

Section 4: To Always Depend Upon Allah's Will

Surah Al-Kahf – Verses 23 – 24

وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَيْءٍ إِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذَلِكَ غَدًا

إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ ۖ وَادْكُرْ رَبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ وَقُلْ عَسَى أَنْ يَهْدِيَنِي رَبِّي لِأَقْرَبَ مِنْ هَذَا رَشَدًا

23. “And do not say, regarding anything, ‘I will do that tomorrow,’”

24. “Save (say): ‘If Allah pleases’, and remember your Lord when you forget, and say: ‘It may be that my Lord will guide me to a nearer way to the right than this’.”

Allah (s.w.t.) prohibits His Prophet (S) in this holy verse to say that he does so and so the following day unless he depends that affair to the Will of Allah and he says:

‘If Allah pleases’.

Thus, Allah desires to train people and He teaches them that whenever they say something about an affair concerning the future, they ought to say this holy phrase, in order that if the affair had not been done the servant would not have said a falsehood.

The reason of this statement lies in the fact that man's power is limited and it is not right and logical for him to decisively inform of something when the appearance of some barriers against it is probable, and many a time the information happens falsehood, save that it be followed by the phrase **‘Allah Willing’**.

Saying the holy phrase **‘Allah Willing’**, which indicates to the belief in ‘The Power and Will of Allah’, was

a phrase used by Allah's saints for 'resting upon' in their conversation. For instance, this meaning has also been narrated in the Qur'an from the tongue of prophets.

In Surah Yusuf, No.12, verse 99, Jacob says to his children:

"...Enter safe into Egypt If Allah please".

In the current Surah (Al-Kahf), verse 69, Moses says to Khidr:

"...Allah Willing, you shall find me patient..."

In Surah Al-Qasas, No.28, verse 27, Hadrat Shu'ayb says to Hadrat Moses:

"...If Allah please, you will find me one of the righteous."

In Surah As-Saffat, no.37, verse 102, Ishmael (as) tells his father Abraham (as):

"...If Allah please, you will find me of the patient ones."

Of course, the purpose of saying "**Allah Willing**", or "**If Allah please**", and "**I take refuge in Allah**" and the like of them are not some things to be uttered unintentionally and barely by tongue, but the purpose of it for a servant is to have such a belief and such a knowledge in mind (heart) and in all dimensions of his life.

Imam Sadiq (as) recommended us not to forget to write '*If Allah pleases*' even in our writings. One day he told someone to write a letter.

When he (as) observed that the letter was not involved with the phrase: '**Allah Willing**', he said:

*"How do you hope that this work will be completed?"*¹

Wherever the Prophet of Islam (S) entered a graveyard, he used to say:

"If Allah please, we will join you",

while death is sure to happen.²

A human being is free and has choice, but he is not absolutely independent. It is not so that all affairs to be given him in a manner that he can perform them without the Will of Allah (s.w.t.). In other words, human beings are neither in compulsion nor the free will of all affairs has been offered to them, but human's freedom is conditioned to Allah's Will.

The verse says:

"Save (say): 'If Allah pleases'..."

Then, next to this sentence, the Qur'an says:

“...and remember your Lord when you forget...”

This statement denotes to this meaning that if you forget to add the holy phrase ‘*If Allah please*’ to the news that you inform of the events related to the future, whenever later you remember it immediately make amends it and recite ‘*If Allah pleases*’, because this action will compensate the past.

Besides that, you should say that you are hopeful that your Lord may show you a way more clear than this.

The verse continues saying:

“...and say: ‘It may be that my Lord will guide me to a nearer way to the right than this’.”

Finally, Sayyid Murtada, who is the most learned one amongst the scholars of Shi‘ah, on the commentary of this part of the verse which is recited:

“...and say: ‘It may be that my Lord will guide me to a nearer way to the right than this’”

says: that he ought to say it may be that Allah will bestow on The Prophet (S) some miracles and evidences to prove his prophethood that will be stronger and more expressive than the story of the Companions of the Cave.

Hence, Allah, the Exalted, bestowed some evidences and miracles more effective on His Prophet. Allah informed His Messenger (S) of all unseen sciences and details about the lives and deeds of the whole prophets. Those facts were some proofs which were more clear and stronger than the story of the Companions of the Cave.

