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Section 1: The Object of the Revelation of the Qur'an

Qur'an's revelation, its object—Every soul shall be judged and every apostle will also be questioned – Deeds will be measured justly.

Surah Al-'A'raf, Verses 1-3

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

المص

كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ فَلَا يَكُنْ فِي صَدْرِكَ حَرَجٌ مِنْهُ لِتُنذِرَ بِهِ وَذِكْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا مِن دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

1. "Alif 'A', Lam 'L', Mim 'M', Sad 'S'."

2. "A Book sent down to you –so let there be no strait ness in your breast about it –that you may warn (people) thereby (and it be) a reminder to the believers."

3. "Follow what has been sent down to you from your Lord, and do not follow any guardians

other than Him; how seldom do you remember!"

The holy Surah Al-'An'am was concluded with statement about the Grace of Allah. This Surah, Al-'Araf, begins with the name of the Qur'an and also the ordinances of the religion and the wise sayings are stated therein. It says:

"Alif 'A', Lam 'L', Mim 'M', Sad 'S'."

The abbreviated letters, mentioned at the beginning of some Suras of the Qur'an were discussed before.¹ They are some secrets between Allah and His Messenger (S).

"A Book sent down to you... "

The Qur'an is a Book which has been sent down to you by the command of Allah.

"... so let there be no strait ness in your breast about it..."

The verse, addressing the Prophet (S) implies that there should not be any strait ness in his breast because of communicating the Qur'an to people.

The Messenger of Allah (S) was afraid that the members of his tribe would accuse him as a liar, and then turn away from his statements, and hurt him. So, he was displeased from their injuries, and did not feel happy about it.

Hence, Allah the Glorified, made him secured, and commanded him not to consider their ill treatment important.

It should be noted that the aim of sending down this Book is to warn people and frighten them from the evil consequence of their wrong thoughts and deeds. It is also a reminder for the true believers. The verse says:

"... that you may warn (people) thereby (and it be) a reminder to the believers"

"Follow what has been sent down to you from Your Lord....."

This phrase is for the attention of those who are responsible and are also fully capable; it means that they should follow that which Allah has sent down to them. This 'act of following' concerns those affairs which are either obligatory, or recommended, or legitimate.

In these affairs a believer should follow the command of Allah, and the one must believe in them. One of its examples is that which says it is obligatory to avoid from forbidden things.

".... and do not follow any guardians other than Him...."

The verse warns us not to follow anything other than the Qur'an so otherwise we will become sinners. It

is evident that whoever is not the follower of the Qur'an is the follower of Satan and the idols. That is why Allah commands us to follow the Qur'an and avoid following other than it. To follow the Qur'an is the same as to follow Allah.

"... how seldom do you remember!"

This part of the verse addresses the pagans and those disbelieving people who rarely remember the Truth and little they take advice. In fact, the purpose of this phrase is to say that the style of their manner is not agreeable. They ought to gradually adopt the admonishments of the Qur'an and learn the affairs concerning of religion and life for themselves.

The Qur'anic word 'tathakkur', here, means: 'to learn little by little'.

Surah Al-'A'raf, Verses 4 - 5

وَكَمْ مِّنْ قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا فَجَاءَهَا بَأْسُنَا بَيَاتًا أَوْ هُمْ قَائِلُونَ

فَمَا كَانَ دَعْوَاهُمْ إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ

4. "And how many a town that We have destroyed, Our punishment came unto them by night or while they slept at midday."

5. "So their cry, when Our punishment came unto them, was not save that they said: 'Verily we were unjust'."

In the previous verse, people were commanded to follow the Qur'an, and to leave out following anything other than the Qur'an. Now, this verse reminds them the fate of the past unjust nations so that they may fear and not to repeat the manner of those nations. It says:

"And how many a town that We have destroyed, Our punishment came unto them by night or while they slept at midday."

Allah says that He has destroyed many people of the towns, and the Divine punishment was sent down over them by night or when they were relaxing at noon. It is obvious that having chastisement in such times is more dangerous for people than in some other times.

"So their cry, when Our punishment came unto them, was not save that they said: 'Verily we were unjust'."

When Allah's chastisement was sent down, the only matter they stated was that they said that they were unjust. Thus, when they saw the punishment of Allah with their own eyes, or when they were involved in the Divine chastisement and were still rather alive, they began to confess their faults.

This indicates that admission, confession of one's sins, and repentance at the time of befalling calamities and wretchedness are not beneficial for the one.

Surah Al-'A'raf, Verses 6 - 7

فَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الَّذِينَ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

فَلَنَقُصَّنَّ عَلَيْهِم بِعِلْمٍ وَمَا كُنَّا غَائِبِينَ

6. ***"Then certainly We will question those to whom (Our messengers) were sent, and certainly We will also question the messengers."***

7. ***"Then certainly We will relate to them with knowledge for We were not absent."***

The previous verse has referred to the worldly punishment. Here, in this verse, the existence of punishment and reckoning in the Hereafter is stated with several emphases. In these two verses, the certainty of the existence of question on the Day of Judgment and that it is not specialized to the sinners alone, is mentioned, too.

