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Section 3: Every People on Earth Had a Warner

Surah Al-Fatir – Verse 15

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ

15. “O people! You are the needy unto Allah; and Allah (alone) is He Who is the Self-Sufficient, the Praised.”

None is there to be free from want from Allah (s.w.t.), and all beings are needy, but since Man disobeys, he should be controlled.

Following to the emphasized invitation to Monotheism and struggle against all kinds of polytheism and idolatry mentioned in the previous verses, this misconception may appear in some individuals that what is the need of Allah to our worshipping that He persists on it and emphasizes it so much?

Therefore, in order to state this fact that it is we who are in need of his worship, and He is not in need of our worship, in this verse the Qur'an says:

“O people! You are the needy unto Allah; and Allah (alone) is He Who is the Self-Sufficient, the Praised.”

What a worthy and important statement it is that makes clear our situation in the scene of the world of existence before the One Who has given us our existence! The verse opens many puzzles in this regard and answers to a great deal of questions.

Yes, the One really free from need and Self-Subsistent in the whole world of existence is He Who is Allah. All human beings, or it is better to say all beings are thoroughly needy and they are dependant to that Independent Existence that if their relation is ceased from Him, even for a moment, they are

nothing.

Therefore, none should bow and submit to other than Him, and demand other than Him to provide his needs, because they all are in need of Him, too. Even dignifying the Divine prophets and leaders of the Truth is for the sake that they are His messengers and His deputies and they absolutely have no independence from themselves.

Thus He is both Self-Sufficient and Praised, that is, in the meantime that He is Self-Sufficient, He is so generous and kind that He is worthy of any sort of praise and gratitude; and also, in the mid-time that He is gracious and kind to the servants, He is Self-Sufficient of all.

Being attentive to this fact produces two positive effects on the believing persons. From one side, it causes them to come down from the horse of pride, selfishness, and disobedience, and warns them that they have not anything from themselves to boast for it, and whatever they have they are the deposits of Allah with them.

And on the other side, they should not ask their needs from other than Allah, and they do not put the yoke of servitude of other than Him on their necks. They must deliver themselves from all possessions so that all others become servants of theirs.

By this kind of concept and theology, whatever the true believers see in the world they know them from His source, and no means may cause them to be neglectful from the cause of causes.

Surah Al-Fatir – Verses 16-17

إِنْ يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ

وَمَا ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ بِعَزِيزٍ

16. “If He pleases, He will take you off and bring a new generation,”

17. “And this is not hard to Allah.”

The statement of the power of Allah is a way for inviting people and threatening the disobedient ones. Allah is powerful in creation and His Power has no limit.

For laying an emphasis on this very need and indigence of men, this verse says:

“If He pleases, He will take you off and bring a new generation,”

Therefore, He is not in need of you and your worship, but it is you who are in need of Him.

He neither needs your worshipping nor is he afraid of your sins, and in the meantime, His vast mercy has encompassed all of you. Neither the destruction of the entire world decreases anything from His greatness, nor has the creation of this world added anything to the rank of His sovereignty.

In the second verse, the Qur'an, as a repeated emphasis, says:

“And this is not hard to Allah.”

Yes, whatever He intends He commands it to be, and immediately it also comes into being. Not only for the creation of Man, but also this statement is true about the whole world of existence.

However, if Allah (s.w.t.) commands you concerning Faith, obedience, and worship, all are for your own benefit, and the advantages and blessings of them all return to you.

Surah Al-Fatir – Verse 18

وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ وَإِنْ تَدْعُ مُثْقَلَةٌ إِلَىٰ حِمْلِهَا لَا يَحْمِلُ مِنْهُ شَيْءٌ وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ إِنَّمَا تُنذِرُ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَمَنْ تَزَكَّىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَتَزَكَّىٰ لِنَفْسِهِ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ

18. “And no one laden bears the burden of another; and if one heavy-burdened calls for its load to be carried, not a thing of it will be carried, even if he be a near kinsman. You warn only those who fear their Lord in secret and keep up prayer. And whoever purifies (himself), he only purifies for his own self. And Unto Allah (alone) is the destination (of all).”

