

Section 12 : The Words of Allah Inexhaustible

Surah Al-Kahf – Verse 102

أَفَحَسِبَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا عِبَادِي مِنْ دُونِي أَوْلِيَاءَ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا جَهَنَّمَ
لِلْكَافِرِينَ نُزُلًا

102. “Do then those who disbelieve think that they can take My servants as guardians besides Me? Verily We have prepared Hell for the infidels to be entertained (therein).”

This holy verse has pointed to a mental deviation of those people. It had been the main origin of their other aberrations.

It says:

“Do then those who disbelieve think that they can take My servants as guardians besides Me?...”

Have these servants, such as Messiah (as) and the angels, who were worshipped, howsoever much their ranks may be high, any thing from themselves that can support others?

Or, on the contrary, whatever they had were given them from the side of Allah. They themselves needed to be guided by the guidance of Allah, too. This is a fact that those people forgot and, therefore, sunk into disbelief.

For a further emphasis, at the end of the verse, the Qur'an says:

“... Verily We have prepared Hell for the infidels to be entertained (therein).”

Surah Al-Kahf – Verses 103 – 104

قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا

الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا

103. “Say: ‘Shall We inform you of the greatest losers in (their) deeds?’”

104. “Those whose effort is lost in this world’s life, while they think that they are working good deeds.”

This verse, as well as the other verses up to the end of Surah Al-Kahf, not only is an explanation upon the qualities of the faithless persons, but also is a kind of summary for all the subjects which were discussed in this Surah. They are especially the matters concerning the story of the Companions of the Cave, Moses, Khidr, Zul-Qarnayn and their efforts and struggles against their opponents.

At first, it refers to the greatest losers, the most wretched persons among all mankind. But, in order to move the sense of curiosity of the hearers upon such an important subject, the Qur’an propounds it in the form of a question, and commands the Prophet of Islam (S) as follows:

“Say: ‘Shall We inform you of the greatest losers in (their) deeds?’”

Then, immediately after this question, the Qur’an itself answers it, so that the hearer does not spend a long time wandered, and it implies that the greatest losers are:

“Those whose effort is lost in this world’s life, while they think that they are working good deeds.”

Certainly the meaning of ‘to lose’ in this text is not only that a person loses some profits, but the real loss is that he loses the main capital, too. What a capital can be higher and worthier than intellect, talent, God-given-powers, lifetime, youth, and health.

These very things, which produce our deeds and our actions, are the fruit of our powers and abilities. When these powers turn into some destructive and vain deeds, it seems all of them have lost and vanished.

The true and double loss is where a man loses his own material and spiritual capitals on a wrong and deviated way, and he imagines that he has done a good action. Such a person has neither obtained any useful result from these efforts, nor has he learnt a lesson from that loss, nor is he secured from the repetition of that event.

However, the Islamic traditions denote that this verse has been rendered into the denier of the leadership of Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) and those who postpone the fulfillment of Hajj from today to tomorrow. 1

Ali-ibn-Abitalib (as) said the referent of a concept of this verse were the people of the Book, who were legitimate at first, then they brought some innovations in religion while they were working good deeds. Then he (as) added the people of Nahrawan were not less than them. 2

Surah Al-Kahf – Verses 105 – 106

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَلِقَائِهِ فَحَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَلَا نُقِيمُ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
وِزْنَاً

ذَلِكَ جَزَاءُهُمْ بِمَا كَفَرُوا وَاتَّخَذُوا آيَاتِي وَرُسُلِي هُزُوًا

105. “They are those who disbelieved in the signs of their Lord and meeting Him (in Hereafter) so their deeds became null, and on the Day of Resurrection We assign no weight for them.”

106. “Thus Hell is their recompense for what they disbelieved and took My Signs and My messengers in mockery.”

The Arabic term /habt/ philologically means: the belly of an animal swallowed because of eating some poisonous plants and the animal exposes to death. Whoever sees such an animal thinks that it is safe and sound with plenty of meat, while its belly is full of wind and the flesh of its body is poisonous.

Some deeds of men which are considered vain are called /habt/ because those deeds have been poisoned by committing sins, and, therefore, they are empty and have been exposed to destruction.

