

According to those who interpreted the painful punishment as referring to execution (in the case of one who kills a killer who has been pardoned, as discussed above), this verse specifically indicates that he is to be killed and that it is not permissible to let him off. This is the view of some scholars, but the first view is the correct one, because his offence is no worse than that of anyone else.

Then Allah (ﷻ) explains the great wisdom behind the prescription of legal retribution:

﴿In this legal retribution there is [saving of] life﴾ that is, lives are protected and criminals will be deterred thereby, because anyone who realises that he will be killed if he kills another is very unlikely to kill. If the killer is seen executed, others will be deterred thereby, but if the punishment of the killer were something other than execution, there would be no deterrent to evil such as that which results from execution. The same may be said concerning all the ḥadd punishments prescribed in Sharia; they teach a lesson and provide a deterrent, which is indicative of the wisdom of the Most Wise, the Oft-Forgiving.

Because the wisdom behind this ruling is not properly understood except by people of reason and understanding, they alone are addressed here. This indicates that Allah (ﷻ) loves those of His slaves who use their minds and ponder the wisdom in His rulings and the purposes they serve, which is indicative of the perfection of His wisdom, His praise, His justice and His all-encompassing mercy. The one who meets this description is deserving of praise, because he is one of the people of understanding to whom this is addressed; that is sufficient honour for people who understand.

﴿so that you may become pious﴾. The one who knows his Lord and is aware of what there is in His religion and His law of great wisdom and clear signs is obliged thereby to submit to the command of Allah and be concerned about disobeying Him, so that he refrains from doing so. Thus he will deserve to be one of the pious.