Based on justice, everyone must carry his own burden.

The verse says:

“And no one laden bears the burden of another...”

In the Hereafter, the Record and Reckoning of everybody is separate from those of others.

In the Qur'an we recite that, in order to deceive others, a group of disbelievers say:

“...follow our path and we will certainly bear (the burdens of) your sins’...”¹

This verse is an answer to them.

Question: Taking this verse which says in Hereafter the burden of everybody is on one's own shoulder and it does not harm others, can we say we should leave alone the sinners, because they themselves will carry the burden of their own sins and it does not relate to us?

Answer: This verse does not justify the silence before unlawful things, because undue silence itself is a sin upon those who commit this action. Our duty is to bid the right and forbid the wrong, but if they did not follow it, their sin would not be upon us.

The Qur'anic term */wizr/* means the heaviness and a load. The Arabic word */muthqalah/* means the weight of a load. The word */himl/* refers to the load on the back while */haml/* refers to the load in the womb.²

This Qur'anic sentence:

“And no one laden bears the burden of another...”

is one of the basic fundamentals in Islamic convictions. In fact, on one side, it relates to the justice of Allah that He counts everybody pledged in his own action, rewards his righteous efforts and endeavours, and gives retribution for his sins.

On the other side, it points to the severity of the divine punishment on the Day of Hereafter when nobody agrees to carry the burden of the sin of another person, even though he had been fond of him extraordinarily.

Being attentive to this meaning has a great effect in man's self-improvement, because whoever is careful of himself he never tends to corruption with the pretext that his entourage or his environment is polluted. He does not count the pollution of the environment as a justification for his own pollution, because everybody carries his own burden.

On the other side, it gives man such a conception and understanding that the reckoning of Allah with societies is not a total and a lump reckoning, but everybody will be reckoned separately and independently.

That is, if he has done his duty both in relation to his purification and struggle against corruption, there will be no fear and horror on him, although all humankind totally, except him, are polluted with infidelity, polytheism, injustice, and sins.

Principally, no training program will be effective without attracting the attentions to this basic principle.

This very subject is referred to in the second sentence in another form.

It says:

“...and if one heavy-burdened calls for its load to be carried, not a thing of it will be carried, even

if he be a near kinsman...”

An Islamic tradition indicates that on the Day of Hereafter there will be brought a mother and a son both of whom have a heavy burden of sins. The mother asks her son to carry a part of her burden of sin and responsibility instead of those labours she tolerated in the world for him. The son will say to the mother to get distance from him, because he is involved in difficulty more than her.³

Finally, in the third sentence this fact is revealed that the warnings of the Prophet (S) affect only in the receptive hearts, where it says:

“... You warn only those who fear their Lord in secret and keep up prayer...”

The warnings of Divine prophets and Allah’s friends will not have any effect unless there is the fear of Allah in the heart, and the one does not feel the observance of a spiritual power over him inwardly and outwardly, and by establishing the daily prayers which survives his heart and causes him to remember Allah, he does not help this inner feeling.

At the beginning of an action, when a person has chosen no faith and has not believed, if he has not a truth-seeking character and does not feel responsibility before the cognition of the facts, he will not hearken to the invitation of prophets, and consequently he will not contemplate over the Divine signs in the world of existence.

In the fourth sentence, the verse returns again to this fact that Allah is self-sufficient from all. It adds:

“...And whoever purifies (himself), he only purifies for his own self...”

And, at last, in the fifth and the last sentence, it warns that if the good doers and the evil doers do not reach the result of their deeds in this world, it does not matter because the return of all is to Him.

It says:

“...And Unto Allah (alone) is the destination (of all).”

