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Section 2: Everything in the universe belongs only to Allah

Surah Al-'Anbiya' – Verses 11 – 13

وَكَمْ قَصَمْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ كَانَتْ ظَالِمَةً وَأَنْشَأْنَا بَعْدَهَا قَوْمًا آخَرِينَ

فَلَمَّا أَحَسُّوا بَأْسَنَا إِذَا هُمْ مِنْهَا يَرْكُضُونَ

لَا تَرْكُضُوا وَارْجِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَا أُتْرِفْتُمْ فِيهِ وَمَسَاكِنِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُسْأَلُونَ

11. “And how many a town We utterly destroyed (the people of) which were iniquitous, and We raised up after them another people.”

12. “So when they felt (the coming of) Our punishment, behold, they (tried to) flee from it.”

13. “(But it was said to them) ‘Do not fly (now) and come back unto what you were made to lead easy lives in and unto your dwellings, haply you will be questioned.’”

Following the explanations about the obstinate polytheists and disbelievers, which were mentioned before, here, the Holy Qur'an refers to the fate of them in comparison with the end of former nations.

At first, it says:

“And how many a town We utterly destroyed (the people of) which were iniquitous, and We

raised up after them another people.”

Then, the Qur'an states their circumstance when the Divine chastisement is cast over their towns and they are helpless but confronting the punishment of Allah.

The Qur'an says:

“So when they felt (the coming of) Our punishment, behold, they (tried to) flee from it.”

They tried to flee from the punishment of Allah exactly like a defeated army who see the blades of the swords of the enemy above their heads and they escape every side.

But, as a blame and scorn, they are told not to fly and return to the comfortable life they have made, to the beautiful splendid castles and ornamented dwellings they have produced, perhaps the beggars and the deprive come there and ask them something.

The verse says:

“(But it was said to them) ‘Do not fly (now) and come back unto what you were made to lead easy lives in and unto your dwellings, haply you will be questioned.’”

This phrase may be a hint to the fact that when they were living in the world and were leading their easy comfortable lives, they used to send back the beggars who come to their dwellings and asked for some helps. Now, such people are told to return and repeat the same hateful and disgraceful actions they used to do. This is, in fact, a kind of derision and blame upon them.

Surah Al-'Anbiya' – Verses 14 – 15

قَالُوا يَا وَيْلَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ

فَمَا زَالَتْ تِلْكَ دَعْوَاهُمْ حَتَّىٰ جَعَلْنَاهُمْ حَصِيدًا خَامِدِينَ

14. “They said: ‘Oh woe to us! Verily we were unjust.’”

15. “And this their crying ceased not till We made them as reaped corn, extinct.”

In any case they may be, they will be informed and aware when they reach this period. Whatever they used to take joke formerly, they will see in the most serious form and reality in front of them, so that they shout and, as the verse says:

“They said: ‘Oh woe to us! Verily we were unjust.’”

But this compulsory wakefulness, which comes into being for everybody when they face with the earnest scenes of punishment, is worthless and is of no avail in changing their fate.

Therefore, the Qur’an adds through this verse:

“And this their crying ceased not till We made them as reaped corn, extinct.”

However, the Qur’anic term /hasid/, in the sense of ‘what is reaped’, means ‘harvested’.

The Arabic word /xamid/ means ‘extinguished’.

Surah Al-‘Anbiya’ – Verses 16 – 17

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لَاعِبِينَ

لَوْ أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نَتَّخِذَ لَهَوًا لَاتَّخَذْنَاهُ مِنْ لَدُنَّا إِنْ كُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ

16. “And We did not create the heaven and the earth and what is between them in play.”

17. “Had We intended that We should take amusement we would certainly have taken it from before Ourselves, if We would do (such a thing).”

In view of the fact that the former verses illustrated this fact that the faithless transgressors did not consider any good for their creation except feasting and drinking, or, in fact, they imagined that the world might be aimless.

Here, in order to nullify this doctrine and to prove the existence of a worthy aim for the Divine creation of the whole world in general, and humankind in particular, the Qur’an says:

“And We did not create the heaven and the earth and what is between them in play.”

This vast land, this high sky, and these various and lively creatures that are found in them, show that there have been an important purpose for their creation. Yes, they have been created, on one side, to denote that there is a great Creator for them and they are simply some signs to His Grandeur.

