

Section 5: Abraham Exhorts His Father to Discard Idolatry

Surah Ash-Shu'ara – Verses 69–71

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ

قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ أَصْنَامًا فَنَنْزِلُ لَهَا عَافِيْنَ

69. “And recite unto them the story of Abraham.”

70. “When he said to his father and his people: ‘What do you worship?’”

71. “They said: ‘We worship idols, and we are ever devoted unto them’.”

Next to Moses (as) whose name has been mentioned in the holy Qur'an more than 130 times, Abraham's name has been reiterated in it more than the names of other divine prophets.

Basing on some Islamic narrations, the objective of the Arabic word /'ab/, mentioned in the above verse, is the name of 'Athar, Abraham's uncle, because it is impossible that the father of a divine prophet, such as Abraham, could be a pagan. Philologically the Arabic word /'ab/ has also been applied for a trainee, grandfather, and father-in-law.

Anyhow, following the wonderful story of Moses (as) and Pharaoh, here the Qur'an refers to the expressive biography of Abraham and his struggles against polytheists. This explanation has started from Abraham's debate with his uncle, 'Athar, and the misled people of his time.

It begins as follows:

“And recite unto them the story of Abraham.”

Among all the details and information concerning this great prophet, the Qur'an emphasizes on this matter, saying:

“When he said to his father and his people: ‘What do you worship?’”

Surely Abraham (as) knew what they were worshipping, but he meant to make them speak and confess their own fault. However, the application of, the Qur'anic word *Imal* (***what thing***), in the verse, reflects a kind of humiliation for them.

In answer to this question, they immediately said that they used to worship idols every day and they respected them while taking care of them.

The verse says:

“They said: ‘We worship idols, and we are ever devoted unto them’.”

This style of their speaking shows that not only they did not feel any shame for their action but also they were very proud of their deed, because after saying the phrase: /na'budu 'asnaman/ (we worship idols), which was sufficient for indicating to their aim, they added /fanazallu laha 'akifin/ (and we are ever devoted unto them).

The Arabic phrase /nazallu/ is applied for the things which are usually done during the day, and now that it has been used in the simple present form, it shows the continuity and permanence of the action.

The Qur'anic word ***'akif*** is derived from /'akuf/ which means: 'paying attention to something and taking care of it Respectfully'. This is also a further emphasis on the former meaning.

The Arabic word /'asnam/ is the plural form of/sanam/ in the sense of a statue which had been made of gold, silver, wood, and the like, and the polytheists worshipped it while considering it the symbol of their venerable and sacred things.

Surah Ash-Shu'ara - Verses 72-73

قَالَ هَلْ يَسْمَعُونَكُمْ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ

أَوْ يَنْفَعُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَضُرُّونَ

72. “Said (Abraham): ‘Do they hear you when you call (them)?’”

73. “Or do they profit you, or harm?”

In the method of propagation, we should awaken the consciences by asking questions, because man, by nature, is worshipper, and if he does not adorn the right, he tends to wrong.

(When the Qur’an refers to some matters of history, it usually does not point to the number, name, time, and place of the event, but it states its instructive content and message.)

When you want to forbid someone from doing evil, you may begin from important evils. (Yes, the most important evil is to associate something with Allah.) Reasoning and logic is the first step of propagation.

The motivation of worshipping is either giving benevolence or removing vice, and idols have neither of them.

However, we must have some clear and understandable reasonings when confronting ordinary people.

The idolaters also believe in futility of the idols very well, they only follow their ancestors

“... but we found our fathers so doing”. 1

Anyway, through these two verses, Abraham, by hearing their words, protested them and condemned them by means of two severe logical sentences.

The Qur’an says:

“Said (Abraham): ‘Do they hear you when you call (them)?’”

Then he (as) continued saying:

“Or do they profit you, or harm?”

