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Section 8: The Ministries of Noah and Moses Referred to

Surah Yunus – Verse 71

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ نُوحٍ إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ يَاقَوْمِ إِن كَانَ كَبُرَ عَلَيْكُم مَقَامِي وَتَذْكِيرِي بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَعَلَي اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ فَأَجْمِعُوا أَمْرَكُمْ وَشُرَكَآءَكُمْ ثُمَّ لا يَكُنْ أَمْرُكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ غُمَّةً ثُمَّ اقْضُوا إِلَيَّ وَلا تُنظِرُونِ

71. "And recite to them the story of Noah when he said to his people: 'O my people! if my stay (with you) and my reminding you of the Signs of Allah is grievous to you, yet I have put my trust in Allah, so resolve on your affair, with your partners, so that your affair be not dubious to you. Then make decision on me, and give me no respite.'"

Allah the Exalted had commissioned His prophet that he should relate the news of the people of Noah to them, because this verse indicates that Noah (as) used to receive support and encouragement from Divine sources, which made him not fear the threats and strategies of the enemy.

Noah announces if listening to his useful instructions and advice with demonstrations and reasoning concerning the authenticity of Monotheism, Justice, prophethood and Resurrection are difficult and unbearable for them, and thus they have decided to kill him or they intend to cast him out, he does put all his hopes and trust in Allah, in which case, he will leave his fate in His will, with the conviction that He will save him from their wickedness and vice.

The verse says:

"And recite to them the story of Noah when he said to his people: 'O my people! if my stay (with

you*) *and my reminding you of the Signs of Allah is grievous to you, yet I have put my trust in Allah…"

Hadrat Noah then threw out a powerful challenge saying that they should collect their thoughts and invite their idols to participate in their decision-making so that nothing should be left hidden from them, there should be no ambiguity remaining in their plans, they should make the appropriate decisions and come up with the best stratagem concerning him.

The verse continues saying:

"…so resolve on your affair, with your partners, so that your affair be not dubious to you…"

Noah (as) added telling them if they were able, they should go ahead and put an end to his life, and not spare him a single moment. Here is his statement:

"…Then make decision on me, and give me no respite.""

It has been narrated that before noon on the Day of Ashura Imam Hussein (as) also recited this very verse to the Kufan army.

This is a lesson for all Islamic leaders who might feel daunted when confronted by a multitude of enemies, rather; they must, by taking recourse to Allah and appealing to Him, with utmost decisiveness challenge them and humiliate them their power which would reinforce the morale of their followers and lower that of their enemies.

Surah Yunus – Verse 72

فإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَمَا سَاَلْتُكُم مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلاَّ عَلَي اللَّهِ وَاُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

72. "But if you turn back, I have not asked you for any recompense, my recompense is only upon Allah, and I am commanded to be of those* (*who*) *surrender* (*unto Him*)*."

Anxieties often revolve around either one's life or one's wealth. In the foregoing verse, the issue in question centers on the conspiracy of their enemies with regard to the lives of the prophets. The issue dealt with in this verse relates to the prophets' lack of expectations for reward and wealth from the side of people.

Noah (as) in this verse announced that if the unbelievers were to turn away from the truth, not accepting or following it, he did not expect any rewards for bringing them the message. This was his mission, so

they should not balk at acceptance for fear of feeling that they would end up owing him something, which would be burdensome to them.

The verse says:

"But if you turn back, I have not asked you for any recompense, my recompense is only upon Allah…"

The verse also implies that if they turn away from accepting his words, he would not be at a disadvantage for he was not after their wealth (he did not covet) so that their turning away would put him at a loss, on the contrary, their rejection would turn out to be at their own disadvantage.

He emphasized that his reward for the prophetic mission and its accomplishment lay with Allah alone.

And Allah, the Gracious, had commissioned Noah (as) to be among those who had submitted themselves to His commandments for, indeed, the best of what the servants of Allah can practice is to obey and submit to Him.

The verse continues as follows:

"…and I am commanded to be of those (who) surrender (unto Him)."

Surah Yunus – Verse 73

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَمَن مَعَهُ فِي الْفُلْكِ وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ خَلَائِفَ وَأَغْرَقْنَا الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُنذَرِينَ

73. "But they rejected him (Noah), So We delivered him and those with him, in the Ark, and We made them successors (in the earth), and We overwhelmed those who rejected Our Signs. Then see what was the end of the warned ones."

The Holy Qur'an presents the final destiny of Noah's enemies and veracity of his prediction in the following way. The enemies refuted Noah while Allah saved him and all those who were with him in the Ark. Not only did He save them but He also replaced the oppressors by them and drowned all those who had denied His Signs.

The verse says:

"But they rejected him (Noah), So We delivered him and those with him, in the Ark, and We made them successors (in the earth), and We overwhelmed those who rejected Our Signs…"

Turning to the Prophet (S), Allah finally commands him that he should consider the ultimate destiny of those who did not heed the divine warning and threats and were swept away.

