

Section 6: Guidance From Allah Had Been Continuous

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 51

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ

51. “And We have made the Word to reach them in order that haply they may be admonished.”

The Arabic term /wassalna/ is derived from /wasl/ which means ‘to relate’ and ‘to join’. The purpose of this joining is either the continuation of reflections, or harmoniousness and agreement of the matters which are delivered.

One of Allah’s ways of treatment is His guidance upon mankind, which does not cease even for a moment.

The noble verse under discussion speaks about the receptive hearts that by hearing these holy verses found the Truth and remained seriously faithful to it and submitted to it heartily; while the dark, ignorant, and zealous hearts did not show the least reaction from them.

The verse says:

“And We have made the Word to reach them in order that haply they may be admonished.”

Such as rain, these verses were continuously sent down upon them. These noble verses were in various forms and with different qualities.

They were sometimes with promise of divine rewards, sometimes with warning of Hell Fire, sometimes they were some advices, sometimes they were threats and warnings, sometimes they were

accompanied with intellectual reasoning, and sometimes they were about the history of old nations as some useful instructive lessons.

To sum up, it is a complete collection with materials of the same kind which attracts to itself any heart that has a little receptivity, but the blind hearted ones have not accepted it.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 52

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ هُمْ بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ

52. “Those to whom We gave the Book before this (Qur’an), they believe in it.”

Occasion of Revelation

Upon the occasion of revelation of these verses, it is narrated from Sa‘id-ibn-Habir who said that these verses were sent down about seventy Christian priests whom Najashi sent from Ethiopia to Mecca in order to search. When the Prophet of Islam (S) recited Surah Yasin for them, they shed tears of joy and embraced Islam.¹

Some other commentators have said that these verses have been sent down in relation to a group of Christians from Najran, (a city in the North of Yemen), who came to the Prophet of Islam (S) and heard the verses of the Qur’an and believed in Islam;² while some others believe that they are in relation to Najashi and his companions.³

However, these verses are a lively witness to the fact that a group of the learned persons of the People of the Book believed in Islam when they heard the verses of the Qur’an, because it was impossible that the Prophet (S) to say such a thing while no one of the people of the Book had believed in him. If it were so, the pagans of Mecca would immediately reject it and could protest it earnestly.

The Holy Qur’an implies that the People of the Book (from among the Jews and Christians) may believe in the Qur’an because they find it consistent with the signs that they have found in their own heavenly Book.

It says:

“Those to whom We gave the Book before this (Qur’an), they believe in it.”

It is interesting that these people were a group of the People of the Book, but the verse refers to them as ‘the People of the Book’ without mentioning any quality. Perhaps it means that the real people of the Book were only those ones who believed, and others were naught.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verses 53-54

وَإِذَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا بِهِ إِنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا مِن قَبْلِهِ مُسْلِمِينَ

أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُم مَّرَّتَيْنِ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَيَدْرَءُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

53. “And when it is recited to them, they say: ‘We believe in it, verily it is the truth from our Lord, verily even before it we had surrendered.’”

54. “These shall be granted their reward twice for that they patiently endured, and avert evil with good, and spend out of the sustenance We have provided them with.”

The seekers of the Truth are searching for the Truth and it does not matter for them who says it, what race he is and in what language he speaks.

Of course, if there is receptivity in a person, he may believe in the truth, but if the ground is not prepared, there is no hope of faith even with the continuation of citation of the Qur’an.

That is why the verse says:

“And when it is recited to them, they say: ‘We believe in it, verily it is the truth from our Lord...’”

Yes, the recitation of these verses was enough for them to affirm it and say:

“We believe in it...”

Then they add that not only today they are surrendered to the Words of the Lord, but also they were Muslims from before.

The verse continues saying:

“...verily even before it we had surrendered.”

They implicitly say that they had found out signs of this Prophet (S) in their heavenly Book and loved him. They were expecting him, and as soon as they found him, they took him and accepted him eagerly and heartily.

Then, in the next holy verse, the Qur’an refers to the great reward of this group of truth seekers and

says:

“These shall be granted their reward twice for that they patiently endured...”

They will be rewarded once for their belief in their own heavenly Book, to which they were really loyal, and once again for their belief in the Prophet of Islam (S), the promised prophet whom the earlier Books had informed of.

There is also this probability that they will be granted rewards twice, because, as it is understood from the previous verses, they believed in the Prophet of Islam (S) both before his advent and after his advent.