Explanations

1. On the Day of Judgment, surely all people will be questioned, including: both the leaders, the nations and followers, both the good doers and the evildoers, and both the scholars and the imitators of them.

"Then certainly we will question those to whom (Our messengers) were sent, and certainly we will also question the messengers."

In the next verse, in order that no one considers that questioning from communities and their concerning prophets can be an evidence that there is some thing concealed from Allah's knowledge, clearly and with an emphasis strengthened with an oath, it implies that Allah will explain all their deeds to them with His Knowledge, because He has never been absent from them.

He (S.w.T.) has been with them everywhere and in all circumstances. The verse says:

"Then certainly We will relate to them with knowledge for We were not absent."

2. On that Day, questioning is a kind of calling to witness, making confession and reprimand. But the fact is that there is nothing concealed to Allah to be discovered by question.

Note

There are some points upon this verse which should be noted, as follows:

1. What matter or matters will be questioned?
2. The bounties will be questioned:

"Then on that Day you will surely be questioned about the bounties (you enjoined)." (Surah At-Takathur. No. 102 verse 8).

It is recorded in some Islamic traditions that the objective meaning of **'bounties'**, here, is the bounty of 'mastership' and 'leadership'.

3. The deeds of people will be questioned:

"... we would most certainly question them all,"

"As to what they used to do." (Surah Al-Hijr No. 15. Verses 92-93)

4. The limbs will be questioned of: ***"... surely the hearing and the sight and the heart, all of these shall be questioned about that." (Surah Al-Isra', No. 17. verse 36)***

5. As the Islamic traditions indicate, the life-time, the youth, the incomes, and the expenses will be questioned.

Surah Al-'A'raf, Verse 8

وَالْوَزْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

8. "And the measuring that Day will be just. Then whoever's a scale be heavy, those are they who shall be prosperous."

A 'scale' is the means of weighing. Each thing has a special means of measuring. The scale of a wall is a plummet. The heat of weather is measured by a thermometer. Fruits are measured in kilo. The length of cloth, as well as many other things, is measured by meter.

The means of measuring an ordinary person, from the point of spiritualities, is some particular complete

persons who are accepted as the example and symbol of justice.

Upon the commentary of the phrase:

"And we will set up a just balance ..."

mentioned in **verse 47 from Surah Al-Anbiya No. 21**, Imam, Sadiq (as) said: "Prophets and saints are the scales."²

In the supplication of Imam Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as), addressing him (as), we recite:

"Peace be upon the Scale of deeds."

These immaculate persons, who are our leaders and our guides, are the scales and the means of measuring others.

In Kifayat-ul-Muwahhideen, it is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) who said:

"We are the scales."

That is, Imam Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) and all other immaculate Imams are the scale of distinguishing between right and wrong.

So, the verse says:

"And the measuring that Day will be just. Then whoever's a scale be heavy, those are they who shall be prosperous."

Explanations

1. On the Day of Resurrection, the possession is with the right³, and the Day is the day of right⁴, and the measuring is also just. (The above verse)

2. On that Day, arrangements of the Hereafter are justly measured and the reckoning, the judgment, the commandments, the rewards and retributions are wholly based on justice.

"And the measuring that Day will be just. ..."

Surah Al-A'raf, Verse 9

وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَظْلِمُونَ

9. "And whoever's a scale be light, those are they who have ruined their selves for they used to be unjust unto Our Signs."

Those persons, whose scales are light, will be involved in an eternal punishment, because they have denied Allah's Signs and reasoning in their lives.

The Arabic term /xusran/ (loss), mentioned in this verse, means 'to lose the capital'. The greatest capital of man is his self. When the self of a man falls into perdition, he has incurred a loss. On the contrary, those whose scales of good deeds are heavy on the Day of Judgment will be prosperous.

"And whoever's a scale be light, those are they who have ruined their selves for they used to be unjust unto Our Signs."

Surah Al-'A'raf, Verse 10

وَلَقَدْ مَكَّنَّاكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَعَايِشَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ

10. "And certainly We have given you power in the earth, and We have made the means of livelihood for you in it, (but) little it is that you give thanks."

In the life of this world, everything is under the authority of man. The verse says:

"And certainly We have given you power in the earth....."

The creation of the earth and its conditions, from the point of rotation, heat, light, absorbing and warding off waters, receiving offal, and yielding plants, vegetables, fruits etc. all are in a state that man can take the earth as his own residence.

However, the laws of nature are in a form that man can control them and take them under his authority. If Allah had not tamed it, man, by himself, would not have had ability to bring it under subjugation and to enjoy of it. ,

"... and We have made the means of livelihood for you in it....."

Thus, these bounties should be utilized alongside the path of gratitude of man, not as a means of his negligence and gratifying his desires and his unlawful passions. The Qur'an has frequently referred to the ungratefulness, negligence and faithlessness of the majority of people. The verse says:

"... (but) little it is that you give thanks."

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1. Part one, PP. 71–73. Surah Al-Baqarah, No.2, verse 1
 2. Al-Mizan, commentary
 3. "Here is protection only Allah's, the True One....." Surah Al-Kahf, No. 18, Verse 44.
 4. "That is the True (sure) Day ..." Surah An-Naba', No.78, Verse 39.

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