

Section 6: The Apostle of Allah Delivered and Blessed

Surah Al-'Anbiya' – Verses 76 – 77

وَنُوحًا إِذْ نَادَىٰ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ فَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ مِنَ الْكَرْبِ الْعَظِيمِ

وَنَصَرْنَاهُ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

76. “And (remember) Noah, when he called (his Lord) before, then We answered him, and delivered him and his family from the great calamity.”

77. “And We helped him against the people who rejected Our signs; verily they were an evil people, so We drowned them all together.”

In this holy verse, after mentioning a part of the story of Abraham and Lut, the Qur'an refers to some explanations of the life of another great prophet, i.e., Noah (as). It says:

“And (remember) Noah, when he called (his Lord) before...”

Noah asked Him to deliver him from the grips of those deluded disbelievers.

This call of Noah is apparently a hint to the curse which has been stated in Surah Noah, No. 71, verses 26 and 27 where the Qur'an declares:

**“And Noah said: ‘My Lord! Leave not upon the land any dweller from among the unbelievers’;
“For verily if You leave them they will lead astray Your servants, and will not beget any but**

immoral, ungrateful (children):”

Then, the verse continues saying:

“...Then We answered him, and delivered him and his family from the great calamity.”

The Qur’anic word /’ahl/ has a vast meaning here which envelops both Noah’s believing relatives and his special true friends.

And, in the next verse, the Qur’an also adds:

“And We helped him against the people who rejected Our signs; verily they were an evil people, so We drowned them all together.”

This very last sentence is another emphasis on this fact that the Divine punishments are never done to be taken vengeance, but they are on the basis of choosing the better. In another sense, the right of life and using its blessings is for those who are on the line of development and journey to Allah (s.w.t.), or if one day they went astray, they would repent and improve themselves later.

Surah Al-’Anbiya’ – Verses 78 – 79

وَدَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ إِذْ يَحْكُمَانِ فِي الْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفَشَتْ فِيهِ غَنَمُ الْقَوْمِ وَكُنَّا لِحُكْمِهِمْ
شَاهِدِينَ

فَفَهَّمْنَاهَا سُلَيْمَانَ وَكُلًّا آتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَسَخَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاوُدَ الْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ
وَالطَّيْرَ وَكُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ

78. “And (remember) David and Solomon when they gave judgment concerning the field, when the sheep of the people pastured in it by night, and We were witnesses to their judgment.”

79. “So We made Solomon to understand it, and unto each (of them) We gave wisdom and knowledge. And with David We subdued the mountains to give glory, and the birds, and We were the doers (thereof).”

It is understood fairly well from some Islamic narrations and interpretations about the event which is mentioned in this holy verse that: it happens that one night some sheep go into someone’s vineyard and ruin it.

The owner of the vine trees lodges a complaint to David (as). In order to compensate the damage, David judges that all these sheep should be delivered to the owner of that garden.

But his son, Solomon (as) suggests another way of solution for the problem to his father, saying that the sheep have to be given to the complainant so that he can take their benefits and the garden should be delivered to the owner of the sheep in order to amend it, and after compensating the damage caused by the sheep, each of the owners takes back his original property. 1

The verse says:

“And (remember) David and Solomon when they gave judgment concerning the field, when the sheep of the people pastured in it by night, and We were witnesses to their judgment.”

Evidently both of the Divine prophets tried to find a way to compensate the loss, but the father (David (as)) thought in the deliverance of the sheep, while the son (Solomon (as)) intended to provide it by means of the benefits of the sheep.

Allah in this verse says:

“So We made Solomon to understand it, and unto each (of them) We gave wisdom and knowledge....”

Meaning that though Allah gave both of them knowledge and wisdom but, in this case, the judgment of Solomon was better.

Then the Qur’an points to another merit and honour that Allah had bestowed on David, by saying:

“...And with David We subdued the mountains to give glory, and the birds...”

This sentence means that these deeds are not so important comparing Allah’s power, and He says:

“...and We were the doers (thereof).”

However, an Islamic tradition indicates that whenever David (as) was busy reciting the heavenly Book (Zabur), there was no stone, mountain, and bird but, by hearing his voice, it also sang with him.2

The reason of this is that all beings, including mountains and birds, have got a kind of perception that they are often busy glorifying Allah.