For fulfilling their duty, they showed much patience and perseverance in both stages. Neither the deviated Jews and Christians approved their action, nor the imitation from ancestors and social atmosphere allowed them to leave their former religion. But they stood firm, left their own interests and renounced their sensual desires, and, consequently, they gained the great Divine reward twice.

Then, the Qur'an points to a group of their righteous deeds, each of which is worthier than the other. These actions are 'averting evil with good', 'spending out of the Divine bounties', and 'facing with the ignorant magnificently.' These qualities added to patience and perseverance, mentioned in the former sentence, make four outstanding qualities.

It begins saying:

“...and avert evil with good...”

They avert evils, such as: ugly words with good sayings, the indecency with virtue, the ignorance with knowledge, the enmity and grudge with kindness, and the rupture of relation with friendship and union of kindred. In short, instead of answering vice with vice, they try to repel it with goodness.

This is a very effective style in struggling against mischief, specially against a group of obstinate persons, and the Qur'an has repeatedly emphasized it.⁴

Another thing is that they spend not only out of their property and wealth, but also out of their knowledge, mental power, body strength, and social honour, all of which are sustenance and merits of Allah that they give in the way of Allah.

The verse says:

“...and spend out of the sustenance We have provided them with.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 55

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا اللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَقَالُوا لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لَا نَبْتَغِي الْجَاهِلِينَ

55. “And when they hear idle talk, they turn away from it and say: ‘We shall have our deeds and you shall have your deeds. Peace be on you, we do not seek the ignorant’.”

A real believer is he who not only does not go into a meeting of vanity and does not listen to an idle talk, but also if he heard a vain word, he would react properly.

Turning away from speaking and hearing idle talk and also from seeing and associating with it is a virtue which is praised in all religions. The above verse is about the qualities of a group of the People of the Book.

Therefore, the verse says:

“And when they hear idle talk, they turn away from it...”

They never answer an idle talk with an idle talk, and do not reply ignorance with ignorance, but they tell the talkers of idle as follows:

“...and say: ‘We shall have our deeds and you shall have your deeds...’

Neither you will be punished for our deeds, nor we will be punished for your deeds, but soon you will know about the result of the deed of each of us.

Then the Holy Qur’an adds that they say farewell to the ignorant idle talkers, and those who, by some vicious talks, try to hurt the nerves of the faithful and benevolent persons, and their speech is such:

“...Peace be on you, we do not seek the ignorant’.”

Neither we are the people of idle talk, ignorance, and mischief, nor we seek them. We seek for clear-minded scholars, the learned men who practice their own knowledge, and true believers.

Thus, instead of wasting their strength and power in struggling against the blind-hearted ignorant and unaware idle talkers, they honourably pass by them and pay to their own fundamental aims and programs.

It is worthy to note that when these believers face with such people, their greeting is not salutation of ‘meeting’ but it is the salutation of ‘farewell’.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 56

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

56. “Verily you cannot guide whom you like, but Allah guides whomever He pleases, and He knows best those that are guided.”

Divine prophet’s duty is conveying the Messages of Allah to people and showing the right way. Whether people accept or not it does not relate to them.

The verse says:

“Verily you cannot guide whom you like...”

Guiding people is the job of Allah which involves only the pure and receptive hearts.

The verse continues saying:

“...but Allah guides whomever He pleases, and He knows best those that are guided.”

Regarding the fact that the previous verses referred to two groups of the people of Mecca: the obstinate pagans in whom the light of Faith did not penetrate though the Messenger of Allah (S) tried to guide them.

On the contrary, a group of the People of the Book and those who were in some distance places, accepted the Divine guidance and eagerly tried their best in the way of Islam, and they did not fear of the opposition of their near relatives and the arrogant ignorant pagans.

Keeping these things in mind, the above verse uncovers the curtain from over this fact that the Prophet (S) could not guide whomever he liked, but Allah guides whomever He pleases.

Allah knows those who are eligible to accept Faith. He knows which hearts are eager for the Truth, He knows which minds contain the love of Allah. Yes, He knows these persons well and He gives them success, and endows them His grace so that they be guided towards Faith.

But those dark hearted evil doers who are inwardly enemy of the Truth, and they struggle against the messengers of Allah (as) with all their strength, and, from the point of life, they are so polluted and disdained that are not eligible for the light of Faith, Allah (s.w.t.) does not set the torch of success above their way.

Therefore, the purpose of guidance, here, is not ‘showing the way’, because showing the way is the

main job of the Prophet (S) and he shows the way to everybody unexceptionally, but the purpose of guidance, here, is remittance to that which is sought and causing them to reach the destination.

