

## Surah al-Furqan, Section 3, The Qur'an Was Revealed Gradually

### Surah al-Furqan, Chapter 25– Verse 21

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَوْ نَرَى رَبَّنَا لَقَدِ اسْتَكْبَرُوا  
فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ وَعَتَوْا عُتُوًّا كَبِيرًا

**21. “And those who do not hope to meet Us (for Judgment) say: ‘Why are not the angels sent down to us, or (why) do we not see our Lord?’ Certainly they are too proud of themselves and have revolted in great revolt.”**

The Arabic word /'utuww/ means the worst kind of oppression.<sup>1</sup> The day of Resurrection is called the day of /liqa'/ (meeting), because in that day all ignorance, negligence and obstacles will be removed fully and people can see Allah's magnificence.

**(“...and they will know that Allah, He is the (very) Manifest Truth.”)<sup>2</sup>**

In order to relinquish duties and responsibilities that believing in Allah and Resurrection would put on polytheists' shoulder, they stated some pretexts, one of which was why the Prophet (S) eats like us and walks in markets, which we read its answer in the former verses.

The concerned verse completes two other parts of their pretexts and answers them.

It first says:

**“And those who do not hope to meet Us (for Judgment) say: ‘Why are not the angels sent down to us, or (why) do we not see our Lord?’...”**

Their statement means that suppose it is accepted that the Prophet (S) can have a common life like other people, but it is not accepted that the bringer of revelation comes only to him and that it cannot be seen by other people. What is the problem if the angel appears and certifies his prophethood or retells some of his revelation while people are present?

What is the matter if man sees Allah by his own eye? If this happens, no doubt remains for him. These are the arouse questions which prevent them accepting the call of the Prophet (S).

It is important that the holy Qur'an introduces these pretext-seeking persons as:

***"...those who do not expect the meeting with Us..."***<sup>3</sup>

This shows that these baseless words originate from unbelief in resurrection and also the lack of undertaking responsibility to Allah.

In verse 7 of Surah Al-Hijr, No. 15 we read words like this, where they said:

***"If you are of the truthful ones, why do you not bring to us the angels?"***

In the beginning of this Surah also we read:

***"...Why is not an angel been sent down to him, to be a warner with him?"***<sup>4</sup>

But a person who seeks truth only demands reason for proving a matter and he does not care about the sort of reason whatever kind it may be. When by performing miracles, including the holy Qur'an itself, the Prophet (S) has proved that his call and invitation is right, what do these pretexts mean?

The best reason that these words were not uttered for the sake of researching on the prophethood of the holy Prophet (S) is that they asked to see Allah and by this demand they reduced Him to a visible object. This groundless demand was asked by the Children of Israel and its decisive answer has been given them in the Qur'an which is explained in Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 7, verse 143.

Thus, the Holy Qur'an answers these demands in this way:

***"...Certainly they are too proud highly of themselves and have revolted in great revolt."***

The Arabic word /'utuww/ means to restrain to obey an order stubbornly and with enmity. The Qur'anic phrase /fi 'anfusihi/ may mean that they were proud of themselves and were also self-conceited, or it may mean that they concealed their conceit and pride in their own heart and proposed such demands and pretexts.

In our age there are also some persons who repeat the logic of former polytheists and say that they do not believe in Allah unless they see Allah in their laboratory and experiment the soul with Himself in surgery operation. The source of both is one thing: arrogance and delusion.

Basically, all the persons who know sense and experience as the only means of recognition implicitly repeat this very matter. All materialists and the money-minded ones do have the same opinion, while our sense can perceive only a small part of this world.

Anyway, all materialists count everything unspiritual and earthy and they try to see Allah with their own physical eyes and this is their great mistake.

## Surah al-Furqan – Verse 22

يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ لَا بُشْرَىٰ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُجْرِمِينَ وَيَقُولُونَ حَجْرًا مَّحْجُورًا

**2. “On the day when they shall see the angels, there shall be no glad tidings that day for the guilty, and they (the angels) shall say: ‘It (Paradise) is a forbidden (thing), totally prohibited’.”**

In the previous verse the arrogant that had no hope of resurrection and expected to see angels were mentioned, and the concerned verse wants to say that the angels will come to

them but instead of conveying the light of revelation, they declare the severest threats to them. That day, as Imam Baqir (as) says, is the day of their death and Allah orders the Angel of death to take their life and when their soul is going to leave their body, some angels hit their back and face. Then Imam Baqir (as) recited this verse.<sup>5</sup>

The verse says:

**“On the day when they shall see the angels...”**

Therefore, in this noble verse the Qur’an implies as a threat that they want to see the angels and finally they will see them, but as the verse says:

**“...there shall be no glad tidings that day for the guilty...”**

Yes, on that day they do not get happy, but since they see the signs of punishment along with them, they fear so much that they will utter the same sentence that they used to say at the time of danger in this world:

**“Grant grace to us and exempt us!”<sup>6</sup>**

Certainly neither this sentence nor other sentences will have any effect on their doomed fate, for the fire they have started by themselves will burn them, and the evil deeds which they have done will be materialized then before them, The consequences of their misdeeds eventually come home to roost.

