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Section 1: The Qur'an Ever Protected by Allah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, The Merciful

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 1-2

الر تِلْكَ ءَايَاتُ الْكِتَابِ وَقُرْءَانٍ مُّبِينٍ

رُّبَمَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ كَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ

1. "Alif 'A', Lam 'L', Ra 'R'. These are the verses of the Book and (of) a clear Qur'an (that makes things manifest)."
2. "Often will those who disbelieved wish that they were Muslims."

We notice once again that this noble Surah begins with the abbreviated letters of Alif, Lam, Ra, which exhibit the combination of these great celestial words, that lead all men towards happiness, are made up of simple alphabetical letters, the same raw material which are at the disposal of all human beings even children aged 2 or 3 years.

This is the utmost kind of miraculous performance that such a unique feat should be produced out of such ordinary kinds of material.

Therefore, immediately next to them, it has been added:

"Alif 'A', Lam 'L', Ra 'R'. These are the verses of the Book and (of) a clear Qur'an (that makes things manifest)."

That is: these are the verses of the celestial Book, revealed in the Qur'an, which express facts and which reveal the truth as distinguished from the untruth!

In Tafsir-i-Tabari and Majma'ul-Bayan, there has been cited a tradition implying that in Hereafter the pagans tell those Muslims who are entangled in the inferno

"*Did you also become hellish people like us, and, you were not saved by Islam?*"

While the sinful Muslims will be saved after sometime being punished, but the pagans will be remaining in the Fire of Hell for ever, saying:

"We wish we were Muslims, too."

It says:

"Often will those who disbelieved wish that they were Muslims."

Although the holy Qur'an has got a very highly esteemed position, yet it is always available for all and everybody can have access to it. At the same time, it is written in a book format and is readable by all, 'the Qur'an'.

It is for this reason that its discussions are explicit and they draw a line between right and wrong. It will be a source of credit for Islam in the future and, at the same time, it will be a source of regret for disbelievers.

Thus, those who are ridiculing Islam today, will regret tomorrow. Many a time, pagans aspire to embrace Islam, but they are involved in the affairs to the despots or entangled in their corrupt environment. Therefore, we have it in history that the Caesar of Rome decided to embrace Islam when he saw the letter of the holy Prophet of Islam (S), but he said:

"My life is in danger and my kingdom will be lost."

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 3

ذَرْهُمْ يَأْكُلُوا وَيَتَمَتَّعُوا وَيُلْهِهِمُ الاَمَلُ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ

3. "Leave them (alone) so that they may eat and enjoy themselves, and that they may be bemused by hope for they will soon know."

One can conclude from the Qur'anic phrase /ḏarhum/ which means leaving the pagans alone because of their own disobedience, while Allah has never left anyone alone since the beginning of creation and has sent them prophets to guide them, and this matter has been repeatedly dealt with in the Qur'an.

Therefore, Allah, the Magnificent, with a pounding tone in this holy verse, advises the Prophet implying that he (S) leaves these pagans alone so as they feed-themselves like four-footed animals and enjoy themselves out of the pleasures of this fleeting world, and their aspirations make them ignorant of this grave reality though they will soon find out.

The verse says:

"Leave them (alone) so that they may eat and enjoy themselves, and that they may be bemused by hope for they will soon know."

They are like animals which do not understand anything except the stable and grass and the material life, and they do not move unless they are on the look out for such things.

They are so blindfolded because of their arrogance and negligence that they are distanced from reality and engaged in their daily routine affairs which all make them unable to comprehend the real truth.

They will only understand to what extent they have been at a loss and negligence, and they will be disillusioned once they are about to see their doom in the bed of death or they are about to rise in the resurrection plain.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 4

وَمَآ أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَرْيَةٍ إِلاَّ وَلَهَا كِتَابٌ مَّعْلُومٌ

4. "And never did We destroy a township, but it had a known decree."

There will be an end to the joys and enjoyment of those who customarily rejoice themselves in this world, and once Allah wills, He is able to put an end to the pagans, perishing them at once.