This is only the job of Allah that He spreads the seed of faith in the hearts, and His deed is not done undue either. He looks at the receptive hearts and cast this heavenly light into them.

However, this verse is a kind of console for the Prophet (S) that he regards this fact that neither the persistence of a group of idolaters of Mecca upon polytheism is undue, nor the sincere faith of the people of Ethiopia, or Najran and the like in becoming Muslim.

He should never be worried of the disbelief of the first group, because this divine light goes only into the receptive hearts, wherever it arrives it erects camp therein.

There are many examples of this meaning found in the verses of the Holy Qur'an.

Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 272 says:

"It is not upon you to guide them (O' Muhammad), but Allah guides aright whomever He wills..."

Surah Yunus, No. 10, verse 43 says:

"And some of them look at you, but can you guide the blind even though they will not see (inwardly)?"

And, in Surah 'Ibrahim, No. 14, verse 4 it says:

"...then Allah leads astray whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases, and He is the Mighty, the Wise."

The last sentence of the recent verse shows that the will of Allah concerning these two groups is not undue, but it is according to His Wisdom and upon the competencies, activities, and efforts of the persons. It is only upon this basis that Allah gives the success of guidance to a group and negates it in another group.

Now pay attention to this matter that the content of this verse, which is a consolation for the Prophet (S), has been repeated in some other verses of the Qur'an with some rather different statements and meanings; including, Surah Yusuf, No. 12, verse 103 that says:

"And most people will not believe, though you desire it."

Or Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 272 says:

"It is not upon you to guide them (O' Muhammad), but Allah guides aright whomever He wills..."

Yet, in the commentary of Durr-ul-Manthur, Vol. 5, as well as some other commentaries, there have

been narrated some narrations from Sunnites indicating that when Abutalib, Ali's father, was going to die, the holy Prophet (S) went to him and suggested Islam to him but he did not accept it, and then this verse was revealed.

But apart from the fact that what the occasion of revelation is, or whether it relates to the father of Ali (as) or not, with a little care, the lack of this relation is proved, because the continuation of the verse is about a group of the believers of the People of the Book comparing with the pagans of Mecca.

Now, in order to make the fact clear, we discuss on these narrations and the faith of Hadrat Abutalib.

'Allamah 'Amini, the author of the worthy book of Al-Qadir, in Vol. 8, P. 19 on rejecting all these forged narrations and relying on the historical documents, believes that the narrators of such narrations were either some little infants at the time of the death of Hadrat Abutalib, or, like 'Abu-Hurayrah, had not embraced Islam yet.

Again, in pages 330 to 410 of the same volume, 'Allamah proves that Hadrat Abutalib was a true believer. He narrates hundreds of poems from that Hadrat himself, ten reminiscences and forty traditions from the Ahl-ul-Bayt of the holy Prophet (S) which denote to his belief in Allah and the Messenger of Allah. Some of these evidences are as:

- 1- The words of the Prophet (S) and the immaculate Imams (as) about him.
- 2- The grief and sorrow of the Prophet (S) for Abutalib's death, so grievous that that year was named /'am-ul-huzn/ (The year of grief).
- 3- The Prophet's invocation (S) on the pulpit for 'Abutalib and attending in his funeral.
- 4- The Prophet's tradition (S) by which he said he would be the interceder of his parents and his uncle 'Abutalib on the Day of Hereafter.
- 5- The testament of 'Abutalib in which he supported Bani Hashim and the Prophet of Islam (S).
- 6- His recommendation to his wife and his son, Ja'far, for supporting the Prophet (S) and to regard Islam and prayer (salat) are some evidences.
- 7- His abundant supports in regard to the Prophet (S) by the nights of danger when he changed the sleeping place of the Prophet (S) with the sleeping place of his son, Ali (as), and that he exposed his son to danger.
- 8- The life of Fatimah-Bent-Asad with Abu-Talib, in whose Islam there is no doubt, is an evidence, because if Hadrat 'Abu-Talib were not Muslim, a Muslim woman would surely not be his wife.
- 9- The existence of a great deal of poems which denote to his confess to Islam. Yet, how ignorance, ingratitude and injustice it is that some people persistently tried to say that this sincere Unitarian believer

died in paganism.

Of course, it should not be forgotten that the only his unforgivable sin was that he was Ali's father (as). Ali's enemies spent a great deal of money in the way of striking him. They concocted many false narrations, and in order to set a kind of relation between Abutalib, Ali's father (as), and Abusufyan, the father of Mu'awiyah, they accused Abutalib of paganism.

