

Surah 'Ali-Imran, Chapter 3

The Qur'an and the previous scriptures –the correct knowledge of the verses of the Qur'an –
Misinterpretation of the figurative verses – Prayer for guidance from Allah

Surah 'Ali-Imran, Verses 1-4

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

الم

اللّٰهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ

نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنزَلَ التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ

مِّن قَبْلُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَنزَلَ الْفُرْقَانَ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللّٰهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ
وَاللّٰهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انتِقَامٍ

1. **"Alif ' , Lam L, Mim 'M"**

2. **"Allah, there is no god but He, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting (the Sustainer of all things)."**

3. **"He has sent down to you the Book with truth, confirming that which is before it, and He sent down the Turah and the Evangel."**

4. **"Aforetime, a guidance for people, and He sent down the Furqan. Verily those who disbelieve in the Signs of Allah, for them there is a severe chastisement and Allah is Mighty, the Lord of Retribution."**

A Note

As was mentioned at the beginning of the of Surah Al-Baqarah, Alif 'A', Lam 'L', Mim 'M' are known as abbreviated letters, the Muqatta'at. The best and well known definition about them is to say that they are secrets between *Allah* and His Messenger. Or, this subject may be referred to by saying that the Quran has been composed of these very abbreviated letters.

In other words, *Allah* has sent down the Quran through letters. This itself is a miracle, the same as He creates Man from soil, while man makes potsherd, brick, earthenware etc. from it. This is the difference of the Divine Power and human power.

It is worthy to note that the above abbreviated letters have occurred at the beginning of six Suras in the Quran: Al-Baqarah, Ale-Imran, Al-'Ankabut, Ar-Rum, Luqman, and As-Sajdah.

And the abbreviated letters Alif 'A', Lam 'L', Ra 'R' have also occurred at the beginning of Suras: Yunus, Hud, Yusuf, Ar-Ra'd, Ibrahim, and Al-Hijr.

Again the abbreviated letters Ha 'H', Mim 'M', have occurred at the beginning of Suras: Ash-Shaura, Fussilat, Az-Zukhruf, Ad-Dukhan, Al-Jathiyah, and Al-' Ahqaf.

As the evidences show in the above, every one of these instances of abbreviated letters has been revealed at the beginning of six suras, while in each of other instances the abbreviated letter(S) has been stated for only one Surah.

In creation, *Allah* has complete cognizant administration and domination upon the whole creation. The material factors and appliances can be causes of creation but they are not alive when the cause of their existence is not from their own.

The material instances have not any independent knowledge, life, and power. It is only He, the Ever-Living that the life of every living creature depends on Him.

"Allah, there is no god but He, The Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting (the Sustainer of all things)."

It is cited in Jaushan-Kabir, the Supplication: He has been alive from before any living thing, and will be alive after any living thing. There is no living thing as His partner. He is in need of none.

He is the Alive Who has no death, but the life of any living creature, as well as his sustenance, is in His control. He is a living Essence Who has not got it heritably from another living being.

Now, here is a close translation for the exact text of the supplication:

"O' Ever-Living, preceding every living being,"

"O' Ever-Living, succeeding every living being,"

"O' Ever-Living, like unto Whom there is none,"

"O' Ever-Living, Who has no living partner,"

"O' Ever-Living, Who is not dependant on any living being,"

"O' Ever-Living, Who causes every living being to die,"

"O' Ever-Living, Who provides sustenance to every living being,"

"O' Ever-Living, Who has not inherited life from any living being," 1

1. The qualification of a god to be worshipped is having nominal perfections such as being Ever-Living and Self-Subsistent.
2. Monotheism is at the top and is the framework of all Divine Books.

The term Torah is a Hebrew word which means: 'law, the whole body of Jewish religious literature, including the Scripture. The Torah contains five chapters, entitled: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

Since the event of the death of Moses (as) and the explanation of his burial are mentioned in the Torah, the Judgement is that these subjects of the Torah have been added after the time of Moses (as).

