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Section 2: The Triumph of Truth Prophesied

Surah Al-Fatir – Verse 8

أَفَمَنْ زُيِّنَ لَهُ سُوءُ عَمَلِهِ فَرَآهُ حَسَنًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ
فَلَا تَذْهَبْ نَفْسُكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَاتٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ

8. “Is he, then, to whom the evil of his deed is made alluring so that he looks upon it as good, (equal to one who is rightly guided)? Now verily Allah makes err whom He pleases and guides aright whom He pleases, so let not your soul waste away in grief for them; verily Allah is Cognizant of what they do.”

The one who introduces the evil behaviour of a person as a pleasant one, and instead of criticizing it, he flatters him, is counted a Satan, because, in other verse, the Holy Qur'an says:

“...Satan made their deeds fair seeming to them...”¹

Imam Kazim (as) says:

“Seeing bad things as good ones is the premise of haughtiness and self-administration.”²

In view of the fact that in the previous verses people were divided into two groups: a believing group and a disbelieving group, or **‘the party of Allah’**, who are the enemy of Satan, and **‘the Party of Satan’**, who are the followers of Satan, this verse has stated one of the important qualities of these two groups, which, in fact, is the origin of their other evil programs, where it says:

“Is he, then, to whom the evil of his deed is made alluring so that he looks upon it as good, (equal to one who is rightly guided)?...”

In fact, this very subject is the key of all miseries of the misguided and obstinate nations whose ugly deeds seem to them as fair because of the fact that they are consistent with their lusts and their black hearts.

It is also evident that such an obstinate person neither accepts any admonition, nor does he usually show any fitness for listening to criticisms, nor does he agree to change his way. He neither tries to experience and analyse his deeds, nor is he anxious about their sequels.

Further than that when the ugliness and beauty is spoken of, they consider beauties as theirs, and attribute the true believers with the ugly things.

There were many obstinate pagans who when heard the previous verses about the Party of Satan and their painful fate they adapted them with the true believers and counted themselves as an extension of the Party of Allah. And this is a very great calamity.

But, who makes the evil deeds of the wrong doers seem fair in their view: Allah or the carnal desire or Satan?

No doubt the main factor is carnal desire and Satan, but since Allah has created this effect in their deeds it can be attributed to Allah; because when people commit a sin at the beginning that their nature is pure, their conscience is vigilant, and their wisdom works fairly well, they become inconvenient from their action, but the more they repeat it, the more their inconvenience decreases.

Gradually they reach to the stage of indifference, and if they repeat it more, the ugly things seem beautiful in their views, thus far that they imagine it among their honours and virtues, while they have been drowned in the dirty situation of corruption.

It is interesting that when the Holy Qur'an propounds this question, saying:

"Is he, then, to whom the evil of his deed is made alluring so that he looks upon it as good...?"

it does not clearly express the opposite point of it. As if it intends to give a vast respite to the hearer that he illustrates in his mind all the different things that he can consider opposite to it and understands more. It seems it wants to say whether such a person is like the truth seekers.

Is such a person like the pure hearted persons who are always busy examining their own selves?

Is there any hope of felicity for such a person?

Then, the Qur'an refers to the statement of reason of the difference of these two groups. It adds:

"...Now verily Allah makes err whom He pleases and guides aright whom He pleases..."

If the ugly deeds of the first group are decorated in their views, this is the consequence of the Divine

mislead. It is He Who has put this property in the repetition of ugly deeds to which the man's self accustoms itself, he gets the habit of it, and harmonizes with it.

It is He Who gives some penetrating and keen eyes, together with some hearing ears to the pure-hearted believers for understanding the facts as they exactly are.

It is clear that the Divine Will is accompanied with His Wisdom and gives everyone whatever he is eligible to.

So, at the end of the verse, the Qur'an says:

"...so let not your soul waste away in grief for them..."

This meaning is similar to the content of verse 3 in Surah As-Shu'ara', No. 26, which says:

"Perhaps you will kill yourself with grief, for that they do not become Believers."

The application of the Qur'anic word ***/hasarat/*** which is an object for the previous sentence refers to this fact that not only you grieve for them one regret but also with several regrets.

They are the regret of losing the bounty of guidance, the regret of wasting the jewel of humanity, the regret of losing the sense of recognition thus far that they see an ugly thing as beautiful; and, finally, the regret of their encountering the Fire of the Wrath of Allah.

But why does Allah say:

"...So let not your soul waste a way in grief..."?

It is because Allah is cognizant of their deeds and He gives them what they deserve of.

The verse continues saying:

"...verily Allah is Cognizant of what they do."

The extraordinary sympathy of the Prophet of Islam (S) unto the misguided and deviated ones is completely understood from the tone of the verse. And this is the state of a true Divine leader that, because of the people's lack of acceptance of the truth and rejecting the means of their happiness, he pains so much that as if he tended to kill himself.

