

## Section 14: Qur'an Brought Down by the Holy Spirit

### Surah An-Nahl – Verse 101

وإِذَا بَدَلْنَا إِعْيَةً مَكَانَ إِعْيَةً وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَنْزَلُ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُفْتَرٌ بِلَّا أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

**101. “And when We exchange a verse in the place of another verse, and Allah is well aware of what He sends down, they say: ‘You are only a forger.’ Nay, most of them do not know.”**

#### The Occasion of the Revelation

Ibn-i-‘Abbas says:

*The pretext seeking pagans used to claim that Muhammad (S) had made an object of ridicule out of his companions, whenever a verse was revealed and contained some harsh commandments in it and at other time another verse was revealed and a more lenient decree was involved in it, they used to say:*

*Today he decrees one thing while tomorrow he forbids that same order, all of which exhibits the fact that Muhammad (S) claims everything by himself and not from the sphere of Allah. It was at this time that the verse was revealed and provided them with the appropriate answer.*

This verse explains the objections which the pagans had with regard to the Divine verses.

Firstly, the Holy Qur'an implies that when Allah (s.w.t.) converts a verse into another one (thus abrogating a decree), that is, He replaces one verse with another one, pagans say: You are involved in accusations.

However, most of them do not know the truth, for Allah is knowledgeable about the commandments which He sends. Therefore, He sends orders according to those circumstances which are required.

The verse says:

***“And when We exchange a verse in the place of another verse, and Allah is well aware of what He sends down, they say: ‘You are only a forger.’ Nay, most of them do not know.”***

They do not know that the Qur'an is seeking to set up the human society which is pioneering in every respect and with a superior kind of spirituality. Despite all these, it is obvious that this Divine prescription sometimes required some changes and conversions from the side of Allah.

Certainly, they are unaware of these facts and know nothing about the conditions which have brought about the revelation of the Holy Qur'an, otherwise, they knew that the discarding of certain commandments and verses of the Qur'an is a pre-determined well-calculated and exact procedure of Islam for educational purposes without which the ultimate attainment of the evolutionary process can not be achieved and can not be regarded as reasons allegedly for contradictory statements by the Prophet (S) or false accusations to Allah:

***“Nay, most of them do not know.”***

Nevertheless, most of them do not know that this abrogation is done by Him alone or they are unaware that such a process is allowed, or what is the reason that a commandment alters.

## **Explanations**

Sometimes a physician changes his prescription for his patient. This kind of change is found in the verses and commandments by the Wise, the Omniscient, which is called 'abrogation'.

The religion has got two sets of rules: constant and changeable, both of which cases are ordained by Him.

Certainly, all the Divine rules are holding true at their own time and conditions.

The changes of the Divine rules are not the signs of skepticism or regret, or because of scientific development, or experimental development and, finally, due to the weaknesses in the legislation system. On the contrary, they exhibit the fact that they are caused by precautionary measures taken and wisdom, as well as having the environmental conditions in mind. Allah knows.

## **Surah An-Nahl – Verse 102**

قُلْ نَزَّلَهُ رُوحُ الْقُدُّسِ مِنْ رَبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيُثَبِّتَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَهُدَىٰ وَيُشْرِكَ

**102. “Say: ‘The Holy Spirit has brought it down (unto you) from your Lord with the truth, in order to confirm those who believe, and to be a guidance and good news for the Muslims’.”**

This noble verse, following the course set by the previous issue, emphasizes on ordering the Prophet (S) to do as follows:

**“Say: ‘The Holy Spirit has brought it down (unto you) from your Lord with the truth...”**

The ‘Holy Spirit’ or ‘R̄uh-ul-Ghudus’, mentioned here, is the same messenger of the Divine revelations or ‘Gabriel, the Confident’. It is he who upon the Divine command reveals the verses to the Prophet (S), whether they are abrogative or abrogated, they are verses which are all with the truth and are for the training of Man.