The verse continues saying:

***“...and they (the angels) shall say: ‘It (Paradise) is a forbidden (thing), totally prohibited’.”***

The Arabic word /hijr/ originally means an area that is furnished with stones and it becomes forbidden to enter. If we see that ‘Hijr-i-Isma‘il’ is called /hijr/ it is because it prevents man from some evil actions, thus we read in verse 5 of Surah Al-Fajr, No. 89:

***“Is there (not) in this an oath for those who have sense?”***

Also the companions of Hijr whose name is mentioned in Qur’an7, has been used for the name of the people of Salih (as) who used to make fortified stone houses for themselves in mountains and were protected by these houses.

But the Qur’anic phrase */hijran mahj<sup>ra</sup>ra/ (A forbidding ban)* is an expression that was used by Arabs when they met a person whom they feared. They used to say it for protecting themselves.

Specially it was Arab’s tradition that in the sacred months that war was forbidden when they confronted someone and this tradition might get unobserved they repeated this phrase in order to be protected. By hearing this phrase that person protected them and made them calm. Thus the meaning of this holy phrase is that:

***“I seek protection, which is stable and unchanging.”***

Meanwhile, it is understood from the above words that the persons who said these words are criminal. The proportion of existing verbs in the verse, the course of history, and the background of this phrase among Arabs demand this, though some say that it is possible that the speaker of these words will be the angels and their aim is to prevent polytheists from Allah’s mercy.

Some have also said that these words are said by criminals to each other, but apparently the first meaning is correct, for many commentators have accepted it or have mentioned it as the first commentary.<sup>8</sup>

But what day do wrongdoers meet angels?

Some of the commentators say that it is at the time of death that man sees the angel of death, as Surah An-Nisa’, No. 4, verse 97 says:

***“Verily (as for) those whom the angels cause to die while they are unjust to their own selves...”***

Some other commentators say that its purpose is the day of Resurrection when wrongdoers encounter the Divine angels of punishment and observe them.

The second commentary seems more appropriate with regard to the next verses that talk about

resurrection and especially with the word /yauma'iḥin/ that refers to it.

## Surah al-Furqan – Verse 23

وَقَدِمْنَا إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا مِنۢ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَاءً مَّنثُورًا

**23. “And We will proceed to what they have done of deeds, so We shall render them as scattered floating dust.”**

The Arabic word /haba'/ means 'fine dust' and the word 'Manthar' means 'scattered'.

In this noble verse the condition of wrongdoers' actions in Hereafter is imagined.

It says:

**“And We will proceed to what they have done of deeds, so We shall render them as scattered floating dust.”**

The Arabic word /'amal/, as Raqib in Mufradat says, in this verse means: every work or job done by intention. But the word /fi'l/ 'verb' is general and is applied to both jobs and works that are done whether intentionally or unintentionally.

The Qur'anic word /qadimna/ is derived from the word /quḍim/, which means to enter or to turn unto something.

Here, this word is for putting emphasis on the matter, that is to say they have certainly done all their actions intentionally and on purpose, though their deeds are apparently right and good. Thus, for their polytheism and paganism Allah shall turn unto the work they did and make it scattered motes.

In narrations the extension of those whose deeds will be naught is the persons who perform ritual prayer and fast but do not refrain from unlawful food, or do hate and have enmity against Imam Ali-ibn-Abitalib (as) and his Shiites.

By the way, the Arabic word /haba'/ means some very tiny particles of dust that can not be seen in a natural way, unless sun light comes inside a dark room from an opening, so that these particles are clear and visible and, in this way, we can see them.

This sentence shows that their deeds will be so worthless and ineffective that it seems there were not any deeds at all, though they have tried and attempted many years.

This verse is like verse 18 of Surah 'Ibrahim No. 14, which says:

***“...their deeds are as ashes on which the wind blows severely on a stormy day...”***

Its logical reason is also clear, for what gives meaning and sense to man's deed is proper intention, motivation, and the final aim of that action. Faithful persons go after doing things with Divine motives and seek for pure sacred aims, and some sound and correct programs, while unfaithful persons are mostly proud, affecter, deceiver, and self-conceited, therefore, their deeds will be of no value.

As an example, there are mosques that have been built hundreds years before and the past of centuries of time had the least effect on them. On the contrary, we see some houses that after one month or year there appear some defects in them.

The former was built strongly and with the best construction materials and foreseeing all future events, because it had divine motivation, but as for the latter one, attention was paid only to the colour and appearance of it, for its aim was acquiring wealth and money by means of deception and counterfeit.

Basically, according to Islam logic, righteous deeds have got some pests which must be definitely protected. Sometimes it is wrong from the beginning, like the deed which is done hypocritically. Sometimes man will get proud, self-conceited and self-admired while he is performing a deed and his deed will be worthless because of it.

And sometimes after doing a deed, its worth and value will get abolished because its doer does some actions that are contradictory and opposing to it, like a generous action or prodigality that is followed by reproach, or the righteous deeds that are followed by paganism and apostasy.

Even, according to some Islamic narrations, sometimes committing sins before doing a good deed will affect it, as about the person who drinks alcoholic drink we read that his righteous deeds done during 40 days will not be accepted by Allah<sup>9</sup>.

Anyway, Islam has got a very strict, calculated and precise program about attributes of righteous deeds.