Surah Al-Fatir – Verses 19-23

وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ

وَلَا الظُّلُمَاتُ وَلَا النُّورُ

وَلَا الظِّلُّ وَلَا الْحَرُورُ

وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْأَحْيَاءُ وَلَا الْأَمْوَاتُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسْمِعُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِمُسْمِعٍ مَنْ فِي الْقُبُورِ

إِنْ أَنْتَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ

19. ***“And the blind and the seeing are not alike,”***

20. ***“Nor the darkness and the light,”***

21. ***“Nor the shade and the heat”***

22. ***“Neither are the living and the dead alike. Verily Allah makes whom He pleases hear, and you cannot make those hear who are in the graves.”***

23. ***“You are naught but a Warner.”***

The believers are some heartily and hale persons who enjoy the real life. Faith gives life to both an individual and society, while disbelief is a factor of spiritual death for both an individual and the society.

Pursuing the discussions about faith and disbelief in the former holy verses, the verses under discussion mention four interesting parables concerning the believers and disbelievers in which the signs of faith and infidelity have been illustrated in the most manifest form.

In the first parable, a disbeliever and a believer are likened to a blind person and a seeing person.

It says:

“And the blind and the seeing are not alike,”

Faith is both light and light giver; and it gives light and cognition to man’s whole life in his world-view, belief, action. But infidelity is darkness in which there is neither a correct insight for the whole world of existence, nor a proper conviction, nor a righteous deed.

In this regard, the Qur’an in Surah Al-Baqarah, No. 2, verse 257 expressively says:

“Allah is the guardian of those who believe. He brings them out of the darkness into the light; and (as to) those who disbelieve, their guardians are Shaitans who take them out of the light into the darkness; they are the inmates of the fire, in it they shall abide.”

Then, it implies that since only the seeing-eye is not enough there must be a light, too, so that, by the help of these two factors, the things can be observed.

The next holy verse concerning the equality of them, says:

“Nor the darkness and the light,”

The reason of it is that darkness is the cause of mislead. It is the factor of dangers, but light is the source of life, living, movement, growth, and development. If light were destroyed, all sources of energy in the world would be wiped out and death would dominate the whole world of matter. Such is the light of faith in the world of spirituality which is the cause of growth, development and life.

In the third sentence, it continues saying:

“Nor the shade and the heat”

A believer continues to live in peace, security and safety under the shade of his faith, but a disbeliever, because of his infidelity, is in inconvenience and pain. Raqib in Mufradat says:

“The word Iharurl means: ‘a hot and blazing wind’, (a drying and fatal wind)”.

Zamakhshary in Kashshaf says:

“The term Isumuml is called to some harmful and fatal winds which blow during the day, while the Arabic word Iharurl is called to the same winds whether they blow during the day or at night.”

Anyhow, how different is this wind and the cold cheerful shade which gives rest to both soul and body?

And finally through the last similitude in the fourth verse, the Qur’an says:

“Neither are the living and the dead alike...”

The believers are the living ones who usually have effort, endeavour, movement and growth. They are somehow like plants which have leaves, flowers, and fruits; but disbelievers are like pieces of dry wood which have neither greenness nor flower, nor shade, and they are not useful but for burning.

Then, at the end of the verse, the Qur’an adds:

“... Verily Allah makes whom He pleases hear...”

Allah makes him hear in order that he hears the invitation of the truth heartily and answers the call of the callers of Monotheism.

But the more your cry is loud, and your words are pleasant, and the more your statement is expressive, the dead do not perceive anything from it; and those who have lost their human soul as the result of

continuously committing sins and being drowned in bigotry, enmity, injustice, and corruption, certainly are not ready to accept your invitation.

The verse says:

“...and you cannot make those hear who are in the graves.”

In the fifth verse Allah implicitly says that the Prophet (S) should not be worried and anxious about the lack of faith in them, his duty was to convey it and to warn them.

The verse says:

“You are naught but a Warner.”