Surah Al-’Anbiya’ – Verses 80 – 81

وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ صِنْعَةَ لُبُوسٍ لِّكُمْ لِتُحْصِنَكُمْ مِنْ بَأْسِكُمْ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ شَاكِرُونَ

وَلِسُلَيْمَانَ الرِّيحَ عَاصِفَةً تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِهِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا وَكُنَّا بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَالِمِينَ

80. “And We taught him the art of making the coat of mail for you to protect you in your wars. Are you then thankful?”

81. “And for Solomon We (subdued) the wind blowing violent, that ran at his command unto the land where We had blessed; and of everything We are aware.”

In the last verse of this group of verses, the Qur’an again points to one of the merits that Allah had granted to this great prophet.

It says:

“And We taught him the art of making the coat of mail for you to protect you in your wars. Are you then thankful?”

As the Late Tabarsi cites in Majma‘-ul-Bayan, the Arabic word /labus/ means any kind of defensive and offensive weapon, such as: mail, sword, and spear.³

But, the frames of references which exist in the Qur’an show that the Qur’anic word /labus/, mentioned in this verse, means ‘the coat of mail’ which had been used as a means of protection in the battles.

The explanation of the fact that how Allah made iron as a soft and pulpy material for David, and taught him the art of making mail, will be said later under the verses 10 and 11 of Surah Saba’, No. 34, Allah willing.

Then, in the next verse, the Qur’an refers to a violent wind which used to blow in the holy land of Syria; but, as it is understood from Surah Sad, No. 38, verse 36, Hadrat Sulayman (Solomon) (as) had gotten the power of domination and commanding upon the slow winds in other regions, too, where it says:

“Then We made the wind subservient to him; it made his command to run gently whenever he desired.”

Surah Saba’, No. 34, verse 12 refers to the length of the time and the distance that Solomon (as) could travel by the wind, where it says:

“And (We made) the wind (subservient) to Sulayman, which made a month’s journey in the morning and a month’s journey in the evening...”

It can be deduced from these matters that the friends of Allah are able to cause alteration in nature by Allah’s leave; and that the winds have perception, too, and they perceive and execute the command of Allah and the commands of the friends of Allah.

However, in this holy verse, Allah says:

“And for Solomon We (subdued) the wind blowing violent, that ran at his command unto the land where We had blessed;...”

And this is not wonderful, because Allah is the knower of all things. The verse continues saying:

“...and of everything We are aware.”

He is aware of not only the secrets of the world of existence and the rules and systems governing them, and knows how to make them subservient but also of the result and the end of this job, and, however, everything is humble and submissive before the Knowledge and Power of Allah.

Surah Al-‘Anbiya’ – Verse 82

وَمِنَ الشَّيَاطِينِ مَنْ يَغُوصُونَ لَهُ وَيَعْمَلُونَ عَمَلًا دُونَ ذَلِكَ وَكُنَّا لَهُمْ حَافِظِينَ

82. “And some of the Satans dived for him and did (also) other work besides that, and We were watching over them.”

This verse reiterates another one of the exclusive merits of Solomon (as). It indicates that Allah made some Satans subservient to him to dive into the sea and bring out jewels and other precious things for him; they would do some deeds for him other than these. He (s.w.t.) caused them not to disobey Solomon’s command.

The verse says:

“And some of the Satans dived for him and did (also) other work besides that, and We were watching over them.”

Whatever is referred to in this verse as ‘Satan’ has been stated in Surah Saba’, No. 34, verses 12 and, 19, as ‘jinn’, and it is clear that these two verses do not contradict each other, for we know that ‘Satans’ are also of the kind of ‘jinn’.

However, as it has been mentioned previously, jinn is a creature that possesses wisdom, sensation, talent and duty. We do not see jinn and that is why it is called by this name, meaning (concealed).

As it is understood from the verses of Surah Jinn, No. 72, Jinns are divided, as human beings, into two groups: righteous believers, and arrogant disbelievers. We have no evidence for the negation of their existence and, since the true informer (the Qur’an) has informed us of them, we accept it as a fact.

It is well understood from Surah Sad, No. 38, and Surah Saba', No. 34, as well as the verse under discussion, that this group of jinn, who were under the command of Solomon, were some intelligent, active, ingenious and skilled ones in different arts.