Surah Al-Fatir – Verse 9

وَاللَّهُ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ الرِّيحَ فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابًا فَسُقْنَاهُ إِلَى بَلَدٍ مَيِّتٍ فَأَحْيَيْنَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ
بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا كَذَلِكَ النُّشُورُ

9. “And Allah is He who sends the winds that stir up cloud then We drive it to a dead land and there with revive the earth, after it is dead. Even so is the Resurrection.”

In the same manner that by the Will of Allah, the Almighty, the movement of the cloud and winds, and the fall of rain make the dead land alive and plants shoot out of the soil, with His Will a great earthquake will happen and the dead come out of the ground and will be quickened.

Regarding to the discussions, which were mentioned in the previous holy verses about guidance, misguidance, faith, and disbelief, this holy verse talks briefly and clearly about Origin and Resurrections and by an interesting reasoning it proves both of them.

It says:

“And Allah is He who sends the winds that stir up cloud...”

“...then We drive it to a dead land and there with revive the earth, after it is dead...”

“...Even so is the Resurrection.”

The accurate system which runs the movement of winds and then the movement of the pieces of cloud and after that the descent of the life-giving rain drops and, next to it, reviving the dead lands, itself is the best proof and the best evidence upon this fact the Might of a Wise One exists beyond this system and directs it.

It is also necessary to note this point that the Qur’anic phrase ***Ituthirul*** is derived from *’itharah/* in the sense of ‘distribute and scatter’, and here it refers to the rising of pieces of cloud as the result of the blow of winds over the water of oceans, since the subject of the movement of pieces of cloud has been mentioned in the next sentence, saying:

“...That stir up cloud...”

It is interesting that we recite in a tradition from the Prophet of Islam (S) that once one of his companions asked him:

“O’ Messenger of Allah! How does Allah quickens the dead and what is the sign of it in the world of creation?”

The Prophet (S) said:

“Have you not passed by the land of your tribe while it has been dry and dead, and then you passed by it while it has become green?”

I said:

“Yes, O Messenger of Allah.”

He (S) said:

“In such a way Allah quickens the dead and this is its sign in the creation.”³

Surah Al-Fatir – Verse 10

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ
يَرْفَعُهُ وَالَّذِينَ يَمْكُرُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَكْرُ أُولَئِكَ هُوَ يُبَوِّرُ

10. “Whoever desires glory, the glory belongs to Allah wholly to Him do ascend the good words and the righteous deed, He uplifts it; but those who devise evil deeds, for them is a terrible chastisement, and their plot shall come to naught.”

The real glory is with Allah, not with people, and it is found under the light of ‘Faith’ and ‘righteous deed.’

Following to this monotheistic discussion, this verse points to the great error of the pagans who asked their glory from their idols and thought that believing in the Prophet (S) caused the dispersion of people from around them.

They used to say:

“... ‘If we follow the guidance with you, we shall be driven out from our land.’...”

The Qur’an says:

“Whoever desires glory, the glory belongs to Allah wholly...”

As Raqib has said in Mufradat, the Arabic word *‘izzat* originally means that state that makes man resisting and mighty. It is for this reason that the hard and firm lands are called *‘azaz* in Arabic.

Since it is only the Pure Essence of Allah that is Mighty, else, because of their limitation, all creatures can be defeated. Therefore, the whole glory belongs to Him, and whoever obtains any glory it is from the endless ocean of His blessing.

During the last hours of his lifetime when Imam Hassan (as) was asked by one of his companions named Junadat-ibn-’Abi-Sufyan to advise him, Imam stated some valuable and effective admonitions for him, among which was this:

“If you wish to be ‘honoured’ without having any tribe, and to have reverence without the power of government, then come out from the shade of sin of Allah, and settle in the glory of the obedience of Allah.”

And if we see that some verses of the Qur'an introduce glory, besides Allah, for the Prophet (S) and the believers, (like Surah Munafiqun, No. 63, verse 8 which says:

"...Honour belongs to Allah and His Messenger and to the Believers...",

it is for the reason that they have earned glory from the rays of the glory of Allah, too.

Then the verse introduces the way of reaching to glory as follows:

"...to Him do ascend the good words and the righteous deed, He uplifts it..."

The Qur'anic phrase: ***'al kalimutayyib'*** means: 'pure words', and the purity of a speech depends on the purity of its content, and the purity of content relates to the concepts which adapt to the pure, brilliant, objective facts.

What reality is higher than the Pure Essence of Allah and His right and just religion, as well as the pure righteous ones who pave the way of its distribution? Therefore, this holy phrase has been rendered into correct belief in Origin, Resurrection and Allah's religion.

