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Section 4: Allah's Blessings on Moses

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 114-116

وَلَقَدْ مَنَنَّا عَلَي مُوسَي وَهَارُونَ

وَنَجَّيْنَاهُمَا وَقَوْمَهُمَا مِنَ الْكَرْبِ الْعَظِيمِ

وَنَصَرْنَاهُمْ فَكَانُوا هُمُ الْغَالِبِينَ

114. "We bestowed Our favour on Moses and Aaron."
115. "And We delivered them both and their people from the great distress."
116. "And We helped them so that they were the victors (over their enemies)."

The remembrance of the graces and favours of Allah to the former Divine prophets (as) was the cause of peace, comfort, encouragement and consolation of the Prophet of Islam (S) and the Muslims in the terrible circumstances of Mecca.

These verses refer to a part of the Divine favours unto Moses and his brother, Aaron, and there are some discussions consistent with what was formerly said about Noah and Abraham in the previous verses. The contents of these verses are fairly similar to each other, and the words are somehow harmonized so that they may arrange a firm training program about the believers.

Again in these verses for the explanation of many events the style of 'epitome and expansion', which is

the style of the Qur'an, has been used.

At first, it says:

"We bestowed Our favour on Moses and Aaron."

In Philology and the uses of the Qur'an, the Arabic term ***/minnat/*** has a vast meaning which includes bestowing the divine heavy bounties, too.

However, in these verses Allah secretly gives the news of some worthy and great favours which he granted to these two brothers; and in the later verses He explains a few of these favours each of which is worthier than the other.

In the second verse, Allah says:

"And We delivered them both and their people from the great distress."

What grief was greater than this that the Children of Israel were captured in the grips of the cruel, blood-thirsty people of Pharaoh who used to slaughter their sons and spared alive their females to serve them and make their men work hard for them?

Yes, losing freedom and being involved in the grips of a cruel king who had mercy neither on the children nor on the adults, and he even misused the honour of the females of a nation, was a great distress and a heavy grief. This was the first favour that Allah bestowed on the Children of Israel.

Then, in the third verse, the Qur'an implies that Allah helped Moses and Aaron and the Children of Israel so that they could win their powerful enemies, on the day when the great blood-thirsty army of Pharaoh, and in front of them Pharaoh himself, forcefully attacked them, the Children of Israel were very weak and had not enough fighters and means of war to fight against them, but the grace of Allah came to help them and buried the troops of Pharaoh in the waves of the sea.

So the Children of Israel were delivered from great distress and He gave the Pharaohs' castles, wealth, gardens, and properties to them.

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 117-119

وَءَاتَيْنَاهُمَا الْكِتَابَ الْمُسْتَبِينَ

وَهَدَيْنَاهُمَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِمَا فِي الْأَخِرِينَ

117. "And We gave them both the Book making things clear."
118. "And We guided them both on the right way."
119. "And We left (praise) for them both among the later generations."

The first is deliverance from that tyrant ruler, and then there is invitation to the Book and Path of Allah.

These verses point to the favours and spiritual merits that Allah gave to this group of people.

The Qur'an says:

"And We gave them both the Book making things clear."

Yes, the Torah, the clear Book, was a Book which made things clear, and answered all the religious and worldly needs of the Children of Israel at that time; as in Surah Al-Ma'idah, No. 5, verse 44 we recite:

"Verily We have sent down the Torah, wherein is guidance and light..."

And in the next verse it points to another spiritual merit, the merit of guidance to the Straight Way, when it says:

"And We guided them both on the right way."

It is the same right way which is far from any crookedness and deviation and which is the way of the Divine prophets and there is not any line of deviation, aberration and fall in it:

It is interesting that in all our prayers, when we ask Allah to guide us to the straight Path, we say:

"The path of those upon whom You have bestowed Your bounties, and not (the path) of those inflicted with Your wrath, nor (of those) gone astray."1

And this is the path of prophets and saints.

In the third verse, it refers to the duration of the religious school and their good name (praise) and says:

"And We left (praise) for them both among the later generations."

This is the same meaning that the Qur'an mentioned in the former verses about Abraham and Noah.

In principal, the history and the names of all men of Allah and those who pave the great path of the right, are eternal and it must be so, because they do not belong to a proper people or nation, but they belong to the whole world of humanity.

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 120-122

سَلَامٌ عَلَي مُوسَي وَهَارُونَ

إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

إِنَّهُمَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

120. "Peace be on Moses and Aaron."
121. "Verily thus do We reward the doers of good."
122. "Verily they were both of Our faithful servants,"

The godly men are alive and receive Allah's greetings.

These verses refer to the greeting and peace of Allah to Moses and Aaron, a salutation from the side of Allah, the Exalted, the Merciful, a greeting which is the secret of health in religion and faith, in belief and religious school, and in the right line and doctrine. It is a greeting which denotes to the deliverance and security from the Divine punishment in this world and the next.

It says:

"Peace be on Moses and Aaron."

Through the next verse, Allah refers to the recompense and to His great reward to them, and says:

"Verily thus do We reward the doers of good."