The sentence which says:

“...and did (also) other work besides that...”

is an epitome of what is widely explained in Surah Saba', No. 34, which indicates that they made some very beautiful, splendid sanctuaries and temples for him as well as various appliance of life and utensil including pots, cauldrons, very large plates, and the like of them.

Some other verses of the Qur'an, relating to Solomon (as) denote that there were some arrogant disobedient Satans, too, whom he (as) had made bound together in fetters and in chain, for the Qur'an says:

“And others fettered in chain.”⁴

And, maybe the sentence:

“...and We were watching over them”

also points to this fact that He restrained that group of servants of Solomon (as) from arrogance and disobedience. Further explanation in this field will be discussed in the commentary detailed upon Surah Saba', No. 34, and Surah Sad, No. 38, Allah willing.

However, it seems necessary to be mentioned that there are many false or doubtful mythological matters about the life of Solomon and his forces which should never be mixed with what is stated in the Holy Qur'an, for they may become some pretexts for those who seek excuse.

Surah Al-'Anbiya' – Verses 83 – 84

وَأَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ فَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِ مِنْ ضُرٍّ وَءَاتَيْنَاهُ أَهْلَهُ وَمِثْلَهُمْ مَعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِنْ عِنْدِنَا
وَذِكْرَى لِلْعَابِدِينَ

83. “And (remember) Job when he called unto his Lord (saying:) ‘Verily distress has touched me,

and You are the Most Merciful of the merciful ones’.”

84. “So We responded to him (his prayer) and We removed the distress that was upon him, and We restored his family to him, and the like of them with them; a mercy from Us and a reminder for the worshippers.”

These two holy verses speak about one of other great prophets of Allah and his instructive biography, i.e. Job. He has a sad biography but, in the meantime, it is splendid and full of dignity. His patience was very wonderful, specially for bearing the unpleasant events, in a form that ‘Job’s patience’ is an old proverb.

Through the verses under discussion, the Holy Qur’an particularly points to the stage of Job’s rescue and overcoming the difficulties when he regains his lost merits, so that it may be a lesson for all the believers in any time and any place who involve in difficulties, and the Muslim believers of Mecca, in particular, who were seriously in the siege of the enemy at the time of the revelation of these verses.

The verse, addressing the Prophet (S), implies that he should remember Job when he called his Lord, saying: distress, pain, sickness and miseries had surrounded him, and that He is the Most Merciful of the merciful ones.

The verse says:

“And (remember) Job when he called unto his Lord (saying:) ‘Verily distress has touched me, and You are the Most Merciful of the merciful ones’.”

The Arabic word /durr/, upon the rhythm of /hurr/, is applied to any calamity that visits the man’s spirit or body, as well as mutilation, loss of wealth, the death of the dear persons, spoiling of prestige, and the like. As we will explain later, Job visited many of these calamities.

As other prophets, at the time of invocation for the removal of his exhausting difficulties, Job was very polite and humble before Allah. He did not say anything to be even like complaint. He only said that He might solve his problem because he knew that He is the Great and aware of the way of it.

Then in the next verse, the Qur’an implies that after Job’s invocation, Allah accepted his prayer and removed his pain and calamity.

The verse says:

“So We responded to him (his prayer) and We removed the distress that was upon him...”

Then, it continues saying that He returned his family to him, and added to them the like of them, in order that it would be both a mercy from Him to them and a remembrance for all those who worship Allah.

The verse says:

“...and We restored his family to him, and the like of them with them; a mercy from Us and a reminder for the worshippers.”

This fact has been stated here in order that the Muslims know that how plenty the difficulties are and how much the calamities may be, and how intense the enemies can be and their forces may be abundant, yet with a slight mercy of Allah all of these can be removed.

It is so that not only the losses will be amended, but also sometimes, as a reward for the steadfast patient, He adds to it the like of what has been lost. This is a lesson for all Muslims in general and particularly for the Muslims who were in the siege of the enemy and had so many problems at the time of the revelation of these verses.

A Few Points About Job (as)

1. A tradition from Imam Sadiq (as) indicates that once a person asked him about the reason for which Job confronted that calamity.

