

## Section 5: Allah's Chosen Servants

### Surah An-Naml – Verse 59

قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَسَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ عِبَادِهِ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَىٰ ءَآلَهُ خَيْرٌ ۖ أَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

**59. “Say: ‘Praise be to Allah, and peace be on His servants whom He has chosen. Is Allah better, or what they associate (with Him)?’”**

Not only the punishment of the wrong doers, but also the deliverance and the salvation of the believers are because of Allah's Grace, which must be thanked.

**“Say: ‘Praise be to Allah...’**

Both the praise of the servants of Allah and peace being on them are mentioned beside the praise of Allah.

**“...Praise be to Allah, and peace be on His servants...”**

However, next to the end of the explanation of the life stories of five Divine prophets, as well as the fate of their peoples, the verse under discussion addresses the holy Prophet of Islam (S) and, as drawing a conclusion from the former statements and as a premise for speaking with pagans, implies that all praise belongs to Allah Who annihilated the former disgraceful nations, such as the people of Lot, lest the kind of their corruption might spread all over the earth.

The verse announces:

**“Say: ‘Praise be to Allah...’**

Praise belongs to the One Who sent the corruptors such as the people of Thamud and the arrogant

people of Pharaoh to destruction so that their manner might not be continued as a tradition among others.

And, finally, the praise belongs to the One Who bestowed those plenty bounties and might on His faithful servants, like David and Solomon, and by which guided some misled ones like the people of Sheba.

Then, it adds:

***“...and peace be on His servants whom He has chosen...”***

Peace be on prophets, such as: Moses, Saleh, Lot, Solomon, and David (as), and peace be upon all Divine prophets and their true followers.

Then, the verse continues saying:

***“...Is Allah better, or what they associate (with Him)?”***

That is, which is better, the Lord Who has those infinite powers, strengths and bountiful merits, or the idols which idolaters associate to Allah (s.w.t.) and they absolutely affect nothing?

In the explanations of the life stories of the former prophets, we realized that idols could never help their worshippers at the time of coming misfortunes and afflictions, while Allah did not leave the believers alone in none of their difficulties and His merciful grace came to help them.

## **Surah An-Naml – Verse 60**

أَمَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنْبَتْنَا بِهِ حَدَائِقَ ذَاتَ  
بَهْجَةٍ مَا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَنْ تُنْبِتُوا شَجَرَهَا أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ

***60. “Or Who created the heavens and the earth, and sent down for you water from the sky? Then We caused to grow thereby beautiful gardens; it was not in your power that you grew the trees thereof. Is there any god with Allah? Nay! They are a people who deviate.”***

Contemplation about Divine creation is the best way for getting near to Allah.

Every tree or plant that grows is under the observation of Allah and by His Will. After explaining some outstanding parts of the life stories of five Divine prophets, there was an expressive question in the content of the previous verse implying whether Allah, with His infinite power, is better or the worthless idols which the idolaters produced.

The verses under discussion explain this meaning and, putting the pagans under trial, state the clearest

reasons of Unity.

At first, it refers to the creation of the heavens and the earth, as well as the descent of rain and the bounties emerged from it, where it says:

***“Or Who created the heavens and the earth, and sent down for you water from the sky? Then We caused to grow thereby beautiful gardens...”***

The Arabic word /hada'iq/ is the plural form of /hadiqah/ and, as many commentators have said, it means a garden which is surrounded with a wall and it is secured from any thing, like the pupil of eye which is protected among eyelids.

Raqib says in Mufradat:

*“The word **lhadiqah** is originally used for a land where there is gathered some water, like the pupil of the eye that there is always water therein.”*

It can be concluded from these two statements that the Arabic word /hadiqah/ means a garden which has both a wall and enough water.

The Arabic word /bahjat/ means the beauty of colour and apparent goodness which causes the spectators to be full of joy.

At the end of the verse, the Qur'an addresses the servants of Allah and says:

***“...it was not in your power that you grew the trees thereof...”***

You should only sow the seed and irrigate it, but He who has created life inside this seed and commands the sunlight, the life giving drops of rain, and the pieces of soil to grow this seed is only Allah.

These are some facts that none can deny, or attributes them to other than Allah. It is He Who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and is the sender of rain. He is the cause of all beauties and favours in the world.

Even paying attention to the colouring of a flower, the delicate and regular arrangement of leaves inside each other that have circulated around the central point of the flower and cry of the existence of life, are enough to acquaint man with the glory, power and knowledge of Allah. These are the facts which move the man's heart and call him toward Him.

In other words, Unity in creation (Unity of Creator) and Unity in Lordship (the Unity of the Deviser of this world) are counted as the basis of the Unity of the object of worship.