Surah Al-Kahf – Verses 25 – 26

وَلَبِثُوا فِي كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلَاثَ مِائَةٍ سِنِينَ وَازْدَادُوا تِسْعًا

قُلِ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثُوا لَهُ غَيْبُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَبْصِرْ بِهِ وَأَسْمِعْ مَا لَهُمْ مِنْ
دُونِهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا يُشْرِكُ فِي حُكْمِهِ أَحَدًا

25. “And they remained in their Cave three hundred years, and (to that also) they added nine more.”

26. “Say: ‘Allah knows best how long they remained. To Allah belongs the Unseen of the heavens and the earth. How clear of sight is He and keen of hearing! There is none to be a guardian for them besides Him; and He makes none to share in His Sovereignty”

The Sleep of the Companions of the Cave

The frame of references existed in the former holy verses denoted that the sleep of the Companions of the Cave was a very long sleep. This matter moves the sense of curiosity of every listener. He may desire to know how many years precisely they remained in their long sleep.

This holy verse removes the doubt of the listener when it says:

“And they remained in their Cave three hundred years, and (to that also) they added nine more.”

Therefore, the total years that they remained and slept in the Cave counted three hundred and nine years.

The Jews asked Hadrat Ali (as) about the length of the time that the Companions of the Cave remained in the Cave. He (as) answered them it was 309 years. They said that it had been mentioned 300 years in their Book. Hadrat Ali (as) said that nine years was the difference between the solar year and lunar year.³⁴

In Maraqi's it is cited that this nine years is counted as a miracle of the Qur'an which has considered the difference between solar years and lunar years so precisely.

It may be said that the number of the years had been the same 300 years to which later people added nine years where the Qur'an says:

“...and (to that also) they added nine more.”

So, in answer to that, Allah says:

“Say: ‘Allah knows best how long they remained...”

It is evident that the purpose of Allah, the Exalted, by this verse is reasoning to His wonderful and great Power. This reasoning can be right when the length of their sleep is clear.

Thus, the objective meaning of the holy words:

“Say: ‘Allah knows best how long they remained...”

after stating the length of the time of their sleep, is for invalidating the saying of the people of the Book who had differed in this matter. Then, the objective meaning of the Qur'an is:

‘O Muhammad! Say that Allah is more aware of the time of their sleep than He has informed it’.

Do accept whatever Allah says and leave out the sayings of the people of the Book, because Allah is more aware of this matter.

In other words, in order to put an end to the different debates of people in this concern, He commands His Messenger (S) as follows:

“Say: ‘Allah knows best how long they remained...”

Then, the reason of this statement comes forth, when the verse continues saying:

“...To Allah belongs the Unseen of the heavens and the earth...”

He Who is aware of what is concealed and what is manifest in the whole world of existence, how may it be that He remains unaware of the length of the time of the stop of the Companions of the Cave?

The verse says:

“...How clear of sight is He and keen of hearing!...”

That is why they (the dwellers of the heavens and the earth) have no guardian save Him. The verse says:

“...There is none to be a guardian for them besides Him...”

At the end of the verse, the Qur'an adds:

“...and He makes none to share in His Sovereignty”

In fact, this part of the verse is an emphasis on the absolute guardianship of Allah.

Surah Al-Kahf – Verse 27

وَاتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ كِتَابِ رَبِّكَ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مُلْتَحَدًا

27 “And recite that which has been revealed unto you of the Book of your Lord; none shall change His words, and you shall not find any refuge besides Him.”

In this holy verse, the Qur'an addresses the Prophet of Islam (S) and says:

“And recite that which has been revealed unto you of the Book of your Lord...”

That is, he should not pay attention to the talks of this and that. They might speak some baseless matters mixed with falsehoods and superstitions. In discussions about those matters, his reliance should

always be only upon the Divine revelation, because nothing may change His statements.

The verse says:

“...none shall change His words...”

There is no room for diversity to enter into His Words and Knowledge. His Speech and His Knowledge is not like the speech and knowledge of human beings which, as a result of a new invention or information, has to be changed.

It is upon these facts that, at the end of the verse, the holy Qur'an says:

“...and you shall not find any refuge besides Him.”

This historical wonderful adventure, which the Qur'an has explained without any superstition and baseless inventions, as all other stories of the Qur'an, contains so many constructive and training points. Some of them are as follows:

A. The first lesson of this story is the very breaking the barrier of imitation from aberration and separation from the corruption of that environment. Basically, man should be constructive in the society, not putting up with mischiefs of it, which some feeble-minded people do.

