

Section 1: Repentance Earns Pardon and the Bounties from Allah

Surah Hud – Verse 1

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

الرَّكَّابُ أَحْكَمَتْ آيَاتُهُ ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتْ مِنْ لَدُنْ حَكِيمٍ خَبِيرٍ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

1. “Alif ‘A’, Lam ‘L’, Ra ‘R’. (This is) a Book whose verses are set firmly, then explained in detail, from One All-Wise, All-Aware.”

The Qur'an is made up of those very same alphabetical letters that are found in every Arabic text available for all. However, Allah has created a book out of these simple letters, the equivalent of which no one can produce.

Just as man makes bricks and ceramics out of soil, Allah creates thousands of flowers and plants, fruits and animals as well as man, out of the same materials. Of course just as we can notice Allah's omnipotence in the system of creation, we can observe His omnipotence in the Book of Divine legislation as well.

There are some further explanations about the abbreviated letters mentioned at the beginning of Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2 which need not to be repeated here.

The Qur'an is a decisive Book, containing one fundamental spirit; that is, the spirit of monotheism; besides all its stories, exhortations, Divine commandments, and its verses are the explanations of this very line.

The Qur'an is a decisive book which has not been distorted nor is it to be doubted.

It is not based on conjecture and presupposition, and so all its contents are irrevocable with sound foundations.

The foundations of the Qur'an are decisively firm and nothing will be able to penetrate or cause disruption in it. The further science advances, the more the secrets of this book are revealed and discovered.

The Qur'an is both demonstrative and irrevocable, while at the same time, encompassing all the dimensions of this worldly life and the life hereafter. The Qur'an has been revealed to the Prophet (S) in its totality, after which, it has been extensively explained. And as Allah is Wise, His Book is decisive, and as He is All-Aware, He has dealt with the details of all needs.

The verse says:

“Alif ‘A’, Lam ‘L’, Ra ‘R’. (This is) a Book whose verses are set firmly, then explained in detail, from One All-Wise, All-Aware.”

Surah Hud – Verse 2

أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا اللَّهَ إِنِّي لَكُمْ مِنْهُ نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ

2. “(It teaches) that you should worship none but Allah. Verily, I am for you from Him, a warner and a bearer of glad tidings.”

This verse takes up the most important and the most fundamental issue of the Qur'an, which is monotheism by explaining the campaign against polytheism as follows:

Allah's first and foremost call to mankind is that he should stop worshipping everything else but the Almighty.

The verse says:

“(It teaches) that you should worship none but Allah...”

Secondly, the Divine call concerns the matter that the Prophet (S) is surely acting on Allah's behalf, as a

messenger of warning and glad tidings.

The duty of the Prophet (S) is that he warns people against disobeying Allah, injustice, corruption, polytheism and infidelity.

He informs them of Divine punishment as a result of their evil actions, and give them glad tidings of a happy fate for their obedience, piety and virtuousness.

The holy verse continued saying:

“... Verily, I am for you from Him, a warner and a bearer of glad tidings.”

Surah Hud – Verse 3

وَأَنْ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوا إِلَيْهِ يُمَتِّعْكُمْ مَتَاعًا حَسَنًا إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى وَيُؤْتِ كُلَّ
ذِي فَضْلٍ فَضْلَهُ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ كَبِيرٍ

3. “And that you seek the forgiveness of Allah and turn unto Him in repentance so that He may provide you with a goodly provision to an appointed term, and bestow His abounding grace on everyone endowed with grace. But if you turn away (from serving Him), then I fear for you the Penalty of a Great Day.”

His third call is that people should repent from their sins, and purify themselves from all types of pollution.

His fourth call for them is that they should turn to Him after purifying themselves from their sins by repentance, thus decorating themselves with Divine characteristics. This means that returning to Him means nothing more than acquiring those qualities that are associated with Him.

Afterwards, the holy Qur’an recounts that the practical results which ensue from acceptance or rejection of the four commandments, mentioned in the above, are as follows: Whenever you act according to this schedule, Allah grants you a whole happy life–time of enjoyment in your worldly life.

The verse says:

“And that you seek the forgiveness of Allah and turn unto Him in repentance so that He may provide you with a goodly provision to an appointed term...”

Therefore, before enabling one to reap the fruits of his deeds in the After–Life, religion and religious ideologies tend to produce their fruits in this world.

Moreover, the fact that everyone is rewarded according to his deeds in this world, and people's individual differences are never overlooked, it is amazing how they can all act in accordance with those four principles mentioned above.

Allah measures each in his virtue and every individual's merit for whatever He bestows upon him.

The verse continues saying:

"...and bestow His abounding grace on everyone endowed with grace..."

However, if you turn against these principles, disobeying these ideological and practical commandments, I fear for you the punishment of a Great Day, when you must stand in that great court of Justice for the Divine Judgment.

The verse says:

"...But if you turn away (from serving Him), then I fear for you the Penalty of a Great Day."