For more information, you may refer to the commentary books of Shi'ah and the narrations of Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) cited following the abovementioned verse.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 57

وَقَالُوا إِن نَّتَّبِعِ الْهُدَى مَعَكَ نُتَخَطَّفُ مِنْ أَرْضِنَا أَوَلَمْ نُمْكِّنْ لَهُمْ حَرَمًا ءَامِنًا يُجْبَى
إِلَيْهِ ثَمَرَاتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ رِّزْقًا مِنْ لَدُنَّا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

57. “And they say: ‘If we follow the guidance with you, we shall be driven out from our land.’ Have We not settled them in a secure sanctuary to which fruits of everything are drawn, as a provision from Us? But most of them do not know.”

A group of the pagans of Mecca once told the Prophet of Islam (S) that if they accepted Islam, very soon they would be sent away from their home and, being homeless, they would be vagrant from their own life and living.

This statement, of course, is uttered by those persons who count the Might of Allah naught and the power of ignorant Arabs great. This statement is uttered by those who are not still acquainted with the depth of favours and helps of Allah and they do not know how He assists His friends and how He causes His enemies to fail.

So, in answer to them, the Qur'an says:

“And they say: ‘If we follow the guidance with you, we shall be driven out from our land.’ Have We not settled them in a secure sanctuary to which fruits of everything are drawn, as a provision from Us? But most of them do not know.”

The Lord Who set a dry saline land, which had no trees and plants, as a secure sanctuary, and attracted the hearts to it so strongly that the best products from different parts of the world are brought towards it, has clearly shown His Power.

The One Who has proved such a Might and has provided security and those abundant bounties in this land and every one sees their effects and have enjoyed of them for many years, how He is not able to

protect them from the attack of a group of idolatrous Arabs.

When they were in infidelity, they were enjoying of these two great bounties of Allah: security and the merits of life, how is it possible that Allah deprives them from these bounties after Islam? They must be strong-hearted, stand firm and believe in Islam since the Lord of Ka'bah and Mecca (s.w.t.) is with them.

The Qur'anic term *lyujbal* (**are drawn**) is mentioned in the Arabic form of simple present tense. It denotes the continuation of action in both the present and future; and now, after fourteen centuries, we witness the concept of this statement that all kinds of merits are continuously drawn toward this sacred land.

Those who go to Mecca see by their eyes that how this dry, hot, grassless land is full of kinds of the best bounties, so that there may not this affluence, from all points of views, be found so easily in any place of the world.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 58

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ بَطَرَتْ مَعِيشَتَهَا فَتِلْكَ مَسَاكِنُهُمْ لَمْ تُسْكَنْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
وَكُنَّا نَحْنُ الْوَارِثِينَ

58. "And how many a town We did destroy which exalted in its means of subsistence; so these are their abodes, they have not been dwelt in after them save a little, and We are their heirs!"

The Arabic word /batira/ means disobedience and inebriate because of abundance of wealth and welfare.

In the previous verse we studied that a group of people told the holy Prophet (S) that if they believed in him, the pagans of Mecca would drive them out from their land, and Allah implicitly said that the same Power that made Mecca a secure place for them with plenty of sustenance, can protect His bounties for them after Faith, too.

Now, in this verse, He implicitly says they should not forget that the people of those cities, that were inebriate with His bounties and full welfare, were destroyed; then they must be aware that they, too, will meet the Wrath of Allah because they do not believe in Islam in order to protect their own properties and welfare.

The verse says:

"And how many a town We did destroy which exalted in its means of subsistence..."

Yes, the affluence and pride of bounties invited them to disobedience, and disobedience became the source of injustice and cruelty, and injustice annihilated the whole their living.

The verse continues saying:

“...so these are their abodes, they have not been dwelt in after them save a little, and We are their heirs!”

Yes, their ruin houses and cities are empty, silent, and ownerless, and if there came some persons into them to live therein they were a few and it was for a short length of time.

O’ the pagans of Mecca! Do you also want to have such a comfortable life, under the shadow of infidelity, the end of which is the same thing that was said? What can the worth of it be?

The application of the Arabic term /tilka/, which is a demonstrative pronoun pointing to a far place and is often used for perceptible things, may refer to the land of ‘Ad and Thamud and the people of Lot which was not so far from Mecca, viz. in the land of ‘Ahqaf (between Yemen and Syria), or in Wad-il-Qura, or in the land of Sadum, all of which were on the way of commercial caravans of Arabs of Mecca to Syria, and those Arabs could see the empty houses of that place with their own eyes and knew that there had dwelt few persons there after them.