The least thing that is necessary to be found in the object of worship is that the deity hears the call of its worshipper and hastens to help him in his difficulties, or there would be at least a kind of fear from opposition with its command.

But there is nothing seen in these idols to show that they have the slightest amount of understanding, or the least effect in the fate of men. They are some worthless pieces of metal, stone, and wood to which superstition and the power of delusion have given such situation.

Surah Ash-Shu'ara - Verses 74-76

قَالُوا بَلْ وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا كَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ

قَالَ أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ

أَنْتُمْ وَأَبَاؤُكُمْ الْأَقْدَمُونَ

74. ***“They said: ‘Nay, but we found our fathers so doing’.”***

75. ***“He said: ‘Have you then considered what you have been worshipping?’”***

76. ***“You and your fathers before you?”***

Imitation from scientists and scholars is sometimes a means for integration, development and progression, while following common people is the cause of stubborn conservatism; because stable belief in vain social traditions and national and tribal manners cause the society to be narcotized which is a barrier in the way of new thoughts and a hinder for recognizing the truth.

So, in these holy verses, the Qur'an says that the zealous idolaters, in answer to this logical question that idols had no understanding, or any concept, reiterated their old and repeated response. They only answered that those issues were not so important, the important matter was that they had found their ancestors doing like that.

The verse says:

“They said: ‘Nay, but we found our fathers so doing’.”

This answer, which referred to their blindly imitation from their ignorant ancestors, according to Abraham's statement, was the only answer they could deliver.

It was an answer that the reason of its nullification was inside of it, because no wise person permits himself to follow others blindly, particularly that the experiences of the new generations are more than those of the old generations, and there is no reason for blindly imitation from them.

The Qur'anic phrase: *lkaḥalika yaf'alun/ (so doing)* is another emphasis on the concept of their imitation.

It means that they said that whatever their ancestors had used to do they were doing, whether it was worshipping the idols or other things.

Then, in the next noble verses, the Qur'an implies that Abraham concentrated his attack on the idols and told them whether they had seen the thing that they were constantly worshipping.

“He said: ‘Have you then considered what you have been worshipping?’”

“You and your fathers before you?”

Surah Ash-Shu'ara - Verse 77

فَانَّهُمْ عَدُوِّي اِلَّا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ

77. “Surely they are enemies to me, save the Lord of the Worlds,”

On the Day of Hereafter, idols will abhor the idolaters, and they will be in opposition with them and by this means their enmity will be made clear.²

Abraham says that verily they all are his enemies, and he is a severe foe of them forever.

It is noteworthy that Abraham says:

“Surely they are enemies to me...”

The necessity of this enmity is that Abraham should have enmity to them, too. But the existence of this meaning may be for the sake that worshipping idols might be the cause of the worshippers' wretchedness, and aberration, as well as their chastisement in this life and the next; and this will be counted as their enmity.

Moreover, there are a lot of verses in the Qur'an which indicate that, on the Day of Hereafter, idols will repudiate their worshippers and will show their enmity against them. By the command of Allah, they will speak and will utter their abhorrence.

The exception of 'the Lord of the worlds' is for the purpose of emphasis on the pure monotheism, though He was not among their gods.

The verse continues saying:

“...save the Lord of the Worlds,”

There is another probability, too, saying that there were some persons among them who, besides idols,

also worshipped the Lord. For considering this matter, Abraham excepted the Lord of the Worlds Whom he loved.

Surah Ash-Shu'ara – Verses 78-81

الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ

وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِينِ

وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ

وَالَّذِي يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ

وَالَّذِي أَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لِي خَطِيئَتِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ

78. “Who created me, and Himself guides me,”

79. “And Himself feeds me and provides me to drink;”

80. “And whenever I am sick, then He heals me,”

81. “And Who caused me to die, then gives me life,”

82. “And Who, I hope, will forgive me my mistakes on the Day of Judgment.”

At first, the world and the Creator of the world must be regarded, and then one's self may be attended.