Surah Hud – Verse 4

إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ وَهُوَ عَلِيٌّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

4. "To Allah is your return and He is All-Powerful over everything."

At any rate, one should beware that regardless of who he is and whatever rank or position he may occupy, that ultimately, the one will return to Him.

The verse says:

"To Allah is your return..."

The above sentence points to the fifth principle of the fundamental principles of the Qur'an, that is, the Resurrection.

You should never think that your power is significant compared to the power of Allah, or you are able to disobey His orders, and escape His Court of Justice. Never give yourselves the benefit of a doubt that He would be unable to assemble your degenerated bones after death, providing them with a new life, because He is Omnipotent and has the power over all things.

The verse continues saying:

"...and He is All-Powerful over everything."

Surah Hud – Verse 5

أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ يَنْتُونُ صُدُورَهُمْ لِيَسْتَخْفُوا مِنْهُ أَلَا حِينَ يَسْتَغْشُونَ ثِيَابَهُمْ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ
وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ

5. “Behold! They fold up their breasts to hide them from him (the Prophet)! Behold! Even when they cover themselves with their garments, He knows what they conceal and what they reveal: Verily He is aware of what is in the hearts.”

This verse, in general, makes allusions to one of the foolish behaviors of the Prophet’s (S) enemies who, by using their subterfuge and hypocritical manner, i.e., distancing themselves from the Truth, sought to conceal their true nature from the public so as not to lend their ears to the words of truth.

Thus, the holy Qur’an implies that the unbelievers would approach each other in a very intimate manner, and draw alongside one another so as to conceal themselves and their words from the Prophet (S).

The verse says:

“Behold! They fold up their breasts to hide them from him (the Prophet)!...”

The interpretation of /yanun/ probably refers to whatever act of concealment, whether apparent or hidden, that was performed by the enemies of the Prophet (S).

1– The Arabic verb /yanun/ means placing two things next to each other. The word /’inan/ means ‘two’, which also signifies bearing a grudge against someone. Therefore, the Qur’anic phrase: (yanuna sudurahum/ either means that the unbelievers converge and ally themselves for secret objectives and conspiracies against the prophets or that they bear grudges against them.

Therefore, the holy Qur’an hastens to add that we should beware of those who conceal themselves in their places, however they are not hidden from Allah as He has knowledge of all secrets whether open or hidden.

The verse also says:

“...Behold! Even when they cover themselves with their garments, He knows what they conceal and what they reveal: Verily He is aware of what is in the hearts.”

Surah Hud – Verse 6

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ مُسْتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا كُلٌّ فِي
كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ

6. “And there is no moving creature on the earth but its sustenance is on Allah, and He knows its resting place and its depository. All is (recorded) in a clear Book.”

The Arabic word /dabbah/, derived from the word /dabib/ signifies ‘walking slowly’ and ‘taking short steps.’ However it also refers to every moving creature.

The Qur’anic word /rizq/ signifies the continuous bestowal of bounties, whether material or spiritual. Hence, we call to Allah in our prayers:

“O Allah! Bestow upon me knowledge that is useful.”

Whatever of sustenance He bestows is suitable for the relevant creature. For instance, the food that babies utilize, while still unborn, alters according to their needs after birth which changes into delicious milk, otherwise, how could a human being feed a baby in the womb of its mother? Or, how could a newly born baby receive its food?

In another occurrence, the Qur’an says:

“And how many a living creature that does not carry it’s sustenance: Allah sustains it and yourselves.”¹

Hadrat Ali (as) says in his will to Imam Hasan (as):

“Sustenance, Irizql, is of two kinds: One kind is to be obtained through your own endeavor and struggle; the other kind is that which comes to you by itself, whether it be natural, such as sunlight and rain, or whether it be a potentiality in man such as intelligence and memory.”

Thus, the verse does not tell us to sit around and wait for food to descend from Heaven; rather it tells us to struggle and to endeavor, as well as to consider whatever we obtain as Allah-given and is a bestowal from Him.

He takes care of all creatures which necessitates the existence of a very accurate system to be permanently at work so as to keep track of all allotted portions and needs. That is, He must be aware of the numbers and places of all men, animals, marine animals, birds, and desert animals as well as creatures great or small with their various specifications and needs.

The verse says:

“And there is no moving creature on the earth but its sustenance is on Allah, and He knows its resting place and its depository. All is (recorded) in a clear Book.”

If all knowledge is contained in the Holy Book, it follows that he who has a good command of the Book knows everything. We recite in the last verse of Surah Ar-Ra’d:

“...Say: ‘Allah is sufficient as a witness between me and you and the one with whom is the knowledge of the Book.’”²

Both Shi’ah and the Sunni quotations reaffirm the fact that the man in question in the foregoing sentence is Hadrat Ali (as).

Concerning the provision bestowed upon the creatures, Allah’s way of treatment is of two kinds. One is providing them directly with those necessities for their existence and the other is providing for them through making the means and devices available which would enable them to meet their needs.

