

Section 1

Surah Al-'An'am, Verse 1

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمَاتِ وَالنُّورَ ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

1. "(All) praise belongs to Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth and appointed darkness and light; yet those who disbelieve hold (others) as equal with their Lord."

In the whole text of the Qur'an, the Arabic word /nur/ (light) has been mentioned in the singular form while its opposite term, /zulumat/ (darkness), has occurred in its plural form. The concerning reason is that the 'Truth' is only one, but the false ways are many. 'Light' is the secret of unity but 'darkness' is the cause of dispersion.

Therefore, the first verse of this Surah points to the system of existence, the second verse hints to the creation of man; and the third verse refers to the deeds and behavior of human beings.

"(All) praise belongs to Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth and appointed darkness and light; yet those who disbelieve hold (others) as equal with their Lord."

And, as Hadrat Ali (as) has said, this verse is an answer to three groups of the deluded people:

A) The materialists, who deny the creation and temporal contingency (phenomenally).

"...created the heavens ..."

B) Dualists, who believe that 'light' and 'darkness' have two separate origins.¹

"....and appointed darkness and light ..."

C) Disbelievers, who associate others as partners and equal with Allah.²

"... yet, those who disbelieve hold (others) as equal with their Lord."

Surah Al-'An'am, Verse 2

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ طِينٍ ثُمَّ قَضَىٰ أَجَلًا وَأَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى عِنْدَهُ ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ تَمْتَرُونَ

2. "He it is Who created you from clay, then decreed a term (for your life) and the term is fixed with Him, yet still you doubt."

In the previous verse, extroversive phenomena and the creation of the heavens and the earth were mentioned. Here, in this verse, the creation of Man and the innate affairs are referred to.

More than twenty times the term of /ajalin musamma/ (the appointed end) have been stated in the Qur'an.

Concerning the life's final term, Allah has appointed two kinds of time for humankind. One of them is so certain that if all protections be fulfilled, too, the course of lifetime will be consumed and, like the oil of a torch, it will be finished.

The second divine appointed time is concerned to our own conduct. It is like an oil lamp that contains enough oil but we put it in the current of a storm.

In the Islamic literature, deeds such as visiting ones kin, free will offering, alms, and supplications are recorded as the factors that cause the lifetime to be prolonged; while some actions like break off connection with one's kindred and injustice have been introduced as the cause of shortening the lifetime of the one.

It is narrated from Ibn-'Abbas that Allah has set two kinds of 'appointed end' for humankind. One of them is from birthday until death, and the other is from death until the day of Resurrection.

By his deeds, a person may sometimes decrease from one and increase the time of the other.

Therefore, the conclusion of the life's final term of no person is changeable.

The verse, addressing the infidels, implies that such people, who are polytheists, are doubtful about the Creator Who has created man from this worthless origin, viz. clay, and Who has passed him from these amazing and wonderful stages.

"He it is Who created you from clay, then decreed a term (for your life) and the term is fixed with Him, yet still you doubt."

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

"Allah has created Adam from clay, and He has prohibited clay for his progeny to eat."

In another tradition the Imam (as) has said:

*"The one who is greedy in eating clay, he has surely taken part in shedding his own blood."*³

Surah Al-'An'am, Verse 3

وَهُوَ اللَّهُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّكُمْ وَجَهْرَكُمْ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُونَ

3. "And He is Allah in the heavens and in the earth! He knows your secret and your open, and He knows what you earn."

In answer to those who consider a separate god for every type of thing, such as god of rain, god of war, god of peace, god of sky, and the like of them⁴, the verse says:

"And He is Allah in the heavens and in the earth! ..."

It is obvious that the One Who dominates everywhere and in whose authority is the devise of everything, the Omnipresent, knows all the secret and concealed things. So, it is such that in the next sentence, the verse says:

"... He knows your secret and your open, and He knows what you earn."