If they obtained these honours, it is not undue. They were righteous. They were faithful, sincere, and benevolent, and such ones must be given all these rewards.

Finally, in the third verse, the Qur'an points to the same proof that was formerly mentioned in the story of Abraham and Noah.

So, concerning Moses and Aaron, it says:

"Verily they were both of Our faithful servants,"

It is faith that makes man's spirit so clear and strong that he goes after kindness, benevolence, purity and virtuousness, a kindness which opens the doors of Divine mercy to man, and brings kinds of blessings down to him.

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 123-125

وَإِنَّ إِلْيَاسَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَلاَ تَتَّقُونَ

أَتَدْعُونَ بَعْلاً وَتَذَرُونَ أَحْسَنَ الْخَالِقِينَ

123. "And verily Elyas was of the apostles."
124. "When he said to his people: 'Will you not be in owe (of Allah)?'"
125. "Do you call on Ba'l and abandon the best of the creators?"

The fourth life story, which is mentioned in Surah, out of the life stories of the former prophets, is the short biography of Elyas.

It says:

"And verily Elyas was of the apostles."

There is no doubt that Elyas (as) is one of the prophets of Allah, and the verse under discussion has explicitly stated this matter.

The name of this Divine prophet has been mentioned in two verses of the Qur'an, once in this very Surah, As-Saffat, and the other one is mentioned is Surah Al-'An'am, No. 6, verse 85. However, there are different stories and various matters about this Divine prophet recorded in books.

You may refer to the commentary books of Majma'-ul-Bayan, Al-Mizan, Rauh-ul-Bayan, Al-Kabir by Fakhr-i-Razi, Fi-Zalal, 'A'lam-ul-Qur'an, and Encyclopaedia by Dehkhuda.

In the second verse, it implicitly announces that they ought to remember the following event:

"When he said to his people: 'Will you not be in owe (of Allah)?'"

This statement points to the subjects of godliness, avoiding from polytheism and idolatry, from sins, injustice, and corruptions and from whatever drives man into destruction.

With a more precision, in the third verse it says:

"Do you call on Ba'l and abandon the best of the creators?"

It is understood from this verse that they had a famous idol by the name of Ba'l, in front of which they fell themselves in prostration, and Elyas dissuaded them from that ugly action and invited them toward the great Creator of the world and pure Unity.

It is for this reason that some commentators believe that the centre of the activity of Elyas was Ba'labak, one of the cities of Syria since the name of that special idol was Ba'l, and /bak/ meant 'city' and with the combination of those two parts the word Ba'lbak had been formed.

It has been said that this long idol had been so big that the length of it was nearly twenty one meters and it had four faces with a few guards.

But some other commentators have not considered Ba'l as the name of a definite idol and they have taken it as the absolute name of idol, while some others use it as the concept of Rabb (lord) and object of worship. Raqib in Mufradat says:

"Originally /ba'l/ means husband, but Arabs use the objects by which they drew nigh to God called Ba'l."

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 126-129

اللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ وَرَبَّ ءَابَآئِكُمْ الأَوَّلِينَ

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَمُحْضَرُونَ

إِلاَّ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الْمُخْلَصِينَ

وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِي الأَخِرِينَ

126. "Allah is your Lord and the Lord of fathers of old."
127. "But they belied him, therefore they shall certainly be brought (to Hell)."
128. "Except for Allah's sincere servants;"
129. "And We left (praise) for him among the later generations."

The comparison of an idol and Allah makes any conscience awake, Elyas seriously reprimanded this idol worshipping nation, and reminded them that they had left the Lord Who is their Lord and the Lord of their fathers.

He told them He had been the Owner and Lord of all of them, and any blessing they had was from Him, and solution of any problem is possible by His Might, and besides Him, there is neither any source of goodness and favour nor any remover of vice and impediment.

It seems that, similar to the idol worshippers of the time of the Prophet of Islam (S), the idol worshippers of the time of Elyas, in order to justify their own deed, relied on the tradition of their ancestors, and in answer to them, Elyas says:

"Allah is your Lord and the Lord of fathers of old."

The application of the Arabic word ***/rabb/*** is the best motive for contemplation and thinking, since the most important matter in a man's life is this fact that he knows from the side of whom he has been created and now who is his authorized one, his lord, and his benefactor.

In the next verse the Qur'an implies that this obstinate and self-loving group of people did not hearken to the reasonable advices and clear guidance of this Divine great prophet and they belied him.

The verse says:

"But they belied him..."

So, Allah has stated their punishment in a short sentence where the Qur'an continues saying:

"...therefore they shall certainly be brought (to Hell)."

In Hereafter, they will be called in the Divine court of Justice and then brought into the chastisement of the Hell where they will receive the retribution of their ugly and evil deeds.

The third verse indicates that a small group of people, who were sincere, pure and righteous, believed in Elyas, and in order that their right would not be wasted.

The verse immediately after it says:

"Except for Allah's sincere servants;"

And in the fourth verse, Allah says:

"And We left (praise) for him among the later generations."