Imam Baqir (as) says:

*“On the day of Resurrection Allah brings a group of people while there is a light in front of them, like brightening and white garments, (this is the light of their deeds). Then Allah orders those deeds to be scattered particles of dust. (Then all of them will disappear).*

*These are those who used to perform ritual prayer and fast, but when they were given something unlawful, they would take it; and when it was said something of the virtues of Imam Ali (as) to them they denied it.”<sup>10</sup>*

## Surah al-Furqan – Verse 24

أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَيْرٌ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَأَحْسَنُ مَقِيلًا

**24. “The companions of the Garden (Paradise) that day shall be in a better abode and a better resting-place.”**

There must be a kind of good tidings and encouragement along with warning and advice. Therefore, the holy Qur’an usually sets good and bad beside each other, so that by comparing, their situations will be clear. This verse speaks about the situation of those who live in the Paradise.

The verse says:

**“The companions of the Garden (Paradise) that day shall be in a better abode and a better resting-place.”**

This verse does not imply that Hell-dwellers are in a good situation, and dwellers of Paradise are in a better situation. For example, we read in Surah Fussilat, No. 41, verse 40:

**“...Is he who is hurled into the Fire better, or he who comes secure on the Day of Resurrection...”**

The Arabic word /mustaqarr/ means ‘residence’ and the Qur’anic word /muqil/ means ‘the pace of rest in the midday’.

(It is derived from the word /qaylāh/ that means ‘midday sleep’.)

Ibn Abbas said that the Prophet (S) said:

“When Allah created the Paradise, He put things in it that no one has seen and no mind has imagined. Then He ordered the Paradise to speak.

The Paradise began speaking and said:

**‘Successful indeed are the believers’.**<sup>11</sup>

## Surah al-Furqan – Verses 25-26

وَيَوْمَ تَشَقُّقُ السَّمَاءُ بِالْغَمَامِ وَنُزِّلَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ تَنْزِيلًا

## الْمُلْكُ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَكَانَ يَوْمًا عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ عَسِيرًا

**25. “And on the day when the heaven shall burst asunder with the clouds and the angels shall be sent down descending (in ranks).”**

**26. “The dominion that day in truth shall belong to the Beneficent Lord, and a hard day shall it be for the unbelievers.”**

Again, the discussion of Resurrection and the destiny of wrongdoers on that day continues where it says:

**“And on the day when the heaven shall burst asunder with the clouds and the angels shall be sent down descending (in ranks).”**

The Arabic word /qamam/ is derived from the word /qam/ that means to cover something. Because cloud covers sun, it is called ‘Qamam’. Also the sorrow that covers heart is called ‘Qam’.

This noble verse is in fact an answer to the polytheists’ demand and one of their pretexts, for they expected that Allah and the angles who are among clouds, according to the old fables and legends, come to them to invite them to the Truth.

In the Jews’ myths we also read that Allah sometimes appears among clouds.<sup>12</sup>

The holy Qur’an answers them, implying that a day (in which wrongdoers are punished and their meaningless words are finished) the angels (not Allah) will be sent down to them.

Now, what is the purpose of separation of the sky and heaven? Some say that it means intuition, rising of curtail of ignorance, and showing of the invisible world. That is on that day, man is bestowed a perceiving and viewing capacity that is different from today’s. He sees angels who are descending from the above world.

Another commentary is that the sky and heaven means celestial bodies that explode one after the other one. The cloud that is created by these explosions and bursting of mountains, covers the sky. Thus the celestial bodies will burst asunder and in the same time their resulting clouds are with them.

Many verses of the holy Qur’an, especially those of the short Suras that are at the end of the Qur’an, express this truth that on the threshold of resurrection some great changes and a strange revolution and transformation happen throughout the universe; mountains will burst and scatter in air like dust, sun and stars will lose their light, even the existing distance between moon and sun will abolish, and a strange shake and earthquake will happen throughout the earth.

Yes, on such a day the bursting of heaven (celestial bodies) and covering sky with a dense cloud is a natural matter.

This very commentary can be said in another way:

The intensity of changes and explosion of stars and planets cause that the sky can be covered with a dense cloud, but there are sometimes some openings inside this cloud. Thus, the sky that in the ordinary state is seen with the natural eye will be separated with these clouds of great explosion.

Then one of the clearest characteristics of that day is referred to through the next verse, where it says:

***“The dominion that day in truth shall belong to the Beneficent Lord...”***

Even those who have some kind of transient, mortal limited, virtual sovereignty in this world will leave their apparent government, and sovereignty will belong to His pure essence from every aspect and dimension, and because of this, as the Qur’an says:

***“...and a hard day shall it be for the unbelievers.”***

Yes, on that day that virtual powers will completely diminish and sovereignty will be particular to Allah, the disbelievers’ shelters will be destructed, and the tyrannical powers will disappear, though they were also naught in this world before His Will, but here they were apparently powerful and important.

But in resurrection, where the fact will manifest and unfaithful persons’ imaginations and dreams will blow out, to what they can resort when they face divine punishments. That is why that day will be very difficult for them, while believers will have an easy and comfortable day.

