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## Reasons for the Differences Among the Miracles of the Messengers

There is a hadith which is somewhat well-known which backs up our claim of differences in the methods of guidance as seen in the reasons for the differences among the miracles of the various Messengers sent. Although this hadith is in relation to the various miracles of the Prophets which were of a different nature to coincide with different time periods, however it still backs up our claims (in relation to the methods of guiding the youth). This hadith is actually the response that Ibn Sikkiyt (r.d.a.) received from Imam al-Hadi (a.s.) – the tenth Divinely appointed religious guide.

Ibn Sikkiyt (r.d.a.) is well known among the experts of Arabic grammar. His name is mentioned quite frequently in the books of Arabic syntax and it is stated that he lived around the time of Imam Ali ibn Muhammad al-Hadi (a.s.) – thus, it was around the same time as the political leadership of Mutawwakil. Ibn Sikkiyt (r.d.a.) was also a follower of the Shi'a faith and was killed at the hands of Mutawwakil. It has been said that the reason why he was killed was because he had a strong love for Imam Ali (a.s.) and his family (a.s.).

One day Ibn Sikkiyt (r.d.a.) was in the presence of Mutawwakil when two of the sons of Mutawwakil came into the gathering. Mutawwakil, about whom it has been proverbially stated that he was one who possessed a sword that was always in search of blood turned towards Ibn Sikkiyt (r.d.a.) and said to him, “Are my (two) sons better or are the sons of Ali – meaning al-Hasan and al-Husain – better?”

This knowledgeable man (Ibn Sikkiyt (r.d.a.)) was so surprised at Mutawwakil that he immediately replied to him, “In my opinion, Qambar (r.d.a.), the servant of Ali was better than your two sons and he (Qambar (r.d.a.)) is even better than your two sons’ father.” At this point, Mutawwakil gave the order for his Turkish slave to come into the room and cut the tongue of Ibn Sikkiyt (r.d.a.) out – and it is in this state that he died.

In any case, this man asked Imam al-Hadi (a.s.) “O’ Son of the Messenger of Allah! Why is it that when Prophet Musa (a.s.) was raised as a Prophet, his signs and the ways and miracles that he employed to

invite the people and to bring guidance to them was through his staff being transformed into a serpent, and his hand that radiated with Divine light and other things such as this.

However when Prophet ʿĪsā (a.s.) was raised as a Prophet, we see that his method and the miracles which he used to invite the people was something different. He cured people who were born blind; he healed the lepers; he brought the dead back to life and other things such as this. However our Prophet (S) – when he was appointed as a Messenger, his form of miracle were none of these – meaning his miracle was through expression and words – the Noble Qurʾān.”

The Imam (a.s.) replied to him that, “This was due to the difference in times when these Prophets were raised. During the time of Prophet Mūsā (a.s.), people were amazed by magic and trickery, thus, the miracles of Mūsā (a.s.) resembled the things that the others were performing, but the difference was that Prophet Mūsā (a.s.) brought a miracle with substance to it, whereas the other people had magic and witchcraft.

As for the time of Prophet ʿĪsā (a.s.), his era was one in which doctors were in abundance and they were able to cure the most serious of sicknesses and this brought amazement and bewilderment to the masses. Thus, Allah (s.w.t.) gave ʿĪsā (a.s.) miracles that would be in line with what the people of his time were performing.

As for the time of the seal of the Prophets (S), his time was that of speech and verbal communication and the attention that people paid to oratory powers was very high. It is for this reason that the greatest teaching of Islam was brought forth through the noble words clothed in the perfect garment of eloquence and expression (the Noble Qurʾān).”

Ibn Sikkiyt (r.d.a.) thoroughly benefited from the answer given to him by the Imam (a.s.) and now that he understood this issue, he said to the Imam, “O’ Son of the Messenger of Allah! What is the Hujjah of Allah right now?” The Imam (a.s.) replied to him, “Intelligence” and said to him:

هَذَا وَاللَّهِ هُوَ الْجَوَابُ

*“This, by Allah is the answer.”*

Thus, it is clear that the reason for the difference in miracles of the Prophets was that through each of them, they were able to guide the people in different time periods. If this was not the case, then it is possible that from Adam (a.s.) till Muhammad (S) – if Prophet Adam (a.s.) had any miracles and if he was a Prophet (since there are some people who say that he was not a Prophet) – there would have only been one type of miracle. However we see that this is not the case and that each and every Prophet brought along with him his own specific miracle that was fit for his time and age.

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