Some of the commentators have rendered the Qur'anic phrase: ***'al kalimut tayyib'*** into: 'there is no god but Allah', – while some others have rendered it into: /subhan-allah-i-wal-hamd-u-lillah-i-wala-'ilaha-'illallah-u-wa-llah-u-'akbar/, and some commentators have rendered it, after mentioning there is no god but Allah, into "Muhammad rasul-ullah wa 'Aliyyan waliyyullah wa xalifata rasulih".

Or in some Islamic narrations the Qur'anic phrases ***'al kalimut tayyib'*** and ***'al-'amal-us salih'*** have been rendered into the love of Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) or the like of it. All of them are of the kind of the statement of clear extensions for that vast concept, and they do not create any limitation in its concept, because every statement which has a pure and excellent content is entirely found in this title.

However, the same Lord Who, according to the previous verse, makes the dead land alive by life-giving drops of rain, furnishes 'the pure word and righteous deed', too, and causes them to reach to the neighbourhood of His Mercy.

Then the Qur'an refers to the opposite point of it, where it says:

"...but those who devise evil deeds, for them is a terrible chastisement, and their plot shall come to naught."

Although the corruptive persons imagine that, by injustice, cruelty, falsehood, and plot, they can obtain a kind of glory for them by means of wealth, property, and power but at the end they shall understand that not only they have provided a chastisement for them, but also their efforts in this way will become naught.

As the Qur'an says, there were some people who behaved like this:

“And they have taken gods besides Allah that they might be for them a glory.”⁴

And there were some hypocrites who imagined themselves as some honoured ones and the believers as the meaner:

“They say: ‘If we return to Medina, surely the more honourable (element) will expel there from the meaner’...”⁵

There were some other persons, who considered the deceit of the Pharaohs as their own glory, or they sought honour from sin, injustice, and cruelty, but all of them were defeated. So, it is only faith and righteous deed which go up toward Allah.

In philology the Arabic word ***/makr/*** means any kind of device, but in some instances it is used in the sense of the devices that are accompanied with mischief, and the verse under discussion is among those instances.

The term */sayyi’at/*, mentioned in the above verse, refers to all ugly and evil things which occur, irrespective of creedal evils and practical ones, and that some commentators have rendered it into the pagans’ plots for killing or banishing the Prophet of Islam (S) from Mecca is, in fact, one of the expansions of it, not its whole concepts.

The Qur’anic word ***/yabur/*** is derived from */bawar/* and */buran/* which originally means excess dullness of market, and since this kind of dullness of market often causes destruction, this word has been used in the sense of destruction and annihilation.

The whole glory belongs to Allah. Does this state mean something save reaching to the stage of being Almighty? If it is so, where can glory be sought, and what can give glory to man?

By a clear analysis we reach this fact that the reality of glory, at the first degree, is the power which appears in the heart and entity of man and dissuades him from having humility submission, and collusion in relation with disobedient and rebellious persons to the command of Allah. It is a power that with having it one never surrenders to unlawful lusts and he never obeys his low desires.

It is a power which usually elevates him up to the stage of impenetrability before any wealth and force.

Does this power originate from any source save from the Faith in Allah, which is the main source of power and glory?

What was said is only in the stage of thought, belief, soul and spirit; but in the stage of action, glory originates from some deeds that have correct root and an accurate program and style. In other words, glory can be found in ‘righteous deeds’. These two elements give man honour, greatness, might, and glory.

The world loving sorcerers, contemporary to Pharaoh, began their tricks in his name and glory.

“...and said: ‘By Pharaoh’s dignity we shall certainly be the victors.’”⁶

Yet, before long, they failed from the shepherd–stick of Moses (as), but when they came out from the cover of the disgraceful flag of Pharaoh and went under the light of Monotheism and believed, they became so strong and mighty that the most severe threats of Pharaoh did not affect on them.

They eagerly lost their hands, feet, and even souls in the cause of Allah and suffered martyrdom. By this action, they proved that they would surrender neither to money nor to force. They remained mighty and, today, their honourable history contains a great deal of instructive lessons for us.

Surah Al-Fatir – Verse 11

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَمَا تَحْمِلُ مِنْ أُنْثَى وَلَا تَضَعُ إِلَّا بِعِلْمِهِ وَمَا يُعَمَّرُ مِنْ مُعَمَّرٍ وَلَا يُنْقَصُ مِنْ عُمُرِهِ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ

11. “And Allah did create you from dust; then from a sperm-drop, then He made you pairs. And no female conceives nor does she bring forth, save with His knowledge and none is given long life who is given long life neither is any diminished in his life, but it is in a Book. Verily this, for Allah, is easy.”

The Arabic word */mu‘ammar/* is called to the owners of a long-life. The word */‘umr/* is derived from */‘imran/* (flourishing state), and since a person has the ability of flourishing during the time he is alive, the length of his life is called ‘life–time’.

