

Section 5: Jonah's Delivery From Distress

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 139–141

وَإِنَّ يُونُسَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

إِذْ أَبَقَ إِلَى الْفُلِّ الْمَشْحُونِ

فَسَاهَمَ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْمُدْحَضِينَ

139. “Verily Jonah was (one) of the Envoys,”

140. “When he ran away to the laden ship.”

141. “So he cast lots, and was of the rebutted,”

To become familiar with the history of prophets is a lesson for us today.

It says:

“Verily Jonah was (one) of the Envoys,”

The last life story of the Divine prophets and the former nations, which has been mentioned in this Surah is the life-story of Yunus (Jonah) and his repentant people who, by seeing the signs of Divine punishment, came out of their negligence and repented.

Therefore Allah showered His favours over them and caused them to enjoy His material and spiritual

blessings. Even Yunus (Jonah) (as) encountered some difficulties and problems because of the leaving the better he performed in hastening for emigration from among his people.

And even the Qur'anic word */’abaq/ (ran away)*, which is usually used for the run-away servants, is used for him. This meaning refers to this fact that whether the pagans of Arab and the polytheists in the length of history want to be like the people of Jonah. Do they seek for that evil and painful end or a happy prosperous fate? It depends on their decision.

However, like other prophets, Jonah began his invitation from Monotheism and struggled against idolatry and then he referred to struggling against the corruptions which were current in the society.

But those zealous people, who blindly used to follow their ancestors, did not accept his invitation. Like a kind father, Jonah (as) sympathetically and benevolently continued admonishing that deviated nation, but in spite of this wise logic he did not hear from those enemies anything save fallacy and sophistry.

Only a very small group, who were perhaps no more than a few persons, believed in him. There was a servant of Allah and a knowledgeable man among them. Jonah (as) preached so much that he approximately became disappointed from them.

Some Islamic authentic narrations indicate that, considering the circumstances of that aberrant nation, he decided to curse them. This decision was performed and Jonah cursed them. It was revealed to him that the Divine punishment would come to them at so and so time.

When the appointed time of punishment was approaching, Jonah accompanied the servant of Allah went out from among those people while he was angry. He went as far as he reached the shore. Over there he saw a ship full of people and laden with loads. He asked them to take him with them, too.

The next verse implies that this is the same thing which the Qur'an points to, and announces that you do remember when he ran away toward the ship full of loads and people.

It says:

“When he ran away to the laden ship.”

The application of the Qur'anic term */’abaq/* is derived from */’ibaq/* in the sense of ‘to run away a servant from his master’ which here is a wonderful application. It shows that how much important a very small ‘leaving the better’ from the side of the high rank stationed prophets is with Allah and is taken so hard from His side that He calls His prophet ‘a ran away servant’.

No doubt Jonah was an immaculate prophet, and never did he commit a sin, but it was better that he would tolerate more again and remain among people until the last moment, perhaps they could awaken.

It is true that according to some narrations he preached for forty years, but it was better for him to add

some more days or hours to it, and since he did not so, he was likened to a run away servant.

The third verse implies that Jonah embarked a ship and, according to some Islamic narrations, a great fish, opening his mouth wide, came across the ship and intercepted its way as if it demanded its food. The people in the ship said it seemed there was a sinner among them, and he had to become the bait of that fish. They could not help it save casting lots.

Here they cast lots and the lot fell upon Jonah. According to a narration the lot was repeated three times and every time the lot fell upon Jonah's name. Therefore, they took Jonah and threw him into the mouth of the great fish.

Through a short sentence the Qur'an points to this event where it says:

“So he cast lots, and was of the rebutted,”

The Qur'anic term ***/sahama/*** is derived from */sahm/* which originally means 'arrow' and the term ***/sahama/*** has been used in the sense of 'lottery', because at the time of lottery the names were written on the end of the arrows rejected out and everyone whose name was fallen by the lot he was involved in it.

The Arabic term ***/mudhad/*** is derived from */idhad/* in the sense of: 'to nullify, to wipe out, and to overcome', and here the purpose is that the lot fell upon his name.