The verse says:

"…Then see what was the end of the warned ones."

Noah's companions were only eighty in number whilst the numbers of the unbelievers were manifold, however, by the grace of Allah, the Almighty, the unbelievers were annihilated and the faithful became the inheritors of the earth.

Surah Yunus – Verse 74

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِن بَعْدِهِ رُسُلاً إِلَي قَوْمِهِمْ فَجَآءُوهُم بِالْبَيّنَاتِ فَمَا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا بِمَا كَذَّبُوا بِهِ مِن قَبْلُ كَذَلِكَ نَطْبَعُ عَلَي قُلُوبِ الْمُعْتَدِينَ

74. "Then, after him, We sent messengers to their people; they brought them the clear evidences, but they would not believe in what they had already rejected beforehand. Thus do We seal up the hearts of the transgressors."

In these verses, Allah, the Gracious, recounts the stories of those prophets who had been appointed after Noah (as).

After Noah and the annihilation of his people, several prophets were dispatched to their peoples who, as a result of marriage and reproduction, had multiplied by that time. The purpose here is prophets 'Ibrahim, Hud, Saleh, Lot, and Shu'ayb (Jethro).

These prophets went to those people with clear proofs and miracles that testified to their prophecy and provided reasons for their truthfulness.

The verse says:

"Then, after him, We sent messengers to their People; they brought them the clear evidences…"

However, none of them any longer believed in what their divinely guided forefathers had believed. Just like the idol worshippers before them, they were also rebellious and stood in opposition to Divine guidance.

The verse continues saying:

"…but they would not believe in what they had already rejected beforehand…"

The holy phrase saying: ‘Thus do We seal the hearts of the transgressors’ means that Allah (s.w.t.) impresses the symbol of infidelity upon the hearts of those who do injustice against themselves and violate the Divine limits and laws laid down by the Almighty, so that they become condemned to reprimand, and are recognized by the angels.

The verse says:

“…Thus do We seal up the hearts of the transgressors.”

Surah Yunus – Verse 75

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِن بَعْدِهِم مُوسَي وَهَارُونَ إِلَي فِرْعَوْنَ وَملإِيْهِ بِاَيَاتِنَا فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْماً مُجْرِمِينَ

75. “Then, after them, We sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh and his chiefs with Our Signs, but they were arrogant, and they were a guilty people.”

The meaning of the Arabic word /mala’/ is the eye-caching splendour of the courtiers and palace residents who were among the Pharaoh’s entourage.

Pharaoh had divided the society into two categories: The Coptic palace-dwellers and the Sebti paupers. He had enslaved one group and the other group resided in wealth and luxury.

The primary crime of Pharaoh was his claim to being a god, and of putting innocent boys to death and letting the girls live.

Fighting against arrogant autocrats has been a major activity of the prophets, for they fight the causes of corruption not only what is caused by it.

The verse says:

“Then, after them, We sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh and his chiefs with Our Signs, but they were arrogant, and they were a guilty people.”

Surah Yunus – Verse 76

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِندِنَا قَالُوا إِنَّ هَذَا لَسِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ

76. "So when the truth came to them from Us, they said: 'Verily, this is a manifest sorcery.'"

The Essence of Allah, the prophets, the divine laws, miracles and whatever is attributed to Him are all true and real.

People do not always go after the truth. The adherents of the truth must sometimes go after the people.

The Prophets entertain a direct link with the Lord and their miracles as well as their program have their origins in the Divine nature.

However, accusing someone to be a magician is the shrewdest, simplest and the most prevalent of the accusations leveled against the prophets. It is for this reason that Moses (as) was personally accused of being a sorcerer.

The verse says:

"So when the truth came to them from Us, they said: 'Verily, this is a manifest sorcery.'"

Surah Yunus – Verse 77

قَالَ مُوسَي أَتَقُولُونَ لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَكُمْ أَسِحْرٌ هَذَا وَلاَ يُفْلِحُ السَّاحِرُونَ

77. "Said Moses: 'Do you say (this) about the Truth when it hath actually reached you? Is this sorcery? But sorcerers do not prosper.'"

Moses asked the disbelievers why it was that when the Signs of truth reached them they kept claiming it was sorcery. Moses rejects the allegations that the Signs accompanying him were the products of sorcery, for sorcery is not like this, these were Signs of the Truth and independent investigation could vouch for that.

The verse says:

"Said Moses: 'Do you say (this) about the Truth when it hath actually reached you? Is this sorcery?..."

However, they did not want to submit to the Truth, even if this truth had reached them from Allah. They claimed that the proofs that Moses brought was sorcery and simple-hearted people did not discriminate between sorcery and prophecy since both involved elements contrary to nature and habit. It was for this reason that they became confused, mixing the two which led many astray.