Imam Sadiq (as) answered him in detail, the shortened of which is that the calamity of Job was not for the sake that he was unthankful of the divine blessings, on the contrary, it was for the thankfulness of the divine blessings to which 'Iblis envied and said to the presence of Allah:

“If Job thanked You so much it would be for the vast and comfortable life You have bestowed on him, and if You take the material merits of this world from him, he will never be gratitude to You. Let me dominate over him concerning his affairs of this world so that it may be known that the matter is the same.”

In order that this event was an evidence for all the followers of the path of the truth, Allah gave this permission to him. Iblis came and destroyed his wealth and children one after another, but, not only these painful events did not decrease the state of thankfulness of Job, but his gratitude was increased.

Satan asked Allah that he would also dominate over his sheep and farming. This permission was given him. Then he burnt Job's farming utterly and destroyed his sheep, too. Again the thankfulness of Job was increased.

Finally, Satan asked Allah to dominate over the body of Job, and to cause him a terrible sickness. This happened in a manner that Job could not move because of intense of disease and suppuration, without the existence of the least infection in his intelligence and understanding.

Precisely speaking, the favours of Job were taken one after another, but parallel with it the rank of gratitude increased in him.

It happened that a group of monks came to visit him. They asked him what kind of great sin he had committed that he was in too much calamity. Thus, the scorn of people began and this case tolerated

too much for Job.

He answered them that, by the Lord, he had never consumed a morsel but an orphan or a poor person was sitting at his food table; and there had come no worship of Allah to him but he had chosen its hardest form.

It was at this time that Job had passed successfully all his examinations in the rank of patience and gratitude. He began supplicating and, with a very polite manner, and free from any complaint, he asked his Lord to help him mercifully for solving his problems⁵.

It was then when the doors of the Divine mercy started to be opened and very soon his difficulties swiftly disappeared and the divine favours came back to him more than what there were before.⁶

Yes, the thoughts and programs of men of Allah do not change with the change of favours. When they are in welfare or distress, freedom or prison, safety or sickness, power or weakness, and, on the whole, in all circumstances their attentions are toward Allah and the alterations of life do not create any change in them.

Their soul is similar to the Pacific Ocean, the peach of which remains still even with the storms.

Also, they never lose hope because of bitter events. They stand firm and persevere until the doors of the Divine mercy would be opened. They do know that hard incidents are originally the Divine examinations that sometimes He provides them for some of His particular servants in order to make them more experience.

2. Among the commentators, the common commentary upon the sentence:

“... We restored his family to him and the like of them...”

is that Allah returned Job's children to their first life and in addition to them He gave him other children, too. Some Islamic narrations, including that of Imam Sadiq's, indicate that Allah restored him (as) not only the children who had been annihilated in that event but also the children who had died before that.⁷

Some commentators believe that Allah probably gave some new offspring and grand children to Job and they filled the empty place of the children whom he had lost.

3. It is cited in some unreliable narrations that as the result of an intensive sickness Job's body had got such an infection that people could not approach him. But this meaning has explicitly been negated in the traditions narrated from Ahl-ul-Bayt (as).

The intellect also proves the latter, because if a prophet possesses a hateful state or quality, it does not adapt to his prophetic mission. He must be in a situation that all people can meet him pleasantly and hear the words of Allah from him. A prophet has always attractions.

However, Ayyub (Job) is a prophet who has been honoured with the sign of patience in the Qur'an, where it says:

*"...verily We found him patient; most excellent the servant! Surely he was frequent in returning (to Allah)."*⁸

Surah Al-'Anbiya' – Verses 85 – 86

وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِدْرِيسَ وَذَا الْكِفْلِ كُلٌّ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ

وَأَدْخَلْنَاهُمْ فِي رَحْمَتِنَا إِنَّهُمْ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

85. "And (remember) Ishmael and Idris, and Zul-kifl; all were of the patient."

86. "And We admitted them into Our Mercy; verily they were of the righteous."

Following to the instructive biography of Job (as) and his patience against the storm of calamities, these current verses refer to the rank of the patience of three other persons from among the divine prophets, where the Qur'an says:

"And (remember) Ishmael and Idris, and Zul-kifl; all were of the patient."

Every one of them patiently persevered before the enemies and laborious difficulties they had throughout their lifetime, and never kneed for those events, so that each of them was an example of steadfastness and perseverance.

Then the Holy Qur'an points to the greatest favour of Allah which came to them as a result of their patience and perseverance.