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 142-144

فَالْتَقَمَهُ الْحُوتُ وَهُوَ مُلِيمٌ

فَلَوْلَا أَنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُسَبِّحِينَ

لَلَبِثَ فِي بَطْنِهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

142. “Then the fish swallowed him while he blamed himself;”

143. “So had he not been of those that glorify Allah,”

144. “He would have tarried in its belly until the Day of Resurrection.

Sometimes animals are ordered from the side of Allah to do something.

So, the great fish swallowed Jonah while he deserved to be blamed.

The verse says:

“Then the fish swallowed him while he blamed himself;”

The Arabic term */mulim/* originally is derived from */lawama/* in the sense of ‘blame’ and when it is conjugated in this Arabic form it means: to be deserved of blame.

It is certain that this blame and scorn was not because of a lesser sin or a heinous sin but its cause was only the leaving the better which he committed.

That he hastened in going out and emigrated from among his people. But the Lord Who makes fire safe inside water and glass beside stone, ordered this great animal that it would not hurt his servant, Jonah, the least hurt.

Jonah should pass an unprecedented term in prison in order to note his own ‘leaving the better’ and to try to recompense it. An Islamic narration indicates that Allah inspired the fish not to break any bone and not to cease any join of him.¹

In the second and third verses, the Qur’an implies that Jonah realized the situation very soon and thoroughly he turned to Allah and asked Him forgiveness for his ‘leaving the better’. So, in this verse, through a short sentence, it says:

“So had he not been of those that glorify Allah,”

“He would have tarried in its belly until the Day of Resurrection.

Thus, this temporary prison would be changed into a permanent prison, and that permanent prison would be changed into his grave. Or the fish might remain alive forever and Jonah would be kept prisoner in its belly until the Hereafter.

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 145–147

فَنَبَذْنَاهُ بِالْعَرَاءِ وَهُوَ سَقِيمٌ

وَأَنْبَتْنَا عَلَيْهِ شَجَرَةً مِنْ يَقْطِينٍ

وَأَرْسَلْنَاهُ إِلَى مِائَةِ أَلْفٍ أَوْ يَزِيدُونَ

145. “But We cast him forth on the naked shore while he was sick,”

146. “And We caused to grow over him a plant of gourds.”

147. “And We sent him to a hundred thousand (people) or more.”

Allah protected four prophets in relation with water in different forms: Jonah was protected under the water; Noah on the water; Moses and Yusuf beside the water.

In a tradition Imam Baqir (as) said:

“Jonah was kept prisoner in the belly of a fish for a few days where his hairs went away and the skin of his body became thin. Then he came out from the belly of the fish. He sucked the bush of gourd and rested under the shade of the gourd.”²

The verse says:

“But We cast him forth on the naked shore while he was sick,”

The great fish approached the dry shore where there was no tree or plant and, by the command of Allah, it threw out the morsel which was extra inside it. But it is clear that this wonderful prison disturbed the bodily health of Jonah and he was delivered from that prison while he was sick.

The second verse indicates that again the grace of Allah came to him. Since his body was sick and he was bodily tired and feeble, the shore sunshine hurt him and his tender face. It was necessary for him to rest under the shade of the wide leaves of that plant.

The Qur'an says:

“And We caused to grow over him a plant of gourds.”

As many of the philologists and commentators have said, the Arabic word *lyaqtin* is called to every plant which has not a stalk and has wide leaves, such as the bush of melon, cucumber, watermelon and the like. But a great deal of commentators and Islamic narrators here have stipulated that the purpose here is particularly gourd.

It should be noted that the Arabic word *šajarah* is used for both the plants which have stalk and branches, and those without stalk and branches, and in other words, it is irrespective of tree and plant.

There has been narrated a tradition from the holy Prophet of Islam (S) that someone asked him whether he liked gourd, and he (S) answered:

“Yes, it is the plant of my brother Jonah.”³

By the way, besides that a gourd has some wide leaves full of water which can be used as a good shady recess, flies and other insects do not approach it.

When Jonah left his people angrily, and the sign of the Divine Wrath was also going to appear to them, they were shocked severely and came to themselves. They went toward the learned man who was among them and by his leadership they decided to repent.

Some Islamic narrations denote that they entirely moved toward the desert and they caused a separation between men and women, and their children, and also between animals and their children. Then they began crying loudly and for the sins and wrongs they had performed against the prophet of Allah, Jonah, repented sincerely.