Therefore, at the end of the verse, the Qur'an says:

*“...Is there any god with Allah? Nay! They are a people who deviate.”*

## **Surah An-Naml - Verses 61-62**

أَمَّنْ جَعَلَ الْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَجَعَلَ خِلالَهَا أَنْهَارًا وَجَعَلَ لَهَا رِوَاسِي وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ  
الْبَحْرَيْنِ حَاجِزًا أَلَيْسَ مَعَ اللَّهِ بِلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ أَلَيْسَ مَعَ  
اللَّهِ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ

**61. “Or Who made the earth a resting place, and made in it rivers, and placed firm mountains therein, and placed between the two seas a barrier. Is there any god with Allah? Nay! Most of them do not know.”**

**62. “Or Who answers the distressed one when he calls on Him and removes the distress, and makes you successors in the earth. Is there any god with Allah? Little it is that you heed!”**

This verse refers to the merit of peace and firmness of the earth as a resting place for human beings in this world, and compares the artificial idols of the idolaters with Allah.

It says:

**“Or Who made the earth a resting place, and made in it rivers, and placed firm mountains therein, and placed between the two seas a barrier...”**

Thus, there are four great bounties mentioned in this verse, three of which are about calmness.

The calmness of the earth itself which in the meantime that it rotates around itself and around the sun as well as its travel in the constellation of solar system, its movement is so monotonous and quiet that its habitants never feel it, as if it is standing fix in a point and has not any movement.

Another one is the existence of the mountains. As it was said before, they have surrounded the lands of the earth and their rots have clung to each other and have formed a strong armour against the inner pressures of the earth.

This armour resists against the outward movements created by flow and ebb resulted from the gravity of the moon, too, and it is also a barrier against the great storms that disturb the calmness of the earth.

Another one is the natural hinder which is between the two flows of a part of the sweet and salty water of some seas or oceans.

This unseen inviolable obstruction is not any thing but the difference of the density of the sweet water and that of the salt water which causes the water of the great rivers that comes into the sea does not mix with its salty water for a considerable length of time and, therefore, the flow and ebb of the sea bring it over a great part of the lands of the seashore whose farms are ready to be irrigated.

The explanation of this very meaning was cited in the commentary of Surah Furqan , No. 25, verse 53.

In the meanwhile, there are some sources of water inside the different layers of parts of the earth. The water of these sources is the origin of liveliness and greenness of cultivated farms and fruitful gardens. A part of the sources of such water is located in mountains and another part is inside the layers of the earth.

Can this system be the fruit of a deaf and blind cause and that of an origin with no intellect and knowledge?

Have idols any function in the creation of this wonderful system? Even the idolaters themselves do not claim such a thing.

So, at the end of the verse, this question is repeated, saying:

***“...Is there any god with Allah?...”***

And then it continues saying:

***“...Nay! Most of them do not know.”***

In the next verse, the words are about solving difficulties, removing the distresses, and answering the supplications. It implies which is better, your worthless idols or Allah.

It says:

***“Or Who answers the distressed one when he calls on Him and removes the distress...”***

Yes, at the time when all the doors of the world of means are shut to a man and he is helpless from any point of view, the only one who can unlock the lock of difficulties, brings the light of hope into the hearts and opens the doors of mercy to the distressed ones is only His Pure Essence, not anyone else.

In view of the fact that this reality as a natural feeling is inside the soul of all human beings, idol worshippers also forget all their objects of worship when they entangle with the huge waves of the sea and refer to the Grace of Allah, as the Qur'an says:

***“Then, if they embark on a boat, they call on Allah, making their devotion sincerely (and exclusively) to Him...”<sup>1</sup>***

Then the holy verse implies that not only He solves and removes the difficulties but also He makes you successors in the earth.

The verse says:

***“...and makes you successors in the earth. Is there any god with Allah? Little it is that you heed!”***

Invoking Allah and prattling with Him is a worthy and an indispensable act. Supplicating to the Presence of Allah, and asking Him for solving the difficulties, specially at the time of distress, is necessary for everybody.

Wherever our invocation is not answered, there is a reason for it, as follows:

- 1- Our invocation had not been for a good deed but we considered it as good.
- 2- The manner in invocation has not been earnest and accompanied with distress.
- 3- We have not been sincere in our invocation. That is, while we have turned to the presence of Allah, we have had some hope in others, too.

It is true, of course, that sometimes, instead of accepting our supplication, He gives us something similar to it, or sometimes, instead of our demand which is not expedient for us with Allah, He banishes a misfortune from us; and sometimes instead of answering our invocation in this world, He will compensate it in the Hereafter; and sometimes instead of doing a favour to us, He favours to our descendants.

All of these meanings have been mentioned in the Islamic narrations.

Of course, the condition of fulfilment of invocation, in general, is the existence of sincerity in one's invocation and having no hope in others. Allah is aware of those who ask Him for something in silence, but He likes that His servants ask their needs by their tongues.