Some Islamic narrations indicate that charity and visiting one’s kin cause the life–time to be long, but ‘breaking off connections with one’s kindred’ and to disgrace parents cause the lifetime to be shortened.⁷

In this holy verse, the Qur’an states another part of the extroversive and introversive verses which are, on one side, the evidence over the Power of Allah and, on the other side, over His Knowledge.

At first, it points to the creation of man in different stages, when it says:

“And Allah did create you from dust; then from a sperm-drop, then He made you pairs...”

These are three stages among the whole stages of the creation of man: soil, sperm-drop, and the stage of matrimony.

It is certain that man is from dust, not only from this point that all materials that form the man's body are derived from dust, and that which man takes food from, or wherefrom his sperm-drop originates all are finally found in the materials which are in soil.

Some commentators believe that the concept of 'the creation of man from dust' probably refers only to the first creation, while the creation from sperm-drop refers to later stages.

The first one is the stage of men's compendious creation, (because the entity of all human beings has been extracted in the entity of Adam); and the second is the expansive stages which are separate from each other.

However, the stage of person's matrimony is the stage of continuation of generation and man's reproduction.

Then it refers to the fourth and the fifth stage of man's life, viz., the subject of 'pregnancy' of mothers and their delivery.

It says:

"...And no female conceives nor does she bring forth, save with His knowledge..."

Yes, the subject of pregnancy, and the complicated and very amazing changes of foetus, then reaching the stage of delivery and the wonderful variations that, at that sensitive moment, come forth to mothers, from one side, and to the foetus, on the other side, are so tender and accurate that is not possible save by relying on the infinite knowledge of Allah.

It is done in a manner that if the governing regulation over it changes, even very slightly, the program of delivery or delivery itself will face with disturbance and confusion, and it will come to destruction.

Each of these five stages of man's life is more wonderful than the other.

The inanimate dust is in one side and the wise, alert, and originative man, the alive, is on the other side. How different they are!

The sperm-drop which has been formed of a few drops of fetid water is on one end, and the handsome, beautiful, and talented man equipped with different senses and organs is on the other end.

Next to this stage, there is the subject of variety of man into two genders: male and female.

Regarding to the abundant differences in the body and soul, there will come some physiological problems into being each of which takes its own separate way from the very beginning of the combination of semen and everyone of them goes toward the duty which has been given to them and thus they develop.

The next subject is the responsibility of mother which is the acceptance and bearing of this burden, its protection, its nutrition and its growth, which has attracted the thoughts of great scientists to them, and they confess that it is one of the most surprising subjects of the world of existence.

The last stage of this part of foetus is the stage of birth. It is a revolutionary stage and completely dangerous, that is accompanied with a great deal of wonders.

What factors command foetus to come out from the mother's womb?

How is the complete harmony arranged between this command and readiness of the limbs of the mother for its execution.

How can foetus totally change the situation to which it has been accustomed for nine months just in a moment: ceases its relation with the mother, uses the fresh air, the way of his food from umbilical cord is suddenly closed, the new way, i.e. the mouth begins to work, the dark environment of mother is left and the bright environment full of light is used, and it resists against all these changes and it immediately adapts itself to them?

Are these things not the best signs to the endless power and knowledge of Allah? It is a complete injustice that man judges so vainly about his own creation.

Then the Qur'an refers to the sixth and seventh stages of this wonderful program.

It says:

"...and none is given long life who is given long life neither is any diminished in his life, but it is in a Book..."

What factors are effective in the length of man's life? What factors fight against the continuation of his life? And in short, what factors must gather and help each other in order that man can continue his living for one hundred years or less and more! And, finally, what factors cause the difference in man's life-time?

All of these things have also some complicated and exact computations of which none is aware but Allah; and whatever we know in these fields today comparing with what we do not know is very little and worthless.

The Arabic word ***/mu'ammari/*** is derived from the word */'umr/* which is originally derived from */'imarat/* in the sense of 'habitation', and the fact that the length of man's living is called lifetime is for the sake that the habitation of his body is in this time.

This word, */mu'ammari/*, means a person who has a long life. So, the Qur'an concludes the verse with this sentence, saying:

“... Verily this, for Allah, is easy.”

The creation of this wonderful being from ‘dust’ and the initiation of the creation of a complete man from ‘sperm-drop’, and also the whole facts concerning ‘genetic state’, conjugality, pregnancy, delivery, increase and decrease in life-time, whether from the point of power and from the point of knowledge, and computation of all of them is entirely easy and simple for Him.

These are as a small part of the extroversive verses that, from one side, they relate and acquaint us with the world of existence, and, on the other side, they are counted as some valid proofs upon the possibility of Resurrection.

He Who was able to create a being from ‘dust’ and from sperm-drop for the first time, is He not able to revive men?