It was then that the Divine punishment went away and was poured on the mountains, and the faithful people who had repented returned safely by the mercy of Allah.⁴

After this event Jonah came back to his people to see what the punishment had done upon them. When he came he wondered that how they were all idol worshippers on the day of his emigration and now they were wholly worshippers of Allah.

The Qur'an says:

“And We sent him to a hundred thousand (people) or more.”

Surah As-Saffat – Verse 148

فَأَمَّنُوا فَمَرَّغْنَاهُمْ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ

148. “And they believed, so We gave them enjoyment for a while.”

Repentance for the past actions accompanied with sincere faith is a ground for the future success. Jonah's people repented and Allah took back His Wrath and made them successful.

So, this verse says:

“And they believed, so We gave them enjoyment for a while.”

Their beginning faith and repentance were formerly existed, but their detailed faith in Allah and His prophet Jonah and his teachings and instructions performed when Jonah (as) returned back among them.

It is noteworthy that it is understood from the verses of the Qur'an that this second return has been

toward that very former people and that some commentators have considered this return as a new duty for him does not adopt to the verses of the Qur'an, because from one side, we recite here that these people, whom Jonah was appointed to guide, believed and Allah gave them enjoyment for a certain time.

This makes it clear that the purpose of 'for a while' is the same as the end of their life and their natural death. There is a question that why in the previous verses it has been said 'a hundred thousand people or more' the apparent state is that these kinds of meanings are for emphasis and the greatness of something, not for the sake of the doubt of the speaker.

Surah As-Saffat – Verse 149

فَاسْتَفْتِهِمُ أَلِرَّبِّكَ ابْنَاتٌ وَلَهُمُ ابْنُونَ

149. “Then ask them whether your Lord has daughters and they have sons.”

Asking from conscience is the key to contemplation and warning of people.

A group of the polytheists of Arab, because of the lack of knowledge and degradation of thought, compared Allah with their selves, and considered child, and sometimes wife, for Him.

Among them there were mainly the tribes of Jahinah, Salim, Khuza'ah, and Bani Malih who believed that the angels were Allah's daughters, and also a great deal of Arab polytheists imagined jinn as His offspring, or some of them believed that Allah had a wife from jinn.

These baseless and superstitious imaginations had completely deviated them from the path of truth in a manner that the signs of Monotheism and Oneness of Allah had disappeared from among them.

It is said in a tradition that an ant thinks that its Lord has two small feelers, like an ant.⁵

Yes the low thought drives man into gossip. The comparison of the Creator with the creature is the worst factor of aberration in recognizing Allah. However, at first the Qur'an refers to those who considered the angels as the daughters of Allah and answers them in three various ways: experimental, intellectual, and traditional.

It says:

“Then ask them whether your Lord has daughters and they have sons.”

The Qur'anic phrase */istaftihim/* is derived from */istifta'/* which is taken from */fatwa/* which is in the sense of 'the answer to difficult problems.'

However, it implicitly asks them how they consider for Allah that which they do not desire for themselves.

This statement is according to their wrong belief who severely hated daughters and were seriously interested in sons, since sons had a very effective function in their lives, their fights, and their robberies while daughters could not help them in these affairs.

No doubt, from the point of value and being a ‘human’, a daughter and a son are the same with Allah and the criterion of both of them is piety, but the reasoning the Qur’an here, in terminology, is for mentioning the certain issues of the enemy in which the subjects of the opposite party is taken and they are returned to him again.

The like of this meaning has been mentioned in some other Suras of the Qur’an: such as Surah An-Najm, No. 53, verses 22–23 where it says:

“What! For you the male sex and for Him the female?”

“Behold, such would be indeed a division most unfair.”

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 150–152

أَمْ خَلَقْنَا الْمَلَائِكَةَ إِنَاثًا وَهُمْ شَاهِدُونَ

أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ مِّنْ إِفْكِهِمْ لَيَقُولُونَ

وَلَدَ اللَّهُ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ

150. “Or did We create the angels females while they were witnesses?”

151. “Beware! Verily it is of their own lie that they say.”

152. “Allah has begotten, and verily they are liars.”

Those who consider the angels as pregnant women will be called to account by Allah.