Those who have true Faith, and are possessors of an independent thought, say that a godly servant should never follow the majority when they are misguided.

B. Migration from the polluted surroundings is another lesson taken from this wonderful event.

C. Precautionary dissimulation, in its constructive meaning, is another lesson taught by this story. And we know that precautionary dissimulation is not anything save that the person conceals his main subject where divulgence of facts is fruitless, and he protects his power for the time of struggle and striking against the enemy.

D. The lack of difference among persons in the way of Allah, and sitting a minister beside a shepherd, and even the guarding dog that paves their way, is another lesson in this field, in order to be manifested that the privileges of this material world.

Then its different ranks have no effect along the side of separating the rows of the followers of the path of truth which is the path of Unity and the path of Unity is the path of oneness and unicity of all human beings.

E. The wonderful helps of Allah (s.w.t.) at the time of the appearance of crises is another income which the circumstance of the event teaches us.

F. In this story, even in the most grievous circumstances, they taught us the purity of food. The nutrition

of the body has a deep effect on man's spirit, thought and heart. And pollution, resulted from unlawful (haram) foods, makes man afar from the path of Allah and the path of piety.

G. Seeking help from His grace, and saying the holy phrase '*If Allah please*' in informing about the future affairs, is another lesson.

H. Another instructive lesson of this story is how we confront the opponents.

I. Finally, the possibility of resurrection of the body, and that human beings will return to a new life at the time of Resurrection, is another lesson that this event teaches us.

However, the aim here is not telling a story as a hobby. The aim of the Qur'an is to bring up some steadfast, faithful, aware and brave men. One of its way is to introduce the noble samples of them through the length of history.

At the end, one of the pretexts of the Prophet's opponents was that they asked the Prophet (S) to change the Qur'an.

They said:

"...Bring us a Qur'an other than this, or change this."⁵

In answer to such arrogant people, the Prophet (S) used to say that it was not of his own accord to change it. The change of the Qur'an is only up to Allah.

Surah Al-Kahf – Verse 28

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ وَلَا تَعْدُ
عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ
وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا

28 "And keep yourself content with those who call unto their Lord morning and evening seeking His pleasure, and let not your eyes turn away from them desiring the adornment of the life of the world, and do not obey him whose heart We have made neglectful of Our remembrance and he follows his own low desires, and his affair has become all excess."

Occasion of Revelation

A group of arrogant conceited rich Arabs came to the Prophet (S) and, pointing to some faithful Muslims, such as: Salman, 'Abuthar, Sa'aduhayb, Khabab and the like of them, said:

“O’Muhammad! If you sit in the seat of honor, and send away these fellows from around yourself, (so that your meeting becomes apt for notables and personalities), we will approach you. But, with the presence and existence of these people, the meeting is not a suitable place for us.”

At this time, the verse was revealed and commanded the Prophet of Islam (S) not to surrender to those hollow deceptive statements, and he should always receive the faithful, sincere-hearted ones, such as those who are like Salman and’Abuthar.

The Prophet (S) told them (his true followers) that he praised Allah for that he (S) did not die until when He ordered him such a commandment that he would be with them and the like of them.

He (S) said:

“Yes, life with you, and also death with you, is pleased.”

One of the lessons which the story of the Companions of the Cave taught us was that the criterion of men’s value is not the apparent rank, social position, and their wealth. In fact, this verse pursues this very important subject, and commands the Prophet (S) as follows:

“And keep yourself content with those who call unto their Lord morning and evening seeking His pleasure...”

Imam Sadiq and Imam Baqir (as) said:

“The objective meaning of calling Allah in the morning and in the evening is ‘to perform the prayer’.” 6

Then, as an emphasis, the Qur’an continues saying:

“...and let not your eyes turn away from them desiring the adornment of the life of the world...”

Again, for a more emphasis, it adds:

“...and do not obey him whose heart We have made neglectful of Our remembrance and he follows his own low desires...”

Such people are always out of normal method, so that their manner has become all excess. Since, concerning the material lusts, the nature of man is always toward the mood of demanding more and more, a mortal ceaselessly steps in the direction of excess so far that he perishes himself.

The holy verse says:

“...and his affair has become all excess.”

