

Section 5: Regard for the Sign of Allah

Surah Al-Hajj – Verse 34

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا لِيذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيَّ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِنْ بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ فَإِلَهُكُمْ
إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ فَلَهُ أَسْلِمُوا وَبَشِّرِ الْمُخْبِتِينَ

34. “And for every people We appointed a ritual that they may mention the name of Allah on what He has provided them of the cattle quadrupeds (as their sustenance) so your God is One God, therefore surrender unto Him, and give you glad tidings unto the humble,”

The Arabic term /mansak/ is either an infinitive, or noun of time, or noun of place. Therefore the meaning of the verse is such: We have appointed for every people a program of worship, or a time for sacrifice, or a place for it.

The Arabic word /muxbitin/ is derived from /xubat/ which means: a vast and plain land without any high and down; thus a calm and assured person is called /muxbit/ who is far and free from any polytheistic imagination.

In connection with the former noble verses and the divine commandment of sacrifice, there may come forth this question that what kind of a worship is this, legislated in Islam, that some animals must be slaughtered and offered as sacrifice for Allah and for attracting His attention?

Does Allah need any sacrifice? And was there this action in other religions, too, or it was special among polytheists?

In order to make this subject clear, the holy Qur'an implies that you are not the only nation whose duty is slaughtering sacrifice for the Lord, because Allah has appointed a place of sacrifice for every nation in order that, at the time of sacrifice, they mention the name of Allah over the cattle that Allah has provided

them as their sustenance.

The verse says:

“And for every people We appointed a ritual that they may mention the name of Allah on what He has provided them of the cattle quadrupeds (as their sustenance)...”

So, at the end of the verse, the Qur’an implies that there is only one God and His program is also a single program.

The verse continues saying:

“...so your God is One God...”

Now that the fact is this, then do surrender before Him and His command.

“...therefore surrender unto Him...”

And the humble ones and those who surrender before the commandments of Allah should be given glad tidings.

The holy verse concludes:

“...and give you glad tidings unto the humble,”

Indeed, this sentence means: O Messenger of Allah (S)! you should give the glad tidings of happiness, prosperity, and safety of the chastisement as well as the wholesome life to those who have become humble and obedient to the commandment of Allah.

Raqib in his book, Mufradat, says: The Arabic word /nusk/ means ‘worship’, and /nasik/ means ‘worshipper’, and ‘manasik-i-Hajj’ means: the places wherein this worship is done; or it means ‘these rites themselves’.

But according to the commentary of Majma‘-ul-Bayan by Tabarsi, and Ruh-ul-Janan, by Abul-Futuh, the Arabic term /mansak/ probably means ‘offering sacrifice’, in particular, among all worships.

Therefore, though the term /mansak/ has a general concept, which encompasses other worships including specially rites of Hajj, but in the verse under discussion, with the context of the Qur’anic phrase /...liyaḥkurumallah.../

(that they may mention the name of Allah...),

it means special to sacrifice.

Surah Al-Hajj – Verse 35

الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَهُمْ وَالْمُقِيمِي الصَّلَاةِ
وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

35. “(To) those whose hearts tremble when Allah is mentioned, and those who are patient under that which afflicts them, and the establishers of prayer, and spend (in charity) out of what We have provided them with.”

Mentioning the name of Allah is both tranquillizing for the faithful, and dreadful; like a child who, by the remembrance of his parents, becomes tranquil and is in awe of them both. Therefore the inner awe of Allah is a value, and in this verse the qualities of /muxbitin/ (the humble) are explained in four parts, two of which are spiritual and the other two are physical.

At the first, it says:

“(To) those whose hearts tremble when Allah is mentioned...”

They do not fear of His Wrath unduly, nor do they have doubt in His Grace, but this fear is for the responsibilities they have and they, maybe, have rather neglected fulfilling them. This fright is for the recognition of the great rank of Allah that man is timid facing His grandeur.

Another quality of ‘the humble’ is that they are often patient when something evil and painful happens in their lives.

The holy verse says:

“...and those who are patient under that which afflicts them...”

Whatever the event is great and its harm is much and heavy, they do not knee before it. They usually do not lose their coldness and do not escape from the field. They do not lose hope, and do never blaspheme, and briefly speaking, they persevere. They continue going forth and, at last, they win.

The verse says:

“...and the establishers of prayer...”

Their third and fourth qualities are that they establish the prayer and spend in charity out of what Allah has bestowed upon them as sustenance.