In this verse, it refers to a sensible proof of the subject and, again by the way of appositive interrogative with a negative sense, the Qur’an asks whether Allah created the angels as girls and those people were as witnesses over it. No doubt their answer in this regard will be negative because none of them can claim that they were present at the creation of the angels.

The verse says:

“Or did We create the angels females while they were witnesses?”

In the second and third verses the Qur'an returns to the rational proof which has been taken from their certain mental issues and says:

“Beware! Verily it is of their own lie that they say.”

“Allah has begotten, and verily they are liars.”

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 153–156

أَصْطَفَى الْبَنَاتِ عَلَى الْبَنِينَ

مَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ

أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

أَمْ لَكُمْ سُلْطَانٌ مُبِينٌ

153. “Has He chosen daughters in preference to sons?”

154. “What has happened to you, how is it that you judge?”

155. “Will you not then receive admonition?”

156. “Or have you a clear authority?”

Man may reach a point that, basing on a wrong opinion, he considers daughter bad and son good. Then, it happens that he may imagine daughters for Allah (s.w.t.) and sons belonging to him.

So, with the sense of blame and reprimand, in these four verses the Holy Qur'an implies whether they have preferred daughters to sons. What is the matter with them and how do they judge? Do they understand what they say?

Is it not the time they would leave these vanities and ugly superstitions, because these words are so vain

and baseless that if a person has a little intellect and contemplates he will realize its vanity.

Here are the verses:

“Has He chosen daughters in preference to sons?”

“What has happened to you, how is it that you judge?”

“Will you not then receive admonition?”

“Or have you a clear authority?”

After the nullification of their superstitious claim, by a sensible reasoning and a rational reasoning, it refers to the third evidence which is a reasoning stated in tradition. It indicates that if the thing you say is correct, there must be a remark or symptom from it in the former Books. Do you have any clear evidence in this regard?

Surah As-Saffat – Verse 157

فَأْتُوا بِكِتَابِكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

157. “Then bring your book if you are truthful.”

The heavenly Books are mostly proofs and documents for judgment about Allah, and in neither of these Books there is any word saying that Allah has child.

So, in this verse, the Qur’an says if you have anything in this regard and you are truthful, bring your Book and show in which Book, in which writing and in which heavenly revelation such a thing has been mentioned and to which prophet it has been revealed.

The verse says:

“Then bring your book if you are truthful.”

No, these are not the things found in the heavenly Books. These are some superstitions which have been transferred from one ignorant generation to another ignorant generation and have no acceptable source.

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 158–160

وَجَعَلُوا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ الْجَنَّةِ نَسَبًا وَلَقَدْ عَلِمَتِ الْجِنَّةُ إِنَّهُمْ لَمُحْضَرُونَ

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُصِفُونَ

إِلَّا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الْمُخْلَصِينَ

158. “And they have set up a kinship between Him and the jinn, while the jinn know (quite well) that they shall surely be brought up (to account).”

159. “Glory be to Allah! (He is free) from what they ascribe (to Him).”

160. “Except for Allah’s sincere servants.”

The beliefs of polytheists are artificial and false. Beliefs should be based on intellect, nature, and tradition. This verse refers to another superstition of polytheists. They believed in a kinship between Allah and the jinn.

The Qur’an changes the form of the statement from the kind of ‘address’ to the form of absent one, as if they were so worthless that they had not the eligibility of being spoken to face in face.

It says:

“And they have set up a kinship between Him and the jinn...”

What kind of kinship was it that they believed between Allah and the jinn? In answer to this question it has been said that the purpose of it is any kind of kinship and relation although they have no relationship. And we know that a group of pagan Arabs used to worship the jinn and considered them as partners of Allah and thus they believed in a communication between them and Allah.

However, the Qur’an seriously rejected this superstitious idea and implies that the jinn whom the superstitious idol worshippers imagine as their objects of worship, or they believe in a kinship relation between Allah and them, themselves know well that these superstitious idol worshippers will be brought up to the court of justice of Allah for reckoning and punishment.

It continues saying:

“...while the jinn know (quite well) that they shall surely be brought up (to account).”

In the next verse, the Qur’an says:

“Glory be to Allah! (He is free) from what they ascribe (to Him).”