However, it is Allah's way of treatment to provide all with as many respites as requires and postponement of the punishment. Therefore, we must not feel rest assured of the Divine respites thus provided for us.

"And never did We destroy a township, but it had a known decree."

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 5

مَا تَسْبِقُ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلَهَا وَمَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ

5. "No nation outstrips its term, nor can they postpone (it).

Allah's way of treatment has been such under all circumstances that He has sought to provide adequate respite for reconsideration by all and for their awakening.

He sends the means to inform all through causing painful disasters to happen, and enabling all to receive blessings one after the other. He does them both: He rewards, threatens, and He warns simultaneously so that each and everyone of the people is provided with the necessary ultimatum.

However, as soon as this duration of respite expires, the unavoidable and decisive doom awaits them all.

The verse says:

"No nation outstrips its term, nor can they postpone (it)."

Notes to Be Considered

One's fate and the calamities which ensue are of two kinds: those which are certain to happen, and those which are not so.

The deaths which are not certain to occur can be avoided by praying, giving away alms and spending in charity, and making donations as well as charitable acts. They can be altered. However, the deaths which are certain to occur are unchangeable.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 6 – 7

وَقَالُوا يَآ أَيُّهَا الَّذِي نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ إِنَّكَ لَمَجْنُونٌ

لَوْ مَا تَأْتِينَا بِالْمَلآئِكَةِ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ

6. "And they (unbelievers) said: 'O' you to whom the (Divine) Reminder has been sent down, you

are surely insane;"

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

The Arabic term /majn□n/ (insane) here does not signify 'irrational'. Rather, that means being overtaken by 'Jinns', as is the case with the word 'demoniac' which means possessed or influenced by demons or by the spirit of the demons.

During the age of Ignorance, there was a widespread common belief that poets could compose poems because of the relationship they had with the 'jinns' or 'fairies'.

In these two noble verses, cases of humiliation, ridicule, accusations, and hesitation or skepticism have been mentioned from the tongue of the pagans with respect to the Prophet (S). Employing the phrase ***'O you to whom'*** instead of ***'O Prophet!'*** exhibits a kind of humiliation.

The Arabic term /□ikr/ is some kind of ridicule when applied by the pagans considering the fact that they did not believe in revelations. The Arabic word /majn□n/ meaning 'lunatic', applied for the Prophet (S), implies accusation.

And the sentence:

"If you are of the truthful ones"

makes allusions to their skepticism regarding the prophetic mission of the Prophet (S). Moreover, the Arabic signs /'inna/ and 'Lam' in the sentence

"...you are surely insane"

as well as the Arabic structure of the 'nominative clause', all are kinds of emphasis in various ways of their speech and exhibit their deviant form of thinking.

The verse says:

"And they (unbelievers) said: 'O' you to whom the (Divine) Reminder has been sent down you are surely insane;"

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

Incidentally, the pagans regarded the descending of angels as the authenticity of the mission of the Prophet (S) though this was only a pretext, for, Allah elsewhere, in the Qur'an says:

"And even if We sent down the angels to them, and the dead spoke to them, and We mustered all things before them, (even then) they would not believe..."1

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 8

مَا نُنَزِّلُ الْمَلاَئِكَةَ إِلاَّ بِالْحَقِّ وَمَا كَانُوا إِذاً مُّنظَرِينَ

8. "We do not send angels but with the Truth, and then they would not be respited."

One can conclude from the verses of the Qur'an that whenever a miracle is performed by one of the prophets and people are heedless about that, the divine outrage may ensue. They may also be given a respite for sometime.

However, in the cases that the kind of miracle and the request for its performance is proposed by the people, such as the coming out of the she camel from inside the mountain which the disbelievers demanded from Hadrat Salih (as), or the descending of heavenly food which was requested from Jesus (as), the Divine outrage is certain to promptly happen when the people offend and they will be given no extra respite.

It says:

"We do not send angels but with the Truth, and then they would not be respited."

In the previous verse, the pagans demanded that the Prophet (S) should descend angels for them. This noble verse provides the answer that the descending of the angels is with the Truth, which requires that they descend on the qualified people.