The term Evangel has a Latin root (evangelium) which means 'good news', or 'the teaching of the New Testament'.² The Evangel is the Divine Book of the Christians and wherever in the Qur'an it is mentioned it is stated in the singular form while, today, there are different Books amongst the Christians by this name, four of which are very famous. They are as follows:

1. Matthew is one of the four Evangelists, the first book of the New Testament, and the reputed author of the first Gospel. Matthew is one of the twelve students of Jesus (as).
2. Mark, the second book of the New- Testament, telling the story of Jesus' life. Mark wrote this book under the authority of Petros after the time of Jesus (as).
3. Luke, a physician and companion of the apostle Paul and the reputed author of the third Gospel.

4. John the fourth Gospel, the book of revelation. He has also been one of Jesus' students.
It is also remarked that the abovementioned Gospels have all been written wholly after Jesus (as).

Explanations

1. The heavenly Books of prophets, one after another, are complementary of the formers:

"... *Conforming that which is before it...*"

2. The confirmation of the former heavenly Books and prophets is a factor to the unity of theists and one of the manners of inviting others as the verse says: **"*conforming*"**.

3. The confirmation of the Qur'an upon the Torah and Evangel is a proof for the idea that the former Books are heavenly, and, also, it is a great right upon the former divine religions. Otherwise, regarding the superstitions that have been added to the Torah and the Evangel, their being **heavenly** would be forgotten totally.

4. The means, instructions and the stages of training are different in the former Books due to their time and conditions of revelations. Yet they are on the same line of development and unity towards the godly goal.

5. The revelation of the Qur'an unto the Prophet (S) is an honour from *Allah* unto his personality when He preceded the phrase **'to you'** to the term **'the Book'**:

"*He has sent down to you the Book with truth...*"

6. The Qur'an is secured from any falsehood, and it is coinciding to reality and truth.

7. In spite of the fact that the Torah and the Evangel were separately and wholly revealed at once, the Quran was sent down gradually during twenty three years. This is in the condition that it was revealed to the heart of the Prophet (S) at once by the Grand Night.

8. Considering the qualities mentioned in the previous verse, the revelation of the heavenly Books is a manifestation of the attributes of *Allah*.

The first part of this verse, added to the meaning of the previous verse, addresses the Prophet of Islam (S) and totally says:

"*He has sent down to you the Book with truth, confirming that which is before it, and He sent down the Turah and the Evangel.*"

"*Aforetime, a guidance for people ...*"

Then, pointing to the Qur'an which separates right and wrong, it follows saying:

"... and He sent down the Furqan..."

Hence, after the verses of the Qur'an being sent down from the side of *Allah* and completing the argument being done, together with testification of innate disposition and intellect to the truthfulness of prophets in their invitations, there is not any other way against rejecters but punishment.

That is why, in this verse, next to the statement about the rightfulness of the Prophet (S) and the Qur'an, it says:

"... Verily those who disbelieve in the Signs of Allah, for them there is a severe chastisement ..."

And, to make it clear that there is no doubt about the capability of *Allah* in accomplishing His threats, it says:

"... and Allah is Mighty, the Lord of Retribution."

Surah 'Ali-Imran, Verses 5-6

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ

هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

5. "Verily, Allah, nothing hidden is there from Him in the earth and in the heaven."

6. "He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases. There is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise."

How is it possible that something be hidden from *Allah* while He is Omnipresent and Omniscient? And regarding that His Essence is infinite and unlimited from any point of view, there will be no place without Him. He is nearer to us than we are to ourselves.

Therefore, in the meantime that He is found in no definite site, He dominates everything. This domination is in the sense of His Knowledge and cognizance upon all the things and affairs of the world.

"Verily, Allah, nothing hidden is there from Him in the earth and in the heaven."

Then, the verse points to one of the distinguished things in the world of creation which is, indeed, one of the clear examples of *Allah's* Knowledge and Power, by saying:

"He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases ..."

Yes, it is completely true that:

"... there is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise."

The formation of Man in mother's womb, and designing wonderful, marvellously beautiful features, one after another, in that dark environment is really surprising. It is especially with those varieties that a human being may have from the point of stature, face, gender, kinds of capacities and faculties.

Man carries different qualities in him. So, that is why there is no god but He, and it is for this very reason that only He, His pure Essence, the Almighty, is worthy of being worshipped.