And in the third verse, it implicitly says: except for the explanation that the sincere servants of Allah have about Him knowingly, there is no other explanation suitable for the Pure Essence of Allah. It says:

“Except for Allah’s sincere servants.”

Thus, every qualification that man may have about Allah from himself is incorrect and Allah is free from it, except for that which the sincere servants have about him. These are the true servants who are quit of any kind of polytheism, low desire, ignorance, and aberration.

They do not qualify Allah save that which He Himself has allowed them to explain.

For obtaining more knowledge in this regard, we must refer to the words of the Prophet (S), the sermons of Ali (as) in Nahj-ul-Balaqah, and the comprehensive supplications of Imam Sajjad (as) in Sahifah Sajjadiyyah, and know Allah under the light of the explanations of these servants of Allah.

Imam Amir-ul-Mu’mineen Ali (as) says:

*“...He has not informed (human) wit about the limits of His qualities. Nevertheless, He has not prevented it from securing essential knowledge of Him...”*⁶

In another place, upon qualifying Allah, he (as) says:

“...Imagination cannot reach Him so as to assign Him quantity. Understanding cannot think of Him so as to give him shape. Senses do not perceive Him so as to feel Him. Hands cannot touch Him so as to rub against Him.

He does not change into any condition. He does not pass from one state to another. Nights and days do not turn Him old. Light and darkness do not alter him. He is not qualified by anything of the limbs, nor by the parts of the body, nor by the length and width.

*It cannot be said that He has a limit, extremity, or end, or termination, nor do things control him so as to raise Him or lower Him, nor anything carry Him...”*⁷

Ali-ibn-il-Hussayn (as) in Sahifah Sajjadiyyah says:

*“Praise belongs only to Allah Whose Existence is the source of creation, an Essence that the eyes of the lookers cannot see Him and the understanding and thought of the explainers are not able to explain His qualities...”*⁸

The cognition and knowledge of Allah must be learnt from the school of the leaders of the religion.

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 161–163

فَإِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ

مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ بِفَاتِنِينَ

إِلَّا مَنْ هُوَ صَالِ الْجَحِيمِ

161. “So verily you and what you worship,”

162. “Can never excite (anyone) against Him.”

163. “Except such as are (themselves) going to the blazing Fire.”

Through the first and second verses, the Qur’an implies that the temptations of idol worshippers do not affect on the hearts of the pure and righteous ones, and only the polluted hearts and hellish souls, which tend to their mischief, surrender themselves to these temptations.

It says:

“So verily you and what you worship,”

“Can never excite (anyone) against Him.”

It indicates that neither you nor what you worship can deceive anyone by it and separate them from Allah, or deviate them by means of delusion and mischief.

In the third verse the Qur’an says:

“Except such as are (themselves) going to the blazing Fire.”

These verses are as a hint to this fact that none can consider himself excused before deviations and claims that he has been deceived and driven to idol worship. The Qur’an implies that you idol worshipper have not the ability of deceiving persons except for those who choose the path of Hell willingly.

The evidence for this meaning is the phrase: ‘going to the blazing Fire’, since the Arabic word **/sali/** has originally been in the form of ‘active participle’, and usually when an active participle form is used for an intellectual being its concept is that the accomplishment of an action is done willingly and with authority like the Arabic words: **/qatill/ (murderer)**, and **/daribl/ (striker)**.

Therefore, the Arabic phrase **/sal-il-jahim/** means a person who is willing to burn himself in the Fire of Hell. Thus, the Holy Qur’an shut the way of pretext to every deviated one.

By the way, it is necessary to note to this point that the word **/sali/** is derived from **/saly/** in the sense of candling fire and entering into fire, or being burnt and roasted by it.

The Arabic term **/fatini/** is an active participle derived from **/fitnah/** in the sense of tempter.

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 164-166

وَمَا مِنَّا إِلَّا لَهُ مَقَامٌ مَّعْلُومٌ

وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الصَّافُّونَ

وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الْمُسَبِّحُونَ

164. “And (the angels say:) ‘There is not (any one) of us, but for him is an assigned place,”

165. “And verily we are they who range ourselves in order.”

166. “And verily we are they who celebrate His glory.”

In the world of angels, there is a rank, position, special responsibility and hierarchy for every one of them, the same angels whom the idol worshippers used to imagine as the daughters of Allah.