’Abū Sa’id Khidri says that when the Prophet (p.b.u.h) was reciting the verse saying:

***“...in a Day whereof the span is fifty thousand years”,***<sup>13</sup>

which shows that the day of Resurrection is equal to 50 thousand years, he said:

***“What a strange long day it is!”***

The Prophet (S) said:

***“I swear by The One in Whose hand my life is, that that Day will become light for the believer as short as the time is spent for performing one ritual prayer in this world.”***<sup>14</sup>

Carefully studying other verses of the holy Qur’an shows why that day is hard for pagans. On one side, we read in Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 166:

***“(On the day) when those who were followed disown those who followed (them), and they would see the torment, and their ties (between them) are cut asunder.”***

On the other side, we read in Surah AL-Lahab, No. 111, verse 2:

***“His wealth avails him not, neither what he had earned.”***

And also we read in Surah Ad-Dukhan, No. 44, verse 41:

***“The day on which a friend shall not avail (his) friend aught, nor shall they be helped.”***

Even intercession that is the only way of salvation is for those sinners that have some relationship with Allah and His friend:

***“...Who is it that can intercede with Him save by His leave?...”***<sup>15</sup>

Also they will not be allowed to apologize on that day, let alone to the acceptance of their unreasonable excuses:

***“Nor will it be open to them to put forth excuses.”***<sup>16</sup>

## **Surah al-Furqan – Verses 27-29**

وَيَوْمَ يَعَضُّ الظَّالِمُ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي اتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ الرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا

يَا وَيْلَتَى لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أَتَّخِذْ فُلَانًا خَلِيلًا

لَقَدْ أَضَلَّنِي عَنِ الذِّكْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَاءَنِي وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِلْإِنْسَانِ خَذُولًا

**27. “And on the day when the unjust one shall bite his hands, saying: ‘Oh! Would that I had taken a way alone with the Messenger!’”**

**28. “Oh woe is me! Would that I had not taken such a one for a friend!”**

**29. “He indeed led me astray from the Message after it had come to me, and the Satan fails to aid man.”**

### **Occasion of Revelation**

Commentators have narrated an occasion of revelation for these verses that we mention a summary of it:

At the time of the Prophet (S), there were two friends named ‘Uqbah and ‘Ubayy among polytheists.

Whenever 'Uqbah returned from a journey, he prepared some food and invited wealthy people of his tribe to a party.

Meanwhile, he liked to go to the Prophet (S) and to be with him for a while, though he had not accepted Islam. One day he prepared some food as usual and invited his friends as well as the Prophet (S).

When food was ready to be served, the Prophet (S) told 'Uqbah:

*"I will not eat your food unless you testify to unity of Allah and my mission."*

'Uqbah testified that there is no god besides Allah and testified that Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah.

'Ubayy heard this news.

He said to his friend:

*"You have deviated from your religion O' 'Uqbah!"*

His friend said:

*"No, by God I did not. But a man came to me who did not eat my food unless I testified to Allah's unity and his mission. I was ashamed that he was about to leave my home without eating any food, so I testified."*

'Ubayy said:

*"I will not be happy with you, unless you stand before him and insult him." 'Uqbah did this action and apostatized.*

Finally he was killed with other pagans in the Battle of Badr. His friend 'Ubayy was also killed in the Battle of 'Uhud.<sup>17</sup>

The above holy verses were sent down and explained the destiny of the man who had a deviated friend and he caused him to go astray.

We have repeatedly said that though the occasions of revelation are particular and especial, they never limit the concept of holy verses and its generality includes all similar persons.

### **A Bad Friend Deviated Me!**

The day of Resurrection has strange scenes, some of which are mentioned in the previous holy verses and in the concerned verses, here, another part is brought up, and that issue is the extraordinary regret of oppressors about their past.

It first says:

***“And on the day when the unjust one shall bite his hands, saying: ‘Oh! Would that I had taken a way alone with the Messenger!’”***

The Arabic word /ya‘add/ is derived from the word /‘add/ that means grip with teeth. This is usually used about the persons who are upset because of regret and sorrow, as in a Persian proverb it is said that that person grips finger of regret with teeth.

But in the Arabic language, instead of finger, hand is used, and perhaps it is more expressive, for man in such situations does not bite his finger, but he bites the back of his hand. In the Arabic language it is seen many times such as this verse that both hands are referred. In this way the intensity of regret and sorrow is expressed better.

This is perhaps for this matter that when such persons review their past and see that they themselves are responsible and guilty, they decide to revenge themselves so that they can somehow get calm and soothed.

Verily that Day must be called ‘the Day of anguish’, as in the holy Qur’an the day of Resurrection is called by this name<sup>18</sup>, for wrongdoers see a perpetual life with the worst conditions before them, while they could change it to a happy and honorable life with some days of patience, struggling with appetitive soul, holy war and donation.

Even for doers of good deeds it is the day of regret. They will regret why they did not do more good deeds!

Then, in the next verse this oppressor, who is completely regretful, says:

***“Oh woe is me! Would that I had not taken such a one for a friend!”***

It is clear that the purpose of ‘such a one’ is the same person, whether an aberrant kinsman, or Satan or a deviated friend such as ‘Ubayy, who deviated ‘Uqbah, mentioned in the occasion of revelation.

In fact this verse and the previous verse set two positions of negation and verification against each other.

In a verse it says:

***“Oh woe is me! Would that I had not taken such a one for a friend!”***

(For all my misery is for leaving the Prophet (S) and choosing this deviated person as a friend.)

Again in this verse it is continued:

***“He indeed led me astray from the Message after it had come to me...”***

If he were very far away from perpetual happiness and faith, he would not regret so much, but he had been near it, there was only one step for being ever after happy. But that stubborn, biased, dark-hearted friend returned him thirsty from the spring of life water and took him to the whirlpool of misery.

The Qur'anic word /ʿikr/ has got an extensive meaning in this verse and it includes all divine verses that are in the heavenly books. Moreover, it includes any thing that makes man awaken, alert, and informed.