Two Points

The first is the effects of belief and disbelief:

We know that the Qur'an considers no importance for the geographical, racial, and classical boundaries which separate groups of human beings from each other. The only boundary in its view is the boundary of 'Faith' and 'blasphemy'. Thus, all of the human societies are divided into two groups: faithful and unfaithful.

For introducing 'Faith', in many occurrences, the Qur'an has likened it to 'light', and 'disbelief' into 'darkness', and this is the most expressive simile of the Qur'an for introducing belief and disbelief.⁴

Faith is a kind of perceiving and inner insight. It is a sort of knowledge and cognizance combined with heartily conviction together with movement. It is a kind of belief which has penetrated into the depth of man's soul and becomes the source of instructive activities.

But disbelief is ignorance, unawareness, and the lack of certainty, the result of which is the absence of feeling of responsibility and the existence of Satanic destructive actions.

The second:

Do the dead not perceive any reality?

Regarding to what has been said in the abovementioned verses, there appear two questions: the first is that how does the Qur'an say:

“...you cannot make those hear who are in the graves”?

or that a famous tradition indicates that on the day of the battle of Badr, the Prophet (S) ordered that the dead bodies of the pagans would be cast into a well at the end of the war.

Then he called them and said:

“Have you found truth what Allah and His Messenger promised? But I found truth what Allah promised me.”

Here ‘Umar protested and said:

“O’ Messenger of Allah! How do you speak with some bodies in which there is no soul?”

The Prophet (S) said:

“You do not hear what I say better than that they do, except that they are not able to answer anything.”⁵

Or that one of the rites of a dead is that the right beliefs are indoctrinated him (her). How does this action adapt to the verses under discussion?

With regard to one point, the answer to this question can be made clear. This is a fact that the verses under discussion speak about the lack of understanding in the dead in ordinary natural case, while the tradition of the Battle of Badr is different from the indoctrination of a dead.

It relates to some extraordinary conditions by which Allah (s.w.t.) transfers the sayings of His Messenger (S) extraordinarily to the ears of those dead bodies.

In other words, the communication of man in the purgatory world with this world will be ceased, except in the cases that Allah commands, and then this communication occurs. That is why, in ordinary circumstances we cannot communicate with the dead.

Another Question is: If our sound does not reach the dead, what is the meaning of our greeting to the Prophet (S) and to the Imams (as), resorting to them, visiting of their tombs, and asking for intercession from them before Allah?

Some extravagant Muslims, who are generally known for their thought conventionalism also relying on this very imagination, without considering other verses of the Qur’an, and without having any veneration for the abundant traditions narrated from the Prophet (S), have negated the subject of resorting and, as they think, they have nullified it.

Surah Al-Fatir – Verses 24-26

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَإِنْ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ

وَأِنْ يُكَذِّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَبِالْزُكْرِ
وَبِالْكِتَابِ الْمُنِيرِ

ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ

24. “Verily We sent you with truth as a bearer of glad-tidings and a Warner, and there was not a people but a Warner having gone in them (in the past).”

25. “And if they belie you, so indeed did belie those before them; their apostles had come unto them with clear proofs, and with scriptures, and with the enlightening Book.”

26. “Then did I seize those who disbelieved, so how (severe) was My punishment?”

Allah is true, and He has appointed the training system by the means of prophets in the basis of the truth, too.

So, in this verse, He says:

“Verily We sent you with truth as a bearer of glad-tidings and a Warner, and there was not a people but a Warner having gone in them (in the past).”

O’ Prophet! When you fulfil your duty in ‘glad tidings’ and ‘warning’ it is enough for you. You may convey them your call and give them the glad tidings of the Divine rewards and warn them of the retributions of Allah, whether they accept them or continue their stubbornness and enmity.

The Arabic word **/xala/**, here, is derived from **/xala’a/** which originally means a place wherein is not any curtain. This term is used for both time and place, and since time is always passing the ‘past times’ is called **/’azminah xaliyah/**, because there is no trace from them at the present time and the world is empty of them.