Thus, the Qur'an in this verse implies that the disbelievers denied the divine revelations and His reasons, as well as the reward and retribution of Allah, and they spoiled their deeds thereby. They performed those actions in a way that Allah had not enjoined.

Therefore, such people will not be worthy and respectable with Allah on the Day of Resurrection. He will not heed them, and by punishing them, He will despise them and abase them.

In Arabic language, when it is said that a thing has not weight, it means that the thing is worthless. In other words, since they have not any action which can be worthy and measurable, then there will not be set a scale for them on the Day of Hereafter to weigh their deeds. Yes, they will not have anything to be

weighed and, therefore, there will be no need of preparing a scale.

A well-known tradition narrated from the Prophet (S) denotes:

“On the Day of Reckoning, the fat and heavy men of this life will bring a body in the court of Allah the weight of which is not as heavy as the wing of a fly.”

The reason of it is that their deeds, thoughts, and personalities have utterly been empty and vain in this world.

The verse says:

“They are those who disbelieved in the signs of their Lord and meeting Him (in Hereafter) so their deeds became null, and on the Day of Resurrection We assign no weight for them.”

In the next verse, the Qur’an implies that the disbelievers denied three basic principles of the religious belief: (Origin and End and the prophethood of the prophets), or farther than denial, they took them in mockery.

The verse says:

“Thus Hell is their recompense for what they disbelieved and took My Signs and My messengers in mockery.”

Surah Al-Kahf – Verses 107 – 108

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ الْفِرْدَوْسِ نُزُلًا

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يَبْغُونَ عَنْهَا حِوَلًا

107. “Verily those who believe and do righteous deeds there is for them Gardens of Paradise for their entertainment.”

108. “Abiding therein forever, they desire no removal therefrom.”

The qualities of disbelievers, the greatest losers among people, and their fate was rather widely defined. Now, the Qur’an, as a frame of reference before the disbelievers, refers to believers and their fate, so that the situation of both parties becomes quietly clear and distinguished.

In this regard, the holy Qur’an says:

“Verily those who believe and do righteous deeds there is for them Gardens of Paradise for their entertainment.”

The Qur’anic term /firdaus/ is a garden which contains all the bounties and the whole necessary merits. Thus, it is the best and the most privileged gardens of Paradise.

The holy Prophet of Islam (S) said:

*“Paradise has one hundred degrees, the best of which is ‘Firdaus’. Whenever you supplicate, ask ‘Firdaus’ from Allah.”*³

In view of the fact that the perfection of a bounty is that it does not face with extinction, immediately after that, the Qur’an adds:

“Abiding therein forever...”

The fastidious and desirous nature of man constantly asks for variety and changing, yet the inhabitants of ‘Firdaus’ will never demand removal from it, for whatever they wish they find there, even variety and perfection.

The verse continues saying:

“...they desire no removal therefrom.”

Surah Al-Kahf – Verse 109

قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مِدَاداً لِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّي لَنَفِدَ الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنْفَدَ كَلِمَاتُ رَبِّي وَلَوْ
جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِ مَدَداً

109. “Say: ‘If the sea became ink for (writing) the Words of my Lord, the sea would certainly be exhausted before the Words of my Lord were exhausted, even though We brought the like of it to help.’”

The Arabic term /midad/ is applied for the ink which is poured into an inkpot and is used as a means of drawing the pen on the paper.

The objective meaning of the Qur’anic phrase /kalimat-i-rabb/ is either the divine promises and the created things, or the godly philosophies and conceptions, or Divine revelations and whatever has a sign from Allah. Thus, every particle, every atom, and every cell is one of the Words of Allah.

However, in the occasions of revelation of this verse it is said that when the Jews heard this sentence

from the Prophet of Islam (S) saying:

“...and you are not given aught of knowledge but a little.”⁴

They said how such a matter could be right while the Jews were given the Turah, and whoever has been given the Turah indeed has been given abundant good. Then the abovementioned verse was revealed and illustrated the infinite knowledge of Allah and that man’s little knowledge is aught before it.