It states:

"And We admitted them into Our Mercy; verily they were of the righteous."

It is interesting that the Holy Qur'an does not say Allah bestowed His mercy upon them, but it says He admitted them into His Mercy. As if they had dived into the Mercy of Allah with their whole body and soul in the same manner that they had dived into the ocean of difficulties aforetime.

As was explained before, 'Idris, the great prophet of Allah, according to many commentators, had been the ancestor of Noah. Enoch is the name which used in the Turah while in Arabic it is 'Idris, and some

considered that it is derived from the Arabic word /dars/ because he was the first person who wrote by pen.

Besides having the rank of prophecy, Enoch (as) knew astronomy and arithmetic as well as configuration of elements, and it is said that he was the first one who taught tailoring to human beings.⁹

It is known among the commentators that Zul-kifl has been one of the Divine prophets, though some believe that he was one of the righteous men¹⁰.

The apparent meaning of the verses of the Qur'an, in which he is mentioned in the row of the great prophets, indicate that he is one of the prophets, too, and it also seems that he had been one of the prophets of the Children of Israel.¹¹

In Tafsir-i-Majma'-ul-Bayan, it is narrated from 'Abdul-'Azim Hasani who narrates from Imam Jawad (the ninth Imam) (as) that Allah has appointed one hundred and twenty four thousand prophets for guiding humankind among whom one hundred and thirteen are messengers and Zul-Kifl was one of those messengers.

The opinions are divided concerning the reason of naming Zul-Kifl by this appellation in regard that the Arabic word Kifl, (upon the rhythm of /fikr/), has been used in the meaning of both 'share' and 'surety'.

Some have said that since Allah had given him a great portion of rewards and mercy for the abundant good deeds and worships that he used to do he has been named as Zul-Kifl (meaning the possessor of much interest).

Some others have said since he had pledged to get up for worship by nights and to be fast on days, and never he was angry at the time of judgment, and he fulfilled his promise until the end, he was called Zul-Kifl.

Some also believe that 'Zul-Kifl' is the nickname of Elijah, Similar to 'Israel', which was the nickname of Jacob, and 'Messiah' as the nickname of Jesus, and Zannun the nickname of Yunus.¹²

By the way, Hadrat 'Isma'il, for the command of Allah saying that he must be killed by his father, was patient, and Hadrat Enoch also invited people to the religion of truth for 365 years but no one believed in him.¹³

Surah Al-'Anbiya' – Verse 87 – 88

وَذَا النُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغَاضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْغَمِّ وَكَذَلِكَ نُنْجِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

87. “And (remember) Zan–Nun (Jonah) when he departed (his people) in anger and imagined that We would not straiten him; so he called out in the darkness: ‘There is no god but You (O my Lord!). Glory be to You! Verily I was of the unjust ones!’”

88. “So We responded to him (his prayer) and delivered him from the grief; and thus do We deliver the believers.”

These two holy verses are also about the life of Yunus (as), the great prophet of Allah. At first, it implies that you should remember Jonah when he went out angrily from among his people who were idolater and disobedient.

The verse says:

“And (remember) Zan–Nun (Jonah) when he departed (his people) in anger...”

The Arabic word /nun/ philologically means a huge fish, or, in another sense, it is a crocodile. Thus, the word Zan–Nun means ‘the possessor of a crocodile’. Taking this name for Yunus is for the event which will be referred to later, Allah willing.

However, he thought Allah would not straiten the life for him. He imagined he had fulfilled his prophetic mission fully among his disobedient people and had not even left any better in this field.

So, now that he left them to themselves and went out from among them, there was nothing to him; while he would rather remain more than that among them and showed patience and perseverance haply they might be aware and turn toward Allah.

The verse says:

“...and imagined that We would not straiten him;...”

At last, for that very leaving the better, he was put in straits and a huge crocodile swallowed him when in that darkness he called Allah, his Lord, saying that he was unjust both to himself and to his people, because he should suffer the miseries and difficulties more than that and that he should accept all tortures so that they might improve themselves.

The verse continues saying:

“...so he called out in the darkness: ‘There is no god but You (O my Lord!). Glory be to You! Verily I was of the unjust ones!’”

Finally, Allah accepted his prayer and made him free from affliction and grief. In such a way He, the

Almighty, delivers the believers.

