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Section 3: Mankind warned against its enemy, Satan

Mankind was warned against Satan and his Tribe –Sincerity in prayer – Justice in dealings enjoined.

Surah Al-'A'raf, Verse 26

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُؤَارِي سَوْآتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ
ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ

26. "O' children of Adam! We have indeed sent down to you clothing to cover your shameful parts, and (for) adornment, and the raiment of piety; that is the best. This is of the Signs of Allah so that they may take admonition."

A Warning unto All the Children of Adam!

From this holy verse on, Allah states a series of constructive commandments and recommendations for all the children of Adam, which, in fact, are the continuations of Adam's affairs in Heaven.

At first, He points to the subject of clothing and covering the body, which had an important function in the event of Adam. Allah says:

"O' children of Adam! We have indeed sent down to you clothing to cover your shameful parts....."

The usage of the clothing that He has sent for us is not only for covering the body and concealing its shameful parts, but it is also a factor of adornment. Clothing is a splendor and an ornament which makes one's stature seem more beautiful than what it really is.

"... and (for) adornment....."

Following this phrase, which refers to the outward clothing of people, the Qur'an stretches the discussion to the spiritual clothing. As the manner of the Qur'an is in many other instances, it combines these two aspects together, and says that the clothing of piety is better than that clothing. It says:

"and the raiment of piety; that is the best. "

The resemblance of piety and righteousness to 'raiment' is a very explicit and expressive resemblance. Clothing both protects the body from cold and heat, and is a fender against a great deal of dangers.

It both covers the vices of the body and is an ornament for persons. The essence of piety and righteousness, besides covering the ugliness of man's sins and protecting him from a lot of personal and social dangers, is also considered a very great adornment for him. It is a notable ornament which increases his personality.

The objective meaning of '***the raiment of piety***' is that very spirit of piety which protects the soul of man, and, however, the sense of 'shy', 'righteous deed.', and the like of them are assembled in it.

At the end of the verse, the Qur'an implies that these raiment that Allah has assigned for you, irrespective of the material raiment and the spiritual one, bodily raiment and the raiment of piety, are wholly from the signs of Allah, so that the servants of Allah may remember the Divine bounties. It says:

"... This is of the signs of Allah so that they may take admonition."

Raiment in the Past and Present

As far as the history of man indicates, human beings have always worn clothes, but, in our time, the means of producing clothes have so vastly varied and developed that it is not comparable with the past at all.

And, unfortunately, the secondary aspects of clothes, and even its unpleasant and disgraceful instances, have so vastly spread that they are being preceded the philosophy of clothing.

Clothing has been taken a factor of kinds of luxuries, expansion of corruptions, excitation of lusts, gaudiness, haughtiness, prodigality, extravagance and the like of them. Sometime there may be found some surprising clothes among people, and particularly among those young ones who imitate the western customs, that its aspect of madness precedes its aspect of intellect.

The custom of following fashion in clothing, not only wastes a great deal of wealth, but also squanders a great part of time and powers of individuals.

Surah Al-'A'raf, Verse 27

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ لَا يَفْتِنَنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ كَمَا أَخْرَجَ أَبَوَيْكُم مِّنَ الْجَنَّةِ يَنْزِعُ عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا لِيُرِيَهُمَا سَوْآتِهِمَا إِنَّهُ يَرَاكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيلُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا تَرَوْنَهُمْ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

27. "O' children of Adam! Let not Satan seduce you as he expelled your parents from the Garden, stripping them both of their clothing that he might expose unto them their shameful parts. Surely he sees you, he and his Tribe, from where you do not see them. We have made the Satans the friends of those who do not believe."

The previous verse referred to raiment as a divine bounty. Here, the Qur'an warns us to be aware that Satan does not take away this raiment and bounty from us.

Satan seduces the believing people either, and causes them to deviate from the straight path. But he has not a full mastership and domination over them, because a believing person can be saved by means of repentance and refuting to Allah. Thus, his domination is over the disbelievers.

"O' children of Adam! Let not Satan seduce you he expelled your parents from the Garden, stripping them both of their clothing that he might expose unto them their shameful parts. Surely he sees you, he and his Tribe, from where you do not see them. We have made the Satans the friends of those who do not believe."

Explanations

1. Any kind of propaganda and preach, which ends to nakedness, is Satanic.
2. Exposing the private parts is a preparation for the lack of belief and domination of Satan.
3. Nakedness is a factor of banishment from the rank of nearness to Allah.
4. Adam (as), who was prostrated unto by the angels, was seduced by Satan; therefore, you should be more careful.
5. Satan is not alone; He has some groups of assistances, too. They watch you in all moments–

Surah Al-'A'raf, Verse 28

وَإِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً قَالُوا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهَا آبَاءَنَا وَاللَّهُ أَمَرَنَا بِهَا قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَأْمُرُ
بِالْفَحْشَاءِ أَتَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

28. "And whenever they commit an indecency, they say: 'We found our fathers (acting) upon it, and Allah has enjoined it on us.' Say: 'Verily Allah does not enjoin indecencies. Do you say against Allah what you do not know? '."

In this verse, the Qur'an points to one of the important temptations of Satan, usually stated by the tongues of some persons who have satanic qualities.