That He created us and guides us is a sign that He likes us, not the idols.

The bounty of His guidance (after creation) is the greatest bounty, because creation, in this sense, is for one time but guidance exists in every moment and for ever.

However, in these verses, Abraham describes the Lord of the Worlds and mentions some of His material and spiritual bounties, so that, by comparing with idols, who neither hear the demands of their worshippers nor have any benefit or loss for them, the matter may be made completely clear.

It begins with the bounties of creation and guidance where Abraham says about Allah:

“Who created me, and Himself guides me,”

Abraham implies that Allah has guided him both in the world of genesis and has provided the material and spiritual means available for him, and, in the world of religion, He has sent down revelation and heavenly Book to him.

Mentioning /f/ at the beginning of the Qur’anic phrase ***lfa huwa yahdin/ (and Himself guides me)*** which has occurred after the concept of creation, indicates that ‘guidance’ is not separate from ‘creation’ and they both go forth with together everywhere.

The Arabic word /yahdin/, that is in simple present tense, is an evidence to the continuity of guidance and the need of man to Him throughout his life.

It seems that, by this statement, Abraham implies that from the first point of his life and creation, he has always been with Him and He has also been with him so that he feels His presence in his life and living. He implies that He is a friend Who takes him wherever He desires.

Next to stating the first stage of Lordship, that is the stage of guidance after creation, Abraham pays to the material bounties and says:

“And Himself feeds me and provides me to drink;”

Yes, I see all bounties from Him; my whole entity, as well as my drink and my food all are from Him and because of His blessings.

Not only when I am sound and healthy I am involved in His blessings, but also when I become sick it is He Who heals me.

The verse says:

“And whenever I am sick, then He heals me,”

Sickness is sometimes from His side, too, but, observing etiquette in speech, Abraham attributes it to himself.

Then Abraham goes further than the stage of the life of this world and pays to the eternal life in hereafter in order to make clear that not only he enjoys favours in the present world but also in the next world and in all conditions he sits at the table of His bounties.

He says about Him:

“And Who caused me to die, then gives me life,”

Abraham indicates that both his death and his returning to life against are from His origin.

Then he (as) implies that when he arrives the scene of; gathering-place of Resurrection his hope is fixed only on Him, of Whom he seeks forgiveness.

The verse says:

“And Who, I hope, will forgive me my mistakes on the Day of Judgment.”

There is no doubt that prophets are sinless and they have no fault to be forgiven for; but as we have said formerly, sometimes the good deeds of the righteous are counted as the faults of the near-stationed ones and, therefore, in their high rank one good act is sometimes questionable against them, too, because it has hindered the accomplishment of a better action, and thus this is called ‘leaving the better’.

Abraham never relies on his good deeds, because they are naught comparing the kindness of Allah, and they are not worthy of mentioning when His bounties are considered. His reliance is only on Allah’s Grace, and this is the last stage of being hopeful to Him.

In the commentary of Atyab-ul-Bayan, where explaining this verse, it is asked whether the divine prophets and Imams are immaculate and they have not any fault.

Answer: Before the presence of Allah, the One, they know their deeds little, humble, and faulty in order that they should not have any shortcoming in worship, or they would not commit any ‘leaving the better’, or they would not achieve any shortcoming in disciplines. For instance, the holy Prophet (S) used to say to Allah:

*“We have not known You as the due knowing of You.”*³

Imam Amir-ul-Mu’minin (as) says:

*“The praises have not been numerated for You as You have for Yourself.”*⁴

And, by this statement, the problem of many narrations concerning the immaculate ones can be solved.

Shortly speaking, here in order to specify the real deity, Abraham first pays to the creative power of Allah, then he makes the rank of His Lordship in all stages clear.

The first is the stage of guidance; the second is the stage of material bounties, irrespective of producing suitable conditions and removing the barriers; and the final stage is the eternal life in the next world, where His Lordship will also be shown in the form of granting different merits and forgiving the sins.

