

The Divine Declaration

فَقَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ : يَا مَلَائِكَتِي وَيَا سُكَّانَ سَمَاوَاتِي إِنِّي مَا خَلَقْتُ سَمَاءً مَبْنِيَّةً وَلَا أَرْضاً مَدْحِيَّةً وَلَا قَمَراً مُنِيراً وَلَا شَمْساً مُضِيئَةً وَلَا فَلَكَاً يَدُورُ وَلَا بَحَراً يَجْرِي وَلَا فَلَكَاً يَسْرِي إِلَّا فِي مَحَبَّةِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْخَمْسَةِ الَّذِينَ هُمْ تَحْتَ الْكِسَاءِ

Meanwhile, Allah the Almighty and All-majestic said, "O My angels and inhabitants of My heavens! Verily, I have not created any well-established sky, extended land, glowing moon, shining sun, revolving planet, flowing ocean, or moving on ark except for the love of these five (individuals) who are now under the cloak."

The Prophet (SA) has just supplicated to his Lord after his members of the Household – Ali, Fatima, Hasan, and Husain – have gathered under the cloak with him at this momentous and historical occasion. The grand request for thorough purification was made and Allah (SWT) sees and hears the prayer of his most close servant on the face of earth. What happens next? And what do we expect for Allah (SWT) to do?

In regards to the other requests such as blessings, benedictions, and pleasure etc., they have been granted to the Prophet (SA) as we discussed. But what about this grand and unique request for purification?

The *Tradition of the Cloak* now changes scenes and the speaker now is none other than the Almighty Creator. He (SWT) addresses His speech to the angels and the inhabitants of the heavens. One may wonder how the narrator who is Lady Fatima (AS) received knowledge that this dialogue took place between Allah (SWT) and the angels such that she is narrating the incident as if she is witnessing it.

Could this be a sign or hint of divinely bestowed authority (Wilayah Takweeniya) which granted her the knowledge of the unseen? That is something to be pondered over and Allah (SWT) knows better.

One may also question why the angels are being addressed when the monologue which just took place was a supplication by the Prophet (SWT) who directed his prayer to his Lord. Hence, we should expect

that if Allah (SWT) responds back then He would respond back directly to Prophet Muhammad (SA). But that didn't happen in that exact fashion. Instead, Allah (SWT) chooses to direct His Words to the angels for two reasons.

The first reason is so that they and the other creatures in the heavens may act as witnesses and testify to what Allah (SWT) is about to say. And the second reason is that Allah (SWT) has directed His Speech to the angels, but in reality, His Words are directly to us and to all of mankind till the end of time. As the Arab proverb goes, "The speech is directed to you, O' Neighbor". Allah (SWT) is intentionally creating an opportunity to pronounce His divine declaration that will ring in the ears of all those who come across this unique tradition.

Allah (SWT) presents seven of His greatest creations which any person can relate to and recognize, and they are the:

- 1) Heavens
- 2) Land
- 3) Moon
- 4) Sun
- 5) Planet
- 6) Ocean
- 7) A sailing Ark

If we take a look around us, we will notice that we are standing on land and above us are the heavens. During the day, the sun shines and brings light to us, and during the night, the crescent of the moon becomes apparent in the beginning of every lunar month. We recognize that the home address that we live in is the Earth which is one out of nine planets that the Almighty God created.

And one of the key resources of life without which the creatures and plants would not live is water, and the source of water is the rainfall which gathers into oceans and seas. It is interesting to note that the seventh creation which Allah (SWT) mentions – a sailing Ark – is different in nature compared to the other creations which He (SWT) mentioned such as the planet and the ocean.

An Ark is a vehicle of transportation which is man-made but it cannot proceed and sail in the ocean without the availability of wind to push the ship forward in the right direction that the sailor is intending to sail and in the presence of appropriate weather that does not impede the journey of the Ark. But how can the wind be controlled and who determines what the weather will be?