And does He, Who is aware of the minutes of these laws, have any difficulty in protecting and reckoning of the deeds of people in the scene of Resurrection?

Surah Al-Fatir – Verse 12

وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْبَحْرَانِ هَذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ سَائِغٌ شَرَابُهُ وَهَذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ وَمِنْ كُلِّ
تَأْكُلُونَ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا وَتَسْتَخْرِجُونَ حِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا وَتَرَى الْفُلْكَ فِيهِ مَوَازِيرَ لِتَبْتَغُوا
مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

12. “And not are the two seas alike, the one (is) palatable, and pleasant to drink, and the other, salt and bitter. Yet from the both you eat fresh flesh; and you extract ornaments which you wear, and you see the ships cleave through it that you may seek of His bounty and that you may be thankful.”

The Divine bounties are from His grace and we are not His creditors, but we may gain something because of our effort and endeavour, so noting to blessings is a premise to the growth of the essence of thanksgiving.

Another part of the extroversive verses, which are the signs of His greatness and power in the creation of the seas, blessings, and their benefits are referred to in this verse.

It says:

“And not are the two seas alike, the one (is) palatable, and pleasant to drink, and the other, salt and bitter...”

The Arabic word **/ʾaṣḥab/**, as Raqib says in Mufradat, means: pure and cold, while Lisan-ul-ʿArab has rendered it into: ‘Pure water’.

Although, on the first day, the water of these two seas has been sent down from the sky in the form of some sweet and wholesome drops of rain, and both of them originate from one source, but they have appeared in two completely different forms and with various benefits.

It is also wonderful that:

“... Yet from the both you eat fresh flesh...”

“...and you extract ornaments which you wear...”

Moreover, you can take enjoy both of them, not only for transportation but also for carrying your goods, as the verse says:

“...and you see the ships cleave through it that you may seek of His bounty and that you may be thankful.”

Some Points

1- As the Lisan-ul-ʿArab says, the Arabic word **/furat/** is the water which is in utmost purity and wholesomeness.

The Qurʾanic word **/saʾiq/** means the water that because of its wholesomeness is easily swallowed, contrast to the word **/milh/ (a salt water)** and the word **/ujaj/ (a bitter water)** that as if this kind of water hurts the throat and bars the way of the gullet.

2- Some commentators believe that this holy verse is an example to show the lack of equality between believers and disbelievers, but the verses before and after it all talk about the signs of creation.

Even the last part of this very verse is the evidence over this fact that this sentence, too, discusses about the secrets of Unity, and it is an indication to the variety of the seas and their different effects, and their common benefits.

3- In this verse three benefits out of abundant benefits of the seas have been mentioned: foodstuff, means of ornament, and the subject of transportation.

We know that the seas are one of the important sources of man’s foodstuff, and every year millions of tons of fresh flesh are taken from them without that man bears a considerable trouble for it. The system of creation has arranged a proper program in this regard so that men can enjoy this vast blessing, the spread Divine food table, without the least task.

Some different means of ornament, such as: pearl, shell, pearls and coral are drawn out from the seas. The emphasis of the Qurʾan on this subject is for the sake that, contrary to the beasts, the man’s self has

different dimensions one of which is the sense of beauty.

This sense is the origin of the appearance of some artistic, literary and taste issues, the satiation of which correctly and far from any kind of excess and defect, and immoderation and extravagance pleases the self and gives man mirth and calmness, and makes him ready for the heavy affairs of life.

As for the subject of transportation, which is one of the most important fillers of human civilization and the man's social life, regarding the fact that the seas (and oceans) have covered the main part of the surface of the earth and, that they relate to each other, they can do man the best favour in this regard.

The amount of the goods that are transported on the seas and the number of the passengers who are removed from one place to another on them is so large that they cannot be compared with any other means of vehicle. Sometimes it happens that one ship can carry by it the loads as many as the tens of thousand cars.

4- Of course, the benefits of the seas are not limited to what was said in the above, and the Qur'an does not tend to limit them in these three aspects. The formation of pieces of cloud, different medicines, oil, the means of clothing, the fertilizing materials for the uncultivated lands, having effect on winds, and so on are counted as other favours of the seas.

5- The emphasis of the Holy Qur'an on 'fresh flesh' is an expressive indication to the nutrition benefited from such fleshies comparing the harms of the stale fleshies, the conserves, and the like.

6- There arises a question here: the seas with salt water are spread all over the globe, where is the sea with sweet water?

In answer it must be said: the seas and lakes with sweet water are not so few in the earth, like the lakes of sweet water in the United States and the others. Moreover, some great streams are sometimes called sea, like the great river of Nile which in Arabic has been called ***ibahr*** (sea) in the story of Moses.⁸

Moreover, the advance of the water of the great streams into the seas, regarding the fact that it goes through the salty water therein and does not mix with it for a length of time, itself forms some seas of sweet water in different places.