The verse says:

“So We responded to him (his prayer) and delivered him from the grief; and thus do We deliver the believers.”

This program was not allocated to Yunus alone but every one of the believers who asks forgiveness from Allah for his shortcomings and asks Him for help and mercy Allah accepts his prayer, and his grief will be removed.

Some Explanations About the Life of Yunus

1. Yunus was busy preaching among his people for years in Neynawa, located in the land of Iraq. He invited them to the religion of Allah, but the more he tried to guide them the less his guidance affected on their hearts. Once he became angry and, leaving that place, went to the shore of the sea.

He embarked a ship there, but in the way the sea became so wavy that it was about that all the people in the ship to be drowned. The captain of the ship, addressing the passengers, said he thought there was a runaway slave among them whom had to be thrown into the sea.

(Or he said the ship was too heavy and by drawing lots, one passenger should be thrown into the sea.) However, they cast lots for several times and every time Yunus was elected by lots. Yunus understood that there was a secret concealed in that, so he resigned himself to the events.

When he was thrown into the sea, a huge crocodile swallowed him, and Allah miraculously kept him alive.

When he finally realized that he had done a ‘leaving the better’, he turned to Allah and confessed his shortcoming and negligence. Allah accepted his prayer, too, and delivered him from that strait.¹⁴

There may be thought that this event, from the point of science, is impossible, but undoubtedly this matter is a supernatural event and not an intellectual impossibility.

It is like the dead being quickened, which is considered but a supernatural event, and it is not impossible. In other words, the fulfilment of such a thing in ordinary ways is not possible, but, by asking the help and infinite power of Allah, there is no problem in it.

2. What Darkness Means Here?

This darkness may refer to the darkness of the sea and the depth of water there, or the darkness of the belly of the huge fish, or the darkness of the night. A tradition narrated from Imam Baqir (as) also verifies this meaning.¹⁵

3. What Was Yunus' Leaving the Better?

No doubt the application of the Qur'anic phrase 'in anger' refers to the anger of Yunus due to his faithless people, and such an anger and inconvenience in that condition, that a sympathetic divine prophet tries hard during years for guiding a misguided people but they never respond him positively, is completely natural.

On the other side, in view of the fact that Yunus knew that the Divine punishment was coming over them, leaving that city and locality had not been a sin, but for a great prophet such as Yunus, it was better he remained there until the last moment after which the Divine punishment might come.

For this very reason and for this haste, as a leaving the better, Yunus was taken to task from the side of Allah.

4. An Instructive Lesson

The Qur'anic sentence:

"...and thus do We deliver the believers"

shows that Yunus' calamity and deliverance was not only a decree particular to him (as), but, observing the hierarchical order, it has a common and general state.

Many of the sad events, miseries and calamities are the consequences of our own sins. They are whips for awakening our unaware souls, or they are furnaces to purify the material of the man's soul. When a man notices the same three points that Yunus noticed, his deliverance will be certain.

1- Noting the reality of Monotheism, and that there is no god and no refuge but Allah.

2- Glorification and purification of Allah from any defect, deficiency, injustice, cruelty and any wrong imagination about His Pure Essence.

3- Confession to one's own fault.

The witness to this statement is the tradition which has been cited in Durr-ul-Manthur, narrated from the Prophet (S), who said:

"One of the names of Allah by which whoever calls Him he will be answered and whenever he asks something by it He will give him that thing, is the prayer of Yunus."

Once someone asked the Prophet (S) whether that was particular to Yunus alone or it can be used by all Muslim people. The Prophet (S) answered it was related to both Yunus and all the believers when they call Allah by it.

Then he said whether that person had not heard the word of Allah in the Qur'an where He says:

“...and thus do We deliver the believers.”

This is a reference that whoever invokes such a prayer Allah has guaranteed its acceptance. 16

It does not need to be mentioned that the purpose of calling Him is not only pronouncing the mere words, but its reality must be reflected on the inside and the man's soul; i.e. while reciting these words, the whole entity of man must be filled with their meanings in his practice.

This is also necessary to be mentioned here that the Divine punishments are of two kinds. One of them is the punishment of /'istisal/, viz. the Divine punishment which comes for the incorrigible people to annihilate them to which no prayer is beneficial at this time, because after vanishing the storm of the affliction, the same vices will be repeated.