And, on the other side, they have been created to work as a reason for Resurrection. Otherwise, all these things were meaningless to be created for a few days of life.

Now that it is certain that the creation of the world is not aimless, this fact is also certain that the aim of this creation has not been a hobby for Allah, because it will be an irrational hobby. The verse says:

“Had We intended that We should take amusement we would certainly have taken it from before Ourselves, if We would do (such a thing).”

This holy verse conveys two facts. The first is that it is impossible that the aim of Allah to be a hobby and play. Then it implies, on the supposition that His aim were a play, the play should be apt to His Essence. It should be something out of the world of abstractions, not out of the world of the limited matter.

Explanations

In Arabic, the word /lau/ is used for an action which is impossible to be done, and since, here, /lahw/ (play) is impossible to be attributed to Allah, this word has been applied in this verse.

In these verses, at first Allah says:

“...We did not... in play”,

and then He continues saying:

“Had We intended that We should take amusement...”

but He does not say:

“...that We should take play”.

Thus, it makes clear the meaning that the essence of ‘amusement’ and ‘play’ is the same.

It has been recorded in Al-Mizan, the commentary, that a regulated action which is done by some imaginary aims, like some childish deeds, is called ‘play’, but as soon as these imaginary actions become earnest, so that they hinder man from the main affairs and change into the form of hobbies, they are called ‘amusement’ both of which are futile and meaningless when concerning Allah.

This subject has frequently emphasized on in the Qur’an that the world of existence is not a play, but has an aim. If, granting an impossibility, Allah intended an aim of play, He would not pay to creation of man; He might not put all those prophets into trouble; He would not bid and forbid anything; and He would not assign any reward and retribution for human beings.

Surah Al-‘Anbiya’ – Verse 18

بَلْ نَقْذِفُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلَى الْبَاطِلِ فَيَدْمَغُهُ فَإِذَا هُوَ زَاهِقٌ وَلَكُمُ الْوَيْلُ مِمَّا تَصِفُونَ

18. “Nay! But We hurl the truth against falsehood so that it breaks out its brain, and behold, falsehood vanishes away. And yours will be woe for that which you ascribe (unto Allah).”

The, Arabic term /qaṭafa/ means ‘to throw from a long distance swiftly and powerfully’; and the Qur’anic term /damq/ is used for ‘a stroke upon head so that its effect reaches the brain’.

The Qur’anic word /wayl/ here means ‘punishment and destruction’. It is usually used for an instance which deserves ‘destruction’.¹

However, in order to futile the imaginations of those who consider the world aimless, or as a means of pleasure, the Qur’an, with a decisive tone, implies that this world is a collection of ‘Truth’ and ‘reality’. It is not so that whose fundamental be based upon falsehood.

The verse says:

“Nay! But We hurl the truth against falsehood so that it breaks out its brain, and behold, falsehood vanishes away....”

And, at the end of the abovementioned verse, the Holy Qur’an continues saying:

“...And yours will be woe for that which you ascribe (unto Allah).”

This concluding phrase means that Allah (s.w.t.) always sets some clear reasonable proofs and manifest miracles from Him against the vain imaginations of such people, in order that these illusions can be wretched in the view of the wise men and possessors of intellect.

Surah Al-’Anbiya’ – Verses 19 – 20

وَلَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَلَا
يَسْتَحْسِرُونَ

يُسَبِّحُونَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ لَا يَفْطُرُونَ

أَمْ اتَّخَذُوا إِلَهًا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ هُمْ يُنْشِرُونَ

19. “And to Him belongs whoever is in the heavens and the earth; and those who are with Him are

not proud to worship Him, nor do they get weary.”

20. “They glorify (Him) by night and day; they never intermit.”

21. “Or have they taken gods from the earth who can raise (the dead)?”

In figurative ownerships, the further man becomes near to Allah he fears less and, therefore, he sometimes commits a vice, too. But, in real ownerships, the nearer a man becomes to Allah, he worships Him more.

The words through the former verses were about this fact that the world of existence has a designed progressive aim for human beings.

Now, in view of the fact that there may appear this thought that: how Allah is in need of Faith and worship, then the Qur'an pays to answer this question, when it says:

“And to Him belongs whoever is in the heavens and the earth; and those who are with Him are not proud to worship Him, nor do they get weary.”