It is for this reason that following it the Qur'an proclaims in implication that the aim is to enable the believers to stand on firmer grounds in their course of action and to provide guidance and good news for the general Muslims.

The verse continues saying:

**“...in order to confirm those who believe, and to be a guidance and good news for the Muslims’.”**

Anyway, in order to strengthen the people's power of faith and to cover the road to guidance and good news, sometimes, there is no other means provided except short-term schedules and temporary programs which will later be replaced by final and constant procedures. Such is the way which constitutes the secret of the existence of the ‘abrogative’ and the ‘abrogated’ in the Divine verses.

In the final analysis, the alterations introduced in the entire content of the Qur'an, as well as each of the rules, are authentic in their own particular circumstances are right, and the pre-condition for receiving guidance and good news is having a healthy spirit and being submitted.

Incidentally, concerning the revelation of the Qur'an both the Qur'anic phrase /'anzaln a/ has been employed in the course of the revelation as in

**“We have sent it down by the Grand Night”<sup>1</sup>,**

and

**“We have sent it down gradually in portions. ”<sup>2</sup>**

It is because the Qur'an has got two methods of revelation: one is when it has been instantly revealed to the Prophet (S) on the Night of ‘Qadr’. The other method is the one which has been gradually achieved

and revealed in the course of 23 years.<sup>3</sup>

The difference between the Arabic term /tanzil/ and /'inzal/ is that the former implies ‘bring down gradually’ and the latter means ‘bringing down all at once’. This difference, which is seen in the verses of the Qur'an, can be taken as an indication to the above kinds of descent.

## Surah An-Nahl – Verse 103

وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعْلَمُهُ بَشَرٌ لِسَانُ الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِيٌّ وَهَذَا  
لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُبِينٌ

**103. “And certainly We know that they say: ‘Only a mortal teaches him’. The language of him at whom they hint is outlandish, while this (Qur'an) is clear Arabic.”**

It seems apparently there was a non-Arab person living in Mecca and the pagans accused the blissful Prophet (S) of receiving the Qur'anic instructions from him and he ascribed them to Allah, while one may raise the issue as how could a person teach the other if they did not know each other's language?

And how is it that no one claimed at that time that he had been the instructor of the Prophet? And how is it that the words which were revealed in the course of 23 years and under various circumstances did not contradict one another?

And why is it that the said instructor himself did not claim to be a prophet himself? And how is it that no one has answered the challenge of the Qur'an that were even one Surah to be produced by anyone, the Qur'an would take its claim back?

And how is it that words uttered during the ‘Age of Ignorance’ have not been even partially discovered and their secrets revealed by the scientists even to-day? And how is it that a Book, a Surah of which has not even been produced by the dissident Arabs, could have been brought forward and taught by a non-Arab?

At any rate, this noble verse refers indirectly and in a correct way to the pretexts for accusations set forth by the opponents to the Prophet (S) of Islam, saying that Allah knows that they claim a man instructs these verses to him.

The Holy Qur'an obliterates all these unfounded and groundless accusations and claims with a decisive response, implying that they are heedless of the fact that: the language of him to whom they ascribe the Qur'an is not Arabic, while this Qur'an is revealed through the Arabic language which is eloquent and explicit.

The verse says:

***"And certainly We know that they say: 'Only a mortal teaches him': The language of him at whom they hint is outlandish, while this (Qur'an) is clear Arabic."***

One can infer from this verse that the miracle performed by the Qur'an is not confined to its content. On the contrary, the words employed by the Qur'an are also reaching the heights of miracle, while attraction, sweetness, and particular harmony are to be found in its words and structural forms of sentences are beyond the power of men.

To sum up, the Arabic term /yalhadn/ is derived from /ilh ad/ which signifies deviation of the right toward what is wrong, and sometimes it refers to all kinds of deviation. In this context, it alludes to the fact that professional accusers and liars sought to ascribe the Qur'an to a man and considered him to be the teacher of the Prophet (S).