Therefore the Qur’anic sentence saying:

“...and there was not a people but a Warner having gone in them (in the past)”

means that every nation of the ancient nations had had a Warner in the past.

This point is also noteworthy that according to the above verse all nations had a Divine Warner, viz., a Divine prophet, though some commentators have taken it with a vaster meaning which envelops the scholars, and learned ones who warn people, too.

Of course, this statement does not mean that in any town and city a prophet has been appointed, but

when the invitation of Divine prophets and their words reach peoples it is enough, because the Qur'an says:

"...a Warner having gone in them"

(Fiha) and it does not say /minha/ (among them).

In the next verse, it implies that if they reject you it is not wonderful and, you should not be surprised and sorry, because the people who were before them rejected their prophets, too, while their messengers came to them with clear miracles, books containing admonitions, and the heavenly Books introducing ordinances, and enlightening laws to them.

It says:

"And if they belie you, so indeed did belie those before them; their apostles had come unto them with clear proofs, and with scriptures, and with the enlightening Book."

It is not only you who, with having miracles and heavenly Book, have been rejected by this ignorant group of people; the former prophets had encountered this difficulty, too. So you should not be sad and do stand firm in your path, and do know that those who must accept the truth will accept it.

What is the difference between '**Bayyinat**', '**Zubur**', and '**The enlightening Book**'?

1- The Qur'anic term **/bayyinat/** means some clear proofs and miracles which prove the legitimacy of the Prophet (S).

2- The purpose of Zubur is that part of the prophets' Books which contained of only some admonitions, advices, and supplications, (like supplications of David)⁶

3- The Qur'anic phrase **/kitab-il-Munir/** refers to that group of heavenly books which contain some ordinances, laws, and different social and individual instructions, such as Turat, Bible, and Qur'an.

In the last verse of the verses under discussion, the Qur'an, referring to the painful retribution of this group, implicitly says: It was not such that they could remain safe from the Divine retribution and would continue constantly their rejections, but Allah seized the disbelievers and punished them severely.

The verse says:

"Then did I seize those who disbelieved..."

The Arabic word **/ʾaxaṭu/** is derived from **/ʾaxaṭa/** with the sense of 'to take', but its application in such cases indirectly means 'punishment', because taking and capturing someone is the beginning of punishment.

However, Allah caused some pagans to be faced with a tempest, another group with a destructive hurricane, and some people were destroyed by the heavenly Blast, lightning, and earthquake.

Then at the end of the verse, for emphasis and stating the greatness and severity of their punishment, the Qur'an says:

“...so how (severe) was My punishment?”

In any case, on one side, these verses console and encourage all those who pave the path of Allah, particularly the true leaders of any nation in any time that they should not be despaired of the murmurs of the opponents and know that the Divine invitations have always been faced with the intensive oppositions from the side of aberrant zealous ones and cruel profit seekers, and in the meantime, there have been some sympathetic pure lovers who sacrificed their souls helping the claimers of the path of the truth.

And, on the other side, it is a threat against these aberrant opponents that they should know that they cannot continue their disgraceful and destructive deeds forever. Soon or late, the divine punishments will encompass them.

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1. Surah Al-'Ankabut, No. 29, verse 12
 2. Mufradat by Ragib
 3. The Commentary of Abul-Futuh, Qurtubi, and Rauh-ul-Bayan
 4. You may refer to Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 257, Surah Al-Ma'idah, verses 15 and 16, Ibrahim, verses 1 and 5, Al-Hadid, verse 9, Surah Az-Zumar, verse 22, and At-Talaq, verse 11
 5. Tafsir-i-Rauh-ul-Bayan, -Bukhari, Vol. 5, P. 97 under the verse, and Sah
 6. The Arabic word /zubur/ is the plural form of /zabur/ which means the books the scriptures of which have been written to be permanent (like writings on the stone, and the likes that here it indicates to the firmness of their matters).
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