It is interesting that in some Islamic narrations this verse has been rendered into the rising of Hadrat Mahdi (as).

Imam Baqir (as) in a tradition says:

***“By Allah, as if I see Mahdi (as) who has leaned against the Black Stone (of Ka'bah) and calls Allah by his legitimacy...”***

Then he said:

*“By Allah, he is the distressed one in the Book of Allah in the verse which says:*

***‘Or Who answers the distressed one when he calls on Him, and removes the distress...’***<sup>2</sup>

In another tradition, Imam Sadiq (as) says:

*“This verse has been revealed concerning Mahdi from the progeny of Muhammad (S). By Allah he is the distressed one, when he keeps up two units prayer in the station of Abraham and offers a petition unto the presence of Allah, Almighty and Glorious, He answers him and removes the distress and makes him successor in the earth.”*<sup>3</sup>

No doubt, the purpose of this commentary, as we have seen many instances similar to it, is not confining the concept of the verse to the specious rank of Hadrat Mahdi (as), but the verse has a vast scope of meaning and one of its clear denotation expansions is Hadrat Mahdi (as).

That time is the time that corruption has covered everywhere, the doors of hope have been shut, everybody is helpless so that humankind is in an earnest blind alley, and the state of distress is seen throughout the world.

At that time, in the most sacred point on the earth, the Holy Mosque, he invokes Allah and asks for removing the distress.

Then Allah makes this invocation the outset of his worldly sacred revolution and, according to the holy phrase:

***“...and makes you successors in the earth...”***,

He makes him and his followers the successors on the earth.

Concerning the importance of supplication, the conditions of the acceptance of invocation, and that why some prayers will not be answered, we have discussed in details when commenting on Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 186.

## **Surah An-Naml - Verse 63**

أَمَّنْ يَهْدِيكُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَنْ يُرْسِلُ الرِّيَّاحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ  
أَعْلَهُ مَعَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى اللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

**63. “Or Who guides you in the darkness of the land and the sea, and Who sends the winds as heralds of glad tidings of His Mercy? Is there any god with Allah? Exalted High is Allah above**

***what they associate (with Him).”***

The ‘guidance in the darkness of the land and the sea’ may be the guidance that comes through stars, because in another occurrence of the Qur’an we recite:

***“...and by the stars they find the right way.”***<sup>4</sup>

The best way of theology for us is to pay attention to the difficulties and problems of life and that there appear some ways by which those problems may be solved or there come some hopes to the grace of Allah.

If we use our conscious as a judge, we will find out that there is no god save Allah.

So, this holy verse refers to the subject of guidance when it implies asking which is better idols or Allah, and says:

***“Or Who guides you in the darkness of the land and the sea, and Who sends the winds as heralds of glad tidings of His Mercy?...”***

There are some winds that indicate to the descent of rain. These winds, as special heralds of good tidings, come before falling rain. Their duty in fact, is also to guide people to the descent of rain.

The application of the Qur’anic word ***/bušra/ (heralds of glad tidings)*** concerning the winds, and the word ***/rahmat/ (Mercy)***, concerning the rain, both are interesting, because the winds carry the moisture of weather by pieces of cloud arising from seas and oceans, and bring them to the dry and thirsty lands and give them goodness by the descent of rain.

Also it is raining that causes the merit of life to be seen throughout the earthly globe. Wherever it comes down, it brings goodness, mercy, bounty and life.

The Qur’anic word ***/bušra/*** is the abbreviated form of ***/bušur/*** which is the plural form of ***/bašur/*** that means ‘the heralds of glad tidings’.

(Some more details about the function of winds and rains is mentioned in the commentary of Surah Al-’Araf, No. 7, verse 57)

At the end of the above verse, the Qur’an, addressing the pagans again, says:

***“...Is there any god with Allah?...”***

Then, without waiting for any answer, it immediately says:

***“...Exalted High is Allah above what they associate (with Him).”***

## Surah An-Naml - Verse 64

أَمَّنْ يَبْدُوا الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَمَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَعْلَهُ مَعَ اللَّهِ قُلْ  
هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

**64. “Or, Who originates the creation, then reproduces it, and Who gives you sustenance from the heaven and the earth? Is there any god with Allah? Say: ‘Bring your proof if you are truthful.’”**

From verse 60 of this Surah up to this verse, the holy phrase:

**“Is there any god with Allah?”**

has been repeated for five times, which is for the purpose of nullification of paganism and negation of false gods.

From the viewpoint of the Qur’an, no created phenomenon vanishes, but it is from the viewpoint of us that they disappear. Resurrection is not for returning some vanished things so that some people imagine that it is an impossible job.

It is returning the creatures to their first form, after some changes that have occurred in their physical forms. In other words, the same power which created it at first, can return it again either.