The verse continues saying:

“...and spend (in charity) out of what We have provided them with.”

From one side, their relation with Allah, the Creator of the world, is firm, and on the other side, they have a strong relation with people. This explanation makes the fact clear that the qualities of the believers, such as: love, surrender, and humility have not merely the inward aspect, but the effects of them must usually be appeared and manifested in their daily deeds and manners, too.

Some Traditions

1. Karajaki cites in Ma'dan-ul-Javahir narrating from Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) saying that the origin of every goodness, both in the world and Hereafter, is one thing and it is being in awe of Allah¹, the Almighty...

2. Once a man came to the Messenger of Allah, and said:

“Teach me something so that my Lord loves me...”

The Messenger of Allah said:

*“Whenever you like that your Lord loves you, be in awe of Him.”*²

3. Abubasir said:

“I told the Imam (Imam Sadiq) (as): ‘O’ May I be your ransom! Will your followers (shi'ites) be with you (in Hereafter)?”

*He (as) answered: “Yes, if they fear Allah and be careful of His orders; and they are in awe of Him, and obey Him (His commandment), and be afraid of the sins, and when they behave like that they will be with us in the degrees of the Hereafter.”*³

4. Imam Sadiq (as) said:

*“A servant can be called a believer when he fears Allah and is hopeful to Him.”*⁴

5. Imam Rida (as) said:

*“Whoever is in awe of Allah will be in security.”*⁵

6. Imam Kazim (as) said:

*“Allah does not give security to the timid persons as much as their fear, but according to His grace and generosity.”*⁶

7. Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) said:

“Be in awe of Allah and be hopeful of His grace so that He secures you from that which you are in awe

of and He bestows on you what you are hopeful of.”7

8. Imam 'Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) said:

“Being in awe of Allah in this world causes the security of fear in the Hereafter.”8

9. Imam Ali (as) said:

“The finite of knowledge is the fear of Allah.”9

10. Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“None is the follower of Ja'far (Imam Sadiq) (as) save he who restrains his tongue, and acts for his Creator, and hopes in his Master (Allah) and really fears Allah.”10

11. The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“The most elevated people with Allah is the one who is the most God-fearing.”11

12. The Messenger of Allah (S) also said:

“Whoever leaves committing a sin because of the fear of Allah, He will make him happy on the Day of Hereafter.”12

Surah Al-Hajj – Verse 36

وَالْبُدْنَ جَعَلْنَاهَا لَكُمْ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ لَكُمْ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ فَاذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا صَوَافٍ فَإِذَا وَجَبَتْ جُنُوبُهَا فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطْعِمُوا الْقَانِعَ وَالْمُعْتَرَّ كَذَلِكَ سَخَّرْنَاهَا لَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

36. “And (as for) the fat camels, We have made them for you of the symbols of Allah, therein is good for you. So mention Allah’s Name on them, standing in a row; then, when they fall down (sacrificed) on their sides, eat of them and feed the contented (poor one) and such as beg with due humility; thus have We made them subservient to you that haply you may give thanks.”

Spend Generously When Glorifying Symbols of Allah

The verses under discussion speak about: the rites of Hajj, the symbols of Allah, and the subject of sacrifice.

At first, it says:

“And (as for) the fat camels, We have made them for you of the symbols of Allah...”

From one side, they belong to people and, on the other side, they are among the symbols and signs of Allah (s.w.t.) in this great worship, because ‘Sacrifice in Hajj’ is one of the clear manifestations of this worship, the philosophy of which was referred to formerly.

The Arabic term /budn/ is the plural form of /badanah/ which means a big fat and fleshy camel, and in view of the fact that such an animal is the most appropriate for the ceremonies of sacrifice and feeding the poor and needy ones, it is specially emphasized here, else we know well that the fatness of the sacrificial animal is not among the obligatory conditions of it. It is enough for us to be careful that the animal should not be rather thin.

Then, the Qur’an adds:

“...therein is good for you...”

From one side, you use its meat and feed others from it, and on the other side, because of this donation and that you worship Allah, you will enjoy its spiritual results and gain access to Allah.

Then the Qur’an states the quality of offering sacrifice in a short sentence, as follows:

“...So mention Allah’s Name on them, standing in a row;...”

No doubt, mentioning the name of Allah at the time of slaughtering the animals, or immolation of a camel, does not need that a particular quality be observed, and mentioning any Name of Allah is enough.