Thus, Abraham nullifies the superstitious imagination of numerous gods and various deities and bows before Allah with glorification.

Surah Ash-Shu'ara - Verse 83

رَبِّ هَبْ لِي حُكْمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ

83. "My Lord! Bestow wisdom on me, and join me with the righteous!"

The Qur'anic word */hukm/*, mentioned here, can be in the sense of government, guardianship, and the management of the affairs, or it can be used with the meaning of knowledge and cognition.

The word */hukm/*, of course, has a meaning more than */hikmat/* (wisdom, theology), because */hikmat/* is only the power of recognition between right and wrong while */hukm/* is a cognizance accompanied with preparation for executing the right.

However, from this verse on the supplications of Abraham and his beseeching before the Presence of Allah begin.

It seems that after inviting that misguided people unto Allah and stating the manifestations of His Lordship in the world of existence, he becomes completely hopeless of them and turns to the Presence of Allah and asks Him whatever he wants, so that he shows those idolaters that whatever they desire for this life and the next they ought to ask Him.

By the way, this matter is another emphasis on the absolute Lordship of Allah.

Here is his first demand that he asks Him:

"My Lord! Bestow wisdom on me, and join me with the righteous!"

Yes, before anything else, Abraham (as) asks Allah (s.w.t.) to give him a deep and correct cognizance coupled with jurisdiction, because no practical program is possible without such foundation.

Next to this demand, he (as) asks Allah to join him with the righteous ones. This request that Abraham asks refers to the practical aspects which idiomatically is called 'practical knowledge' versus 'theoretical science' that was seen in his former demands.

Undoubtedly, Abraham (as) had both the rank of 'wisdom' and was among 'the righteous ones'; then why does he ask Allah such a demand?

The answer to this question is that neither wisdom nor righteousness has a definite limit. He asks Allah that every day he gains the more and more levels of knowledge and practice. He (as), even as an arch prophet, is not satisfied with these aspects.

Moreover, he knows that all these merits are from the side of Allah, and every moment they may be ceased as the result of a fault. Therefore, besides he asks Allah its continuation, as everyday we ask him in our ritual prayer to guide us into the ‘Straight way’ and demand the continuation and perfection of this way.

Surah Ash-Shu‘ara - Verses 84-86

وَاجْعَلْ لِّي لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِي الْآخِرِينَ

وَاجْعَلْنِي مِنْ وَرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ النَّعِيمِ

وَاعْفُرْ لِأَبِي إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الضَّالِّينَ

84. “And ordain for me a goodly mention among posterity;”

85. “And make me of the heirs of the garden of bliss;”

86. “And forgive my father, verily, he is of those astray.”

In some Islamic narrations, the Qur’anic phrase: *lisani sidqi*, mentioned here, has been rendered into the holy Prophet of Islam (S) and Hadrat Ali (as).

After these couple of demands, Abraham (as) asks Allah another important demand where he says:

“And ordain for me a goodly mention among posterity;”

He humbly asks Allah to treat with him in a way that his remembrance may remain in minds and his line and program would continue among the later generations. He wants Him to make him such an example that others follow him, and he should be the founder of a school by which people can learn the correct way and move on His line.

Allah accepted the supplication of Abraham, too, as He says in the Qur’an about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob;

“...and say We assigned unto them a high and true renown.”⁵

It is not improbable that this demand contained the same thing that Abraham asked Allah after building the House of Ka‘bah when he said:

“Our Lord raise among them an Apostle of their own to recite unto them Your revelations, and to teach them the Book and the Wisdom, and to purify them...”⁶

And we know that this demand came into action when the Prophet of Islam (S) announced his call and by this way the good mention of Abraham (as) continued to be among this great nation.