“They glorify (Him) by night and day; they never intermit.”

In this case, how does He need to your obedience and your worship? Thus, His order of Faith, worship, righteous deed, and servitude upon you all are for your own interest and your benefit.

Next to the statement of negation of vanity and aimlessness of the world of existence expressed in former verses, in the following holy verse, the Qur'an refers to the Unity of the Worshipped Who is the Deviser of this World.

It says:

“Or have they taken gods from the earth who can raise (the dead)?”

Surah Al-'Anbiya' – Verse 22

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ

22. “If there were, in the heavens and the earth, (other) gods besides Allah, they would both certainly go to ruin. So glorified is Allah, the Lord of the ‘Arsh, from what they attribute (unto Him).”

This verse is one of the clear reasons of the negation of any god as well as polytheists' gods. It says:

“If there were, in the heavens and the earth, (other) gods besides Allah, they would both certainly go to ruin....”

In that case, the regulation of the world would disturb.

The verse continues saying:

“...So glorified is Allah, the Lord of the ‘Arsh, from what they attribute (unto Him).”

These undue attributes unto Him, these false idols and imaginary gods are naught but some illusions, and the Essence of Allah, the Pure, therefore may not be polluted by these undue attributes.

The proof which has been mentioned in the verse under discussion upon Unity and negation of any god, besides being simple and clear, is one of the exact philosophical proofs in this field. The Islamic scholars call it ‘a mutual hindering proof’.

This reasoning, briefly speaking, says that no doubt there is a single regularity dominated over this world. This harmony existed in the laws and order of the creation denotes that they have originated from a single source, because if the sources were different and the wills were various, this harmony and agreement would never exist; since each of them might have a separate requirement and would nullify the effect of the other, and, consequently, the world might finally go to destruction.

Husham-ibn-Hakam once asked Imam Sadiq (as) what the reason of Unity of Allah was. Imam (as) said:

“The continuation of devices (of the world) and the completion of creation, is the reason of His Unity...”²

This verse is an answer to those who used to believe in a separate god for every thing and every affair.

That is why the Qur’an says:

“The Lord of the ‘Arsh”

which means Allah is the Lord of the whole world of existence.

Surah Al-‘Anbiya’ – Verse 23

لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ

23. “He (Allah) will not be questioned as to what He does, but they will be questioned (for their deeds).”

After proving the Unity of the Controller of this world by the reasoning which was explained in the previous verse, the Qur’an in this verse implies that He has arranged the world so wisely that there is no

room for any objection and talk upon it. Yes, no one can object Him and question Him, while others are not like that, because there may be many objections and questions upon their deeds.

The verse says:

“He (Allah) will not be questioned as to what He does, but they will be questioned (for their deeds).”

Questions are two kinds. One sort of question is that a person desires to know the main point and the real aim of an affair. This kind of question is permissible, even about the deeds of Allah, too.

The other kind of question is the protesting question. This sort of question implies that a performed action has been wrong or improper. It is evident that this kind of question, concerning the deeds of Allah, the Wise, is meaningless. But there is room for asking this kind of question, if necessary, about the deeds of others.

This fact has also been mentioned that the Qur'an has repeatedly pointed out that men are responsible for their own actions, including the verse which says:

“So, by your Lord, We would most certainly question them all.”³

And, in another verse of the Qur'an, we recite:

“And stop them, (for) they shall be questioned.”⁴

However, on the Day of Judgment, people will surely be questioned about their thoughts and intentions, youth and lifetime, incomes and expenditures, choosing the leader, and obedience from dignitaries.

Surah Al-'Anbiya' – Verse 24

أَمْ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ ءَالِهَةً قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ هَذَا ذِكْرٌ مَنْ مَعِيَ وَذِكْرٌ مَنْ قَبْلِي بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْحَقَّ فَهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ

24. “Or have they taken other gods besides Him? Say: ‘Bring your proof! This (Qur'an) is the remembrance of those who are with me, and the remembrance of those before me. But most of them do not know the truth, so they are averse.’”

This verse contains two more reasons upon the negation of polytheism. These couple of evidences together with the previous evidence makes three proofs in that field.

At first it says:

“Or have they taken other gods besides Him? Say: ‘Bring your proof!...”