The apparent of the holy verse also shows the same thing, but some narrations contain a special invocation of Allah to be mentioned for here which, in fact, is the statement of a complete one.

The commentators have quoted this invocation from Ibn-‘Abbas, as this:

“Allahu Akbar-u-La’ilaha ’Illalah-u-wallahu Akbar. Allahumma minka wa laka”. 13

Yet, in a narration from Imam Sadiq (as) some more expressive sentences have been quoted. He (as) said:

“When you bought the sacrificial animal, do turn it toward Qiblah, and at the time of slaughtering, you should say:

‘I have turned my face (myself wholly) toward Him Who created the heavens and the earth being upright, and I am not of the idolaters. Verily my prayer and my worship, my life and my death are for Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

No associate (there is) for Him, and this (submission) I have been commanded to, and I am the first of the Muslims. O' Allah! (this sacrifice) is Yours and it is for You. By the Name of Allah and to Allah, and Allah is the Great. O' Allah! Accept it from me'."¹⁴

The Qur'anic term /sawaff/ is the plural form of /saffah/ which means 'standing in row', and as some Islamic narrations denote, the objective of it is that the hands of the sacrificial camel must be tied together from the wrist to the knee while it is standing so that the camel does not move so much and does not run away at the time of slaughtering.

It is natural that when the body of the camel bleeds for a while, its hands grow weak and weaker and finally, the camel lies on the ground, therefore, at the end of the verse, the Qur'an says:

"...then, when they fall down (sacrificed) on their sides, eat of them and feed the contented (poor one) and such as beg with due humility;..."

The difference between the Arabic words /qani'/ and /mu'tar/ is that the word /qani'/ is applied to a person that when something is given to him, he is satisfied and becomes contented and happy. He shows no protest, objection and anger. But the word /mu'tar/ is used for a person who comes to you, asks for something, and he is often not content with what you give him, and he protests.

The Arabic word /qani'/ is derived from /qana'ah/ while the Qur'anic word /mu'tar/ is derived from /'arr/, pronounced as /harr/, originally means 'scab' which is a mangy skin disease in human beings, then the word /mu'tar/ has been used for a beggar who comes unto one and asks for help (and it usually happens that he protests).

The word /qani'/ has been mentioned in the verse before the word /mu'tar/. This matter shows that those groups of the deprived who are self-modest and self-possessed must be taken more under consideration.

This point is also noteworthy that the Qur'anic phrase /kulu minha/ (eat of them) apparently means that the pilgrims must eat something out of their own sacrifice as an obligation; and, perhaps, this is for the equality between them and the poor.

Finally, The Qur'an concludes the holy verse as follows:

"...thus have We made them subservient to you that haply you may give thanks."

This is amazing, indeed, that a big animal such as camel, with that power and strength that it has; is so subservient to us that it lets even a child tie his feet very firmly, and then it will be slaughtered. (The style of slaughtering a camel is that a knife is pushed in the hole of the neck of that camel and it begins bleeding, and soon the animal is sacrificed).

Sometimes, in order to show us the importance of this conquest, Allah (s.w.t.) takes the command of

obedience and submission from this animal, and we have seen that an angry camel, which a little boy can take its rein and leads it here and there in an ordinary case, turns to a dangerous being that several strong men cannot usually manage to control it.

Surah Al-Hajj – Verse 37

لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَاؤُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوَىٰ مِنْكُمْ كَذَلِكَ سَخَّرَهَا لَكُمْ لِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَيَشِّرِ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

37. “There never reaches Allah their flesh nor their blood, but it is your piety (that) reaches Him. Thus has He made them subservient to you, that you might pronounce the greatness of Allah for what He has guided you aright, and give good tidings to the good doers.”

The flesh of animals which is given as almsgiving, and the blood which is shed on the ground as the result of slaughtering camels are not things that can attract the pleasure of Allah, but the thing that attracts the content of Allah, the Almighty, is your piety, sincerity, and pure intention.

The verse says:

“There never reaches Allah their flesh nor their blood, but it is your piety (that) reaches Him....”

It has been narrated that when the people of the Age of Ignorance wanted to slaughter their sacrificial animals, they polluted the Sacred House with blood. So, at the first time when the Muslims did pilgrimage, they wanted to do the same thing, and then Allah sent down this verse.

In this holy verse, after repeating the remembrance of the blessings as /tasxir/, Allah implies the purpose of making these blessings subservient to you is that since Allah has guided you, you should glorify Him and with the phrase:

“...that you might pronounce the greatness of Allah for what He has guided you aright....”

you may proclaim His greatness.

