245815 - Meaning of “being with” in the verse “And whoso obeys Allah and the Messenger , then they will be with those on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets, the Siddiqoon , the martyrs, and the righteous... [an-Nisa’ 4:69]

the question

Allah say’s in the Quran ‘’And whoso obey Allah and the Messenger , then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace, of the prophets, the Siddiqun , the martyrs, and the righteous. (4;69)’’ According to this verse those who obey Allah and his messenger they will be in the same level in Jannah with these people. Now in the Quran Allah speaks clearly about the Jannah which he has prepared for Al-Muqqarrabun(The Foremost) and then he speaks about the Jannah which he has prepared for the people of the right hand. The two descriptions are not the same. The Jannah prepared for Al-Muqqarrabun(The Foremost) is better than the one prepared for the people of the right hand. Now the people of the right hand are people who obeyed Allah and his messenger, maybe not all of them but a lot of them. So they are supposed to be in the company of those who made it to the top levels in Jannah according to the verse. So How come the Jannah which is prepared for them is lower in Quality then the one prepared for Al-Muqqarrabun(The Foremost)? Are they not supposed to be in the same level? Will they be in the same level and yet have different things? If the answer is yes, does the same apply for the family members? When they are reunited at the same level of their family members who are above them, will they have less even though they are in the same level?
I Hope you can explain in detail.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says in His holy Book (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whoso obeys Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)), then they will be with those on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets, the Siddiqoon (those followers of the Prophets who were first and foremost to believe in them, like Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq), the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these companions are!”

[an-Nisa’ 4:69].

In Arabic, the word ma‘a (with) is used to refer to everyone who shares with someone else in some matter; it does not necessarily mean that the two parties share in all matters.

Based on that, the “being with” in the verse mentioned does not necessarily mean that they will all be in the same level or degree of Paradise. Rather what is meant is that they will all have in common admittance to Paradise and enjoying its delights, even though each of the believers will have his own degree or level that Allah will bestow upon him in accordance with his good deeds.

Al-Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

What is meant is that they will be with them in one abode of bliss, enjoying seeing them and being present with them; not that they will be equal with them in degree, for they will vary in degree, and everyone in it will be granted contentment with his lot. End quote.

Tafseer al-Qurtubi (5/272)

Ibn ‘Ashoor (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Being with” here refers to being together in Paradise, even though its degrees and levels vary. End quote.

At-Tahreer wa’t-Tanweer (5/116)

Al-Haafiz adh-Dhahabi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

It was narrated from Ibn ‘Umar in a marfoo‘ report: “The honest, trustworthy Muslim trader will be with the Prophets, the siddeeqs and the martyrs on the Day of Resurrection.”

This hadith has a jayyid isnaad and its meaning is sound, but the fact that he will be with them does not necessarily mean that he will be in the same degree or level as them.

Another example is the verse in which Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): “And whoso obeys Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)), then they will be with those on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets, the Siddiqoon (those followers of the Prophets who were first and foremost to believe in them, like Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq), the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these companions are!” [an-Nisa’ 4:69]. End quote.

Mizaan al-I‘tidaal (3/413)

A similar case is the report narrated by al-Bukhaari (3688) from Anas (may Allah be pleased with him), according to which a man asked the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) about the Hour. He said: When will the Hour be? He said: “What have you prepared for it?” He said: Nothing, except that I love Allah and His Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). He said: “You will be with those whom you love.” Anas said: We never rejoiced over anything as much as we rejoiced over the words of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), “You will be with those whom you love.” I love the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and Abu Bakr and ‘Umar, and I hope that I will be with them by virtue of my love for them, even if I do not do deeds like theirs.

Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Being with” is attained merely by sharing a thing, but not necessarily sharing all things. If it so happens that they all enter Paradise, then “being with” is fulfilled, even if their degrees or levels vary. End quote,

Fath al-Baari (10/555)

The believers have in common the fact that they will be together in Paradise, even though their degrees or levels may vary. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And you (all) will be in three kinds (i.e. separate groups).

So those on the Right Hand (i.e. those who will be given their Records in their right hands), Who will be those on the Right Hand? (As a respect for them, because they will enter Paradise).

And those on the Left Hand (i.e. those who will be given their Record in their left hands), Who will be those on the Left Hand? (As a disgrace for them, because they will enter Hell).

And those foremost ((in Islamic Faith of Monotheism and in performing righteous deeds) in the life of this world on the very first call for to embrace Islam,) will be foremost (in Paradise).

These will be those nearest to Allah

In the Gardens of delight (Paradise)”

[al-Waaqi‘ah 56:7-12].