In the end of the verse the Qur'an says:

***"...and the Satan fails to aid man."***

For Satan misleads man and leads him to dangerous places. Then leaving him wandered, Satan goes after his own job.

We must note that the Arabic word /xāʿil/ is an amplification form which means:

'The one who abundantly fails someone when most needed', and the reality of /xiḷān/ (desertion) is that someone hopes for another person's help, but he deserts him just in the very sensitive moments.

Whether this last sentence of the verse saying:

***"...and the Satan fails to aid man"***

is said by Allah as a warning for all oppressors and the deviated persons, or it is the rest of the statement said by those who regret in the day of Resurrection, commentators have mentioned two commentaries, both of which are in line with the meaning of the verse, but being Allah's words is more consistent.

## **The Role of Friend in Man's Destiny**

Undoubtedly the factors that form man's personality are different including his will and decision, and most importantly his friend and companion, for man is desirably or undesirably impressionable. Most of his thoughts and moral attributes are formed through his friends. This fact has scientifically and experimentally been proved.

From the view of Islam this impressionability is logical so much that we read in Islamic narrations that Solomon (as) has said:

*"Do not judge someone, unless you see who are his friends, for man is known by his companions, friends, and fellows."*<sup>19</sup>

Imam Ali (as) said:

*"When you are doubtful about someone and you do not know his religion, find out who are his friends. If*

*they are believers, he is a believer, too, and if they are not believers of the religion of Allah, he may be an unbeliever, too.*"<sup>20</sup>

Verily the role that a friend plays in happiness and misery of a person is sometimes more important than any other factors. Sometime a friend leads him to destruction and death and sometimes a friend leads him to the climax of success and prosperity.

The concerned verses and their occasion of revelation show well that how possibly man can approach happiness, but a devil temptation by a friend takes him back to darkness and prepares him a deadly fate so that he bites both of his hands on the day of Resurrection and cries:

*"Oh Woe is me!"*

In the book Al-'Ishrah (Roles of Association), there are many narrations about this matter. This shows how precise and exact Islam is in selecting a friend.

We finish this discussion with narrating two traditions.

Those who want to read more, please refer to Bihar-ul-' Anwar, Vol. 74.

Imam Muhammad Taqi, Al-Jawad (as) said:

*"Avoid a bad companion, for he is like an unsheathed sword whose appearance is beautiful and whose effect is very ugly."*<sup>21</sup>

The holy Prophet (S) said:

*"There are four things that bring death to man's heart: repetition of sin... and association with the dead."*

A person asked him:

*"Who are the dead?"*

The Prophet (S) said:

*"The wealthy people who are indulging in luxury."*<sup>22</sup>

## **Some Traditions About Friendship in Islam**

1. Imam Ali (as) said:

*"A man's friend is the sign of his intellect and his speech is the sign of his virtue."*<sup>23</sup>

2. The Prophet (S) said:

*"Anyone who dies while he is a friend of the family of the Prophet (S) has died as a martyr."*<sup>24</sup>

3. The Prophet (S) said:

*“The happiest man is one who associates with respected and dignified people.”*<sup>25</sup>

4. Imam Sadiq (as) said:

*“The most favoured brothers of mine are those who present me my defects (and to warn me of them).”*<sup>26</sup>

5. Imam Ali (as) said:

*“The best friend of yours is the one who makes you fond of the Hereafter and indifferent to the world and helps you in obeying Allah.”*<sup>27</sup>

6. The Prophet (S) said:

*“Avoid associating with bad companion, for you are known by him.”*<sup>28</sup>

7. Imam Ali (as) said:

*“Associating with bad people causes mistrust unto good people.”*<sup>29</sup>

8. Imam Sadiq (as) said:

*“Whenever Imam Ali (as) climbed the pulpit, he said:*

*“It is deserved that a Muslim avoids friendship of three persons: the impudent dissolute person, imbecile, and liar.”*<sup>30</sup>

9. Imam Ali (as) said:

*“Be kind towards your friend, though he disobeys you and have relationship with him, though he treats you harshly.”*<sup>31</sup>

10. The Prophet (S) was once asked about the best companion.

He said:

*“The best one is the person whose meeting reminds Allah to you, and his words increases your knowledge, and his behaviour makes you remember the Hereafter.”*<sup>32</sup>

Islam has got many pieces of advice about friendship and selecting a friend. Islam encourages having friendship with some persons and prohibits friendship of some other persons, and this needs a special separate discussion.

Some subtitles of the subject of ‘friend and friendship’ are as follows: the ways of knowing a friend, boundaries of friendship, continuity of friendship, termination of friendship, proper motivations of

friendship, and rules of association with friends and rights of friend, that for each of them there are a lot of verses and narrations.

We have only mentioned some part of it.

Also Imam Ali (as) said:

*“Good friend is the best relative.”*<sup>33</sup>

There is a tradition that says test your friend with money, anger, wealth and journey. If he is successful in them, he is a good one. In poems there are also a great deal of references about friend and friendship and it is recommended to associate with good friends. Also association with bad friends is reproached.

Bad companion is likened to a beautiful snake that has a very deadly poison.

As a Persian poet says:

*Escape bad companion as you can,*

*Bad companion is worse than a poisonous snake.*

*Poisonous snake threatens only your life,*

*But bad companion threatens your, life as well as your faith.*

*Or, bad friend is likened to a dark cloud that covers the magnificent sun:*

*Associate less with bad persons,*

*For bad persons’ words make you impure, though you are pure.*

*Sun that is so great and huge,*

*Goes out of sight with a piece of cloud.*

## **Surah al-Furqan – Verse 30**

وَقَالَ الرَّسُولُ يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا

**30. “And the Messenger will say (that Day): ‘O my Lord! Verily my people treated this Qur’an with neglect.’”**

Oh Allah! People have deserted the holy Qur’an.