This statement indicates that if you relinquish the previous reasoning upon the fact that the regulation of the world of existence is the evidence to Unity, there is at least, no reason to prove the deity of these gods. How then does a wise person accept something without any reason?

Then, the Qur’an points to the last reason here, where from the tongue of the Prophet (S) it implies that this is not only the word of mine and that of my companions’, who talk upon Unity, but this is also the saying of the prophets before me.

The verse says:

“...This (Qur’an) is the remembrance of those who are with me, and the remembrance of those before me....”

This reasoning is the same reasoning that the scholars of theology bring under the title of ‘the consensus of prophets upon the Oneness of Allah’.

And, since sometimes it happens that the abundance of idle worshippers causes some persons not to accept Unity, the Qur’an continues as follows:

“...But most of them do not know the truth, so they are averse’.”

The opposition of the majority of the ignorant people against the truth in many societies has always been an evidence taken by some unaware ones for their turning away. And, the Holy Qur’an has seriously condemned reliance on majority.

However, Ali (as) said:

“By the descent of the Qur’an to the Prophet (S), the knowledge of the former prophets, and the knowledge of Allah’s saints, and the knowledge of whatever will happen until the Resurrection have been given to him (S).”

Then Imam Ali (as) recited the above-mentioned verse:

“This (Qur’an) is the remembrance of those who are with me, and the remembrance of those before me.”

Therefore, the Qur’an continues the knowledge of whatever had been before and whatever exists now and whatever will be in future.⁵

Surah Al-'Anbiya' – Verse 25

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ

25. “And We sent no Messenger before you but We revealed unto him that ‘Verily there is no god but I; so worship Me (alone)’.”

Allah has manifestly announced in the Holy Qur'an that Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, is the seal of the Prophets, where it says:

“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Apostle of Allah and the last of the prophets;...”⁶

Yet, it has referred to this meaning in different ways and by different occasions. Among them is the fact that more than 30 times the Qur'anic phrase: /min qabluka/ (before you) has been repeated in various occurrences of the Qur'an while the phrase /min ba'dika/ (after you) has not occurred in the Qur'an even for one time.

And, since it is possible that some unaware persons say that they have prophets such as Isac (as) who has invited them to numerous gods, the Qur'an, with full explicitness, in this verse says:

“And We sent no Messenger before you but We revealed unto him that ‘Verily there is no god but I; so worship Me (alone)’.”

And, thus, it proves that, among Divine prophets, neither Isaac (as) nor other than him has invited people to polytheism at all, and these kinds of attributions are some slanders.

Surah Al-'Anbiya' – Verses 26 – 27

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا سُبْحَانَهُ بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُكْرَمُونَ

لَا يَسْبِقُونَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ وَهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِ يَعْمَلُونَ

26. “And they say: ‘The Beneficent (Allah) has taken to Him a son.’ Glory be to Him! Nay, but (angels) are (His) honoured servants.”

27. “They do not precede Him in speech, and (only) according to His commandment do they act.”

This idea that the angels are Allah’s children, not only had been accepted by some polytheists, but also had been current among the Jews and the Christians.⁷

And since in the previous verse the words were about the Divine prophets and nullification of any kind of polytheism, this verse is upon the negation of angels as the children of Allah.

The explanation is that: many of the polytheists of Arab believed in angels as the children of Allah. The Qur’an has condemned this baseless superstitious belief and proves its falsehood through various reasonings.

At first, it says:

“And they say: ‘The Beneficent (Allah) has taken to Him a son.’...”

If they mean that this son is a ‘true son’, the requisite of it is to be body; and if the son is adoption, which had been common amongst Arabs, that is also a proof for feebleness and inability.

But attributing a son to an Essence that is Eternal, non-body, and free from want from any point of view, is absolutely meaningless.

That is why, in order to negate Him from any blemish and defect, immediately after that, the verse continues saying:

“...Glory be to Him!...”

Then in some different statements it explains the qualities of the angels, which, on the whole, are some clear evidences for the lack of child attributed to Allah:

They are the servants of Allah:

“...(angels) are (His) honoured servants.”

They are some honoured and worthy servants:

“...(His) honoured servants.”

They are not like the disobedient servants who serve their master only under the pressure of that master. For the sake of the sincerity of these divine angels in their servitude, Allah has honoured them, too, and He has increased His bounties for them.

The verse says:

“...Nay, but (angels) are (His) honoured servants.”