The application of the Qur’anic sentence:

“...and We are their heirs”

points to that place being empty, and is an indication to the real ownership of Allah Who is the owner of everything, and if the nominal ownership of some things is temporarily given to some persons, it will not last long and all of them will disappear and their heirs will be Allah.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 59

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ الْقُرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يَبْعَثَ فِي أُمِّهَا رَسُولًا يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَاتِنَا وَمَا كُنَّا
مُهْلِكِي الْقُرَىٰ إِلَّا وَأَهْلُهَا ظَالِمُونَ

59. “And your Lord never destroyed the towns until He raised in their centers a messenger, reciting to them Our signs, and We never destroyed the towns except when their people were unjust.”

This verse, in fact, is the answer of the probable question saying that: if it is so that Allah (s.w.t.) destroys the disobedient and rebellious ones, then why did He not annihilate by His punishment the

pagans of Mecca and Medina who committed the utmost contumacy and there was no ignorance and crime that they did not commit?

The Qur'an says:

“And your Lord never destroyed the towns until He raised in their centers a messenger, reciting to them Our signs...”

Yes, He will not punish the people of the towns unless He completes the argument and sends messengers with explicit instructions.

Moreover, after completing the argument, He has constant attention to their deeds, and if they commit any injustice or oppression that deserves punishment, He will punish them.

The verse continues saying:

“...and We never destroyed the towns except when their people were unjust.”

The application of the Arabic phrases /ma kana rabbuka/ (Your Lord never) and /ma kunna/ (We never) in the verse is an evidence over this fact that it has been the constant and permanent way of treatment of Allah that He never punishes any nation before giving them enough proofs.

The Qur'anic sentence:

“...until He raised in their centers a messenger...”

points to this fact that it is not necessary that He raises a messenger in every town and city. It is enough that a messenger to be raised in a great center where the people of mind and wisdom of a nation are gathered and the news are quickly scattered from it throughout the province and the people of that locality can get the news they need.

The news of the raise of the Prophet of Islam in the land of Mecca spread throughout Arabia peninsula in a short time, and it went beyond it since Mecca was ‘Mother of cities’; it was both the spiritual center of Hijaz (Mecca and Medina) and a commercial center. It reached even the important centers of the civilization of that time during a short period.

Therefore, the verse states a universal and a general principle, and, thus, the belief of some commentators who say it refers to Mecca is completely baseless; and the usage of the Arabic phrase /fi ‘ummiha/ (in their centers) is also a general meaning since the Arabic word /‘umm/ means ‘mother’ and ‘the main center’, and it is not allocated to Mecca.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 60

وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَمَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتُهَا وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ

60. “And whatever things you have been given are only a provision of the life of this world and its adornment, and whatever is with Allah is better and more lasting, have you then no sense?”

Indeed, this is the third answer that Allah (s.w.t.) gives to the infidel pretext seekers of Mecca who used to say if they believed their living would be ruined. This verse implicitly says that whatever they imagine they obtain through disbelief is a worthless perishing thing for the limited life of this world while the things with Allah are better and more lasting.

The verse says:

“And whatever things you have been given are only a provision of the life of this world and its adornment, and whatever is with Allah is better and more lasting...”

All the material bounties of this world generally have some unwholesome sequels mixed with different problems, and there is no material bounty free from harm and difficulty.

In addition, the bounties which are with Allah are permanent and are not comparable with the perishing merits of this world; therefore, they are both better and more lasting.

Thus, with a simple comparison, every rational person can understand that he should not devote that lasting bounty for this mortal one.

That is why, at the end of the verse, He says:

“...have you then no sense?”

Fakhr-i-Razi narrates from one of the jurisprudents who said that if a person makes testament that one third of his wealth must be given to the wisest person among people, his legal opinion was that this one third ought to be given to those who obey the commandment of Allah, because the wisest person among people is the one who gives little (perishing) thing and takes a large (lasting) capital, and this is true only in the obedient persons of the command of Allah.

Then, Fakhr-i-Razi adds that it seems that that jurist has taken this legal injunction from the verse under discussion.⁵

1. Tafsir-i-Fi Zilal, Vol. 6, PP. 357, 358

2. Ibid

3. Ibid

4. There is a detailed explanation in this regard when commenting on Surah Ar-Ra'd, No. 13, verse 22, and Surah Al-Mu'minun, No. 23, verse 96

5. Tafsir-i-Kabir by Fakhr-i-Razi, Vol. 25, P. 6

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