Al-Bukhaari (3256) and Muslim (2831) narrated from Abu Sa‘eed al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “The people of Paradise will see the people of the highest place in Paradise above them as you see a brilliant star far away on the horizon in the east or the west, because of the difference in status between them.” They said: O Messenger of Allah, is that the status of the Prophets that no one else will attain? He said: “No, by the One in Whose hand is my soul. They are men who believed in Allah and believed in the Messengers.”

Secondly:

Undoubtedly the Prophets, siddeeqs, martyrs, the righteous, those who are close to Allah, and those on the Right Hand are all categories of believers and righteous close friends of Allah, and they are all among those who obeyed Allah and obeyed His Messenger. But faith itself may vary, and its degrees may vary according to what is in people’s hearts. People of faith may also vary

with regard to their deeds, for obedience to Allah and obedience to His Messenger is not all at the same level such that whoever attains that will find that no one else among those who obeyed Allah is ahead of him or behind him; rather they will all have various degrees and levels with their Lord. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Those Messengers! We preferred some to others; to some of them Allah spoke (directly); others He raised to degrees (of honour)”

[al-Baqarah 2:253].

As it is the case that some of the noble Messengers were preferred over others, then how about others among the ordinary believers and righteous people?

And Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Not equal are those of the believers who sit (at home), except those who are disabled (by injury or are blind or lame, etc.), and those who strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah with their wealth and their lives. Allah has preferred in grades those who strive hard and fight with their wealth and their lives above those who sit (at home). Unto each, Allah has promised good (Paradise), but Allah has preferred those who strive hard and fight, above those who sit (at home) by a huge reward;

Degrees of (higher) grades from Him, and Forgiveness and Mercy. And Allah is Ever OftForgiving, Most Merciful”

[an-Nisa’ 4:95-96]

“The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His Verses (this Quran) are recited unto them, they (i.e. the Verses) increase their Faith; and they put their trust in their Lord (Alone);

Who perform As-Salat (IqamatasSalat) and spend out of that We have provided them.

It is they who are the believers in truth. For them are grades of dignity with their Lord, and

Forgiveness and a generous provision (Paradise)”

[al-Anfaal 8:2-4].

Al-Waahidi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

With regard to the words of Allah, may He be exalted, “For them are grades of dignity with their Lord”, ‘Ata’ said: This means that they will reach the degrees or levels of Paradise by virtue of their deeds. Something similar was stated by the commentators: they will have statuses, some of which will be higher than others, commensurate with their deeds.

End quote from al-Baseet (10/24).

Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The words “For them are grades of dignity with their Lord” mean: statuses and stations at the degrees or levels in Paradise, as Allah, may He be exalted, says elsewhere (interpretation of the meaning): “They are in varying grades with Allah, and Allah is All-Seer of what they do” [Aal ‘Imraan 3:163].

“and Forgiveness” i.e., forgiveness for their bad deeds and appreciation of their good deeds.

Ad-Dahhaak said concerning the words “For them are grades of dignity with their Lord”: Some of the people of Paradise will be above others, and the one who is higher will see his superiority over the one who is beneath him, whereas the one who is lower will not think that anyone is given precedence above him.

End quote from Tafseer Ibn Katheer (4/13).

Thirdly:

One of the favours that Allah will bestow upon His believing slaves is that He will cause children and wives to join their fathers and husbands in the degrees or levels of the latter, even if they did not attain that by their own deeds, so that they may have the joy of reunion. Allah, may He be

exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Our Lord! And make them enter the Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens) which you have promised them, and to the righteous among their fathers, their wives, and their offspring! Verily, You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise”

[Ghaafir 40:8].

At-Tabari (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

That is: Admit to the everlasting Gardens along with these people who repented “and follow[ed] Your Way” [Ghaafir 40:7] the righteous among their fathers, spouses and offspring, who did righteous deeds that were pleasing to You in the previous world.

It was stated that a man’s parents, children and wife will be admitted to Paradise along with him, even if they did not do deeds like his, by virtue of Allah’s mercy towards him.

End quote from Tafseer at-Tabari (21/356-357)

Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The words “and to the righteous among their fathers, their wives, and their offspring” i.e., He will reunite them in Paradise with their loved ones, their parents, wives and children, among the believers who are fit to be admitted to Paradise, so that they may have the joy of reunion. He will even raise the one who is of lower status to the higher status, without that detracting from the status of the one who is higher. Rather that will be by the grace and kindness of Allah, as He, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And those who believe and whose offspring follow them in Faith, to them shall We join their offspring, and We shall not decrease the reward of their deeds in anything. Every person is a pledge for that which he has earned”

[at-Toor 52:21].

End quote from Tafseer Ibn Katheer (4/451)

For more details concerning that, please see the answers to questions no. 121192 and 107781

And Allah knows best.