnificent, manifests Himself and uncovers His shin? The day when they are called to prostrate but are unable,

Their eyes will be downcast, darkened by debasement; for they were called to prostrate when they were in full possession of their faculties.

(Qalam (68):43)

How will they be when they are gathered together to traverse the Bridge spanning Hell? A bridge finer than a blade of hair and sharper than the edge of a sword, easy to slip off, entrenched in darkness and none can cross it save those guided by a light that shows them where to place their feet. Light is apportioned amongst man, the intensity of light each person has governs the swiftness by which he will cross that bridge. They are given a superficial light with which they accompany the Muslims, just as they used to accompany the Muslims in this life: outwardly praying, giving wealth-tax, performing the pilgrimage, and fasting. When they reach the middle of the bridge their light is blown out by the sharp wind of hypocrisy and they come to a halt in utter confusion, not knowing how to proceed. A wall containing a door is placed between them and the believers, the believers

side of which contains mercy, while the side upon which they find themselves in contains punishment. They cry out to the believers, who in the distance sparkle like stars,

Wait for us so that we can borrow some of your light.

(al-Hadid (57): 13)

So that we may cross this bridge in safety,

They will be told, 'Go back and look for light!'

(al-Hadid (57): 13)

Go back to where the light was first apportioned. Never will any one stop to aid them in such a situation! None will assist another on that path, and a close friend will not turn to aid his friend. They will remind the believers that they accompanied them in this life, just as a wayfarer reminds the resident that he accompanied him on his journey,

Were we not with you?

(al-Hadid (57):14)

We fasted with you, prayed with you, recited the Qur'an with you, and performed the pilgrimage with you; why have we been separated from you! They will reply, your bodies were with us but your hearts were with every deviant and every disbelieving tyrant,

But you made trouble for yourselves and hung back and doubted and false hopes deluded you until Allah's command arrived. The Deluder deluded you about Allah. So, today no ransom will be accepted from you or from those who were disbelievers. Your refuge is the Fire, it is your master. What an evil destination.

(al-Hadid (57):14-15)

The descriptions of these people are numerous; by Allah what we have omitted is more than we have mentioned. One could almost say that the whole Qur'an is about them due to their plenitude on the face of this earth and in its belly, namely their graves. There is not a single place on earth that they are to be found therein. Hudhayfah once heard a person saying, 'O Allah, destroy the hypocrites!' He said, 'Son of my brother, were He to destroy the hypocrites you would find yourself walking down roads alone, because hardly anybody would be left!'

By Allah, the hearts of the Righteous Predecessors lived in dread of hypocrisy because they knew its major and minor manifestations, they knew its generalities and its details and they thought little of themselves to the point that they feared being one of the hypocrites. 'Umar bin al-Khattab said to Hudhayfah, 'I ask you by Allah, did the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) count me as one of them?' He replied, 'No, and I will not answer this question for any other after you.' Ibn Abi Mulaykah said, 'I met thirty Companions of Muhammad (peace be upon him) and found all of them fearing hypocrisy for himself, and not one of them said that his faith was like the faith of Jibril and Mika'il,' (recorded by Bukhari). He also recorded that al-Hasan al-Basri said, 'None feels safe from hypocrisy except a hypocrite, and none fears it save a believer.' One of the Companions supplicated thus, 'Allah, I take refuge with you from hypocritical submissiveness.' When asked what it was he replied, 'That the body be seen to be submissive but the heart is not.'

By Allah, their hearts were overflowing with faith and certainty yet their fear of hypocrisy was great. The faith of many people does not even begin to compare to theirs, yet they claim that there is like that of Jibril and Mika'il.

The plant of hypocrisy grows from two stems: lying and ostentation. It grows out of two sources: weakness of spiritual insight and weakness of resolution. When these four factors exist, the plant of hypocrisy flourishes and grows firm. However, it grows by the side of waters on the brink of a crumbling precipice, so when they see the flood of reality on the Day when all secrets are disclosed, and the graves are emptied out, and the heart's contents are brought to light, the one whose capital was hypocrisy will discover that all he attained was a mirage,

A thirsty man thinks it is water but when he reaches it, he finds it to be nothing at all, but he finds Allah there. He will pay him his accounts in full. Allah is swift at reckoning.

(an-Nur (24): 39)

Their hearts are heedless of performing good but their bodies outwardly do so, and indecent deeds are frequently performed by them. When they hear the truth their hearts are too hard to accept it, but when they witness falsehood and hear fallacy, their hearts openly accept it and they lend a willing ear.

By Allah, these are the signs of hypocrisy, so beware of them! Beware of them before the judgment comes upon you: when they are entrusted with something they break the trust, when they promise they break it, when they speak they are not fair and just, when they are called to obedience they falter, when they are called to what Allah has revealed and to

His Messenger they turn away, but when it suits their whims and desires they rush to it. Leave them to the subjugation and misery they have chosen for themselves, rely not on their contracts and trust not in their promises for they are liars,

Among them were some who made an agreement with Allah: 'If He gives us of His bounty we will definitely give in charity and be among the righteous.' But when He does give them of His bounty they are tight-fisted with it and turn away, so he has punished them by putting hypocrisy in their hearts until the Day they meet Him because they failed Allah in what they promised Him and because they lied.