Surah 'Ali-Imran, Verse 7

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ
فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا
يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا
يَذَكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

7. "He it is Who has sent down to you the Book; in it are decisive verses which are the basis of the Book, while others are allegorical. But for those in whose hearts there is perversity, they follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking (to cause) dissension by seeking it (their own) interpretation, while none knows it's (hidden) interpretation except Allah and those firmly rooted in knowledge. They say: 'We believe in it, the whole (of it) is from our Lord;' and none minds save the possessors of intellect."

The Decisive & the Allegorical Verses in the Qur'an

In former verses, the statement was upon the revelation of the Qur'an as one of the clear evidences and proofs of the prophethood of the Prophet of Islam (S).

Now, in this holy verse, one of the specialities of the Qur'an is pointed out. This quality is the manner of expressing statements that is applied in this grand heavenly Book. At first, it says:

"He it is Who has sent down to you the Book; in it are decisive verses which are the basis of the Book, while others are allegorical..."

These allegorical verses, that in the first glance seem complicated because of high level of the subject or

of other factors in them, are criterions to try individuals in order to separate truthful scholars from stubborn seditious persons. So, next to that, it says:

"... But as for those in whose hearts there is perversity, they follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking (to cause) dissension by seeking it (their own) interpretation, while none knows its (hidden) interpretation except Allah and those firmly rooted in knowledge..."

Then, it points to those who, under the light of their correct understanding the meaning of both decisive and allegorical verses, declare:

"... They say: 'We believe in it: the whole (of it) is from our Lord;!'..."

Yes! Verily:

"... and none minds save the possessors of intellects."

Through the above mentioned verse, it is recognized that the verses of the Qur'an are divided into two groups. A part of the verses have such a clear concept that there is no place for denial, justification or misuse in them.

These verses are called 'decisive verses'. But there are other verses that, because of high level of subject or discussing about things which are out of our reach, like: the unseen world, the world of Resurrection, and the attributes of Allah, are such that their hidden meanings and the secrets and the depth of their reality need a particular scientific ability to be rendered.

These verses are called 'allegorical verses'.

Some perverse persons try to abuse these verses by commenting on them untruly in order to make mischief among people and deviate them from the right path. But *Allah* and those firmly rooted in knowledge know the secrets of these verses and explain them for people.

Of course, those who are in the first line, from the point of knowledge, (*like the Prophet and Immaculate Imams*), know the whole secrets while others may understand from them as much as the amount of their own knowledge.

Hence, it is this very fact that sends people, even the learned scientists, after the divine teachers to catch the mysteries of the Qur'an.

Surah 'Ali-Imran, Verses 8-9

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ

رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ جَامِعُ النَّاسِ لِيَوْمٍ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ

8. ***"(They say:) 'Our Lord! let not our hearts deviate after You have guided us, and bestow on us from Your mercy, for You are, indeed, the Ever-Bestower."***

9. ***"Our Lord! verily You are the Gatherer of mankind unto a Day in which there is no doubt; for surely Allah never fails (His) promise."***

Since the allegorical verses of the Qur'an and their hidden secrets may cause to be the means of going astray for some persons so that they fail in this kind of trial, so, those firmly rooted in knowledge and the believing intellectual ones, besides utilizing their own existing knowledge in comprehending the true meanings of these verses, seek refuge to their Lord.

Both of the above mentioned verses, which are stated from the tongue of those firmly rooted in knowledge, make this fact clear. They say:

"(They say:) 'Our Lord! let not our hearts deviate after You have guided us, and bestow on us from Your mercy, for You are, indeed, the Ever-Bestower'."

In view of the fact that belief in Resurrection and being regardful to the Day of Judgement are the most effective things for controlling one's desires and lusts, then those firmly rooted in knowledge, remembering That Day, say:

"Our Lord! Verily You are the Gatherer of mankind unto a Day in which there is no doubt; for surely Allah never fails (His) promise."

Therefore, they, thereby, avoid of low desires, sensuality, and excessive sentiments, which cause one to do wrong, and thus they can understand the Divine verses as they really are.

1. Jaushan-Kabir Supplication, Item 70

2. Webster's New World Dictionary, Third College Edition.

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