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Part 43: Verses speaking of the afflictions and tragedies of the Imams

Verses that speak of the afflictions and tragedies that befell the Infallible Imams (a.s.)

First verse:

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ. وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ
فَلْيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلْيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِينَ.

Do men think that they will be left alone on saying, we believe and not be tried? And certainly we tried those before them, so Allah will certainly know those who are true and He will certainly know the liars. Or do they who work evil think that they will escape us? Evil is it that they Judge!
(Surah Ankabut 29:2-3)

It is narrated that Amirul Momineen and Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) used to recite this with a slight variation.

According to traditions these two verses are about the mischief after Holy Prophet (S) due to the snatching of caliphate of Ali. That those who has accepted Ali as the successor of the Prophet at Ghadeer Khum and paid allegiance to him but then they followed the worldly desires and broke their allegiance, and the believers became distinct from the hypocrites.

Shaykh Mufeed narrates in *Irshad* that when the opponents of Amirul Momineen (a.s.) paid allegiance to someone other than him a man came to Ali (a.s.) while he was giving the finishing touches to the holy grave of the Holy Prophet (S) with spade. The person said: All have paid allegiance to Abu Bakr and since a difference arose among the Ansars they were left aside and the party of Caliphs that included some hypocrites who had forcefully accepted faith saw this as a good opportunity and they immediately

paid allegiance to Abu Bakr, so that it may not happen that you get the Caliphate. When he said all this, the Hazrat put the spade down and recited the captioned verses:

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ. وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ
فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِينَ. أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ
أَنْ يَسْبِقُونَا سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ.

Do men think that they will be left alone on saying, we believe and not be tried? And certainly we tried those before them, so Allah will certainly know those who are true and He will certainly know the liars. Or do they who work evil think that they will escape us? Evil is it that they Judge!
(Surah Ankabut 29:2-4)

Ibne Mahyar has related from Imam Husain (a.s.) that when this verse was revealed, Ali (a.s.) asked: O Prophet of Allah! What is that 'trial' mentioned in this verse? The Prophet (S) replied: O Ali, it is you. That is the Almighty Allah would test the people through your Imamate and you would dispute with those who have usurped your Caliphate and did not accept your Imamate, so you should be ready to dispute with proof and argument.

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) is reported to have said that: The Holy Prophet (S) spent a night in the mosque and when morning approached Amirul Momineen (a.s.) also arrived. The Prophet (S) called him. Ali (a.s.) said: Labbaik (here I am), O Messenger of Allah.

The Prophet said: Come to me. Amirul Momineen (a.s.) went to him and the Hazrat said: O Ali! You saw that I spent the whole night here in the mosque and asked a thousand wishes from Allah. He fulfilled all of them and I asked similar things for you and Allah accepted them all. Then I asked him to unite the whole Ummat on your Imamate so that all may accept your Caliphate and follow you, the Almighty did not accept this wish of mine and He has revealed these verses.

Also Saddi has narrated that 'those who are true' refers to Ali (a.s.) and his companions and 'He will certainly know the liars' means his enemies who are untrue in their claim of being believers.

Second verse:

وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا
أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا وَإِنْ يَسْتَغِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ بِئْسَ
الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا.

And say: The truth is from your Lord, so let him who please believe, and let him who please disbelieve; surely we have prepared for the iniquitous a fire the smoke of which shall encompass them about. (Surah Kahf 18:29)

Kulaini, Ali Ibne Ibrahim and Ayyashi with authentic chains have narrated from Imam Sadiq and Baqir (a.s.) that the 'Haqq' (truth) means Wilayat of Ali Ibne Abi Talib (a.s.) and iniquitous refers to those who did injustice on Aale Muhammad (a.s.) and the verse was revealed like this: Surely We have prepared for the iniquitous who have usurped their rights of Aale Muhammad a fire...

Ibne Mahyar has related from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) that this verse was revealed in this way: And say: the truth is from your Lord about the Wilayat of Ali Ibne Abi Talib, so let him who please believe, and let him who please disbelieve; surely we have prepared for the iniquitous who have usurped from the Aale Muhammad their rights a fire the smoke of which shall encompass them about.

Third verse:

أَذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ بَأَنَّهُمْ ظَلَمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ. الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ
دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ.

Permission (to fight) is given to those upon whom war is made because they are oppressed, and most surely Allah is well able to assist them, those who have been expelled from their homes without a just cause except that they say: Our Lord is Allah. (Surah Haj 22:39-40)

Ali Ibne Ibrahim said that these verses were revealed in the praise of Amirul Momineen (a.s.), Ja'far Tayyar and Hamza and after them they are applicable to Imam Husain (a.s.).