Since the previous verses mentioned the different kinds of pretext-seeking of some stubborn polytheists and unbelievers, this holy verse mentions complain and annoyance of the Prophet (S) about the incorrect behaviour of this group with the Qur’an, where it says:

**“And the Messenger will say: ‘O my Lord! Verily my people treated this Qur’an with neglect.’”**

This complain of the Prophet (S) is still heard. He complains to Allah even about a large group of Muslims who have neglected the holy Qur'an which is the secret of life, means of salvation, the factor of victory, development and movement, and full of life programs. They have neglected this book and have begged others for their civil and criminal laws!

Now if you study the situation of the people of Islamic countries, especially those who are culturally under the control of Western and Eastern countries, you see that the holy Qur'an is changed into a ceremonial book among them.

Only its words are nicely broadcasted by a few speakers and are seen on glazed tiles of mosques as architecture. It is used for making new house blissful, or for protecting a traveler and healing patients, or at most it is recited for its reward.

Even when some persons argue by using the holy Qur'an, their aim is to prove their prejudgments by the help of its verses and their interpretation is according to their personal opinion.

In some Islamic countries, there are great schools that are named 'Schools of Memorization of the Holy Qur'an'. In these schools girls and boys are memorizing the Qur'an, while their thoughts are sometimes influenced by Western and Eastern countries and their laws are borrowed from some none-Islamic countries and the Qur'an is applied only for covering their wrong actions.

Yes, today the Prophet (S) also cries:

*"O my Lord! Verily my people treated this Qur'an with neglect."*

It is neglected from the aspects of content, thought, and reforming programs.

## **Some Points**

1. This noble verse refers to the complaint of the Prophet (S) and, because he is 'mercy for both worlds', he does not cast curse.

2. Imam Rida (as) said:

*"The reason that we read the holy Qur'an in ritual prayers is for paying attention to the Qur'an."*

3. An Islamic narration recommends to read 50 verses of the Qur'an everyday and your aim must not be reaching the end of Surah. Read slowly and strike your heart with reading the Qur'an. Whenever you are surrounded by temptations, as night engulfed you, resort to the Qur'an.<sup>34</sup>

4. It seems proper to mention a few confessions of some great persons about the holy Qur'an how it is neglected:

A) Mulla Sadra (may his spirit be sanctified!) says in the introduction of Surah Al-Waqi'ah:

*I read books of many philosophers so that I thought I knew all things and I became an important man, but when I began to perceive a little of the true nature of situations, I found out that I knew no real and true knowledge.*

*At the end of my lifetime, I embarked on pondering the Holy Qur'an and the narrations of the Prophet (S) and his family. I became certain that what I had done up to then was baseless, for during my life I was standing in shadow instead of being under light.*

*I became wholeheartedly sorrowful, and, then divine favour was bestowed on me and I became familiar with the secrets of the holy Qur'an and I began to comment on and ponder the Qur'an.*

*I knocked the door of revelation until curtains were taken away and doors were opened and I saw that angels say to me:*

***"...Peace be unto you! You are good, therefore enter it to dwell therein (forever 35."***<sup>36</sup>

B) Fiyz-i-Kashani (may his spirit be sanctified!) says:

*I wrote books and treatises and I researched, but none of them was remedy for my pain and no water I found to quench my thirst. I got worried about myself, and I resorted to Allah and repented so that Allah led me by means of pondering the Qur'an and Islamic traditions.<sup>37</sup>*

C) Imam Khomeini (may his spirit be sanctified!) says that he regrets that he has not spend all of his life for the holy Qur'an and he advised the students of universities and the students of seminaries to set the Qur'an and its various dimensions as ultimate aim in all courses, lest in the end of life they do not regret for youth days.<sup>38</sup>

D) The relationship of man and the heavenly book must be perpetual and in all aspects, for the word 'Hijr' is used when there is relationship between man and that thing.<sup>39</sup> So, we must try our best to pay attention to the holy Qur'an and set it our scientific and practical base in all dimensions of life so that the dear Prophet (S) gets satisfied.

E) Abandoning reading the Qur'an, preferring other books to the holy Qur'an, not setting it as pivot, not pondering it, not teaching it to others, and not applying it in practice are extensions of negligence of the Qur'an. Even one who learns the Qur'an, but does not pay attention to it, does not look at it, and does not feel responsible for it, has neglected the Qur'an.<sup>40</sup>

## **Surah al-Furqan – Verse 31**

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا مِّنَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ هَادِيًّا وَنَصِيرًا

**31 “And thus We appointed for every prophet an enemy from among the sinners, and sufficient is your Lord as a Guide and a Helper.”**

The call that expresses and seeks truth has always been faced with opponents. In struggles of truth with falsehood, man needs two things; guidance and power. Of course, guidance and help are of dignities of Allah’s Lordship.

So in this noble verse, for sympathizing with the Prophet (S), who faced atrocious position of enemies, the Qur’an says:

**“And thus We appointed for every prophet an enemy from among the sinners...”**

(It is not only you who have faced severe animosity of this group, all prophets were in such positions that a group of wrongdoers stood against them.)