Then, Abraham changes the scope of his seeing from the life of this world to the eternal life in Hereafter when he starts his fourth supplication by saying:

“And make me of the heirs of the garden of bliss;”

This garden of bliss is the Paradise wherein there are abundant material and spiritual blessings, the bounties which have neither any destruction nor any weariness and burden. They are some bounties that are not even understandable for us, the prisoners of this world.

Neither our ordinary minds could consider them, nor our eyes have seen them, nor our ears have heard them.

We have formerly said that the application of ‘heir’, concerning Paradise, is either for the sake that, according to the Islamic traditions, every person has a house in Paradise and a house in Hell. When he is sent to Hell, his house in Paradise will be given to others.

In his fifth supplication, Abraham (as) prays for his misguided uncle, and according to his saying that he had promised ‘Athar to ask Allah forgiveness for him, in this holy verse he says:

“And forgive my father, verily, he is of those astray.”

Abraham had formerly promised his uncle to pray for him as the text of the Qur’an explicitly says:

“And Abraham’s seeking forgiveness for his father was only because of promise he had made to him...”⁷

Abraham’s aim was that by this way he could penetrate into his uncle’s heart and drag him Faith.

Thus, he gave him such a promise and fulfilled this promise. As Ibn-‘Abbas in a narration says, Abraham sought forgiveness repeatedly for ‘Athar, but when ‘Athar died in his disbelief, and his enmity against the religion of truth was proved, Abraham ceased seeking forgiveness for him.

The abovementioned holy verse (No. 114) continues saying:

“...when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of Allah, he declared himself quit of him...”

Surah Ash-Shu'ara - Verses 87-89

وَلَا تُخْزِنِي يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ

يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ

إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ

87. "And abase me not on the Day when (men) will be raised up;"

88. "The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail,"

89. "Except for him who comes to Allah with a pure heart."

Being abased and blamed in the Hereafter is the worst state of a person. Among all of the difficulties and problems of the Hereafter Day, Abraham points to 'not being abased' then.

In Hereafter, the worst punishment of the Hell is that a person becomes despised, abject, and disgraced.

Finally, Abraham expresses his sixth and last supplication unto the presence of Allah, which is also concerned to the Day of Resurrection, as follows:

"And abase me not on the Day when (men) will be raised up;"

The Qur'anic phrase *Ila tuxzinil (do not abase me)* is derived from the Arabic word /xizy/ and, as Raqib says In Mufradat, it means 'spiritual failure' which is either from the side of the person himself that appears in the form of excessive shame, or it is from the side of others which is imposed upon the person.

This meaning expressed by Abraham, besides being a lesson and practice for others, is the sign of his ultimate feeling of responsibility and his trust on the Grace of Allah.

In the next verse, it says:

"The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail,"

In fact, these two important worldly capitals, properties and human abilities, will not have the least effect for their possessors. Thus, their other capitals of this world, which are located in a grade lower than

these two, will not avail them either.

It is evident that the purpose of wealth and sons are not those properties and children that are applied in the way of gaining the pleasure of Allah, but the emphasis is on the material aspects of the subject.

The objective of it is that the material capitals will not solve any problem on that Day; but if they are used in the way of obeying Allah here they will not be counted material capitals, they will get the divine colour and then they will be counted as 'the everlasting good deeds'.⁸

Some Islamic narrations indicate that the charity given from the wealth, the voluntary alms that will remain, and the righteous child who prays for the parents will be useful for man in Hereafter.

Then, in the next noble verse, it implies that the worldly arrangements are not effective in Hereafter and, except the pure heart, nothing is useful there. In other words, this exception is for the one who comes before Allah while he has a sound heart (that is, it is sound from any polytheism, disbelief, and pollution of sin).

The verse says:

“Except for him who comes to Allah with a pure heart.”

A tradition says that the sound and pure heart is the heart in which there is no polytheism.⁹

Thus, the only capital for salvation in Hereafter is a pure heart. What an interesting meaning it is! It is a meaning wherein there exist both the pure faith and sincere intention, and any righteous deed, since such a pure heart has no fruit save pure action.