The descent of the angels upon the indecent individuals is for no good reasons and Allah does not do anything but with the Truth.

In other words, performing of miracles is not to be regarded as a game or plaything. On the other hand, it is for proving the truth which is adequately demonstrated for those who are seeking the truth, for the Prophet of Islam (S) has demonstrated his prophetic mission with the Qur'an and other miracles.

Surah Al-Hijr – Verse 9

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

9. "Verily, We Ourself have sent down the Reminder (the Qur'an) and verily We, (Ourself) will be its Guardian".

According to verse 6, the unbelievers used to imply that it was not clear as to where the source of the Prophet's Reminder was.

In this noble verse, Allah says:

Stop hesitating! It is certainly We Who reveal the Qur'an and the Reminder upon him, and as the pagans used to stress the issue of insanity with regard to the Prophet (S), Allah (s.w.t.) attributes to His Own Sacred Essence the revelation of the Qur'an and its preservation. 2

The verse says:

"Verily, We Ourself have sent down the Reminder (the Qur'an) and verily We, (Ourself) will be its Guardian".

According to the Allah's testimony and His pledge in this verse, no changes or distortions have occurred in the Qur'an.

In its other verses as well this meaning has been referred to, among which one may name Surah Fussilat, No. 41, verse 42:

"Falsehood shall not come to it from before it nor from behind it..."

which signifies that: No untruth has any way into the Holy Qur'an.

In addition to Allah's pledge to the preservation of the Qur'an, Muslims have protected it from the beginning and have been earnest in its writing and preserving it.

They would even assign the instruction of the Qur'an as a dower for their wives, and designate it for a man's marriage as a pre-condition.

They used to recite or read it in their prayers, and there were a number of scribes who were the writers of the revelations, one of whom was Hadrat Ali (as).

The Imams, the Ahl-ul-Bayt (as), used to call people to this very Qur'an which exists now. Moreover, the tradition of Thaqalayn, quoted from the Prophet (S), provides another proof for the authenticity of the Qur'an. Sincerely, can one claim that the prophetic mission of the Prophet (S) is constant but his Book is alterable?

Surah Al-Hijr – Verses 10 - 11

وَلَقَد أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ فِي شِيَعِ الاَوَّلِينَ

وَمَا يَأْتِيهِم مِّن رَّسُولٍ إِلاَّ كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ

10. "And indeed, We sent (messengers) before you among the nations of the ancients."
11. "And there came no messenger to them, but they used to mock at him."

The Arabic term /šiya'/ signifies 'a nation' or 'a party' which are somehow bound and related to each other, whether be it a bound which is in the path of the truth, as Surah As–Saffat, No. 37 verse 83 says:

"And verily from his party was Abraham",

or be it in the path of the deviant, like Surah Al–'An'am, No. 6, verse 159 which says:

"Verily those who divided their religion and became parties..."

Here, the verse says:

"And indeed, We sent (messengers) before you among the nations of the ancients."

The aim was the ridiculing or the damaging of the prestige of the prophets so that the truth–seeking people might not assemble around them; or their aim was to compensate for their own weaknesses in face of the logic of the prophets.

The object of their ridicule was either the simple way of life of the prophets, or that of the deprived followers of them, or the breaking up of the superstitious traditions of the people.

The verse says:

"And there came no messenger to them, but they used to mock at him."

Anyway, ridicule and mockery has constantly been the way of the pagans as against the prophets, and such is the usual case that, whenever the weapon of logic is lacking, mockery will replace one's weapon.

Therefore, a preacher must never feel desperate when facing the ridicules of some people.

Surah Al–Hijr – Verses 12 – 15

كَذَلِكَ نَسْلُكُهُ فِي قُلُوبِ الْـمُجْرِمِينَ

لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَقَدْ خَلَتْ سُنَّةُ الاَوَّلِينَ

وَلَوْ فَتَحْنا عَلَيْهِم بَاباً مّـِنَ السَّمآءِ فَظَلُّوا فِيهِ يَعْرُجُونَ

لَقَالُوا إِنَّمَا سُكِّـرَتْ أَبْصَارُنَا بَلْ نَحْنُ قَوْمٌ مَّسْحُورُونَ

12. "Thus do We make it to enter into the hearts of the guilty."
13. "(But) they do not believe in it and such has been the way of the ancients."
14. "And even if We opened to them a gate from the sky, so that they ascended into it all the while,"
15. "They would definitely say: "Indeed our eyes have been blindfolded, rather we are a people bewitched."