The Qur'anic terms /i'jam/ and /ajmah/ originally means ambiguity and /a'jami/ refers to the person who has shortcoming in his expression, whether an Arab or a non-Arab. As the Arabs were faced with lack of information from the part of non-Arabs, they used to call others as /ajam/.

## **Surah An-Nahl – Verse 104**

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَا يَهْدِيهِمُ اللَّهُ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

**104. "Verily, those who do not believe in the signs of Allah, Allah will not guide them and they will have a painful punishment."**

With a threatening tone, the Qur'an deals in this verse with the fact that such accusations and deviations are all caused by their lack of faith which has penetrated all their selves.

***"Verily, those who do not believe in the signs of Allah, Allah will not guide them..."***

That is, they will be lead neither to the right path, nor to the road leading to Paradise and eternal happiness, and a painful chastisement awaits them. For they are so entangled with fanaticism, obstinacy and hostility when facing the truth that they have lost the eligibility of being guided, and they are not prepared but for a painful punishment.

The verse continues saying:

***"...and they will have a painful punishment."***

It is for this reason that those, whom Allah knows not to be believers, are not guided by Him. That is, His

grace does not involve them and they would be left to their own.

## Surah An-Nahl – Verse 105

إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِي الْكَذِبَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ

**105. “Only they forge falsehood who do not believe in Allah’s signs, and they themselves are liars.”**

In the last two verses, the pagans used to claim among their accusations to the blissful Prophet (S) that these verses were taught to him by a man and he falsely ascribed them to Allah.

In answer to them the Qur'an, through previous verse, implied that that man is not an Arab instructor; furthermore, Allah will not teach all of the Qur'anic sciences to a pagan. Now, it implies in this verse that: The prophet is not the one who ascribes the words of others to Allah; this is the job of those who are not believers.

Thus the Qur'an says:

**“Only they forge falsehood who do not believe in Allah’s signs and they themselves are liars.”**

And what a lie is greater than accusing men of the truth, and causing other obstacles to stand in the path of them and those who are thirsty for the truth?

The above verse is one of the shaking verses which concern the ugliness of falsehood. It equates liars with the pagans and with those who reject the Divine verses.

In principle, there is a great deal of importance attached to the issue of telling the truth and campaigning against lying and falsehood in Islamic teachings in so far as lying has been equated with the key to all sins, and telling the truth as the bill or the ticket to enter the Paradise.

The blissful Qur'an proclaims:

**“And if he had fabricated against Us some of the sayings,”**

**“Then We would certainly have cut off his aorta.”<sup>4</sup>**

In Tafsir-i-Durr-ul-Manthar and Al-Mizan, it has been quoted from the blissful Prophet (S) that a believer may be involved in fornication or in theft, but he will never tell lies. Then he recited this verse.

Ali (as) says:

*“Telling lie is disgrace in the world and will cause the punishment of Fire in the Hereafter.”* 5

And also, Imam ‘Askari (as) proclaims:

*“All evil and nasty things are placed in a room, the key to which is ‘telling lies’.”* 6

In another quotation from Ali (as) we read:

*“One can not be blessed with faith unless he abandons lying whether it is in the form of a joke or is seriously said.”* 7

## **Surah An-Nahl – Verse 106**

مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أَكْرَهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌ بِالإِيمَانِ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ مَنَ شَرَحَ  
بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

**106. “He who disbelieves in Allah after believing in Him; not he who has been compelled, while his heart is still content with the faith, but he who opens (his) breast to disbelief, upon them shall rest wrath from Allah and for them shall be a great chastisement.”**

In the early days of Islam, the pagans of Mecca martyred the parents of ‘Ammar Yasir, a true believer, while torturing them for embracing Islam. As soon as it was ‘Ammar’s turn to be tortured, he declared those words which the pagans wanted him to utter and saved his life.