It is interesting that the Qur’an narrates this statement from their own tongue, and says:

“And (the angels say:) ‘There is not (any one) of us, but for him is an assigned place,”

And, in the second and third verses the Qur’an announces that they said they were all ready to obey the command of Allah and waiting to receive His order while celebrating His glory.

Yes, they say that they are some servants who are always ready, with their whole entity, to perform His order. They say they are far off to be Allah’s offspring and they count Him free from these kinds of ugly and false attributes, and that they hate these superstitions and delusions of the polytheists.

The abovementioned three verses, in fact, refer to three qualities of the angels. The first is that each of them has a proper rank which they do not exceed. The second is that they are always ready to obey the command of Allah in the expanse of creation and execute His orders in the whole world of existence.

The third is that they constantly celebrate the glory of Allah and exempt Him from whatever is not suitable for him.

It is noteworthy that, concerning these verses, a group of the commentators have narrated a tradition from the Prophet (S) who said that in all heavens there is no room, even as large as a span, except that an angel is over there busy praying and glorifying Allah.⁹

Another narration indicates that one day the prophet of Islam (S) was sitting with some of his companions when he said:

“Once the heaven began moaning (because of its heavy burden), and it is right to moan because there is no space in it even as large as a footstep save that an angel is bowing or prostrating there”,

then he recited these verses. 10

These different meanings are as a tender hint to the fact that the world of existence is full of the obedient beings of Allah and those who glorify Him.

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 167–169

وَإِنْ كَانُوا لَيَقُولُنَّ

لَوْ أَنَّ عِنْدَنَا ذِكْرًا مِنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ

لَكُنَّا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الْمُخْلَصِينَ

167. “And verily they used to say:”

168. “If we had had but a reminder from the men of old.”

169. “We would certainly have been Allah’s sincere servants.”

The history of the past should not be taken as a pretext against logic and reasoning. So in the above three verses the Qur’an announces that the polytheists used to say if they had had one of the old heavenly Books with them, they would have been among the sincere servants of Allah.

This statement is just like the words of the lazy students who have failed in their examinations and in order to cover their own laziness they say if they had had some good and clever teachers they would have certainly been some first grade students, too.

Here are the concerning verses:

“And verily they used to say:”

“If we had had but a reminder from the men of old.”

“We would Certainly have been Allah’s sincere servants.”

Surah As-Saffat – Verse 170

فَكَفَرُوا بِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ

170. “Then they disbelieved in it, so soon they will know.”

We must be careful of the end of the affairs, because being neglectful unto the future can be the cause of disbelief and denial.

There has been narrated from Imam Baqir (as) who said that the polytheists of Mecca and the pagans of Quraysh used to curse the Jews and the Christians who belied their prophets.

They swore by Allah that if they had had one of the heavenly Books of old with them, they would have believed in it, but when the holy Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, (S) was appointed as a Divine prophet, they disbelieved in him and denied him.

The verse says:

“Then they disbelieved in it, so soon they will know.”

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 171-173

وَلَقَدْ سَبَقَتْ كَلِمَتُنَا لِعِبَادِنَا الْمُرْسَلِينَ

إِنَّهُمْ لَهُمُ الْمَنْصُورُونَ

وَإِنَّ جُنَدَنَا لَهُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ

171. “And certainly Our word has already gone forth for Our servants, the apostles:”

172. “Verily they shall be the assisted ones.”

173. “And verily Our host alone shall be the victorious ones.”

The prophets of Allah being helped is Allah’s way of treatment. The future will also witness the victory of

the Divine prophets and the failure of their enemies. The prophets and their followers are the troops of Allah, and certainly the army of Allah is victorious in all sense.

Therefore, these three verses indicate that the conclusive promise of Allah about the sincere servants of Allah has already been confirmed that they will be helped and the army of Allah is always victorious in all scenes. What an explicit and expressive sentence, and what an enlivening and pleasant promise this is!

Allah says:

“And certainly Our word has already gone forth for Our servants, the apostles:”

“Verily they shall be the assisted ones.”

“And verily Our host alone shall be the victorious ones.”