They are sincerely so polite and obedient unto Allah that they never precede Him in speech; and also from the point of action, they always act only according to His commandment. The verse says:

“They do not precede Him in speech, and (only) according to His commandment do they act.”

Are these qualities the epithets of children or the qualities of the servants?

Explanations

1. Applying the Qur’anic term /mukramun/ (honoured) for the angels is for the reason that, firstly, they are the servants of Allah (s.w.t.), and, secondly, this servitude is accompanied with sincerity.
2. The holy word Beneficent used for Allah (s.w.t.) had been an acquainted name among the polytheists. The existing conditions, which dominate a person, affect on his beliefs and judgments. Since human beings have physical bodies and find themselves some needy ones, they also think of Allah, Who is free from corporeality and neediness, in the same way.

Surah Al-’Anbiya’ – Verse 28

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنْ ارْتَضَىٰ وَهُمْ مِنْ خَشْيَتِهِ
مُشْفِقُونَ

28. “He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they (angels) do not intercede except for him with whom He is well-pleased and they tremble in awe of Him.”

The Arabic term /xauf/ usually means ‘to be afraid of sin’, while the Qur’anic word /xašyat/ means: ‘to be afraid of the Greatness of Allah’, a fear which is always accompanied with glorification and veneration.

Some Islamic traditions indicate that the objective meaning of the Qur’anic phrase / man-ir-tada/, mentioned in the verse, is the one whose religion is consented (by Allah), although he is sinful. The reason of it is that a believer, for the repentance he shows after committing a sin, will be divinely favoured and will be interceded.

However, the holy verse, pointing to the Awareness of Allah unto the situation of the angels, implies that He knows both the present and the future deeds of the angels so that He (s.w.t.) is aware of their life in this world and the world to come. He is cognizant of the status of before their existence and after it.

The verse says:

“He knows what is before them and what is behind them...”

Certainly the angels do know that Allah (s.w.t.) has such an encompassing knowledge about them. This very cognition causes that they neither say anything before Him nor do they disobey His commandments.

Then the noble verse continues implying that, undoubtedly, the angels, who are the worthy and honourable servants of Allah, will intercede for those who are in need of it, but this fact must be noted that they will never intercede save for the one whom they know Allah is well-pleased of and He has given the permission of his intercession.

The verse says:

“...and they (angels) do not intercede except for him with whom He is well-pleased...”

The abovementioned sentence is an answer to those people who used to say that they worshipped the angels in order that they intercede for them with Allah. The Qur'an says that the angels cannot do anything from their own accord. Therefore, whatever you desire you may ask Him directly, even for the leave of intercession.

It is also for this very cognition that they fear only Him.

The verse says:

“...and they tremble in awe of Him.”

They do not fear that they have done a sin, but they are in awe of shortcoming in worship before Him and of leaving the better.

Surah Al-'Anbiya' – Verse 29

وَمَنْ يَقُلْ مِنْهُمْ إِنِّي إِلَهٌ مِنْ دُونِهِ فَذَلِكَ نَجْزِيهِ جَهَنَّمَ كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ

29. “And whoever of them (the angels) says: ‘Verily I am a god besides Him, such a one We recompense with Hell, even so do We recompense the unjust.’”

This holy verse may be of the kind to be said that others understand it. It means that people should know that whoever, even the honourable angels (the consideration of which is impossible concerning them), call others to polytheism, they must wait for the retribution of Hell.

It is quite evident, of course, that the divine angels, with those outstanding special qualifications, and the high rank of pure servitude they have, will never claim deity. But if, supposedly, one of them says he is a god besides Allah (s.w.t.), He will recompense him with Hell.

The verse says:

“And whoever of them (the angels) says: ‘Verily I am a god besides Him, such a one We recompense with Hell, even so do We recompense the unjust.’”

The probable claim of divinity, in fact, is a clear example of injustice to oneself and to the society and it is involved in the general law.

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1. Lisan-ul-‘Arab
 2. Tauhid-i-Saduq, p. 250
 3. Surah Al-Hijr, No. 15, verse 92
 4. Surah As-Saffat, No. 37, verse 24
 5. Tafsir-us-Safi, and Tafsir-i-Furat
 6. Surah Al-‘Ahzab, No. 33, verse 40
 7. The Commentary of Furqan

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