

Archangel Jibrael Delivers The Message

فَهَبَطَ الْأَمِينُ جِبْرَائِيلُ وَقَالَ : أَلْسَلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ، الْعَلِيُّ الْأَعْلَى يُقْرِئُكَ السَّلَامَ ، وَيَخُصُّكَ بِالتَّحِيَّةِ وَ الْإِكْرَامِ
وَقَالَ لَكَ : وَ عِزَّتِي وَ جَلَالِي إِنِّي مَا خَلَقْتُ سَمَاءً مَبْنِيَّةً وَ لَا أَرْضاً مَدْحِيَّةً وَ لَا قَمَراً مُنِيراً وَ لَا شَمْساً مُضِيئَةً وَ لَا
فَلَكَأَ يَدُورُ وَ لَا بَحراً يَجْرِي وَ لَا فَلَكَأَ تَسْرِي إِلَّا لِأَجْلِكُمْ وَ مَحَبَّتِكُمْ ، وَ قَدْ أُنزِلَ لِي أَنْ أُدْخَلَ مَعَكُمْ ، فَهَلْ تَأْذَنُ لِي يَا
رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ؟ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ : وَ عَلَيْكَ السَّلَامُ يَا أَمِينَ وَ حَيِّ اللَّهُ ، إِنَّهُ نَعَمَ قَدْ أُذِنَتْ لَكَ ، فَدَخَلَ جِبْرَائِيلُ مَعَنَا تَحْتَ
الْكِسَاءِ .

Gabriel the Honest Archangel descended, "Peace be upon you, O Allah's Messenger!" he greeted, "The Most High and All-high (Lord) conveys to you His greeting, expresses His special greeting and honoring to you, and says, 'By My Almightyness and My Majesty I take this oath: I have not created any well-established sky, extended land, glowing moon, shining sun, revolving planet, flowing ocean, or moving on ark except for your sake and for your love.' He has then allowed me to join you (under this cloak). Will you, O Allah's Messenger, allow me?" Allah's Messenger said, "Peace be upon you, O trustee of Allah's Revelations. Yes, I allow you."

After Archangel Jibrael (AS) descends to the earth and conveys his greetings to the Prophet (SA), he delivers to him the divine message that is composed of two parts. The first part is the conveyance of Allah's peace greetings to Muhammad and His special salutations and honoring to him.

This introduction by Allah (SWT) certainly brings endless joy to the heart of the Prophet (SA) as he takes a message from the beloved – He (SWT) whose thought and remembrance has filled his life every minute and second! What a great honor it is for a creature to be greeted with such veneration by his Creator!

It is a moment of extreme bliss for a lover to receive or hear news from his beloved, and the exceptional relationship between Prophet Muhammad (SA) and Allah (SWT) is the best exemplar of the longing which exist between two lovers.

With this most-welcoming introduction and greeting which Allah (SWT) conveys to his servant, one can

expect that the message that will come afterwards will certainly carry good news or glad tidings that will please the servant. What is that message which Allah (SWT) has sent Jibrael (AS) to deliver to the Prophet (SA)? The words following the warm greetings amazingly begins with a divine swear where Allah (SWT) says "وعزتي وجلالي" (By My Almightyness and My Majesty).

The question begs itself why does the Almighty Creator have to use the method of swearing when He is the Most Truthful and any statement coming from Him is truth without any doubt. After all, He (SWT) does not need to convince anyone of anything and it is assumed that the audience should and would accept all that Allah (SWT) says without hesitation.

Yet we find the Holy Qur'an presenting many instances where Allah (SWT) begins His speech by swearing (قسم). Swearing in general is used to assure something or to draw the attention to another. In the Qur'an, there are many aims of swearing from which is to assure a certain matter to people.

The verses which contain oaths sworn such as: "those sent forth" (Al-Mursalaat), the winds that scatter (Al-Dhaariyaat), those who pull out (Al-Naazi'at), the break of day (Al-Fajr), the Time (Al-'Asr), the forenoon (Al-Duhaa) and the mansions of the stars (Mawaaqi' al-Nujoom – see al-Waaqi'ah 56:75), etc., these are oaths sworn by Allah (SWT) and He has the right to swear oaths by whatever He wills, but the created being can swear only by his Lord.

When Allah (SWT) swears by something, He is either raising the status of that thing due to its excellence or He (SWT) may be using a grand creation of His which we as human can relate to very well so that we may pay close attention to the rest of His speech. It should be noted that the degree of importance of the subject of swearing increases with the significance of that thing which Allah (SWT) is swearing upon.

For example, if Allah (SWT) swears upon His grand creation such as the sun or the moon, it is different than if He (SWT) swears upon His own existence or an attribute of His divinity. Surely, the latter conveys a high degree of importance to what He (SWT) is about to say.

In the *Tradition of the Cloak*, Allah (SWT) commences His speech to the Prophet (SA) by swearing by His Mightiness and Majesty. This gives the audience a hint that the divine speech that will follow is of utmost graveness and importance and we should keep our ears wide open to receive what Allah (SWT) is about to deliver.