Surely, it is Allah (SWT) who is the Almighty Creator and the One who makes the impossible possible and the incapable capable. The reason why Allah (SWT) mentions a sailing Ark is to present an example of a man-made creation which is dependent on Allah's Power and Will as is the case with all other creations.

In this manner, Allah (SWT) has included in His seven examples of creation the most important and the most comprehensive such that nothing is excluded, and He (SWT) describes each of those creations with its most obvious characteristic or function that we as humans can identify and recognize.

Allah (SWT) begins His speech by making a negating statement “*I have not created*”; and this method of expression conveys a sense of urgency and importance to what He (SWT) is about to say and that is: “*I have not created any well-established sky, extended land, glowing moon, shining sun, revolving planet, flowing ocean, or moving on ark except...*”.

Allah (SWT) could have simply and straightforwardly stated the fact and then the reason behind it, as in “*I have created such and such so that...*”. But He doesn’t do that; rather Allah (SWT) utilizes a more eloquent way of speech to give a powerful introduction for the key point that He (SWT) is about to deliver.

What is that reason which the Almighty Creator has created the universe with all the creation in it? What is the exception which Allah (SWT) has made without which He wouldn’t have created any of His creation? Certainly it is a grand statement that Allah (SWT) is making and anyone hearing this powerful declaration should open their ears and eyes to what He (SWT) is about to convey. The answer Allah (SWT) provides is:

إلا في محبة هؤلاء الخمسة الذين هم تحت الكساء

“..except for the love of these five (individuals) who are now under the cloak.”

Who are those five individuals who are loved by Allah (SWT)? The Almighty Creator identifies them with one phrase “*those who are now under the cloak*”. At this point, we begin to understand the significance behind the gathering under the cloak, and the purpose behind the *Tradition of the Cloak* becomes obvious.

Allah (SWT) has intentionally planned the sequence of events which took place so far where Lady Fatima (AS) receives each one of her purified family and they each seek the permission from the Prophet (SA) to enter the cloak, after the Prophet himself had requested his daughter to bring a cloak to cover him due to physical discomfort he felt, and all these seemingly unimportant details were for the purpose of setting the stage for a grand event and an important declaration.

The five personalities under the cloak whom Allah (SWT) is referring to are none other than Prophet Muhammad, Lady Fatima, Imam Ali, Imam Hasan, and Imam Husain (may Allah be pleased with them)! They are the creations whom Allah (SWT) has created the rest of the universe for their sake.

They are the best of creations in Allah’s eyes. They are the love of Allah (SWT) and the most beloved to Him. They were five in number who were alive at that time but their total number are fourteen which

includes nine members from the descendants of Imam Husain (AS) who were not present under that cloak since they were not yet alive. The five individuals under the cloak in fact represent all the fourteen divine personalities whom Allah (SWT) has chosen and preferred over the whole universe.

How great is their status and how high is their station is such that the Almighty Creator Himself has publicly expressed His eternal Love for them that has translated itself into action – the creation of the whole universe! How beautiful is that relationship between the Master and the Servant – the Creator and the Creature, such that the strong bond of love and admiration between them has exemplified itself in such a manner that the Lord of the earth and heavens have decided to make a grand announcement confessing the love relationship and the deep affection which no words can properly describe or draw a picture of.

It is a love that is unmatched, a relationship that has no similarity, and an example that is the model for all examples. So great and intense is that divine love that it is narrated by a number of companions including Ibn Abbas who testified that he saw the Prophet (SA) enter in the state of prostration (Sujood) five consecutive times without performing genuflection (Rukoo’).