Later generations will never forget the utmost efforts of these great prophets in guarding the line of Monotheism and growing the seed of faith, and their remembrance and their school of thought will be alive as long as the world exists.

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 130-132

سَلَامٌ عَلَي إِلْ يَاسِينَ

إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

130. "Peace be on 'Ilyasin (Elyas)."
131. "Verily thus do We reward the doers of good."
132. "Verily he was (one) of Our faithful servants."

We must learn from Allah (s.w.t.) how to greet to Divine prophets, the great friends of Allah.

This verse says:

"Peace be on 'Ilyasin (Elyas)."

The application of the term 'Ilyasin instead of Elyas is either for the sake that 'Ilyasin was a word inside the term Elyas and both of them have the same meaning; or it refers to Elyas and his followers which has been used in this total form.

"Verily thus do We reward the doers of good."

Here the purpose of righteousness and kindness is in their vast meaning which envelops both performing all His laws and commandments and then struggling against any kind of polytheism, deviation, sin and mischief.

And in the third verse it refers to the main root of all of these things which is faith.

Concerning Elyas, it says:

"Verily he was (one) of Our faithful servants."

Faith and servitude is the origin of kindness, and kindness causes that one may be involved in the row of the sincere ones and be addressed with the greeting of Allah.

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 133-136

وَإِنَّ لُوطاً لَّمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

إِذْ نَجَّيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ

إِلاَّ عَجُوزاً فِي الْغَابِرِينَ

ثُمَّ دَمَّرْنَا الأَخَرِينَ

133. "And verily Lot was (one) of the Envoys."
134. "When We delivered him and his people all."
135. "Except an old woman among those that tarried."
136. "Then We destroyed the rest."

The life story of the people of Lot is a gazing-stock for all. In these verses the life story of Lot (as) has been reiterated as an instructive lesson.

According to the explicit statement of the Qur'an, Lot was contemporary with Abraham and he was one of great prophets of Allah. Lot's name has been mentioned in many verses of the Qur'an, and both he and his people have repeatedly been discussed in it, and the painful fate of this deviated nation, in particular, has been explained in the clearest form.

The first verse says:

"And verily Lot was (one) of the Envoys."

In the second verse, after this short statement, base on the style of epitome and expansion that the Qur'an has, it refers to a part of his event in order to be remembered, and says:

"When We delivered him and his people all."

And, in the third and fourth verses, it continues saying:

"Except an old woman among those that tarried."
"Then We destroyed the rest."

The above mentioned short sentences point to the history of every adventure of this nation the explanations of them were stated in the verses of Suras: Hud, No. 11, Ash-Shu'ara, No. 26, and Al-'Ankabut, No. 29.

Like other Divine prophets, Lot began his invitation with Monotheism, and then he applied his utmost struggle against the corruptions of the society, specially against the same famous ethical deviation, their act of homosexuality, the disgrace of which is known throughout of history.

This great prophet suffered very much and he did his best for the improvement of this deviated nation and he did whatever he could to hinder them from their ugly shameful deeds, but he failed and got no positive result. There were, of course, a few people who believed in him and very quickly they went out from that polluted environment.

At last, Lot became hopeless of them and decided to pray and asked for the deliverance of his own self and his family from Allah. So He accepted his invocation and delivered that small group save his wife, the same old woman who not only did not follow his teachings but also helped his enemies.

Allah sent the most grievous punishments for that nation. At first, He destroyed their cities and then He caused a rain of pebbles to be rained over them in a form that all of them were annihilated and even their bodies were effaced.

Surah As-Saffat – Verses 137-138

وَإِنَّكُمْ لَتَمُرُّونَ عَلَيْهِم مُّصْبِحِينَ

وَبِالَّيْلِ أَفَلاَ تَعْقِلُونَ

137. "And verily you pass by them in the morning."
138. "And at night; do you not then understand?"

Both deliverance and destruction are in the power of Allah.

This verse declares that every morning you usually pass by their ruined cities and you see what kind of fate they afflicted with.

The verse says:

"And verily you pass by them in the morning."

Of course, these things are as a preparation for awakening the proud neglect ones.

And, in the next verse, it says:

"And at night; do you not then understand?"

This statement is for the sake that the cities of the people of Lot were located alongside the way of the caravans of the people of Arabia toward Syria and, in their travelling, these people used to pass by them both day and night.

If they had a spiritual ear they would hear the painful cries of this sinful afflicted people, because the ruins of their cities, by a mute tongue, teach all the passengers and make them aware of being afflicted in the grips of some other events similar to them.

Yes, there are a lot of lessons for taking example, but those who may take an example are few.

Ali (as) says:

*"How many are the objects of lessons, but how few the taking of lessons."*2

There is a narration from Imam Sadiq (as) who, in answer to the question about the commentary of these verses, said:

*"When you are reciting the verses of the Qur'an you pass by them. The Qur'an reiterates the news which Allah has stated for you."*3

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1. Surah Al-Fatihah, No. 1, verse 7
2. Nahjul-Balaqah, saying No. 297
3. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, P. 432

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