The other kind of punishments is the punishments which are for training aspects. At these times and in these cases, as soon as the punishment affects and the concerning person comes out of his negligence, it will quickly disappear.

This fact makes it clear that one of the philosophies of the miseries, calamities, and inconvenient events is the same effect of vigilance and training.

The event of Yunus also warns all the leaders of the path of Truth in different fields that they should never consider that their mission has ended, nor do they think that any effort and endeavour is small in this way, since their responsibility is very grievous and heavy.

Surah Al-'Anbiya' – Verses 89 – 90

وَزَكَرِيَّا إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْنِي فَرْدًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْوَارِثِينَ

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ يَحْيَىٰ وَأَصْلَحْنَا لَهُ زَوْجَهُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسَارِعُونَ فِي
الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا وَكَانُوا لَنَا خَاشِعِينَ

89. “And (remember) Zachariah, when he called unto his Lord: ‘O my Lord! Leave me not alone (without a child); and You are the best of inheritors’.”

90. “So We responded to him (his prayer) and bestowed upon him Yahya (John), and We set his wife right (of her barrenness) for him; verily they used to vie one with the other, hastening to

good deeds, and called upon Us in yearning and awe; and were humbled before Us.”

In these two verses the Holy Qur’an states a part of the biography of the personality of other two great prophets of Allah, Zachariah akarriya and Yahya (John).

At first, it says:

“And (remember) Zachariah, when he called unto his Lord: ‘O my Lord! Leave me not alone (without a child); and You are the best of inheritors’.”

There came many years to the age of Zachariah, and the snow of senescence covered his head, but he had no child yet. On the other hand he had a barren wife.

He (as) longed for a child who could pursue his divine programs. Then he heartily turned to the Lord and asked for a righteous and fruitful child.

Allah accepted this sincere invocation which was full of love to the Truth, and granted him what he desired, as He says:

“So We responded to him (his prayer) and bestowed upon him Yahya (John)...”

Then the verse implies that: in order that he (as) reaches this aim of his, Allah set the barrenness of wife right for him.

It says:

“...and We set his wife right (of her barrenness) for him;...”

Next to that, the Holy Qur’an points to three outstanding qualities of this family, when it says:

“...verily they used to vie one with the other, hastening to good deeds, and called upon Us in yearning and awe; and were humbled before Us.”

They were always humble and that humility was mixed with respect, politeness, and awe, accompanied with the sense of responsibility.

The mentioning of these three qualities may be a hint to the fact that they did not become neglectful and proud at the time of reaching bounties. These are the epithets of the incapacious person and those people whose faith is weak when they gain some affluence.

However, Imam Sadiq (as), concerning the meaning of the Qur’anic words: /raqaban/ and /rahaban/ said that /raqbat/ (yearning) is that in which you set the palms of the hands towards the sky, and /rahbat/ (awe) is that in which you set the back of the hands toward the sky.¹⁷

Therefore, the speediness in doing good and benevolent deeds and prayer, accompanied with hope and

awe, can be effective in the acceptance of supplication.

Surah Al-'Anbiya' – Verse 91

وَالَّتِي أَحْصَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ رُوحِنَا وَجَعَلْنَاهَا وَابْنَهَا آيَةً لِلْعَالَمِينَ

91. “And (remember) her (Mary) who guarded her chastity so We breathed unto her from Our spirit and We appointed her and her son a sign for (all) people.”

The main thing in the statement of the Qur’anic matters is the introduction of the human virtues and their examples. In this connection, there is no difference between the virtue of man and woman.

Chastity is one of the most outstanding virtues of a woman, and the chastity of mother can often promote both her and her children to the highest ranks.

The rank of a woman reaches a point where Allah praises her in the row of prophets and sets her as His sign among mankind,

“...We appointed her and her son a sign for (all) people.”

So, in this verse, He has pointed to the rank, grandeur, and respect of Mary and her son, Hadrat Messiah (as).

Mentioning Mary in the row of the discussions about great prophets is either for the sake of her son, Hadrat Messiah, or for that her birth, from some points of view, was like the birth of Yahya the offspring of Zachariah, the explanation of which was described in the commentary of the holy verses of Surah Maryam, No. 19.

Or, it is for the sake that it makes clear that the grandeur of that rank is not limited only to the great men, but there have been some great women, too, whose history is the sign of their greatness, and they have been taken as examples and good patterns for the women of the worlds. The verse says:

“And (remember) her (Mary) who guarded her chastity...”