‘Ammar was then blamed for having abandoned Islam by some persons. He called on the blissful Prophet (S) while crying. The Prophet caressed him, saying:

*“If your life is at stake again, utter these words and save yourself; you are faithful all over.”* 8

This procedure is called /taqiyah/ in Islam which requires certain rules. However, we must know that there are certain cases of ‘Taqiyyah’.

At times, it is compulsory while at other times, one must stand up to the end and utter his words, and not engage in Taqiyyah, like what the sorcerers of Pharaoh did.

They embraced the faith as soon as they noticed the miracle of Moses (as) not fearing the threats of Pharaoh and telling him to do what he wanted, and that they would not abandon their faith. Pharaoh martyred them all, the resistance of whom has been praised by the Qur'an.

Certainly, the act of Taqiyyah (concealing of faith) is not a sign of excommunication, weakness, fear, retreat, loss of faith, and submission. On the contrary, it is a kind of cover-up and a strategy for the

preservation of powers and programs.

In Islamic quotations, it has been likened to a shield and ‘guarding’ against ‘something’ and ‘boundaries’.

Thus, in this noble verse, the Qur'an implies that he who disbelieves in Allah and abandons Islam, embracing paganism will be entangled with Allah's outrage and there is a great punishment awaiting him; unless he is compelled to utter words of blasphemy while feeling heartily in a different way, in which case, he will not be held responsible.

The verse says:

***"He who disbelieves in Allah after believing in Him; not he who has been compelled, while his heart is still content with the faith, but he who opens (his) breast to disbelief, upon them shall rest wrath from Allah and for them shall be a great chastisement."***

In fact, there are here allusions made to two groups of people who turn their back to Islam after embracing it.

The first group are those who become entangled with illogical enemies under whose pressure and torture, they declare their apostasy with Islam and their loyalty in paganism, while whatever they proclaim is with their tongue and they are heartily faithful.

Such a group is certainly pardoned. However we must note that they have not committed any sin to start with. This is an example of allowed ‘Taqyyah’ which has been permissible for the sake of the protection of lives and for the conservation of powers for further services to the causes of Allah and of Islam.

The second group consists of those who truly leave their ‘selves’ to paganism and disbelief and change their ideological system of thought altogether.

Such people are both targeted by Allah's wrath and His great chastisement, for such an act causes the disintegration of the Islamic society, thus constituting some kind of revolt against the Islamic government. Such an act is often a source of evil intentions and causes the secrets of Islamic society to fall into the hands of the enemies.

## **Surah An-Nahl – Verse 107**

**ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ اسْتَحْبُوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى الْآخِرَةِ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ**

**107. “That (Divine wrath) is because they have preferred the worldly life over the Hereafter, and definitely Allah does not guide the infidel people.**

Sticking to the material world and giving preference to it over the Hereafter paves the ground for one's loss of faith and one's entanglement with the Divine punishment.

Therefore, the causes for their apostasy are cited in this holy verse as follows:

***"That (Divine wrath) is because they have preferred the worldly life over the Hereafter..."***

It is for this reason that they take once again the path to paganism, and Allah does not lead the pagan group who insist on rejection and blasphemy.

The verse continues saying:

***"...and definitely Allah does not guide the infidel people."***

To sum up, once they embraced Islam, some of their material benefits were being jeopardized and as they loved the worldly life they regretted having embraced the faith and once again, they returned to paganism.

It is obvious that such a group, who are not attracted in the faith from within their selves, will not be covered in the Divine guidance, for the love of worldly life, welfare-loving sense, and giving its priority to the Hereafter pave the way for the abandoning of one's faith, the growth of apostasy, and, consequently, entanglement in the Divine outrage.