Explanations

1. A leader should not be heedless of the deprived, but he must be sympathetic unto them.
2. Do not turn away from the poor in order to obtain the material world and the consent of the rich.
3. The worst thing is the circumstance that people pay attention to Allah, but their leader pays to the world.
4. He who follows the low desires and the world, will go out of the path of godly ones.
5. The danger of mammonism is so much that Allah has warned His prophets of it.
6. The value of the remembrance of Allah depends on that its root to be deep in the heart and the soul. Otherwise, a man falls down step by step. The first step is negligence, then lust, and, finally, the path of aberration.

Surah Al-Kahf – Verse 29

وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَاراً
أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا وَإِنْ يَسْتَغِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ بِئْسَ
الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقاً

29 “And say: ‘The truth is from your Lord; so whoever will, let him believe, and whoever will, let him disbelieve.’ Verily We have prepared for the unjust a Fire, the curtains of which encompass them, and if they call for succour, they will be succoured with water like molten copper that shall scald the faces; (how) evil the drink and (how) ill the resting-place!”

The importance of the previous verse is so much so that the Qur’an, in this verse, explicitly says to the Prophet (S) to say that it is a program from Allah and a reality from the Lord. Then let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject it.

“And say: ‘The truth is from your Lord; so whoever will, let him believe, and whoever will, let him disbelieve.’...”

But, everybody should be defined that those unjust mam-monish persons who, with their welfare lives of dazzling glare and its adornments, mockingly laugh at the woolen clothes of the Muslims, will have a dark and evil end, because the verse says:

“... Verily We have prepared for the unjust a Fire, the curtains of which encompass them...”

Yes, such people, in the life of this world, whenever they became thirsty, used to order their servants to prepare them kinds of drinks before them. But, in Hell, when they call for water they will be granted water like melted brass which, if it be brought near the face, will scald the face. How dreadful the drink! And how uncomfortable the dwelling of Hell is!

The verse says:

“...and if they call for succour, they will be succoured with water like molten copper that shall scald the faces; (how) evil the drink and (how) ill the resting-place!”

Here, in this life and in their tents, there exist kinds of drinks. As soon as they call the cupbearers, they bring them different cups of various drinks. In Hell, too, they will have cupbearers to bring them cups of drink.

But what a drink! A drink like molten brass! A drink as hot as the tear of the orphans, and as blazing as the sighs of the poor. Yes, whatever exists there, it is the embodiment of that which they have produced here, in this world.

However, at the end, people are free to choose either belief or disbelief, yet they should know that the end of disbelief is the blazing Fire of the Hereafter.

The Arabic word /suradiq/ means ‘curtain’ which has been mentioned only once in the Qur’an, and it is about the people of Hell.

By the way, there has been recorded a tradition from Imam Baqir (as) in the commentary books of Al-Burhan, As-Safy, and Nur-uth-Thaqalayn which indicates that the purpose of the holy phrase:

“And say: ‘The truth is from your Lord...”

is the mastership of Ali-ibn-Abitalib (as). It means that the Prophet (S) should state the truth about the mastership and Imamate of Ali-i-Abitalib (as) from the side of the Lord.

Surah Al-Kahf – Verses 30 – 31

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا

أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِنْ سُنْدُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُتَكَئِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ نِعْمَ الثَّوَابُ

30. “Verily those who believe and do righteous deeds, surely We do not waste the recompense of him who does a good work.”

31. “These, for them are gardens of eternity beneath which rivers flow, they shall be adorned therein with bracelets of gold, and they shall wear green robes of fine silk, and thick brocade, reclining therein on raised coaches. O, how excellent a reward! and how fair a resting-place!”

In view of the fact that the style of the holy Qur’an is a constructive and comparative style, in this group of verses, after the statement of the qualities and retributions of the arrogant mammonish people, it refers to the statement of the situation of the true believers and their excellent extraordinary rewards.

At first, it expressively says:

“Verily those who believe and do righteous deeds, surely We do not waste the recompense of him who does a good work.”

Whether this recompense is little or much, general or particular from everyone in every age and year, and in any condition, Allah will not waste it.

Then, the Qur’an explains the rewards of the doers of righteous deeds.

It says:

“These, for them are gardens of eternity...”

These rewards are a lot of gardens in Paradise under whose trees and castles some rivers flow. They live in those gardens while they are ornamented with golden bracelets.

The verse says:

“...beneath which rivers flow, they shall be adorned therein with bracelets of gold...”