In other words, as the man's pure heart and spirit is effective in his deeds, his deeds have also a vast reflection in his heart and spirit, and change it into the same quality, irrespective of being godly or satanic.

Surah Ash-Shu'ara - Verses 90-92

وَأَزَلَّتِ الْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

وُيُرَّزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِلْغَاوِينَ

وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ

90. “And the Paradise shall be brought near for the pious.”

91. “And the Hell shall appear plainly to the erring ones,”

92. “And it shall be said to them: ‘Where are those that you used to worship,’”

The Qur’anic word: */uzlifat/* means ‘to approach’, and the Arabic word */burrizat/*, derived from */buruz/*, means ‘to appear’, and the word */qawin/* which is derived from */qiwa’/* is called to ‘a vice and ignorance’ that originates from decadence of belief.

However, in these verses, the Qur’an has explained the status of Paradise and Hell.

It says:

“And the Paradise shall be brought near for the pious.”

Then it says:

“And the Hell shall appear plainly to the erring ones,”

This explanation, in fact, is about the time before they enter into Paradise or Hell when each of these two groups will see their own abode in front of them. Then the believers will become happy and the misguided ones will terrify; and this is the first step of their reward and retribution.

It is interesting that it does not say: the pious will be made approach to Paradise, hut it says:

“...Paradise shall be brought near for the pious”,

and this meaning points to their very great and worthy rank.

This point is also worthy to be noted that the application of the word */qawin/* (the erring ones) here is the same meaning which has been applied in the story of Satan after when he was sent away, where He says in the Qur’an:

“Verily, (as regards) My (devoted) servants, there is not for you over them any authority, except those who follow you of the deviators.”¹⁰

Then the Qur’an pays to the scolding statement that, at this time, will be said to this deviated group, where it says:

“And it shall be said to them: ‘Where are those that you used to worship,’”

Surah Ash-Shu'ara - Verses 93-95

مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ هَلْ يَنْصُرُونَكَ أَوْ يَنْتَصِرُونَ

فَكُبِّبُوا فِيهَا هُمْ وَالْغَاوُونَ

وَجُنُودُ إِبْلِيسَ أَجْمَعُونَ

93. "Besides Allah? Do they help you or help themselves?"

94. " So they shall be thrown into it, - they and the erring ones,"

95. "And the hosts of 'Iblis, all together."

Reproach and blame is one of the spiritual chastisements of Hereafter.

On the Hereafter Day beliefs and thoughts of men will be questioned of. Therefore, this holy verse implies whether the deities, other than Allah, can then help the idolaters for the difficulties and calamities that they will be facing with.

Or can the idols invite someone to help the idolaters? Or even does anyone come to help the idols themselves? But they do not have any answer to give to these questions; and no one expects such a thing from them either.

The verse says:

"Besides Allah? Do they help you or help themselves?"

At this time, the whole deities will be gathered and, all of them, accompanied with their worshippers, will be thrown into Hell Fire; and, according to the opinion of some of the commentators, every one of them will be thrown over the other.

The Qur'an says:

"So they shall be thrown into it, - they and the erring ones,"

"And the hosts of 'Iblis, all together."

In fact, these three groups: idols, the worshippers of the idols, and the hosts of Satan, who were the

dealers of this sin and deviation, will be piled in the Hell, in this manner that they will be sent into Hell one after another.

The Qur'anic word */kubkibu/* originally is derived from */kub/* which means to throw something into a pit by face, and its repetition in */kubkibu/* indicates to the repetition of this fall.

This shows that when they are thrown into the Hell, they are, like a stone which is thrown from a height into a valley. At first, it falls in a place and then from that place it falls in another place until when it falls at the bottom of the valley.