## **Surah An-Nahl – Verse 108**

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَسَمِعَهُمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ

**108. "They are those on whose hearts, and their ears and eyes Allah has set a seal, and these are the heedless ones."**

The rationale for not guiding them has been explained in this holy verse. It implies that they are the ones on whose hearts, ears and eyes Allah has set a seal in so far as they are deprived of seeing, hearing and understanding the truth.

The verse says:

***"They are those on whose hearts, and their ears and eyes Allah has set a seal..."***

It is evident that such people, losing all of the tools for their cognition, are the true inconsiderate ones, because their offensive acts and kinds of sin have left some wrong and evil impacts on their sense of understanding which eventually leads them to be obstructed from grasping all facts.

The holy verse concludes:

***"...and these are the heedless ones."***

## **Surah An-Nahl – Verse 109**

لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

**109. "Undoubtedly, they are the losers in the Hereafter."**

He who deliberately prefers the world to the Hereafter, on the Reckoning Day he will realize that he is of the losers and he has vainly lost the capital of his growth.

The consequences of the work of such people have been depicted in this noble verse, as:

***"Undoubtedly, they are the losers in the Hereafter."***

They are definitely and unequivocally the losers in the Hereafter. What kind of a loss may be worse than this that man remains heedless of all the necessary potentialities for his own guidance and eternal happiness and loses all of those merits because of his whimsical desire!

## **Surah An-Nahl – Verse 110**

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا فُتُنُوا ثُمَّ جَاهَدُوا وَصَبَرُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنْ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

**110. "Definitely, your Lord unto those who have migrated after being persecuted, then they struggled and patiently persevered; verily your Lord, after that, is forgiving Merciful."**

Looking through the previous verses, we find that Muslims were categorized into several groups:

The group who lost their lives while being tortured by the pagans and did not utter a single blasphemous word; such as the parents of ‘Ammar.

The group who had heartily faith but they engaged in simulation, like ‘Ammar.

The group who did apostate, so to speak, after becoming believers.

The group who sought to preserve the faith when entangled in rebellions, and deviations, by going on

exodus and fighting a holy war, while they persevered patiently, repented and protected their faith.

There is another group, referred to in this verse, which consists of those who have been cheated and are placed between the abovementioned two groups, i.e., those who uttered blasphemous words in the form of ‘Taqyyah’ (simulation), and those who returned to paganism whole-heartedly.

This verse, referring to such people states implying that Allah is forgiving and merciful towards those who returned to their faith after being cheated and went on exodus or took part in a Holy War, resisting all kinds of pressure in Allah’s path. They are all covered by His grace.

The verse says:

***“Definitely, your Lord unto those who have migrated after being persecuted, then they struggled and Patiently persevered; verily your Lord, after that, is forgiving Merciful.”***

Incidentally, this holy verse provides clear evidence for the acceptance of the repentance of the ‘nationally apostate’.

Certainly, apostate is of two categories:

The ‘innate apostate’ which refers to the person who is born of Muslim parents and, after embracing Islam, has returned to paganism. His punishment consists of being executed and his wealth confiscated while his repentance is not accepted for the blows which have been stricken to the Islamic society and against the creed of people by his apostasy.

As for the second category which consists of ‘nationally apostate’ and which refers to the one who is born of non-Muslim parents at the time of the coagulation of his sperm, then he has become a convert into Islam and, later, he has again become a pagan. The repentance of such a person is acceptable.

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1. Surah Al-Qadr, No. 97, verse
  2. Surah Al-’Isr a’, No. 17, verse 107
  3. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 97
  4. Surah Al-Haqqah, No. 69, verses 44 and 46
  5. Ghurar-ul-Hikam, vol. 2, p. 31
  6. Bihar, vol. 69, p. 263
  7. Bihar, vol. 72, p. 249, and Ad-Durrat-ul-Bahirah, p. 43
  8. Tafsir Qurtubi, Safi, Burhan and Majma‘-ul-Bayan and the books of Muslim scholars concerning the issue of concealing of faith.
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