(at-Tawbah (9): 75-77)

Peace and Blessings be upon our Prophet, Muhammad, his Family and his Companions.²⁴

Footnote:

1. Allah, Exalted is He says, **“The hypocrites are in the lowest level of Hell and you will not find anyone to help them.”** (an-Nisa (4): 145)
2. Allah, Exalted is He says, **“The hypocrites are afraid that a chapter may be sent down about them, informing them of what is in their hearts. Say: ‘Go on mocking! Allah will expose everything you are afraid of!’”** (at-Tawbah (9): 64)
3. As stated by Mujahid amongst others. Refer to as-Suyuti, ad-Durr al-Manthur [1/56].
4. as-Sadi, Taysir al-Karim ar-Rahman said, “It is Allah who has undertaken the task of aiding His religion, perfecting the truth with which He sent His Messengers, and manifesting its light in all regions of the earth, even though the disbelievers hate it. Even though they strive to the utmost of their abilities to extinguish His light, defeat and failure is their fate. They are like a person who blows air with his mouth in the direction of the sun in the hope that he can extinguish its fire: never will he be able to do so, rather he just imputes his own intellect with deficiency and doltishness.”
5. Allah, Exalted is He says, **“Look how they invent lies against Allah. That suffices as an outright felony!”** (an-Nisa (4): 50)
6. This verse then describes the first characteristic of hypocrisy: lying. They say with their tongues that which is not in their hearts. This quality is so entrenched in them that even when they spoke words that were true, Allah still called them liars because what they said did not conform to what they believed, **“When the hypocrites come to you they say, “We bear witness that you are indeed the Messenger of**

Allah.” Allah knows that you are indeed His Messenger and Allah bear witness that the hypocrites are certainly liars.” [al-Munafiqun (63):1] Refer to the commentary of Ibn Kathir to this verse.

7. This verse describes the second characteristic of the hypocrites: their ignorance of Allah for they try to deceive One who cannot be deceived, One who knows what they manifest and what they hide! This verse also shows their deceptive qualities, their third characteristic, as well as their making mockery of the religion and looking down on it. As-Sadi said, “Deception is to show the one being deceived something and hide the reality in order to reach ones goal. The hypocrites tried to deal with Allah and the believers in this way but their deception came back on themselves. This is something extraordinary for normally a deceiver will either be successful and see the fruition of his goal, or at least be safe. These hypocrites did what they did, and plotted their plans, but all they succeeded in doing was seal their own destruction.”

At-Tarabi mentions that Allah deceives them in this world, **“The disbelievers should not imagine that the extra time We grant them is good for them. We only allow them more time so they will increase in evildoing. They will have a humiliating punishment.”** (Ali Imran (3):178) and in the Hereafter, **“That Day when the men and women of the hypocrites will say to those who have faith, ‘Wait for us so that we can borrow some of your light.’ They will be told, ‘Go back and look for light!’ And a wall well be erected between them with a gate in it, on the inside of which there will be mercy and before whose exteriors lies punishment.”** (al-Hadid (57): 13)

8. this verse describes their fourth characteristic: they are plagued with the disease of doubts and desires. As-Sadi said, “The sickness here is the sickness of doubts and desires. The Heart is beset by two disease that eject it from its state of balance and normalcy: the disease of false doubts and the disease of vile desires. Disbelief, hypocrisy, the love of lewd deeds, and sins all arise from the disease of desire... This verse also shows that it is a consequence of ones sins that Allah punishes him by afflicting him with more sins.”

At-Tabari gives an example of how this verse was actualized by stating that each time a surah was revealed of the Qur’an containing new injunctions, this increased them in their doubts and hence their disease increased, **“Each time a surah is revealed there are some among them who say, ‘Which of you has this increased in faith?’ As for those who believe, it increases their faith and they rejoice at it. But as for those with sickness in their hearts, it adds defilement to their defilement and they die as disbelievers.”**

(at-Tawbah (9):124-125)

9. This verse describes their fifth characteristic: spreading corruption in the land, a direct consequence of the corruption of their hearts. As-Sadi said, “When these hypocrites are prohibited from spreading corruption on the earth: acting by and promoting disbelief and sins, disclosing the plans and secrets of the Muslims to their enemies, and befriending the disbelievers; “they say, ‘We are only putting things right.’ They combine spreading corruption on earth with making out that they are only putting things right, thereby altering reality and believing the falsehood they are on to be the truth. The crime of these to be prohibited, for there is more hope that the latter person will retract and return. Now because their saying, ‘We are only putting things right,’ serves to constrain right deeds to them, implying thereby that the deeds of the believers are not right or corrective; Allah rebuts them by saying, ‘No indeed! They are the corrupters,’ for these is no greater corruption than disbelieving in the verse and signs of Allah, preventing

people from His Way, trying to deceive Allah and His friends, and befriending the enemies of Allah and His Messenger.”