The holy verse continues saying:

“...Thus has He made them subservient to you, that you might pronounce the greatness of Allah for what He has guided you aright...”

Some other commentators have said that the concept of ‘thanksgiving’ is inside the holy phrase of Takbir (magnifying) which means: ‘making these blessings subservient’ is for the sake that by magnifying and

ejaculation ‘lailaha illallah’, you thank the Lord Who has guided you to the religious treatments and the rites of His Hajj.

In other words, the ultimate goal is that you might be acquainted with the greatness of Allah, He Who has guided you in the way of legislation and creation.

On one side, He has taught you the rites of Hajj and the style of obedience and servitude; and on the other side, He has made these big and powerful animals subservient to you to obey you so that you can use them in the way of obedience of Allah, sacrificing, doing good to the needy people and providing your own life.

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

“...and give good tidings to the good doers.”

This good news is for those who utilize these divine blessings in the path of obeying Him and they fulfil their duties in the best form, and specially do not show any shortcoming in spending out in the cause of Allah.

Surah Al-Hajj – Verse 38

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُدَافِعُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ خَوَّانٍ كَفُورٍ

38. “Verily Allah will defend those who believe; verily Allah does not love any treacherous ingrate.”

The promise of Allah about His defending the believers is certain. Thus, the believers defend the limits of Allah and He defends the believers.

And, in view of the fact that resistance against the superstitions of polytheists, referred to in former holy verses, might lighten the fire of the wrath of this fanatic obstinate group, which can cause some conflicts, in this verse Allah (s.w.t.) encourages the believers to His succour; where the Qur’an says:

“Verily Allah will defend those who believe;...”

Let the Arab tribes, the Jews, the Christians, and the polytheists of Arabia altogether, and with the help of each other, try to put the believers under pressure in order to annihilate them, as they imagine; but Allah has promised to defend them, and it is a promise for the existence of Islam until the threshold of Resurrection.

This Divine promise is a commandment which goes on in all Ages and centuries. The magnificent thing

is that we adapt to the meaning of, and as the expansion of, the Qur'anic phrase that says:

'... those who believe...'

after which the Divine defense is certain.

At the end of the verse, the Qur'an makes the position of the polytheists and the like clear before Allah by a single sentence, where it says:

"...verily Allah does not love any treacherous ingrate."

These are those who associated partners with Allah, and even at the time of saying 'labbayk', declared the names of idols, therefore, they were involved in difficulties in this world and Hereafter.

But, as it was mentioned before, one of the promises and laws of Allah is the divine succour and defence for the believers, and He has enjoined this defence and support as a right upon Himself, when He says:

"...and helping the believers is ever incumbent on Us."¹⁵

The fact concerning divine defence and help, of course, is not always a defence and help at once and in a short period, but it envelops a defence for a long time, too, because in some other verses of the Qur'an He says:

"...and the end is (best) for the pious ones."¹⁶

Yes, it is possible that in a conflict or war the believers defeat apparently, but their doctrine and goal will surely be victorious.

Its example is that Ibn-i-Muljam killed Hadrat Ali (as), but whom did Allah support, Ibn-i-Muljam, or Ali (as)? Ali's name (as); Ali's offspring (as), Ali's book (as), Ali's supplication (as), Ali's honour (as), Ali's doctrine (as) and the followers (Shi'ah) of Ali (as) finally won.

The Qur'anic words /xawwan/ and /kafur/ mean someone whose manner and way of life is blasphemy and treachery.

1. Jami'-i-'Ahadith-ush-Shi'ah, vol. 14, P. 163

2. Ibid

3. Ibid, P. 165

4. Mishkat-ul-'Anvar, P. 100

5. Bihar, vol. 75, P. 314

6. Ibid

7. Jami'-i-'Ahadith-ush-Shi'ah, vol. 14, P. 162

8. Ibid, P. 638

9. Mustadrak-ul-Wasa'il, vol. 2, P. 292
10. Jami'-i-Ahadiith-ush-Shi'ah, vol. 14, P. 169
11. Bihar, vol. 74, P. 180
12. Bihar, vol. 67, P. 398
13. Majma'-ul-Bayan, and Ruh-ul-Ma'ani, following the verse
14. Wasa'il-ush-Shi'ah, vol. 10, P. 138
15. Surah Ar-Rum, No. 30, verse 47
16. Surah Al-'Araf, No. 7, verse 128

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