Some other commentators believe that the Jews told the Prophet (S) that Allah had given him wisdom and

“...whoever has been given wisdom, indeed has been given abundant good”⁵,

but when they asked him (S) about the spirit, he replied them an ambiguous answer. Then the abovementioned verse was revealed and declared that however much a man may be learned his knowledge is aught before the knowledge of Allah.⁶

Therefore, this verse and the verse after it are concerned to the whole subjects of this Surah. As if the Qur’an intends to say that the information of the events of the Companions of the Cave, Moses, Khidr, and Zul-Qarnayn are not so important when the infinite knowledge of Allah is considered.

The holy Qur’an, addressing the holy Prophet of Islam (S), says:

“Say: ‘If the sea became ink for (writing) the Words of my Lord, the sea would certainly be exhausted before the Words of my Lord were exhausted, even though We brought the like of it to help.’”

In this verse, indeed, the Qur’an attracts the attentions to this fact that you should not think that the world of existence is confined to what you see, or to what you know, or to what you feel.

But it is so great and vast that if the water of the seas became ink for writing the names, qualities, specialties, secrets and mysteries of it, the seas would be used up before the whole of the creatures of the existing world could be counted.

It is noteworthy that the abovementioned verse, not only illustrates the infinite vastness of the world of existence in the past, present, and future, but also it is an illustration of the infinite knowledge of Allah, because we know that Allah has encompassed in His knowledge whatever exists, and whatever will come into being, in the expanse of existence. Even more, His knowledge is not separate from the existence of these creatures.

Then, in other words, it can be said that if all the oceans throughout of the world became ink and all the trees became pens they are never sufficiently able to record the number of whatever exists in the knowledge of Allah.

At the end, there is a tradition cited in the commentary book of Ali-ibn-Ibrahim Qummi, and in the commentary book of Al-Burhan, narrated from Abi-Basir, from Imam Sadiq (as) who, concerning the commentary of this verse, said:

*“I inform you that the Word of Allah has neither an end, nor has it finite, nor does it cause to eternity.”*⁷

Surah Al-Kahf – Verse 110

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحِي إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ
فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا

110. “Say: ‘I am only a mortal like you. It is revealed unto me that your God is (only) One God. Therefore, whoever hopes to meet his Lord (in Hereafter) let him do righteousness, and make none sharer of the worship due unto his Lord.’”

This holy verse, which is the last verse of Surah Al-Kahf, contains a collection of fundamental principles of the religious beliefs, such as, Unity, Resurrection, and the prophethood of the holy Prophet (S). This is, in fact, the same as what the beginning of the Surah Al-Kahf has begun with.

Since the subject of prophethood among common people has always been accompanied with kinds of exaggeration and extravagance in the length of its history, the Qur’an states it as follows:

“Say: ‘I am only a mortal like you...’”

Thus, by this meaning, he nullified all the imaginary polytheistic privileges which promoted the divine prophets from the rank of human to the rank of divinity, and said that the only his privilege was that it was revealed unto him.

Then, among all the subjects which are revealed, he emphasizes on the subject of Unity and says:

“...It is revealed unto me that your God is (only) One God...”

In this part of the verse, only the subject of Unity has been pointed out, because Unity is not merely a principle out of the fundamentals of belief, but it is the essence of all fundamental principles and the positive laws of Islam.

If, through a simple example, we similarize the Islamic teachings, containing the fundamental principles and positive laws of the religion to the jewelery beads of a jewelery, Unity should be similarized to the string that has joined these beads to each other and has formed, from all of them, a worthy beautiful necklace.

That is why that some Islamic traditions indicate that the holy phrase /la'ilaha'illallah/ (There is not god save Allah) is a firm fortress, and whoever enters it will be safe from the punishment of Allah.

The third sentence of this verse points to the subject of Resurrection, which is connected to the subject of Unity with the Arabic conjunction /f/, where it says:

"...Therefore, whoever hopes to meet his Lord (in Here-after) let him do righteousness..."

Meeting the Lord, which is the innate observation of His Pure Essence by the eye of the heart and the inside spiritual insight, is also possible for the true believers in this world, too. But in Hereafter, because of observing more effects with more clear manifestation of Him, it will become general for the common.