The Holy Prophet (S) said:

*"Allah revealed to Abraham, saying: 'O' Ibrahim ! I am Aware and I like the aware ones'."*⁵

Surah Al-'An'am, Verses 4 - 5

وَمَا تَأْتِيهِمْ مِّنْ آيَةٍ مِّنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا كَانُوا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ

فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوا بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِيهِمْ أَنْبَاءُ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ

4. ***"There never came unto them any Sign from the Signs of their Lord but they turned away from it."***

5. ***"So they indeed belied the truth when it came unto them, therefore very soon the (bitter) tidings will come to them of what they used to mock at."***

As it was mentioned before, the words stated in Surah Al-'An'am mostly address polytheists. The fact is that the Qur'an applies kinds of different means to inform them might be they become aware.

This verse points to the pagans' mood of obstinacy, heedlessness, and arrogance against the truth and the signs of Allah. It implies that they are so obstinate and disrespectful that whatever sign out of Allah's signs they see they immediately turn aside from it. The verse says:

"There never came unto them any Sign from the Signs of their Lord but they turned away from it."

This quality was not confined to the Age of Ignorance and the pagans of Arab. At the present time, even, there are many persons who do not suffer the trouble of only one hour research and investigation about their Lord and the divine religion. So, it is evident that when they come across a book or a passage in this field, they do not study it.

Moreover, if a person speaks with them upon the matter, they usually do not listen to him. These people are some ignorant and unaware arrogant ones who may sometimes appear in society in the form of scientists.

Then, the next verse points to the consequence of this very action of theirs, and says:

"So they indeed belied the truth when it came unto them....."

It is in a case that if they contemplated carefully over the Divine verses, they would see the truth very well, and recognize it and believe in it. The verse continues saying:

"... therefore very soon the (bitter) tidings will come to them of what they used to mock at."

In fact, the two above-mentioned verses refer to three stages of infidelity where, stage by stage, they are intensified.

At first, it is the stage of turning away. Then there comes the stage of belying the Divine verses. And, after that, there is the stage of mocking the facts and Signs of Allah.

Surah Al-'An'am, Verse 6

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنْ قَرْنٍ مَكَّانَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا لَمْ نُمْكِنْ لَكُمْ
وَأَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِدْرَارًا وَجَعَلْنَا الْأَنْهَارَ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ
بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَأَنْشَأْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا آخَرِينَ

6. "Have they not considered how many a generation We destroyed before them, whom We had established in the earth (to the extent) that We have not established you, and We sent abundant (water down from) the sky upon them and made the rivers flow beneath them? Yet We destroyed them for their sins, and raised up after them another generation."

We must take an example from the history and fate of others.

"Have they not considered ..."

This style is one of the training methods of the Qur'an by which it states some factual and teaching stories.

The retribution of those who abuse the divine facilities given to them in this world is destruction.

"... How many a generation We destroyed before them...."

Besides the chastisement in the Hereafter, Allah punishes the sinners in the present world, too.

"... Yet We destroyed them for their sins...."

The powerful people should not think that they are always in comfort in the world. The Lord punishes them and substitutes some others in their place.

"... whom We had established in the earth (to the extent) that We have not established you, and We sent abundant (water down from) the sky upon them and made the rivers flow beneath them? ..."

Thus, the cause of all inflictions are people's own deeds.

"... Yet We destroyed them for their sins, and raised up after them another generation."

The Qur'anic term /qarn/ is used for calling a community who had been utterly destroyed so that none of them remained after them⁶.

All people who live contemporarily are also called in Arabic /qarn/. They are usually a generation living a length of time about 60 years or 80 years or 100 years⁷.

Surah Al-'An'am, Verse 7

وَلَوْ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ كِتَابًا فِي قِرْطَاسٍ فَلَمَسُوهُ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ لَقَالُوا الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ هَٰذَا إِلَّا
سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ

7. "And had We sent down unto you a book written on a paper, so that they touched it with their hands, certainly (still) the disbelievers would have said: 'This is naught but manifest sorcery.' "

Some of pagans used to say that they might believe when a written paper accompanied with an angel was sent down to them. But they told a lie, and they were seeking an excuse.