7- The Qur'anic sentence:

'That you may seek of His bounty'

contains a vast meaning which includes any economical activities which are done by means of sea-ways.

The last sentence of the verse:

'That you may be thankful',

has been mentioned for awakening the sense of thanksgiving in men and it is a means for theism and theology.

Be Careful of the Following Points:

1– The spiritual elements effective in prolongation and, shortening the life–time: In relation to the discussion stated in the abovementioned verses about the increase and decrease of lifetime by the command of Allah, paying attention to the Islamic narrations concerning the prolonging and shortening of lifetime, a group of Qur’anic commentators have explained some matters in this regard.

There are, of course, some natural factors effective in increasing and decreasing the length of lifetime most of which have been known to human beings yet, like correct feeding free from excess and defect, being constantly busy working and moving, avoidance from any kind of narcotic materials and dangerous addictions and alcoholic liquors, avoiding the permanent excitements, and having a strong Faith which can give man peace and power in the difficulties of life and living.

But, besides these things, there are some factors that their outward relation with the question of prolongation of life–time is not so clear to us, while some Islamic narrations have properly emphasized on it.

As a few examples, pay attention to the following narrations:

1– The holy Prophet (S) says:

*“Verily alms–giving (in the way of Allah) and union of kindred cause houses to be furnished and prolong the life–times’.”*⁹

2– He (S) also has said:

“Whoever desires his sustenance to be increased and his death to be postponed should perform union of kindred.”

3– Concerning some of sins, like fornication in particular, Islamic narrations indicate that such sins decrease the length of lifetime.

Among them is the famous tradition of the Prophet (S) in which he has said:

*“O’ Muslims! Do avoid fornication which has six sequels: Three of them are in this world and three of them are in Hereafter. Those three which are in the world are as these: it causes the worth (and light) of man to be vanished, brings indigence, and decreases the length of lifetime...”*¹⁰

4– Imam Baqir (as) says:

“Kindness and hidden alms–giving remove poverty and increase life–time, and prevent seventy kinds of

evil death."¹¹

There are also some indications in Islamic narrations concerning some other sins, such as injustice, and sins in absolute.

Some of the commentators who have not been able to make difference between the 'appointed death' and the 'sudden death' have attacked to these traditions and believe that they are contradictory to the texts of the Qur'an which consider the limit of the length of man's lifetime fixed and unchangeable.¹²

Explanation: No Doubt Man Has Two Kinds of 'End of Life'

The appointed term, which is the end of potential ability of man's body for continuity of entity, and by its coming everything will end by the command of Allah.

The sudden death that, with the change of circumstances, the length of life-time changes. For example, someone commits suicide while if he had not committed this great sin, he would have been alive for longer years.

Or as the result of using the alcoholic liquors and some narcotic materials, and excess sensuality, he loses his bodily ability in a short time, but if these things were absent in his life, he could live for many longer years.

These are some vivid things which are experimental and comprehensible for every body and none can deny them.

Concerning the unexpected events, there are also some affairs which are naturally related to the sudden death; this is not deniable, too.

Therefore, if a great deal of Islamic narrations indicate that alms-giving in the cause of Allah, or union of kindred cause the length of lifetime to be prolonged and pests to be removed, in fact, they depend on these very factors.

And if we do not separate these two kinds of the term of death from each other, the comprehension of many of the issues in relation with fore-ordination and destiny, and the effect of effort and endeavour in men's lives will remain insolvable.

This discussion can be made clear by a simple example. For instance, a person provides a new car that, according to the different preparations used in the structure of it, the car can work for example for twenty years, but upon condition that it would be treated well and the necessary protections should be applied. In this case the appointed term of this car is twenty years, not more than that.

But if the necessary protections are not applied, and the car is given to some unaware experienced and careless persons to ride and they use it beyond its power and capacity, and every day they take it to

work in rough roads, the life-time of the car may decrease to half or less than that. This is that very ‘sudden death’ of it.

Surah Al-Fatir – Verse 13

يُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي
لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْ
قِطْمِيرٍ

13. “He merges the night into the day and He merges the day into the night, and He has made subservient (to you) the sun and the moon, each of them running to an appointed time; such is Allah, your Lord; to Him belongs the kingdom, and those whom you call upon, apart from Him, possess not (so much as) the skin of a date-stone.”

The change of the length of the night and the day, or the gradual transfer of each of them to another is not casual, but the nature is subjected to Allah.

Again in this verse, the Qur’an points to another part of the signs of Monotheism and the infinite blessings of Allah so that, by giving awareness to human beings, it invokes their sense of thanksgiving alongside the recognition of the real object of worship and dissuades them from any partnership and superstitious worshipping.