The reality of the righteous deed is referred to through a short statement in the last sentence of the verse.

It says:

"...and make none sharer of the worship due unto his Lord."

In another more clear statement, an action will not be counted 'a righteous deed' unless the reality of purity and sincerity accompanies it. In fact, the righteous deed which has originated from a godly motive and sincerity, and has mixed with it, is the passport unto the meeting of Allah.

The righteous deed is so important in Islam that the Prophet (S) in a tradition says:

"The person who performs his deeds with sincerity for forty days, Allah will flow the springs of wisdom and knowledge from his heart to his tongue."

It can be concluded that this holy verse has referred to both Unity (only One God), and prophethood (It is revealed unto me), and Resurrection (to meet his Lord in Hereafter), and hope to the mercy of Allah (whoever hopes), and effort and endeavour to reach it (let him do righteousness), and purity in action (and make none sharer).

That was why the Prophet (S) said:

*"If only the last verse of Surah Al-Kahf were revealed to my community, it would be sufficient for them."*⁸

Finally, upon the content of this verse, there have been narrated many traditions concerning the importance of sincerity and the danger of hypocrisy and hidden polytheism. Some of them are as follows:

1. The Prophet (S) said:

*"Verily Allah, the Exalted, will not accept any action in which there is a tiny amount of hypocrisy."*⁹

2. The Messenger of Allah (S) in a tradition said:

“Verily Allah has forbidden the Paradise foreverly hypocrite, man and woman; and piety is not (found) in beauty of face and clothing, but piety is (found) in serenity and solemnity.” 10

3. The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“The Fire (of Hell) and its people will cry because of the punishment of hypocrites”.

Then he (S) was asked:

“O Prophet! How (and why) does the Fire (of Hell) cry?”

He answered:

*“Because of (the intense of) the heat of the Fire by which they (the hypocrites) will be punished.”*11

4. It is narrated by 'Abi-Basir who said:

“I heard 'Aba-'Abdillah (Imam Sadiq) (as) said:

‘On the Day of Hereafter, the servant, who had established prayer, will be brought and he says: ‘O Lord! I have prayed for your pleasure’.

He will be answered:

‘But you prayed in order to be said what a good prayer so and so has established. Take him unto the Fire.’

Then, he said:

‘The same manner will be treated with the one who has struggled, has recited the Qur’an, and has given alms’.”12

5. The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“Verily, more than anything else, I fear about you for the minor polytheism’.

He was asked:

‘O’ Messenger of Allah! What is the minor polytheism?’

He answered:

‘Hypocrisy’.

Then he said:

‘On the Day of Hereafter, when Allah, Almighty and Glorious, recompenses the deeds of the servants, He will tell the hypocrites: ‘Go unto those for whom you used to act hypocritically in the world, and see whether you find the recompense of your actions with them.’” 13

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1. Tafsir-i-Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, and Abul-Futuh
 2. Majma‘-ul-Bayan, and Nur-uth-Thaqalayn
 3. Tafsir-i-Majma‘-ul-Bayan
 4. Surah Al-‘Isra, No. 17, verse 85
 5. Surah Al-Baqarah, No.2, verse 269
 6. Tafsir Qurtubi, pp. 4107 and 4108, and Tafsir-us- Safi, Surah Al-‘Isra, No. 17, verse 85
 7. Tafsir-i-Ali-ibn ‘Ibrahim, vol. 2, p.46, and Tafsir-ul-Burhan, vol. 2, p. 496
 8. Tafsir-i-Dur-ul-Mamthur
 9. Jami‘-i-‘Ahadith-ush-Shi‘ah, vol. 1, p. 368
 10. Jami‘-i-‘Ahadith-ush-Shi‘ah, vol. 1, p. 370
 11. Safinat-ul-Bihar, vol. 1, p.500, and Jami‘-i-‘Ahadith-ush-Shi‘ah, vol. 1, p. 369
 12. Jami‘-i-‘Ahadith-ush-Shi‘ah, vol. 1, p. 368
 13. Safinat-ul-Bihar, vol. 1, p. 499

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