What does Allah (SWT) want to say that is of extreme importance such that He (SWT) is swearing by His own Mightiness and Majesty – two of His most exalted attributes? Jibrael (AS) is actually delivering that same message which Allah (SWT) communicated to him and the other heavenly creatures regarding the sole purpose and aim of His creation of the universe being out of love and for the sake of the holy personalities under the cloak. Jibrael (AS) narrates to the Prophet (SA) the exact words Allah (SWT) used and the Prophet (SA) and his Ahlu'lBayt (AS) are made to recognize themselves the great status that they hold in Allah's eyes.

The intention and purpose of Allah (SWT) regarding His aim of creation is not a secret and must not be hidden from any creation. Everyone including the humans, angels, and the infallible guides must be informed of the purpose of the divine creation, after which the actions of each individual will be accountable.

Allah (SWT) is neither telling a story for the sake of entertainment nor is He (SWT) expressing His feelings or actions just for the sake of sharing information. Rather, the Almighty (AS) is conveying this grand declaration after commencing with a warm welcome to the Prophet (SA) and swearing upon His most exalted attributes so that we pay very close attention and adjust our purpose in life according to the message that He (SWT) is delivering.

If Allah's purpose of creation is out of love and for the sake of the Prophet's AhlulBayt, then shouldn't we as creation also align our purpose and actions with Allah's purpose?

This is most logical and natural for us to do if we claim that we worship Allah (SWT) and desire His proximity. Even if Allah (SWT) does not command us to love the AhlulBayt (AS) and seek their guidance (as He did in countless occasions), we as intellectuals should be able to reach the conclusion that this is what the logic demands us to do.

For example, if you love your mother dearly and she in turn expresses to you that she loves her neighbor very much and exerts a lot of effort in service of that neighbor, wouldn't you also aim to serve and please that neighbor, out of your love and devotion to your mother? Likewise, it follows that whatever pleases Allah (SWT) and whomever He (SWT) favors and whomever He (SWT) elevates in rank, we as creation should follow the same example and strive to imitate the way of Allah (SWT).

After delivering the divine message which contains glad tidings and a "love note" to the Prophet (SA) and his AhlulBayt (AS), Jibrael (AS) informs him that he has attained the divine permission to join their gathering under the cloak. At this point, one may expect for Jibrael (AS) to immediately rush to the cloak and join the holy five since he has already gotten the approval of the Almighty Creator – He whose permission is above all permissions!

However, Jibrael (SWT) does not do that and instead seeks the permission of the Prophet (SA) himself. We must pay very close attention to this interesting behavior of Archangel Jibrael (AS)! Doesn't he know that the divine permission equals the prophetic permission and that whatever Allah (SWT) approves the Prophet (SA) will also approve?

Of course he does, but Jibrael (AS) still seeks the permission of the Prophet (SA) out of respect, veneration, and consideration to his superior position. Jibrael (AS) also recognizes that his action of seeking permission of the Prophet (SA) will certainly please Allah (SWT) and will stand as a sign of his commitment to the purpose of Allah (SWT) which He has declared. It is the natural reaction of extreme admiration and regards which Jibrael (AS) has for the Seal of Messengers which manifested itself in seeking the Prophet's permission although he didn't have to.

The Prophet (SA) responds to Jibrael (AS) by conveying his personal greetings to him and addressing him with the title "يا أمين وحي الله" (Oh Trustee of Allah's Revelation)

Surely, this is a great role which the Prophet (SA) is highlighting to Jibrael (AS) and to the audience who will listen to and recite this tradition in the generations to come. We are to be reminded that the role of Angel Jibrael (AS) is to deliver the word of God as His Trustee. The trustworthiness of Jibrael (AS) as a messenger is verified by Allah's selection to him for this grand role to all the prophets and messengers. Hence, we can never doubt the authenticity of what Jibrael (AS) conveys on behalf of Allah (SWT).

Upon receiving the message of Jibrael (AS) concerning the purpose of Allah's creation being in service and love to AhlulBayt (AS), we should remember that the deliverer of this message is the trustworthy Jibrael, so there must be no doubt in our minds to his truthfulness and we should be even more convinced that what he is delivering is absolutely true and correct, even if we find it hard to believe or fathom.

The natural response of the Prophet (SA) to Jibrael's request, especially after he was informed of the divine approval was to comply with Allah's permission and also grant him his own permission. He knows very well that Jibrael's position in Allah's eyes is great and he himself holds deep respect to Jibrael (AS) whom he considers his good friend and confidant.

Upon the prophetic approval, Jibrael (AS) enters the cloak and is graced by the presence of the most holy ones whose existence is the sole purpose of the divine creation. Perhaps it is due to Jibrael's deep veneration and love to the Prophet (SA) and adherence to those whom Allah (SWT) chose, by virtue of him seeking the prophetic permission which granted him the reward of entering the cloak in this very momentous occasion.

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