But the holy Prophet (S) is not alone and without supporter; as the verse continues saying:

**“...and sufficient is your Lord as a Guide and a Helper.”**

Neither can their temptations mislead the holy Prophet (S), for Allah guides him, nor their conspiracies can defeat him, for Allah is his supporter and helper, He Whose knowledge is the supreme and His power is above all others’.

In brief we must say:

If thousands of enemy intend to kill me,  
I fear not enemy, for You are my Friend.

## **Surah al-Furqan – Verse 32**

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَاحِدَةً كَذَلِكَ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ  
وَرَتَّلْنَاهُ تَرْتِيلًا

**32. “And those who disbelieve say: ‘Why has not the Qur’an been sent down upon him all at once? Thus (is it revealed), that We may strengthen your heart by it and We have rehearsed it to you in slow, well-arranged stages, gradually.’”**

Pretext-seekers found new pretexts every moment. They sometimes said: Why is not revelation made to us? Sometimes they said: Why do not we see angel of revelation? Why does not the Prophet have money, palace, and gold? And sometimes they said:

### ***“Why is not the Qur’an revealed to him all at once?”***

The Qur’an has got two kinds of revelation: A) Instant revelation on the heart of the Prophet (S) that occurred in the night of Power, when all of the Qur’an was sent down to the Prophet’s heart. B) Gradual revelation that the Qur’an was sent down on special occasions during 23 years.

Any way, the word ‘Kaṭā’alika’ (thus) is the answer of them, that is, the advantage and wisdom of gradual revelation of the Qur’an is to make the heart of the Prophet (S) stronger and to make memorization and keeping of the Qur’an easier.

Moreover, there are abrogating and abrogated verses in the Qur’an and every answer must be exactly for a question and these are not consistent with instant revelation of the Qur’an. In addition, the Prophet (S) was illiterate and he did not know writing and reading, so to make him understand the revelation, the Qur’an was sent down gradually, while Moses and Christ knew writing and reading.

### **Explanations**

1. Gradual revelation of the Qur’an is the factor of continual and permanent relation of the Prophet (S) with the source of revelation and it makes him stable in his way. It shows that prophethood is not a temporal matter.
2. A religion that is comprehensive and enlivened has a strong relation with events and occasions. And events and occasions occur gradually, not instantly.
3. To obey all orders and to avoid prohibitions instantly was difficult for common people and it caused them distress and constriction.
4. Since each Surah and verse of the Qur’an was by itself, a miracle, its gradual revelation was as a continual miracle and each miracle soothed the heart of the Prophet (S) against enemies’ oppression.
5. There is much difference between revelation of each verse according to special position and instant revelation of all verses regardless of situations.
6. Some verses are the answers of people’s questions.

Therefore, a question must first be raised and then its answer be given. Some verses and judgments were descended for a certain period; so a verse must be sent down to annul them.

### **Slowly and Distinctly Reading of the Qur’an (Tartil)**

The Prophet (S) said:

*“Tartil is to recite the Qur’an distinctly (not like reading poem and prose). When you reach its wits, you stop and purify your Heart and spirit. Your aim of recitation must not be reaching the end of Surah.”*<sup>41</sup>

Imam Ali (as) said:

*“The purpose of Tartil is to stop when it needs full stop and articulation of letters.”<sup>42</sup>*

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

*“Tartil is to recite the Qur’an beautifully and slowly. It is to stop and to resort to Allah, when reciting the verses that are about the Fire and punishment. It is to pray and to ask Allah the Heaven, when verses about the Paradise are read.”<sup>43</sup>*

In the end, it is understood from all narrations and the words of commentators that Tartil is to recite the holy Qur’an slowly and in proper order.

Reading must be done verse by verse and they must not be mixed, so that the verses can enter the conscience of society and used by next generations. Therefore the future ages can use the light of its guidance and make dark places of their life lighted by it.

## Surah al-Furqan – Verse 33

وَلَا يَأْتُونَكَ بِمَثَلٍ إِلَّا جِئْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَأَحْسَنَ تَفْسِيرًا

**33. “And they shall not bring to you any similitude, but We bring to you the truth and the best explanation (of it).”**

Addressing the Prophet (S), the Qur’an implies that whether the words of the opponents are false so Allah presents true words to the Prophet (S), or their words are true then Allah brings some better and more comprehensive words of the truth for the Prophet (S).

To put more emphasis on this answer, the Qur’an implies that they bring no similitude to him, or they mention no words to weaken his call, but Allah brings the Truth as against it, and better than their similitude as argument.

The verse says:

**“And they shall not bring to you any similitude, but We bring to you the truth and the best explanation (of it).”**

### Explanations

1. The Qur’an is a comprehensive book which answers all faults that are found with it by the opponents.

2. Prophets were struggling with opponents and prophets treated them by means of reasonable argumentation.
3. Others' words and complains are to be answered with some better words.

## Surah al-Furqan – Verse 34

الَّذِينَ يُحْشَرُونَ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ أُولَٰئِكَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا

**34. “Those who shall be mustered upon their faces unto Hell, they are in a worse place and as to path, most astray.”**

The most misled person is the one who finds faults with prophets and makes difficulty for them. Therefore, in this noble verse, it is implied that after their finding faults, stubborn and biased foes had made inference that Muhammad and his followers, with this book and these programs, were the worst people of Allah (we seek Allah's protection!).