Thus, this verse speaks about ‘origin and end’, and comparing their objects of worship with Allah, says:

**“Or, Who originates the creation, then reproduces it...”**

And He Who sustains you between this beginning and end, is Allah, it continues saying:

**“...and Who gives you sustenance from the heaven and the earth?...”**

Yet, do you believe that there is a god with Allah?

**“...Is there any god with Allah?...”**

Tell them if they have such a creed, they should bring their proof if they are truthful.

The verse says:

**“...Say: ‘Bring your proof if you are truthful.’”**

In fact all of the former verses were about the origin and the signs of the greatness of Allah in the world of existence as well as His merits and bounties, but in this verse the Qur’an changes the discussion into

a delicate passage unto the subject of Resurrection, because the initiation of creation is itself an evidence upon the end of it, and the ability of creation is counted as a clear reasoning for Resurrection.

By this explanation, the answer of the question of many commentators is made clear. They say those pagans, who are addressed by these verses, often did not believe in Resurrection (resurrection of the body), in this case, how is it possible that we ask them and want them to confess?

The answer to this question is accompanied with a reason which makes the opposite party confess, because when they confess that the initiation of the creation belongs to Him, and it is He Who gives these sustenance and merits, it is enough that they accept that there is a possibility of returning to life again in the Hereafter.

By the way, the purpose of ‘the sustenance of the heaven’ is rain, sunlight, and the like; and the purpose of ‘**The sustenance of the earth**’ is the plants and different foodstuff which grow directly from the earth or originate indirectly from it, like cattle, mines, various things that man gets from it and enjoys them in his life.

## Surah An-Naml - Verses 65-66

قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ

بَلِ ادَّارَكَ عِلْمُهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ بَلِ هُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهَا بَلِ هُمْ مِنْهَا عَمُونَ

**65. “Say: No one in the heavens and the earth knows the Unseen save Allah and they do not know when they shall, be raised’.”**

**66. “Nay, but their knowledge falls as to the Hereafter; nay, they are in doubt about it; nay they are quite blind unto it.”**

Unseen is of several kinds and Allah teaches a kind of it to the prophets, as the Qur’an says:

**“(O Prophet!) These are of the tidings of Unseen which We reveal unto you...”<sup>5</sup>**

But another kind of it, such as the knowledge of the time of the occurrence of Hereafter, is particular to the Holy Essence of Allah.

The application of /man/ (who) in Arabic literature is for intellectual beings. Therefore, besides the angels, there may be some intellectual creatures in the heavens who, like human beings, will be raised up in Hereafter.

Since in the former verse the words were about Hereafter and Resurrection, these couple of verses refer to this subject from different points of view.

At first, it answers the question of those pagans who had repeatedly asked and said:

*“When does Hereafter occur?”*

it says:

***“Say: No one in the heavens and the earth knows the Unseen save Allah and they do not know when they shall, be raised’.”***

No doubt the knowledge of Unseen, including the date of the happening of Hereafter, belongs to Allah, but it does not contrast to the fact that He gives a part of the knowledge of Unseen to some ones that He desires; as Surah Jinn, No. 72, verses 26 and 27 say:

***“He (alone) knows the Unseen, nor does He make anyone acquainted with His secrets.”***  
***“Except to him whom He chooses as a messenger...”***

In other words, the knowledge of Unseen, essentially, independently, and illimitably, is particularized to Allah, and whatever others know is from His origin, but, in any case, the date of the occurrence of Hereafter is exceptional from this affair, and no one is aware of it.

Then the next holy verse refers to the lack of knowledge, unawareness and doubt of pagan about Hereafter.

It says:

***“Nay, but their knowledge falls as to the Hereafter; nay, they are in doubt about it; nay they are quite blind unto it.”***

The Qur’anic word */iddarak/* has originally been */tadaruk/* in the sense of ‘arranged one after another’. Thus the concept of the sentence in this verse is that they used all their knowledge about Hereafter but they gained nothing.

That is why, next to it, the verse says:

***“...Nay, they are in doubt about it, nay they are quite blind unto it.”***

The evidence of it is that the signs of Hereafter are seen in the life of this very world, including: the return of the dead land to life in summer, the trees that become fruitful after winter, and observing the greatness of Allah’s power in whole creation.

All of these are some evidence for the life possible after death, but they pass by them as if they are

blind. In other words, pagans do not know when they will be raised up and they are doubtful about it. Now the verse announces that they will understand its reality in Hereafter.

Their knowledge about Hereafter will become complete in Hereafter and they will find certainty about it, a certainty which will be in vain, while they are doubtful about it in this world.

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1. Surah Al-‘Ankabut, No. 29, verse 65
  2. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, The Commentary, Vol. 4, P. 94; and Safi, Burhan, ...
  3. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, P. 94; and Safi, Burhan, ...
  4. Surah An-Nahl. No. 16, verse 16
  5. Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 49

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