

Surah 2. Al-Baqara

Asad: And when they meet those who have attained to faith, they assert, "We believe [as you believe]"; but when they find themselves alone with their evil impulses,¹⁰ they say, "Verily, we are with you; we were only mocking!"

Malik: When they meet the believers they say: "We are believers," but when they are alone with their shaitans, they say: "We are really with you, we were only mocking the believers."

Mustafa Khattab:

When they meet the believers they say, "We believe." But when alone with their evil associates they say, "We are definitely with you; we were only mocking."

Pickthall: And when they fall in with those who believe, they say: We believe; but when they go apart to their devils they declare: Lo! we are with you; verily we did but mock.

Yusuf Ali: When they meet those who believe they say: "We believe" but when they are alone with their evil ones they say: "We are really with you we (were) only jesting."³⁷

Transliteration: Waitha laqoo allatheena amanoo qaloo amanna waitha khalaw ila shayateenihim qaloo inna maAAakum innama nahnu mustahzioona

Author Comments

10 - Lit., "their satans" (shayatin, pl. of shaytan). In accordance with ancient Arabic usage, this term often denotes people "who, through their insolent persistence in evildoing (tamarrud), have become like satans" (Zamakhshari): an interpretation of the above verse accepted by most of the commentators. However, the term shaytan - which is derived from the verb shatana, "he was [or "became"] remote [from all that is good and true]" (Lisan al-'Arab, Taj al-'Arus) - is often used in the Qur'an to describe the "satanic" (i.e., exceedingly evil) propensities in man's own soul, and especially all impulses which run counter to truth and morality (Raghib).

37 - A deeper phase of insincerity is actual duplicity. But it never pays in the end. If we compare such a man to a trader, he loses in the bargain.

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