Since saying this matter was not consistent with the eloquent and decorous words of the Qur'an, Allah answers this without mentioning the matter.

It says:

**“Those who shall be mustered upon their faces unto Hell, they are in a worse place and as to path, most astray.”**

Yes, the result of men's programs and deeds will be shown in the Hereafter; when some persons are as tall as cedar and their faces shine like moon. They go toward the Paradise with long steps and fast.

On the contrary, there are persons who are lying on the ground and angels of punishment are dragging them to the Hell. This different destiny shows who had been misled and evil and who had been guided and happy!

Moreover, commentators are of different opinions about the purpose of the Qur'anic phrase which says:

**‘...shall be mustered upon their faces...’:**

Some commentators have rendered as the verse means literally. They have said that the angels of punishment drag them to the Hell while their faces will be on the ground. On one hand, it shows how abject and wretched they are, for in the world they were very self-conceited and proud and they considered themselves better than other people.

On the other hand, it is an embodiment of their aberration in this world, for such a person that is dragged in this way can never see ahead and is unaware of what is happening around him.

But some other commentators have taken it with its ironical meaning; sometimes they say that this sentence ironically implies their inner longing for this world, that is, for the sake that their heart still longs for this world, they are dragged toward Hell.

1. The Prophet (S) in a tradition said:

*“On the day of Resurrection, Fire speaks with three persons: ruler, singer, and the rich. It says to the ruler that Allah had bestowed you palace and sovereignty and you did not judge rightly and then the Fire swallows him as a bird swallows the sesame.*

*It says to the singer that you adorned yourself for people and struggled against Allah by committing sin and disobeying Him, and then it swallows him. It says to the rich that Allah had bestowed you a lot of blessings and wealth, and you did not lend poor and needy people who wanted a little money and then it swallows him, too.”<sup>44</sup>*

2. Imam Sadiq (as) has narrated from his ancestors that Imam Ali (as) said:

*“In the Hell there is a mill that crushes five things into flour. Do not you ask what is its flour?”*

Then he was asked what its flour was.

He said:

*“It is the corrupted and evil scientists, evil and vice singers, tyrannical rulers, treacherous ministers, and lying Gnostics. Verily in the Hell there is a city that is called ‘Hasinah’. Do not you ask me what is in that city?”*

Someone asked:

*“What is there in it O’ Amir-al-Mu’minin?”*

He said:

*“There are hands of those who broke an oath of allegiance.”<sup>45</sup>*

3. Imam Ali (as) said:

*“Fear the Fire whose heat is severe and it is very deep. Its adornment is iron and its beverage is pus.”<sup>46</sup>*

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1. Majma‘-ul-Bayḥīn

2. Surah An-Nūr, No. 24, verse 25

3. Surah Yūnus, No. 10, verse 7
4. The current Surah, verse 7
5. Bihār, Vol. 8, P. 317
6. Surah Qaf, No. 40, verse 49
7. Surah Al-Hijr, No. 15, verse 80
8. Al-Maʿzūn, Fhkr-i-Raʿzī, Fī Zālī, and Abulfutūh
9. Safīnat-ul-Bihār, Vol. 1, P. 227
10. The commentary of Ali ibn ʿIbrāhīm, narrated from Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 2, P. 9
11. Kanz-ul-ʿUmūl, Vol. 14, P. 645
12. Fī Zilī, Vol. 6, P. 154
13. Surah Al-Maʿrij, No. 70, verse 4
14. The commentary of Qurtabī, Vol. 1, P. 4739
15. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 255
16. Surah Al-Mursalāt, No. 77, verse 36
17. Majmaʿ-ul-Bayān, the explanation upon the verse
18. Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 39
19. Safīnat-ul-Bihār, Vol. 2, P. 27
20. Bihār-ul-ʿAnwār, Vol. 74, P. 197
21. Bihār-ul-ʿAnwār, Vol. 74, P. 198
22. Bihār-ul-ʿAnwār, Vol. 74, P. 195
23. Qurar-ul-Hikam, Vol. 3, P. 261
24. Bihār-ul-ʿAnwār, Vol. 107, P. 111
25. Bihār-ul-ʿAnwār, Vol. 74, P. 187
26. ʿUsūl-i-Kāfī, Vol. 4, P. 452
27. Qurar-ul-Hikam, Vol. 3, P. 436
28. Kanz-ul-ʿUmmūl, Vol. 9, Had. 34844
29. Bihār-ul-ʿAnwār, Vol. 74, P. 191
30. ʿUsūl-i-Kāfī, Vol. 4, P. 453
31. Bihār-ul-ʿAnwār, Vol. 74, P. 166
32. Bihār-ul-ʿAnwār, Vol. 74, P. 186
33. Qurar-ul-Hikam
34. Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn
35. Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39, verse 73
36. Introduction to the commentary on Surah Al-Wāqīʿah
37. Risālat-ul-ʿInsāf
38. Sahīfah Nūr, Vol. 20, P. 20
39. Mufradāt by Rāqib
40. Al-Munār, the Commentary explained upon the verse
41. Majmaʿ-ul-Bayān and Nūr-uth-Thaqalayn P. 15
42. Kanz-ud-Daqīyiq and Manhāj-us-Sādiqīn
43. Majmaʿ-ul-Bahrayn, explanation about the word /rattala/
44. Bihār, Vol. 8, P. 285
45. Ibid P. 311
46. Ibid P. 206, taken from Nahj-ul-Balīqah

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