Yes, the victory of the army of truth over the troops of falsehood and the help of Allah unto the sincere servants is among the certain promises of Allah and is one of His decisive treatments which has been mentioned in the above verses as an Allah’s way of treatment done from the beginning.

It is evident that Allah, Who is Mighty over everything, and there has not been any failure in His promises, can fulfill these great promises and, like the unchangeable precedent custom of the world of existence, will make the men of truth completely victorious.

This Divine promise is one of the most important issues by which the people of the way of truth are encouraged and take spirit from it whenever they become tired.

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 174-176

فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ حِينٍ

وَأَبْصِرْهُمْ فَسَوْفَ يُبْصِرُونَ

أَفْبِعَذَابِنَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونَ

174. “So turn you away from them for a time,”

175. “And see them, for they soon shall see (their retribution)”

176. “Do they seek to hasten Our chastisement?”

At first there must be warning, admonition, and ultimatum and after that there comes punishment. In these verses, both for the condolence of the Prophet (S) and the believers, and for emphasis on their victory, and also for threatening the neglectful polytheists the Qur'an says:

“So turn you away from them for a time,”

This is an expressive and frightful threat which originates from the certainty in final Divine victory, specially that it has ambiguously been said ‘for a time’.

The length of this time is not known, whether it is the time of migration, the time of the Battle of Badr, the time of the Conquer of Mecca, or the exact time when the conditions of ultimate and common raise of Muslims against these blind-hearted people will be provided.

Similar to these threats, of course, are seen in some other verses of the Qur'an, such as Surah an-Nisa', No. 4, verse 81, and Surah Al 'An'am, No. 6, verse 91.

This sentence is emphasised with another threat in the second verse where it implicitly points to their situation to be seen that it is empty of content: their obstinacy, their lies, their superstitions, and their pertinacities; but they will see the result of their evil deeds soon.

The verse says:

“And see them, for they soon shall see (their retribution)”

Soon they will see the victory of you and the believers over them and their humiliating failure in this world and the Divine punishment in the next world.

Since those obstinate shameless people used to repeat this word that what happened to the promise of Allah about His punishment, and if you, the Prophet, are truthful why do you hesitate?

So, in the third verse, the Qur'an with a threatening tone answers them, saying:

“Do they seek to hasten Our chastisement?”

Sometimes they say:

“...‘When will this promise be, if you are truthful?’”¹¹,

and sometimes they say:

“...‘When shall be this victory, if you are truthful?’”¹²

They should know that the chastisement of Allah will seize them soon.

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 177-179

فَإِذَا نَزَلَ بِسَاحَتِهِمْ فَسَاءَ صَبَاحُ الْمُنْذَرِينَ

وَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ حِينٍ

وَأَبْصِرْ فَسَوْفَ يُبْصِرُونَ

177. “But when it shall descend in their courtyard, how evil will be the morning of them that are warned!”

178. “And turn you away from them for a time.”

179. “And see you, for they shall soon see (their fate).”

Against the heedlessness of the pagans to the threats of Allah, repetition is necessary. The Qur’anic commandments: */tawalla ‘anhum/ (turn you away from them)* and */wa ‘absir fasaufa yubsirun/ (and see you, for they shall soon see)* have been repeated two times.

The first verse indicates that when the punishment of Allah will come down in the courtyard of their houses and their circumstances become dark for them, that time they will understand how bad and dangerous the morning of those who are warned is.

It says:

“But when it shall descend in their courtyard, how evil will be the morning of them that are warned!”

The application of the Arabic word */sahat/ (courtyard)* is for the sake that it may illustrate the descent of the punishment inside their life and living, and that it shows them that the centre of their peace and tranquillity changes into a terror and terrible centre.

The application of the Qur’anic phrase */sabah ul munḍarin/ (the morning of them that are warned)* points to this meaning that the chastisement of Allah upon this cruel nation, like in many ancient nations, will come in the morning. Or that morning is the time of awakening and they will awaken when there has been no way to salvation and everything has been done.

The subject discussed in the second and third verse is the same thing which was mentioned formerly, too, and it is repeated here again for emphasis.

The Qur'an, with a threatening tone, says:

“And turn you away from them for a time.”

“And see you, for they shall soon see (their fate).”