In such a case, people must be armed with knowledge so as to be able to distinguish miracle from magic

and not to be so dominated by the confusion that sorcerers cause and reject the issue of prophecy. However this is a fact that sorcerers do not succeed.

The verse says:

"…But sorcerers do not prosper.'"

Surah Yunus – Verse 78

قَالُوا أَجِئْتَنَا لِتَلْفِتَنَا عَمَّا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ ءَابَآءَنَا وَتَكُونَ لَكُمَا الْكِبْرِيَآءُ فِي الأَرْضِ وَمَا نَحْنُ لَكُمَا بِمُؤْمِنِينَ

78. "They said: '(O' Moses) have you come to turn us away from what we found our fathers upon, and that the greatness in the land may be for you two? But we shall not believe you two."

The people of Pharaoh continued their accusations against Moses, explicitly accusing him and Aaron of wanting them to abandon the ways of their ancestors.

They brought up the issues of ancestral traditions, and their fabulous glory to influence public opinion against Moses and Aaron, implying that they wanted to belittle and ridicule the sacred objects and symbols of their society and country.

They maintained then that Moses' call to Allah's religion and divinely inspired way was nothing but a lie. They claimed all of them were simply part of a stratagem of Moses and Aaron to seize power over the land and to put the reins of domination in their hands.

In fact, as they themselves made every effort to rule the earth oppressively, using all kinds of underhanded ways of seizing power, they ended up thinking of others as they thought of themselves, which included the struggles of the reformists and prophets.

The verse says:

"They said: '(O' Moses) have you come to turn us away from what we found our fathers upon, and that the greatness in the land may be for you two?…"

For this reason they said that they were never going to believe in Moses for they thought his message and proofs were only but the act of sorcery in the service of a wider scheme for political aggrandizement. This was the first stage of their struggle against Moses (as).

The verse continues saying:

"…But we shall not believe you two."

Surah Yunus – Verse 79

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ ائْتُونِي بِكُلِّ سَاحِرٍ عَلِيمٍ

79. "And Pharaoh said: 'Bring unto me every knowing (expert) sorcerer'."

In witnessing the miracles of Moses (as), he had been rendered wretched and helpless in trying to find a way to remove them, Pharaoh, addressing his people, put the call out that all the best sorcerers in the land should come to him in order to get them to help him nullify Moses' miracles.

The verse says:

"And Pharaoh said: 'Bring unto me every knowing (expert) sorcerer'."

Of course, Pharaoh did so in order that the sorcerers could help him in dismissing the achievement of Moses (as), and thus he called on all of them because he did not want any craft of magic or sorcery to remain hidden from him which might be of potential use in combating what he perceived to be the powerful sorcery of Moses, little knowing that the Signs that Moses manifested were not the effects of sorcery and magic but miracles originating from Allah.

Surah Yunus – Verse 80

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ السَّحَرَةُ قَالَ لَهُم مُّوسَي أَلْقُوا مَآ أَنتُم مُلْقُونَ

80. "When the sorcerers came, Moses said to them: 'Throw what you have to throw!'"

Pharaoh wanted to render the divine movement of Moses inactive with the help of those expert sorcerers. They carried instruments and devices like ropes, wood etc, which by being mixed with some particular materials moved when the sunshine affected them.

On the day when it was appointed for this historical challenge and a common invitation had also issued, a great crowd gathered. Then Moses addressed the sorcerers and told them to cast what they could cast.

The verse says:

"When the sorcerers came, Moses said to them: 'Throw what you have to throw!'"

Surah Yunus – Verses 81 - 82

فَلَمَّآ أَلْقَوْا قَالَ مُوسَي مَا جِئْتُم بِهِ السِّحْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَيُبْطِلُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لا يُصْلِحُ عَمَلَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

وَيُحِقُّ اللَّهُ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُجْرِمُونَ

81. "So when they had thrown, Moses said: 'What you have brought is sorcery. Allah will surely make it naught, verily Allah does not set right the work of mischief makers."
82. "And Allah proves the Truth by His Words though the sinners be averse (to it)."

Falsehood may have a parade and flaunt for a short time, but, at last, it is condemned to extinction. Allah does not support and improve the affairs of the mischief-makers. A sorcerer is a mischief-maker, and sorcery is a corruption. Therefore, it must be opposed with.

The verse says:

"So when they had thrown, Moses said: 'What you have brought is sorcery. Allah will surely make it naught, verily Allah does not set right the work of mischief makers."

Then Allah proclaims in the verse that Moses told them that he would definitely triumph in that quarrel and combat, for Allah had promised to unveil the truth and, through decisive logic and the astounding miracles of His prophets, He would expose the scandals of those who incite corruption even though some of the evil-doers, such as Pharaoh and his supporters, would dislike that.

The verse says:

"And Allah proves the Truth by His Words though the sinners be averse (to it)."

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