The verse continues explaining their rewards and that they will be among a group of good companions in Heaven, where it says:

“...and they shall wear green robes of fine silk, and thick brocade, reclining therein on raised coaches. O, how excellent a reward! and how fair a resting-place!”

Explanations

1. The Qur’anic term /‘adn/ means: ‘a perpetual abode’. The term /‘asawir/ is the plural form of /‘aswira/ which means ‘a bracelet’. The Arabic word /sundus/ means ‘silk’, and /‘istabraq/ is applied for ‘silk of a

thick texture, brocade'; and the term /'ara'ik/ is the plural form of /'arikah/ which is called to a royal throne which is covered with a veil.

2. For the people of Paradise, there are all kinds of clothing and with any material and of any colour there at their disposal, but the green robes, in particular, maybe refers to their formal and common clothing by which they decorate themselves at the time when they recline on raised coaches.

3. Keeping off from the unlawful ornaments of this life is the secret of reaching to the eternal ornaments in Hereafter as a reward.

4. Resurrection is both the spiritual resurrection and the resurrection of the body, since if it were merely a spiritual resurrection it would not need any gold, silk, and throne.

Two Final Points

1. The Ornamental Clothings in Hereafter!

There may arise this question for many persons that, in the Qur'an, Allah has reprimanded the dazzling glare of the world, but He has promised these things to the believers in the next world. They are some adornments such as gold, silken clothes: whether thin and thick, thrones, beautiful coaches, and the like of them.

In answer to this question, preliminarily, it is necessary for us to attract attentions to this matter that we comment the verses of the Qur'an as some other commentators do. They take all these words as some metaphorical ones for the spiritual concepts.

We have learnt from the holy Qur'an itself that Resurrection will be both bodily and spiritual. Thus, the pleasures of the next world must be in both forms. Of course, there is no doubt that its spiritual pleasures are not comparable with its bodily pleasures.

But, in the meantime, this fact cannot be concealed that, as for the bounties of the next world, we may see only a shade of them from a long distance, and we hear some words as an indication to them, because the parable of the coming world, compared with this world, is like the parable of this world with respect to the mother's womb, and the embryo's case.

If mother can communicate with her embryo, she is not able to state the beauties of this world, such as: illuminating sun, bright moon, springs, gardens, flowers, and the like of them, for the baby she has in her womb save by signs.

Similarly, it is impossible for us, the encompassed persons in the womb of the world, to understand or even to state the spiritual and material bounties of the Hereafter.

Now that this fact became clear, we return to the answer of the question. Allah has reprimanded the

dazzling glare of this world for the sake that the limitation of this world causes the preparation of such life to be accompanied with kinds of injustice and cruelty, and taking benefit from it will be done with negligence and ignorance.

The unjust discriminations, which come into being in this course, will be the cause of grudges, jealousies, enmities, and, at last, bloodsheds, and fights.

But in that world, whose all things are vast and plenty, neither the earning of these ornaments creates any difficulty, nor it causes any unjust discrimination and deprivation. They neither produce any grudge and enmity in any one, nor, in that environment full of spiritualities, they cause man to become neglectful of the Lord.

Those ornaments neither need to be protected and guarded nor create any jealousy in others. They are neither the source of arrogance and pride, nor are they the factor of separation from the servants of Allah and Allah Himself (s.w.t.).

Why should the people of Paradise be deprived of such a bounty which is a bodily pleasure beside the great spiritual merits with no unpleasant reaction.

2. Another point that this verse teaches us is that we must not avoid of guiding that group because of their wealth, or for that they have a welfare life, and do not approach them. But, what is blameworthy is that we approach them in order to take benefit from their worldly material circumstances and, as the Qur'an says, become of the extension of those who:

“desire the adornment of the life of the world”.⁷

Thus, if the aim is their guidance, and taking benefit from their wealth and possibilities is along the path of positive and valuable social activities, approaching them not only is not blameworthy but also is necessary and incumbent.

1. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, the Commentary

2. The Commentary of Kashf-ul-'Asrar

3. It should be noted that a solar year lasts 365 days while a lunar year lasts 354 days.

4. Majma'-ul-Bayan, the Commentary

5. Surah Yunus, No. 10 verse 15

6. The Commentaries of Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, As-Safy, and Burhan

7. The current Surah, verse 28

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-upon-allahs-will