...those who have been expelled from their homes without a just cause... was revealed for Imam Husain (a.s.) that Yazid (may Allah's curse be upon him) sent people to arrest the Hazrat and bring him to Syria. Due to this the Imam fled to Kufa from Medina and was martyred in Kerbala.

Through good-like chains it is narrated from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) that he said that the opponents say that the first verse was revealed in praise of the Holy Prophet (S), when the unbelievers of Mecca had expelled him from there. Imam (a.s.) said: It is not so. This verse refers to Sahibul Amr (a.s.) when he would arise to take the revenge of the blood of Imam Husain (a.s.) and say: We are the heirs of that Hazrat and we are taking the revenge of his blood.

Ibne Shahr Aashob has narrated from Imam Baqir (a.s.) that "those who have been expelled from their homes without a just cause" is in our praise.

From other chains it is narrated from Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) that these verses were revealed in

praise of Imams Hasan and Husain (a.s.).

Also from the same Imam (a.s.) there is the tradition that this is in praise of Imam Qaem (a.s.) and his companions.

There is a tradition in *Majmaul Bayan* from Imam Baqir (a.s.) that this verse was in praise of the Emigrants (Muhajirs) and for all the Aale Muhammad because and was applicable to all the Aale Muhammad because the unjust expelled them from the city and always each of them lived in fear and dissimulation (Taqauiyyah).

Fourth verse:

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا ادْخُلُوا هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ رَغَدًا وَادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُولُوا حِطَّةً نَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطَايَاكُمْ وَسَنَزِيدُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ. فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا رِجْزًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ.

And when We said: Enter this city, then eat from it a plenteous (food) whenever you wish, and enter the gate making obeisance, and say, forgiveness. We will forgive you your wrongs and give more to those who do good (to others). But those who were unjust changed it for a saying other than that which had been spoken to them, so We sent upon those who were unjust a pestilence from heaven, because they transgressed. (Surah Baqarah 2:58-59)

It is well known among the commentators that this verse was revealed in praise of Bani Israel. Many of them did not ask the permission to enter the city and some of them asked for a worldly blessings, so the calamity of plague was sent upon them, due to which within an hour twenty four thousand people died.

In the traditions of Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) the verse is in this way: But those who were unjust in usurping from the Aale Muhammad their rights changed it for a saying other than that which had been spoken to them, so We sent upon those who were unjust in usurping from the Aale Muhammad their rights a pestilence from heaven, because they transgressed. 1

Fifth Verse:

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ.

And when We said to the angels. Make obeisance to Adam they did obeisance but Iblees (did it

not). He refused and he was proud, and he was of the unbelievers. (Surah Baqarah 2:34)

Kulaini has related through reliable chains from Moosa Ibne Ja'far (a.s.) that when the Holy Prophet (S) saw in his dream that the unjust Caliphs and Bani Umayyah were mounted on his pulpit, he was much aggrieved that after him they would usurp the right of his successor. At this time the Almighty revealed this verse to comfort him and revealed to him that: O Muhammad! I commanded them, but they did not obey My command therefore do not be sorrowful while these people do not obey you regarding the right of your successor.

Sixth Verse:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَظَلَمُوا لَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ طَرِيقًا إِلَّا طَرِيقَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الرَّسُولُ بِالْحَقِّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَآمِنُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ وَإِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا.

Surely (as for) those who disbelieve and act unjustly, Allah will not forgive them nor guide them to a path, Except the path of Hell, to abide in it forever, and this is easy to Allah. O people! Surely the apostle has come to you with the truth from your Lord, therefore believe, (it shall be) good for you and if you disbelieve, then surely whatever is in the heavens and the earth is Allah's and Allah is knowing, wise. (Surah Nisa 4: 168–170)

Kulaini (r.a.) has narrated from Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) that the verse was revealed in this way: *Surely (as for) those who acted unjustly on the progeny of Muhammad and usurped their rights and the second verse is like this: O People! Surely the Apostle has come to you Ali (a.s.) therefore believe (it shall be) good for you and if you disbelieve in the Wilayat of Ali (a.s.) then Allah is needless of you as all that is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Him.*

Seventh Verse:

وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا.

And we reveal of the Quran which is a healing and a mercy to the believers, and it adds only to the perdition of the unjust. (Surah Israa 17:82)

Ibne Mahyar has related through many chains of narrated from Imam Baqir and Sadiq (a.s.) that the unjust people denotes those who oppressed the Aale Muhammad (a.s.) and the verse was revealed in

this way. And it does not increase for those who were unjust on Aale Muhammad except loss.