In a few verses before, we had that the pagans requested the blissful Prophet (S) to bring forth angels for them to see.

Here, verse 14 proclaims that even if Allah opens a gateway to them from the sky so that they will ascend it and they will see the angels and other things, they will not yet believe in the Truth, for their request for seeing angels is just a pretext, and an obstinate fellow may also deny his own ascent to the sky, too.

Here are the verses:

"Thus do We make it to enter into the hearts of the guilty."

"(But) they do not believe in it and such has been the way of the ancients."

"And even if We opened to them a gate from the sky, so that they ascended into it all the while,"

Another verse of the Qur'an says:

"And had We sent a book down to you, written on a paper, so that they touched it with their own hands, certainly (still) those who disbelieved would have said: 'This is naught but a manifest sorcery'."3

Anyway, such disbelievers are so immersed in the abyss of passions, insistence, and obstinacy with respect to the 'untruth' that they if any grounds are provided for them through which they can repeatedly ascend to the sky and descend from it, they still go on saying that they have been playing magic works on them and they claim that they are a group which has been under enchantment all over, and whatever they witness is never in anyway identical with reality.

The verse says:

“They would definitely say: "Indeed our eyes have been blindfolded, rather we are a people bewitched.”

It is not surprising that man reaches such heights in proportions as regards hostilities and obstinacy. For man’s inherent nature and his untouched inner self is able to receive the factual realities and observations of the true profiles of what is real.

As a result of committing sin, having ignorance and hostility against the Truth, he will gradually adhere to what is utter ignorance and darkness. Certainly, it is possible to wipe out everything in the first stages, though once it is embedded in one’s nature, thus becoming habitual, it cannot be easily wiped out.

It is in this case that the profile of the Truth alters in man, as far as that the most rational arguments and the most explicit tangible reasons will have no impact on him, thus leading him to the denial of all the rational as well as tangible matters of life.

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1. Surah Al-’An‘ am, No. 6, verse 111

2. In this short verse, there are two kinds of emphasis employed. A series of 5 emphasis are dealt with for the revelation of the Qur’an which appear in words /’in/, /n a/, /nahnu/, /nazzal/ /na-ikr/, and a series of 5 emphasis are found in the preservation of the Qur’an in such words as: /’in/, /n a/, /lah/, /la/ and /h afiz-n/, which are obvious in the Arabic literature.
2- As for the lack of distortions of the Qur’an , there are hundreds of books and essays as well as researches written on the absence of any distortions in the Qur’an . However, it is most unfortunate that the Shi‘ites are unjustly held responsible for any idea of distortions, which is ascribed to them.
3- The tradition of Thaqalayn has been quoted from the blissful Prophet (S). That form which has been narrated by and among all of Islamic sects on various occasions is as follows:

“I am leaving behind me two weighty (very worthy and important) things among you: The book of Allah (i.e. the Qur’an) and my progeny, my Ahl-ul-Bayt. Never these two get separated from each other, and once you take recourse to the two, you will never get astray.”

4- The Qur’an is a Reminder: “…We have sent down the Reminder…”, and turning away from the Reminder and the Qur’an will lead man astray, and, hence, causes him misfortunes:

“And whoever turns away from My remembrance verily for him is a life straitened, …” (Surah TaHa, No. 20, verse 124).

The Qur’an is a Remembrance and only by the remembrance of Allah all hearts will be comforted.

The Qur’an says:

“…Behold! By Allah’s remembrance (only) the hearts are set at rest.” (Surah Ar-Ra‘d, No. 13, verse 28)

3. Surah Al-’An‘am, No. 6, verse 7

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