It is so that when they do a disgraceful action, and they are asked of its reason, they will answer that it is the custom and tradition that they have found with their ancestors upon it in addition that Allah has enjoined them upon it, too. The verse says:

"And whenever they commit an indecency, they say: 'We found our fathers (acting) upon it, and Allah has enjoined it on us.' ..."

It is interesting that, for answering them, the Qur'an does not pay attention to the first reason, i.e. the blindly following their fathers. It suffices to answer their second proof. It says:

"... Say: ' Verily Allah does not enjoin indecencies. ..."

The reason of this statement is that Allah's commandment is not separate from the command of intellect.

Then the verse ends with the following holy phrase:

"... Do you say against Allah what you do not know? '."

The objective meaning of the Arabic word /fahisah/ (indecency), here, in this verse, is any indecent and disgrace action, including 'naked circumambulation. This action was performed by some ignorant people in order to follow their unjust leaders, which is counted one of its clear denotation expansions.

Surah Al-'A'raf, Verse 29

قُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّي بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَقِيمُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ
كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ تَعُودُونَ

29. Say: 'My Lord has enjoined justice, and set your faces upright (toward Him) at every place of worship, and call upon Him being sincere to Him in religion. As He brought you forth in the

beginning, so shall you also return."

The verse begins as follows:

"Say: 'My Lord has enjoined justice....."

The Qur'an commands the Prophet (S) to say that his Lord has enjoined him justice, and to what wisdom testifies that it is proper, right, and good.

It has been said that the purpose of the Qur'anic term /qist/ (justice), here, is 'Unity'.

"... and set your faces upright (toward Him)...."

It addresses the Prophet (S) and tells him to say that the servants should intend to worship Allah while they are rightly stationed toward the direction of the Kabah, not toward any other direction.

"... at every place of worship,..."

You should observe this divine ordinance at anytime and place of prostration that you are. The purpose of this holy phrase is in the state of 'prayer'.

"...and call upon Him being sincere to Him in religion..."

In this part of the verse, it commands that servants should worship sincerely. That is, sincerity in worshipping Allah (S.w.T.) has been enjoined. The verse concludes as follows:

"... As He brought you forth in the beginning, so shall you also return."

There are some ideas stated upon the relation of this meaning to the former circumstance, as follows:

The statement means that we should call upon Allah (S.w.T.) sincerely, since, finally, we will be raised up again and we will be given our rewards in Hereafter.

The Qur'an implies that if, from the point of intellect, it is difficult for you to consider this fact in your mind, look upon your creation in the beginning.

Then do know that, as Allah brought you forth from the infinite desert of non-existence into the flower-garden of existence, once more, after death He will give life to your earthly body, too, in the form of a new creation, and He will raise you up again.

Surah Al-'A'raf, Verse 30

فَرِيقًا هَدَىٰ وَفَرِيقًا حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الضَّلَالَةُ إِنَّهُمْ اتَّخَذُوا الشَّيَاطِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ

وَيَحْسِبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ

30. "A party He has guided aright while a party error is justly their due (for) verily they took Satans for their guardians other than Allah, and they think that they are the ones guided aright."

There are some groups of people who, as a result of receptivity and accepting the invitation of the Truth, have been involved in the grace of Allah and have gained the reward of guidance.

On the contrary, those who rejected the invitation of the Truth have been deprived from the grace of Allah, and they have been left to themselves. And, consequently, the light of guidance did not brighten wide their breasts, nor it lightened their hearts, and they were deserving of aberration.

"A party He has guided aright while a party error is justly their due....."

In view of the point that this meaning has occurred after the statement of raising up the dead, it makes clear that 'guidance' is in the sense of 'leading', and 'aberration' is applied with the meaning of being deprived from good rewards and Heaven',

".... (for) verily they took Satans for their guardians other than Allah....."

This statement points out to this fact that their retribution is not undue and without any cause. It is for this condition that they have committed sins and have preferred the love of Satan to the love of Allah. Instead of obeying Allah, they have obeyed Satan.

".... and they think that they are the ones guided aright."

They disobey Allah, yet they think that they are on the path of right and they are guided aright.

Surah Al-'A'raf, Verse 31

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ
الْمُسْرِفِينَ

31. "O' children of Adam! wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer, and eat and drink but do not act extravagantly; verily He does not like the extravagant (ones)."

The verse addresses all the children of Adam, saying to them that they should take with themselves their clothing with which they ornament themselves when they perform every prayer.

It has been narrated that whenever Imam Hasan Mujtaba (as) stood to keep prayer, he used to wear his best clothes. In answer to the question why he (as) used to do so, he said:

"Allah is beautiful and He likes beauty. Therefore, I decorate myself for Him."

And after that, he recited the verse under discussion.

"O' children of Adam! wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer....."

Some of the commentators have said that this verse enjoins Muslims to wear their own clothes at the time of performing every prayer and circumambulation. This is opposite the notion of the pagans who used to circumambulate nakedly. They said that they would not worship the Lord with the clothes in which they had committed sins.

Some other commentators have said that the purpose of 'wearing the beautiful apparel' is targeted to combing the hair at the time of establishing every prayer.

The verse continues saying:

"... and eat and drink but do not act extravagantly; verily He does not like the extravagant (ones)."

It is narrated from Ibn-' Abbas who has said: "Eat whatever you desire, and wear whatever you like, but beware that the two qualities of extravagance and pride do not cause you to commit sin."

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