Eighth Verse:

وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ.

And they did not do us harm, but they made their own souls suffer the loss. (Surah Baqarah 2:57)

Kulaini and others have related from Imam Baqir and Kazim (a.s.) that the Almighty is much high and lofty from it that any injustice could be done on Him. Rather He has included us, Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) and said that injustice on us is like injustice on Him. That is, those who did injustice on My trusts and proofs and whatever pains are caused to them it is all injustice upon yourself and you become eligible for everlasting punishment.

Ninth Verse:

احْشُرُوا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا وَأَزْوَاجَهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ.

Gather together those who were unjust and their associates... (Surah Saffat 37:22)

Ali Ibne Ibrahim says it means gather those who were unjust on Aale Muhammad (a.s.), with their associates.

Tenth Verse:

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ.

And whatever the Apostles gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you, keep back, and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, surely Allah is severe in retributing (evil). (Surah Hashr 59:7)

Ibne Mahyar has narrated from Ali (a.s.) that be fearful of Allah and do not oppress the Aale Muhammad. Certainly Allah would punish very severely those who are unjust to Aale Muhammad.

Eleventh Verse:

وَعَنْتَ الْوُجُوهُ لِلْحَيِّ الْقَيُّومِ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ حَمَلَ ظُلْمًا.

And he who bears iniquity is indeed a failure. (Surah Anbiyah 21:111)

Ibne Mahyar quotes Imam Sadiq (a.s.) that it means those who consider oppressing Aale Muhammad legal are those who are hopeless of the mercy of Allah.

Twelfth Verse:

وَلَمَنْ انتَصَرَ بَعْدَ ظُلْمِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ مَا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ.

And whoever defends himself after his being oppressed. These it is against whom there is no way (to blame). (Surah Shuraa 42:41)

Ibne Mahyar has narrated from Imam Baqir (a.s.) that this verse is revealed in the honour of Imam Qaem (a.s.) that when he would reappear he would take revenge from Bani Umayyah, and those who had denied the pure Imams (a.s.) and had been inimical to these noble personages.

1. The writer says: This translation is possible with two explanations:

- (i) First: Allah has mentioned the stories of earlier Prophets in Quran for this nation and many traditions state that whatever has occurred in Bani Israel would also happen in this nation; and many traditions state the example of Hitta of Bani Israel. It means just as they were commanded to enter from the door and show humility and prostrate and whoever did not do so was punished. In the same way is the Wilayat of Ahlul Bayt for this nation. Those who accept their Wilayat (Mastership), respect and obey them would get salvation and one who does not do so would be chastised. The punishment of the past nations was apparent and the punishment of this Ummat will be misguidance and they would be deprived of good fortune and all types of calamities would befall them like killing, plunder and other such things and there would be difference amongst the people and other types of calamities will come upon them which came to them due to the enmity with Ahlul Bayt (a.s.).
- (ii) Second: It is possible that Bani Israel duly accepted the Wilayat Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). As the Tafsir of Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) mentions on the explanation of this verse that the creator of the world had taken the allegiance of the Wilayat of Muhammad (S) and Ali (a.s.) and the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) from Bani Israel. When they were saved from the desert of Tiya the Almighty commanded them to enter the gate of Areeha in Syria. They reached the gate of the city and saw that the pictures of Prophet Muhammad and Ali (peace be upon them) were fixed on the gate and the gate was very wide and high. So the Almighty ordered them that when they enter they should bow down to accord respect to these lofty personalities and to renew their allegiance, which I have taken from you. And say: Our Lord! We have performed the prostration of respect for Muhammad and Ali (a.s.) and we have renewed their Wilayat. Therefore You erase my sins and forgive my mistakes. Then I would forgive your past sins. And for the one who has not committed any sin, and would remain steadfast on their Wilayat and love, I would increase his rewards. But most of them did not obey My command and said that it was a joke upon them. Why should we bow down when the gate is so high? And why should we accord respect to those whom we have never seen? Then they turned their backs to the gate and entered it in this manner, and instead of saying Hitta (forgiveness), they uttered Hanta (red wheat) and entered it. Or what we have achieved is better than that which is being made incumbent for

us. Then the Almighty sent on them from the heavens the punishment He had fixed for them due to which a hundred and twenty thousand of them perished in a single day of plague and they were such that the Almighty knew they would neither believe nor a believer would be born from their progeny. The tradition ends here. On the basis of these two verses there is no need of any other explanation.

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