As we said before, this repetition is for emphasis, so that they know that this is a decisive subject that they will meet the painful results of their evil deeds, and that the believers are surely victorious either.

Or it is for the sake that, at first, it threatens them to the worldly punishment, and in the second time it threatens them to the chastisement and retribution of Allah in Hereafter.

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 180–182

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ

وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

180. “Glory be to your Lord, the Lord of Honour, far above that which they ascribe (unto Him).”

181. “And peace be upon the messengers,”

182. “And (all) praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.”

The world of creation is the manifestation of the Lordship of Allah. The Lordship of Allah is the doorway to the praise of Allah. The attributes that the polytheists ascribed to Allah do not agree with the rank of honour and Lordship of Allah, because He is the Owner and Manager of the whole world of existence.

This verse says:

“Glory be to your Lord, the Lord of Honour, far above that which they ascribe (unto Him).”

They sometimes call the angels as the daughters of Allah, and sometimes they consider a communication between Him and the jinn, and sometimes they put some worthless things, such as

pieces of stone, and wood, in a row with Allah. The emphasis on the honour and might of Allah, in fact, is in the sense of nullifying all these imaginary objects of worship.

The verses of this Surah have sometimes spoken of the glorification of the sincere servants of Allah, and sometimes the glorification of the angels are referred to, and here the words are about the glorification of Allah due to His Pure Essence.

In the second verse Allah has involved all the messengers in His endless grace and favour and says:

“And peace be upon the messengers,”

This is a greeting which is the sign of health and security from any kind of punishment and retribution in Hereafter. It is a peace that is security against failures and is an evidence to victory over the enemies.

In the third verse the Qur'an concludes the words with the praise of Allah when it says:

“And (all) praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.”

These three recent verses can be a short review over all the materials of this Surah, because an important part of this Surah is about Unity and struggling against kinds of polytheism. The first verse, by glorifying Allah, nullifies all the undue qualities that the polytheists attribute to Him.

Another part of this Surah is the statement about the states of former seven great prophets; and the second verse refers to them. And, finally, another part of this holy Surah is about the Divine bounties, specially the kinds of blessings in Paradise, and the victory of the army of Allah against the troops of the pagans. The praise of Allah, mentioned at the end, is an indication to all of them.

Numerous traditions narrated from the holy Prophet of Islam (S), from Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as), and sometimes from Imam Baqir (as) indicate that whoever desires that on the Day of Hereafter his container of reward would be filled and given fully with the great container, his last word in any meeting he participates should be this, saying:

“Glory be to your Lord, the Lord of Honour, far above that which they ascribe (unto Him).”

“And peace be upon the messengers,”

“And (all) praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.”¹³

Yes, our meetings must be concluded by the glory to the Pure Essence of Allah, and peace to his prophets, and praises and thank to Him for His blessings, so that if we have done something wrong or said some undue words in this meeting they may be recompensed.

O Lord! You have promised to help Your messengers and to make Your army victorious; set us in the line of Your messengers and in the rows of Your army, and make us victorious over the blood-thirsty enemies who have raised from the east and west of the world against the Qur'an to vanish it and to

quench its light!

O Lord! Protect and secure us from being polluted to any polytheism and deviation from the way of Monotheism!

O Lord! Those difficulties which the appointed prophets faced with during the length of history against the troops of infidelity and polytheism, have just now appeared in our Islamic society, may You involve us in the same peace that was the cause of the health of the appointed messengers in these events!

Amin, O' the Lord of the Worlds.

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1. The commentary by Fakhr-i-Razi, and Burhan under the verse.
 2. The commentary book of Qummi and Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, under the verse.
 3. Al-Bayan, Vol. 7, P. 489; Nur-uth-Thaqalayn under the verse
 4. You can read these matters in Burhan commentary, under the verse
 5. Tafsir-i-Nimunah, Vol. 19, P. 171
 6. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, sermon 49
 7. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, sermon 186
 8. Sahifah Sajjadiyyah, Supplication One
 9. Tafsir-i-Qurtabi, Vol. 8, P. 5581
 10. Durr-ul-Manthur and Al-Mizan, under the verses
 11. Surah Yunus, No. 10, verse 48
 12. Surah As-Sajdah, No. 32, verse 28
 13. Majma'-ul-Bayan, under the verses, Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, P. 440

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