This idea means that the circle of obstinacy of such people have become so vastly expanded that they reject the most clear perceptible things, and refrain from submitting to them under the pretext of manifest sorcery.

The verse says:

"And had We sent down unto you a book written on a paper, so that they touched it with their hands, certainly (still) the disbelievers would have said: 'This is naught but manifest sorcery.' "

Surah Al-'An'am, Verse 8

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ وَلَوْ أَنزَلْنَا مَلَكًا لَّقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ ثُمَّ لَا يُنْظَرُونَ

8. "And they said: ' Why has not an angel been sent down to him? And if We had sent down an angel, the matter would have certainly been determined, and then they would not be granted any respite."

The disbelievers protested why there were not sent down an angel to the Prophet (S) so openly that they could see him with their own eyes and, consequently, they might attest his prophet hood.

"And they said: 'Why has not an angel been sent down to him? ...'"

Then, in order to show that their disobedience has reached to its climax, the verse implies that had *Allah* sent down an angel as they wished, they would not have believed. So, the divine wisdom and common good required that Allah *should* not respite them any more, and would immediately involve them in a punishment to destroy them. The verse itself says:

"... And if we had sent down an angel, the matter would have certainly been determined, and then they would not be granted any respite."

Surah Al-'An'am, Verse 9

وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَاهُ مَلَكًا لَّجَعَلْنَاهُ رَجُلًا وَلَلَبَسْنَا عَلَيْهِم مَّا يَلْبَسُونَ

9. "And had We appointed him (Our Messenger) an angel, We would certainly have made him as a man, and We would certainly have made confused to them what they (now) make confused."

If an angel were to become an example of human beings, how could it be the symbol of those persons who are in the storm of their low instincts, food and lusts?

Therefore, the verse may mean that if the Prophet were an angel, he would appear in the guise of a man so that they could see him. This matter would cause people to be led into an error whether he is a human being or an angel.

"And had We appointed him (Our Messenger) an angel, We would certainly have made him as a man, and We would certainly have made confused to them what they (now) make confused."

However, for the purpose of training and invitation, people should be given some symbols from among themselves, so that those symbols take the lead in invitations and actions. Besides, people and angels have not a general resemblance with each other.

Again, according to the words of the Qur'an, the prophet of *Allah* should be a 'male'.

Thus, Allah's ways of treatment have been arranged wisely, and they do not change with the desires of this one or that one.

Surah Al-'An'am, Verse 10

وَلَقَدْ اسْتَهْزَىٰ بِرُسُلٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَحَاقَ بِالَّذِينَ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُمْ مَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ

10. *"And certainly some Messengers were mocked at, before you, then the retribution which they used to ridicule fell on them.*

This verse can be counted as a soothing for the Messenger of Allah (S). The evidence is that, firstly, the former messengers of *Allah* were mocked, too; secondly, the mockers will be confronted with not only the chastisement of the Hereafter but also the Divine wrath in the present world. Their own dangerous plots will surround the plotters themselves.

The verse says:

"And certainly some Messengers were mocked at before you, then the retribution which they used to ridicule fell on them."

However, mockery is one of the great sins that have been promised punishment for.

Imam Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) said:

*"The most loser of people is the one who is able to tell the truth but he does not."*⁸

1. Tafsir-ul-Kashit, vol. 2, P. 158

2. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 1, P. 701

3. Safinat-ul-Bihar, vol. 2, p. 103

4. This is the very belief of 'masters of species' which was current in ancient Greece.

5. Al-Muhajjat-ul-Bayda', vol. 1, p. 15

6. cited in Aqrab-ul-Mawarid

7. Cited in commentary books entitled Al-Mizan, and Tafsir-ul-Kabir, by Fakhr-i-Razi

8. Qurar-ul-Hikam, No. 3178