10. This verse describes their sixth characteristic: their belittling the religion and those who follow it, and their foolishness. As-Sa'di said, “Allah inform us that they are the true fools because foolishness is defined by a person not knowing what is good for himself and his pursuing that which would harm him. These qualities are applicable to them. Their way of intelligence and insight is for a person to know what is good for him and to pursue it and to repress what would harm him. These qualities are applicable to the Companions and the believers. Consideration is given to reality and not to mere claims and empty words.”

11. This is an example of their heinous lies, saying with their tongues what is not in their hearts, in order to acquire temporal gain.

Allah, Exalted is He says, **“They try to conceal themselves from people, but they cannot conceal themselves from Allah. He is with them when they spend the night saying things which are not pleasing to Him. Allah encompasses everything they do.”** [an-Nisa (4): 108]

12. Allah, Exalted is He says, **“It has already been sent down to you in the Book that when you hear Allah’s Signs being rejected and mocked at by people, you must not sit with them till they start talking of other things. If you do not you are just the same as them. Allah will gather the hypocrites and disbelievers in Hell altogether.”** [an-Nisa’ (4): 140]

13. as-Sadi said, ‘Meaning they desired that misguidance in the same way that a buyer desires a particular commodity to much so that he would give something precious as payment. This is an excellent similitude: misguidance, the worst evil, has been compared to the asking price. So they paid the price and gained what they desired, misguidance ... what a wretched trade and what a disgraceful bargain! If someone gives a dinar to get back a dirham, he feels that he has lost out, so what of one who gives a diamond and gets in return a dirham?! And what of one who chose misery and anguish in place of felicity and bliss?!’

Allah, Exalted is He gives an example of such a trade by saying, **‘When the hypocrites and those with sickness in their hearts said, ‘These people have been deluded by their religion.’ But those who put their trust in Allah will find Allah to be Almighty, All-Wise.’** [al-Anfal (8): 50]

14. The author, may Allah have mercy upon him, has a detailed explanation to both these parables in his Ijtima’ al-Juyush al-Islamiyyah, this can be read in Appendix 1; Appendix 2 contains a beneficial explanation to the second parable by Muhammad Amin ash-Shanqiti.

15. Allah also says about them, **“Nothing prevents what they give from being accepted from them but the fact that they have rejected Allah and His Messenger, and that they come to prayer lethargically, and that they only give reluctantly.”** [at-Tawbah (9):54]

16. Allah, Exalted is He says, **“Give news to the hypocrites that they will have a painful punishment. Those who take the disbelievers as protectors rather than the believers, do they hope to find power and strength with them? Power and strength belong entirely to Allah.”** [an-Nisa (4):138-139]; **“You who have faith! Do not take the Jews and Christians as your friends; they are friends of one another. Any of you who takes them as friends is one of them and Allah does not guide wrongdoing**

people. Yet you see those with sickness in their hearts rushing to them, saying, ‘We fear the wheel of fate may turn against us.’ But it may well be that Allah will bring about victory or some other contingency from Him. Then they will deeply regret their secret thoughts.”

[al-Ma'idah (5):51-52]

17. Allah, Exalted is He says, **“Allah does not love those who are vain or boastful. Those who are tight-fisted and direct others to be tight-fisted and hide the bounty Allah has given them. We have prepared a humiliating punishment for the disbelievers, and also for those who spend their wealth to show off to people, not having faith in Allah and the Last Day.”**

(an-Nisa (4): 36-37)

18. The previous verse reads, **“Do you not see those who claim they have faith in what has been sent down to you and what has been sent down before you, still desiring to turn to a satanic source for judgment in spite of being ordered to reject it? Satan wants to misguide them for away.”** (an-Nisa (4):60)

19. Allah, Exalted is He says, **“They swear to you by Allah in order to please you, but it would have been more fitting for them to please and Allah and His Messenger if they are believers. Do they not know that whoever opposes Allah and His Messenger will have the Fire of Hell, remaining in it timelessly, for ever? That is the great disgrace.”** [at-Tawbah (9): 62-63]

20. Allah, Exalted is He says, **“When you call to prayer they make a mockery and a game of it. That is because they are people who do not use their intellect,”** [al-Maidah (5): 58]

21. The next verse reads, **“If they could find a bolt-hole, cave or burrow, they would turn and scurry away into it.”** [at-Tawbah (9): 57]

22. Allah, Exalted is He says, **“The hypocrites are in the lowest level of Hell and you will not find anyone to help them. Except those who repent and put things right and hold fast to Allah and dedicate their religion to Allah Alone.”** [an-Nisa (4): 145-146]

23. Allah, Exalted is He, mentions one such example of how some listened to the hypocrites, **“How is it that you have become two parties regarding the hypocrites, when Allah has returned them to disbelief for what they did? Do you desire to guide people Allah has misguided?”** [an-Nisa (4): 88]

24. Ibn al-Qayyim, Madarij as-Salikin [1/376-389]