It says:

“He merges the night into the day and He merges the day into the night...”

The Qur’anic term */yulij/* is derived from */’ilaj/* in the sense of ‘to merge’. It may refer to one of the following two meanings, or both of them: the gradual increase and decrease of the nights and the days during the year which cause the appearance of different seasons with all their effects and blessings.

The gradual decrease from the night and adding to the day, and vice versa, is because of the existence of twilight, which hinders the dangers of sudden transfer from darkness to light and from light to darkness. It gives human beings enough preparation to quietly and slowly transfer from one to another without any danger.

Then the verse refers to the subject of making the sun and the moon subservient, and says:

“...and He has made subservient (to you) the sun and the moon...”

What a subservient is higher than this that all of them run in the way of man’s interests and that they are

the source of kinds of favours in the man's life. The cloud, the wind, the moon, the sun, and the universe are all busy in order that men can provide his life well and he would not be in negligence, and he should always remember the main real origin of these merits. 13

But in the meantime that the sun and the moon in full regularity rotate in their orbits and they are good servants for humankind, the system which governs over them is not eternal, and even these great stars, with their much light, will finally become dark and will be destroyed.

So, next to the subject of making them subservient, the Holy Qur'an adds:

"...each of them running to an appointed time..."

And according to Surah Takwir, No. 81, verses 1-2, which say:

"When the sun (with its spacious light) is folded up."

"And when the stars fall, losing their lustre."

All of them turn to darkness and will become extinguished.

Some other commentators have delivered here another commentary for the Qur'anic term ***l'ajal-im-musammal*** (***the appointed term***). It refers to the rotations of the sun and the moon. The first prolongs one year and the second ends in one month. 14

But, regarding to the different usages of this meaning in numerous verses of the Qur'an which have been applied in the sense of 'the end of life', it becomes clear that the said commentary is not correct, and its commentary is that very first one, i.e., the end of the lifetime of the sun and the moon. 15

Then, as a conclusion upon this monastic discussion, the verse continues saying:

"...such is Allah, your Lord..."

Allah is the Lord Who has assigned the system of light and darkness and the accurate movements of the sun and the moon with all their favours.

The verse continues again saying:

"...to Him belongs the kingdom, and those whom you call upon, apart from Him, possess not (so much as) the skin of a date-stone."

The Qur'anic term ***lqitmir***, as Raqib says in Mufradat, is the sign which exists at the back of the date-stone (a small gap), and according to Tabarsi in Majma'-ul-Bayan, and Qurtabi in his commentary book, it is a thin white skin which has covered over the date-stone thoroughly. In any case, it indirectly refers to some very small and worthless beings.

Yes, these idols are neither the source of any benefit, and harm, nor do they defend you nor of themselves, nor do they have any authority and possession even over the skin of a date-stone. Yet, why do you, the unwise, worship them and demand them to solve your problems?

Surah Al-Fatir – Verse 14

إِنْ تَدْعُهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوا دُعَاءَكُمْ وَلَوْ سَمِعُوا مَا اسْتَجَابُوا لَكُمْ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكْفُرُونَ
بِشِرْكِكُمْ وَلَا يُنَبِّئُكَ مِثْلُ خَبِيرٍ

14. “If you call upon them, they will not hear your prayer; and even if they heard, they would not answer you; and on the Day of judgment they will deny your partnership; and none can inform you like (the One Who is) aware.”

On the Day of Hereafter, the naughty objects of worship will repudiate and hate the polytheists. They will say to them that you polytheists did not use to worship them (the idols) but you were the servants of your own conjectures and your low desires.

Man reaches a point where he leaves out the invitation of Allah, the Hearer, the Responder,

“...Call on Me; I will answer your (prayer)...”

and goes to some dumb, blind and useless solid bodies.

That is why addressing the polytheists, the Holy Qur'an says:

“If you call upon them, they will not hear your prayer...”

They do not answer you, because they are but some pieces of stone and wood which are inanimate bodies and have no sense. And supposing they were able to hear your moan, invocation, and persistence they would never have the ability of answering to your needs.

The verse continues saying:

“...and even if they heard, they would not answer you...”

It became clear that they do not own any benefit and harm even as much as the thin skin of a date-stone in the world of existence, yet how do you expect them to do something for you or to solve a problem?

Moreover, this fact is higher than that:

“...and on the Day of judgment they will deny your partnership...”

They will say: O’ Lord! these did not worship us, but they, in fact, worshipped their own carnal desire.

This witness is done by non-verbal language that whoever looks at idols he hears this statement from them by the ear of his conscience. Or the same Lord Who on that Day makes the man’s limbs, organs, and skin of the body speak, will order them to talk and they will bear witness that these deviated polytheists used to worship, in fact, their own conjectures and carnal desires.