So Ibn Abbas asked him about the reason and the Prophet (SA) answered, *“Yes, Jibrael came to me and said ‘O Muhammad, the Almighty Allah loves Ali and so I prostrated and raised my head. Then he said ‘The Almighty Allah loves Fatima’ and so I prostrated and raised my head. Then he said ‘The Almighty Allah loves Hasan’ and so I prostrated and raised my head. Then he said ‘The Almighty Allah loves Husain’ and so I prostrated and raised my head. Then Jibrael said to me ‘The Almighty Allah loves those who love them and so I prostrated and raised my head.’”* (Mohadaraat Al Odabaa’)

The profound meaning which Allah (SWT) declares in the *Tradition of the Cloak* has also been conveyed in a sacred narration as we cited earlier where Allah (SWT) says, *“If it was not for you Oh Prophet, I would not have created the planets and God’s analogues”*.

It has also been cited in the book *Shifaa Al Sodoor* that Ali ibn Abi Talib (AS) heard that the Prophet (SA) said that Allah (SWT) has said in a sacred narration: *“O Ahmad, by My Honor and Majesty, if it were not for you, I would not have created my land nor my heavens, and I would not have raised this celestial green, nor have made this land flat, nor have created the heavens and earth nor created a length or width...”*

There are a number of Sunni narrations which are in agreement with the idea that Allah (SWT) has not created the creation except for the Prophet (although these narrations do not include his holy household) such as the following three traditions:

Hadith 1

Al-Hakim in his *Mustadrak*, Baihaqi in *Dalail an-Nubuwwah*, Tabarani in his *Kabeer*, Abu Na’eem in his

Hilya and Ibn Asakir in *Tarikh Damishq* report that Umar ibn al-Khattab relates that:

The Prophet (SA) said: “Allah said: When Adam ate from the forbidden tree, he asked: O Allah! I ask you for the sake of Muhammad to forgive me. Allah said: O Adam! How do you recognize Muhammad when I have not yet created him? Adam said: O Allah! When you created me and blew into me the spirit, I lifted my head and saw written on the ‘Arsh "*La ilaaha illallah Muhammadur Rasoolullah*". So, I got to know that you would only join your name with him who is most beloved to you. Allah (SWT) then said: O Adam! You have spoken the truth. Indeed Muhammad is more beloved to me than anything and when you asked me for his sake, I pardoned you. If Muhammad was not in existence, I would not have created you” (also narrated by Imam Subki in *Shifaa as-Siqam* and Shihab in *Naseem*)

Hadith 2

Hakim in *Mustadrak* and Abu as-Shaykh in *Tabaqaat al-Isfahani*’ in a report from Abdullah ibn Abbas that:

“Allah revealed to Prophet ‘Isa ‘ (AS) that: O ‘Isa! Have faith (*imaan*) in Muhammad and order your Ummah to do the same. If Muhammad was not in existence, I would not have created Adam nor would I have made heaven or hell”. (also narrated by Shaykh Taqi ad-Din Subki in *Shifaa as-Siqam* and Shaykh al-Islam al-Bulqini in his *Fatawa* and Ibn Hajar in *Afdal al-Qur’an*).

Hadith 3

Ibn Asakir reports from Salman Al Muhammadi (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said:

“Jibra’il came to the Holy Prophet (SA) and said that Allah says: I have not created anyone who is more honored to me than you. I have created the world and all that is therein so that they may know the rank that you possess. I would not have created the world if I had not created you”.

For those who belittle or mitigate the status of the Prophet’s household, this divine declaration about the purpose of creation is essentially a ‘wake-up call’ which elevates their status and remove any doubts regarding their position in front of Allah (SWT). And for those believers who are already blessed with their love and Wilayah in their hearts, this declaration further intensifies their love and status in our eyes and leaves us with a feeling of guilt that we have not given them their due rights of love, veneration, and service.

Furthermore, this divine declaration makes us realize that if Allah the Almighty Creator proved His Love to these selected personalities by offering nearly everything to them when He (SWT) didn’t have to, then shouldn’t *we* as God’s servants and the followers of the AhluBayt (AS) exert all our efforts to serve their cause, defend them, prove our love to them, and propagate their ideologies to the best of our abilities, aside from the fact that it is an obligation on us?

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