Thus, obtaining one’s share is not incompatible with the laws governing one’s endeavor in obtaining what he needs.

In other words, one must not rely upon others for his needs, abandoning his own struggle. At the same time we must admit that our share is in Allah’s control, for He has made available to us both the resources of our provisions as well as the reasons and means for the exploitation, discovery, and acquisition of those resources.

Surah Hud – Verse 7

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ وَكَانَ عَرْشُهُ عَلَى الْمَاءِ لِيَبْلُوكُمْ
أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَلَئِن قُلْتِ إِنَّكُمْ مَبْعُوثُونَ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْمَوْتِ لَيَقُولَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ

7. “And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth within Six Days (periods), and His Throne was over the water so that He might try you, which of you is best in conduct. And, if you were to say to them: ‘Verily you shall be raised up after death’, the unbelievers would surely say: ‘This is (not) but a manifest sorcery.’”

There are three principal issues discussed in this noble verse: First, the creation of the world of existence which represents a display of Allah’s Omnipotence, specially the initiation of creation which

signifies His Power, as well as the reasons for His glory.

The verse says:

“And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth within Six Days (periods)...”

The word ‘Days’ here means epochs, whether long or short.

Then it adds:

“...and His Throne was over the Water...”

Some of the scientists believe that at very early time of creation, the world of existence was in the form of some molten materials, (or some extra ordinary pressed gases which had the form of some liquid materials).

Then, some great bursts happened inside this very liquid substance and parts of its outside surface were continuously separated off which, finally, formed the stars and germs of the systems in the sky.

Therefore, the world of existence, maybe, at first was located on this great material, the liquid like.

The second issue hinted at in this verse, is the objective of the creation of the cosmos, the main aim of which refers to the supreme fruit of the process of creation, namely man. Man who must be subjected to educational processes, thus evolving and approaching the Almighty even further.

It says:

“...so that He might try you which of you is best in conduct...”

Imam Sadiq (as) says:

“Good conduct refers to that kind of conduct which is coupled with knowledge, sincerity and virtue, not a mere action which is practiced in abundance. Therefore, the heavens and the earth have been created for good deeds and not for the sake of happiness, pleasure-seeking, and negligence.”

Definitely, those who deny the Day of Resurrection have no reasoning for their claim and they only take recourse to accusations of sorcery and hallucinations.

The verse says:

“...And, if you were to say to them: ‘Verily you shall be raised up after death’, the unbelievers would surely say: ‘This is (not) but a manifest sorcery’.”

Surah Hud – Verse 8

وَلَئِنْ أَخَّرْنَا عَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابَ إِلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ مَّعْدُودَةٍ لَّيَقُولُنَّ مَا يَحْبِسُهُ إِلَّا يَوْمَ يَأْتِيهِمْ لَيْسَ مَصْرُوفًا عَنْهُمْ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ

8. “And if We postpone the penalty from them until a limited period of time, they will surely say: ‘What prevents it?’ Beware! On the day it will come to them it shall not be turned aside from them, and they will be encompassed by that which they used to mock at.”

The word /’ummah/ refers to a group which has a common aim and also means women. The aim in this verse is a definite period of time as we also recite in Surah Yusuf /waḥkur ba’da ’ummatin/ which means that the freed prisoner was reminded of Yusuf after the passage of a length of time.

At any rate, Allah, the Gracious, remarks that if He postponed the tormenting punishment of these unbelievers for a certain period of time, delaying its certain arrival, they would sarcastically cry: If these punishments are certain to come, what has kept them back?

In response, the Qur’an implies that they should beware of the punishment whose late arrival they mocked about, for when He decides to let it come, no one would be able to reverse it, and when He wishes it to happen, no one can stop it, and they would be eradicated by the very punishment which they so mockingly despised.

The verse says:

“And if We postpone the penalty from them until a limited period of time, they will surely say: ‘What prevents it?’ Beware! On the day it will come to them it shall not be turned aside from them, and they will be encompassed by that which they used to mock at.”

Explanations

1– The postponement of the Divine punishment has a number of implications, namely, providing a chance for the sinners to repent, the birth of faithful children from deviant parents, etc. Moreover, the existence of honest people and their prayers also delay the occurrence of Divine punishment.

2– Imam Baqir (as) and Imam Sadiq (as) have been quoted in a tradition as saying that the holy phrase: /’ummatin ma’dudah/ in the verse refers to a limited group of like minded people, alludes to the friends of Hadrat Mahdi (as), whose number equals no more than 313, equivalent in size to the circle of Companions at Badr, who assembled like autumn clouds over the sea.

3– Other interpretations have been made for the phrase /’ummatin ma’dudah/ with documentations from

the Qur'anic verses and the sayings of the Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) which also exist in Sunni interpretations and we will not deal with them here for the sake of brevity.

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1. Surah 'Ankabut, No. 29, verse 60
 2. Surah Ar-Ra'd, No. 13, verse 43

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