Surah Ash-Shu'ara – Verses 96-99

قَالُوا وَهُمْ فِيهَا يَخْتَصِمُونَ

تَاللَّهِ إِن كُنَّا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ

إِذْ نُسَوِّكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

وَمَا أَضَلَّنَا إِلَّا الْمُجْرِمُونَ

96. “And they will say, when they are mutually quarrelling therein: ”

97. “By Allah! We were certainly in manifest error,”

98. “When we made you equal to the Lord of the worlds.”

99. “And none but the guilty ones led us astray.”

Contrast to the environment of Paradise, which is entirely full of safety and peace, the Hell is always full of blame, enmity and curse: the curses of the followers to the mischief leaders, the blame of the sinners unto Satan, the hate of the worshipped (deities) unto the polytheists, and the act of quitting the criminals from each other.

There are many verses found in the Qur'an about these aspects, including these holy verses which illustrate the scene of the conflict and quarrel of those three Hellish groups. When they are in the Hell, they quarrel both with their deities and with each other.

The holy verse says:

“And they will say, when they are mutually quarrelling herein: ”

Yes, the misguided worshippers will say:

“By Allah! We were certainly in manifest error,”

“When we made you equal to the Lord of the worlds.”

But nobody misguided us but the sinners, those sinners who were the leaders and the chiefs of our society and, in order to protect their own benefits, they led us to this way and caused our misery.

There is this probability that the purpose of ‘the guilty ones’ is the criminals, Satans, or their aberrant ancestors who caused them to be in that way.

However, on the Hereafter Day everybody tries to lay his fault and blame on another’s shoulders.

Surah Ash-Shu‘ara - Verses 100-101

فَمَا لَنَا مِنْ شَافِعِينَ

وَلَا صَدِيقٍ حَمِيمٍ

فَلَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَكُونُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

100. “Now, then we have no intercessors,”

101. “Nor a single intimate friend,”

102. “Now if we only had a chance of return, we would be of the believers.”

In Hereafter, the existence of intercession is certain, but a group of misguided people, such as polytheists, infidels, and some criminals, will not enjoy it, because the condition of being interceded is having Faith and righteous deeds.

There is a tradition recorded in Majma‘-ul-Bayan which indicates that the immaculate Imams (as) have made an oath that they will intercede for their true followers.

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

*“On that Day, a believer may intercede for his family (members).”*¹¹

Again, once Imam Sadiq (as) said:

*“By Allah! On the Hereafter Day, we will intercede for the (true) followers in such a way that the deviated ones will protest.”*¹²

The holy Prophet (S) said:

*“In the Hereafter, the Qur’an, the believer’s family, the Prophet, and Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) will intercede.”*¹³

However, as the Qur’an announces, the disbelievers and infidels will say:

“Now, then we have no intercessors,”

“Nor a single intimate friend,”

In short, then they will say neither do the deities come to intercede for them, as they imagined in the world, nor can their friends help them.

Some Traditions Upon Intercession

1– Imam Sadiq (as) said:

*“Verily our intercession will not reach those who take the prayer light (and do not regard it important).”*¹⁴

2– The Prophet (S) said:

*“My intercession will not reach the one who takes his prayer light, and by Allah! He will not arrive to me by the fountain (of kauthar); and, by Allah! He who drinks (alcoholic) liquor is not of me (my follower) and will not arrive to me by the fountain (of kauthar).”*¹⁵

3– The Holy Messenger of Allah (S) said:

*“Learn the Qur’an because that (holy) Book will intercede its followers (readers) on the Day of Hereafter.”*¹⁶

4– The holy Prophet (S) said:

*“There are three groups who will intercede unto Allah, Almighty and Glorious, and their intercession will be accepted: The prophets, the scholars, and the martyrs.”*¹⁷

5– It has been narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) in the book ‘Mahasin’, who said:

*“The intercessors are the Imams (as) and the veracious ones among believes.”*¹⁸

6- Jabir (May Allah be pleased with him) narrates from the Messenger of Allah (S) who said:

*“There has been appointed a (definite) prayer for every prophet to pray for his people by it (with Allah), and I have reserved my prayer as an intercession for my Ummah (nation) on the Hereafter Day.”*¹⁹

7- The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

*“There are four groups for whom I will intercede on the Hereafter Day: The lovers of my Ahl-ul-Bayt (progeny), those who are the friends of their friends and are the enemies of their enemies, those who provide them what they need, and those who do their best to undertake one thing of their affairs.”*²⁰

8- Mu‘awiyat-ibn-Wahab says that he asked Imam Sadiq (as) about whom this statement of Allah was which says:

*“...Who is it that can intercede with Him save by His leave?...”*²¹

The Imam (as) said:

*“We (the Ahl-ul-Bayt) are those who will intercede by Allah’s leave (on Hereafter Day).”*²²

Through the next verse, the Qur’an implies that soon they will understand this fact that neither any regret is helpful there, nor Hereafter is the place of action and compensation, that is why they desire to come back to this world, and they say:

“Now if we only had a chance of return, we would be of the believers.”

It is true that they have got a belief in that world and on that Day, but this belief is a kind of compulsory belief. That belief is effective and constructive which is voluntary and it is in this world, a belief that becomes the source of guidance and righteous deeds.

Yet, this desire, however, does not solve any problem for them, and the Divine way of treatment does not let anyone come back to this world; and they themselves know this fact, too, and the Arabic word /lau/ (if) is its evidence.

Surah Ash-Shu‘ara - Verses 103-104

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ

103. “Verily in this is a sign but most of them do not believe.”

104. “And verily your Lord is He the Mighty, the Merciful.”

If people do not accept the truth and be obstinate, the great signs of Allah are not effective, for their guidance.

The respite that Allah gives the wrong doers is not done because of weakness and powerlessness, but it is because of Mercy and Grace so that they may return.

Finally, in these verses, the Qur’an refers to the biography of Abraham (as), his speaking with the deviated people, his invocations before Allah, and his explanations about the situation of the Hereafter Day.

As a conclusion for all servants, Allah reiterates the same couple of holy verses, which were mentioned at the end of the story of Moses (as) and Pharaoh, and they are repeated at the end of other prophets’ stories, too, in this Surah.

It says:

“Verily in this is a sign but most of them do not believe.”

“And verily your Lord is He the Mighty, the Merciful.”

The repetition of these sentences are counted some effective comfort for the Prophet (S) and the few believers of that time, and also for the believers who are in minority at any time so that they do not fear of the misguided majority and they be assured with the might and mercy of Allah.

It is also a threat for the deviated ones indicating that if they are given respite it is not because of weakness but it is because of His mercy.

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1. The current Surah, verse 74
 2. Tafsir-i-Kabir, by Fakhr-i-Razi, Vol. 2, P. 46
 3. Bihar-ul-’Anwar, Vol. 68, chapter 61, P. 23
 4. Mustadrak, Vol. 4, P. 321 and Bihar, Vol. 90, P. 158
 5. Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 50
 6. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 129
 7. Surah At-Taubah, No. 9, verse 114
 8. Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 76
 9. The Commentary of Nur-uth-Thaqalayn
 10. Surah Al-Hijr, No. 15, verse 42
 11. Majma’-ul-Bayan
 12. Al-Mizan, The Commentary
 13. Kanz-ul-’Ummal
 14. Wafi, Vol. 5, P. 9
 15. Wafi, Vol. 5, P. 9

16. Musnad-i-Hanbal, Vol. 5, P. 251
17. Bihar-ul-'Anwar, Vol. 8, P. 34
18. Tafsir-us-Safi, old edition, P. 358
19. Kanz-ul-'Ummal, Vol. 14, P.391
20. Bihar, Vol. 56, P. 135
21. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 255
22. Mahasin-i-Barghy, P. 183

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