Then, Allah blew into her from His Own spirit and made her and her son a sign for all human beings.

The holy verse continues saying:

“...so We breathed unto her from Our spirit and We appointed her and her son a sign for (all) people.”

A Few Points About This Verse

1. The Arabic word /farj/ philologically and originally means 'a distance' and 'a gap', and metaphorically it has been used in the sense of the genital organ of a woman.

But since the metaphorical meaning of it is not usually considered in the Persian Language, sometimes this question arises that why this word, which explicitly means the particular organ of a woman, has been applied in the Holy Qur'an. But if the state of the meaning which is metaphorical to be noted, the problem will be solved.

In other more clear words, if we want to actually render the metaphorical meaning properly, the equivalent meaning of the Qur'anic phrase: /'ahsanat farjaha/ is 'she kept her chastity safely', and thus this meaning is not sharp or biting in this context.

It is better to say, as some believe, there is not any word in the Arabic language to be used for the explicit meaning of genital organ or sexual association. Whatever is found of this kind has a metaphorical aspect.

For sexual association, for instance, there are some words such as: 'to touch', 'to enter', 'to cover', and 'to go to the spouse' that have been used in different verses of the Qur'an in this sense, and all of them are in the metaphorical forms.

However, for commenting upon this kind of words, which are mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, the essential and original meaning of those words should be noted, in order that the metaphorical aspects of them can be recognized and any ambiguity be dismissed.

It is also necessary to be mentioned that the apparent sate of the abovementioned verse indicates that Mary protected her chastity from any sort of pollution.

But some commentators have offered another meaning for the holy verse saying that probably she restrained from any kind of assoication with a man (whether of the lawful or unlawful one).¹⁸ This is the same thing which Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 20 refers to.

It says:

“She said: ‘How shall there be for me a son while no man has touched me, neither have I been unchaste!’”

This holy statement is, in fact, a preparation for proving the miraculous birth of Jesus (as) and that his birth was a sign for humankind.

2. The objective of the Qur'anic word /ruhana/ (Our spirit), as has also been said before, is a hint to a great and supreme spirit, and this kind of sentence structure, in Arabic, is for the statement of the

greatness of something when it is mentioned together with the name of Allah, like ‘the House of Allah’, and ‘the month of Allah’.

3. The abovementioned verse implies that Allah appointed Mary and her child as a sign for (all) human beings, and it does not say ‘two signs’, for Mary and her son were so close to each other in the verse that they were considered inseparable.

The birth of a child without father is equally so miraculous that pregnancy of a woman without having a husband. The miracles of Jesus (as) in his childhood, as well as in his aged years, are the remindful of the event of his mother.

These matters, each of which was a supernatural event and was contrary to the natural ordinary means, all denote the fact that there is a Power beyond the series of means that whenever it intends it can change their normal courses.

However, the situation of Messiah and his mother, Mary, has been unique throughout the history of man and similar condition to it has been seen neither before it nor after it.

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1. Al-Faghih, vol. 3, p. 57
 2. The commentaries of Safi and Nur-uth-Thaqalayn
 3. Majma‘-ul-Bayan, the explanation under the verse
 4. Surah Sad, No. 38, verse 38
 5. Verse 83
 6. Al-Mizan, narrated from Tafsir-i-Qummi
 7. Kafi, vol. 8, p. 253
 8. Surah Sad, No. 38, verse 44
 9. Some other explanations can be studied in English under verse 56, from Surah Maryam, No. 19 (Book No. 9, p. 278)
 10. Commentary, by Fakhr-i-Razi
 11. The Commentary of Fi-Zilal
 12. The commentary of Fakhr-i-Razi under the current verse, and the history of Kamil-i-Ibn-i-‘Athir, vol. 1, p. 1036
 13. Atyab-ul-Bayan, vol. 9, p. 229
 14. Tafsir-i-Fakhr-i-Razi, Majma‘-ul-Bayan, and Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, the explanation upon the verse under discussion.
 15. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 4, p. 336
 16. Durr-ul-Manthur, according to the narration of Al-Mizan below the verses under discussion
 17. Kafi, vol. 2, p. 497
 18. Tafsir-i-Fakhr-i-Razi

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