This holy verse is similar to the content of verse 28 in Surah Yunus, No. 10 which says:

“And the Day We shall muster them all, then We shall say to those who associated others (with Us): ‘Get you to your place! You and your associates’, then We shall set a space between them, and their associates shall say: ‘It was not us (indeed) that you used to worship!’ ”

For more emphasis, at the end of the verse the Holy Qur’an says:

“...and none can inform you like (the One Who is) aware.”

A Notable Point:

Through the commentary of the previous verses, it became clear that the purpose of the sentence:

“If you call upon them, they will not hear your prayer...”,

mentioned in the verse under discussion, is idols which have neither a hearing ear to listen to the demands of their worshippers, nor if they had, they would not be able to solve any problem, nor do they possess anything and any authority.

But in order to cease the communication of the Muslims with the Prophet of Islam (S) and the great leaders by the way of seeking supplicating and intercession, some outwardly Muslims have taken hold of this verse and the like of it and have said that all those whom you call besides Allah, even the prophets, do not hear your word and if they heard they would not answer.

Or they have seized Surah Al-’A’raf, No. 7, verse 197 which says:

“And those whom you call upon other than Him can neither help you, nor help themselves.”,

and the like.

Thus, they negate any supplicating to the souls of prophets and the Imams and count it contrast to Monotheism.

While a simple glance over the verses which are before these verses and after them are sufficient to perceive this fact that the purpose of the verse is idols, because the words in all these verses are about

idols; the words are about the pieces of stone and wood that they considered as the partners of Allah. And they believed in a power for them in the face of the Power of Allah.

But who is the one who does not know that the Divine prophets and the friends of Allah are like the martyrs in the cause of Allah about whose life the Qur'an explicitly speaks, saying that they have the purgatory life, and we know that in the purgatory life the activity of the soul is vaster and more expanded, because it has been delivered from the worldly needs and material curtains.

This is from one side.

On the other side, no doubt, supplicating to these pure souls does not mean that we have considered any independence for them against Allah, but the aim is that we get help from their honour and their position with Allah, and that we seek help from the reverence and greatness they have in the Court of Allah, and this is the exact Unity and servitude of Allah.

Therefore, as the Qur'an explicitly says in the subject of intercession, they intercede only by the leave and command of Allah:

"...Who is it that can intercede with Him save by His leave?..."¹⁶

Also, supplicating to them is from this way and of this kind.

Who can reject the clear verses of supplicating? Or may he imagine this act as polytheism and stands against the Qur'an and claims Monotheism? They are but some proud ignorant persons who bring these subjects forth to create separation between Muslims.

We study in the biography of the companions of the Prophet (S) that for their difficulties they used to go beside the tomb of the Prophet (S) and resorted and sought help from his pure soul in the Presence of God.

As Biyhaqi, the famous traditionist of the Sunnites, Narrates that there happened a draught and famine at the time of the second Kalif.

Then Bilal, accompanied with a group of Companions of the holy Prophet (S), went beside the Prophet's grave, and said such:

*"O' Messenger of Allah! Seek rain for your Ummah... for verily they have annihilated."*¹⁷

Some of the commentators of the Sunnites, like 'Alusi, have narrated many traditions in this regard.

After a discussion and strictness concerning these traditions, at last he says:

"Next to all these statements, I do not see any hinder in resorting to Allah by the rank of the Prophet (S) whether at the time of his life and after his death."

Then he also adds the names of some others who have a rank with Allah and confesses to the admissibility of resorting to them. 18

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1. Surah Al-'An'am, No. 8, verse 48
 2. Al-Kafi, Vol. 2, P. 313
 3. The book by Qurtabi, Vol. 8, P. 5409
 4. Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 81
 5. Surah Al-Munafiqun, No. 63, verse 8
 6. Surah Ash-Shu'ara, No. 26, verse 44
 7. Mizan-ul-Hikmah, the word 'life-time'
 8. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 50, Surah As-Shu'ara, No. 26, verse 63, and Surah Al-'A'raf, No. 70, verse 38
 9. The of Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, PP. 354-355
 10. Ibid
 11. ar,Safinat-ul-Bih Vol. 2, P. 23
 12. 'Alusi, the , Vol. 22, P. 164
 13. Concerning the subservient of the sun and the moon we had a rather detailed explanation mentioned in the commentary of Surah Ar-Ra'd, No. 13, verse 2, and in the commentary of Surah 'Ibrahim, No. 14, verse 33
 14. The of Rauh-ul-Bayan, and Abul-Futuh-i-Razi
 15. In Surah Fatir, verse 45, you may refer to this relation, Surah An-Nahl, verse 61, Surah Az-Zumar, verse 43, Surah An-Nur, verse 4, and Surah Qafir, verse 67
 16. Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 255
 17. ulsKitab-ut-Taqqas 'ila Haghighat-it-Tawassul.
 - 18.

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