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Foreword

Everything has a heart and the heart of Quran is Surah Yasin

A tradition that all commentators have quoted from reliable books, states that everything has a heart and the heart of Quran is (Surah) Yasin. 1

When we consider the totality of the organs of body as one unit, its center is the heart. From this center is directed the administration of the body. So far as it is warm, the body remains alive and when it fails, the body dies.

Heart of the Quran is Surah Yasin

The comparison of Surah Yasin with the heart, in this narration, conveys the importance of this Surah. Though the entire Quran is a miracle and the Word of God, the special merits found in this blessed chapter particularly, can be better understood by referring to the narrations, which describe the extraordinary excellence and benefits available through regular recitation of this Surah.

Two points, which are probably the basis of this comparison, are as follow:

Muhammad ('s) is the heart of universe

Muslims know well that the best of God's creation is man. God has granted him intelligence and the ability to know Him and to worship Him exclusively, so that he may understand that his creator and the creator of everyone and everything else is Only One God and hence he should worship none but Him:

And I have not created the jinn and the men except that they should serve Me. (51:56)

According to Quran, the creation of the entire universe too, is to make all understand that, in His Words:

He it is Who created for you all that is in the earth. (2:29)

The Holy religion whose foundation is based on understanding and which considers that the measure of nearness to God is the understanding of Truth is Islam. Islam names the one who conveyed it to the world, Muhammad ('s), as the foremost in knowing Allah and that he ranks first in this knowledge and in worship of God. The Quran, which has been revealed to his heart, testifies this Truth.

***The Faithful Spirit has descended with it, Upon your heart that you may be of the warners...
(26: 193–194)***

This foreword can make one easily and nicely understand that the heart of the universe is the Holy Prophet Muhammad ('s), as mentioned that: "Had it not been for you, I would not have created the heavens." Thus all the beings were made existent through the agency of Muhammad ('s).

'Yasin' is the chief of prophets, Muhammad ('s)

Also this Surah, which especially pertains to Muhammad, becomes the heart of Quran just as Muhammad himself is the heart of the world of existence. Of all its verses, the first verse of this Surah addresses Muhammad ('s) as the chief of all divine messengers. The Holy Quran says on oath that he Muhammad ('s) is among the True Messengers sent by the Almighty Allah.

After some verses, it is clearly stated that We (God) gave place to all manifest things and organized beforehand through the effort of the soul of Muhammad ('s). The Holy Quran tells us that all the worlds of existence are wrapped up and placed in him; that the center and heart of the universe is Muhammad ('s).

Surah Yasin has all the themes of Quran

Another noticeable point is that Surah Yasin has all the original themes of the entire Quran. The basis of Quran is the knowledge of our coming to this world and about things to come after death in the Hereafter. The requisite of knowing God is the knowledge about God's messengers.

The trail of these aims has struggle against disbelievers and polytheists, arguments showing correctness of theists and wrongfulness of others and finally the stories of paradise and the people of paradise and the bounties therein as well as hell and hell dwellers and sorrows therein. Throwing an overall glance at this leads us to conclude that the basic subjects of Quran are related to origin of life, the Hereafter and calling people towards religion and they have all come together in this Surah.

Other things are the offshoots of these issues. Therefore, the heart of the Holy Quran are the verses of knowledge about God; that the Creator and Recaller is God and this Surah narrates them with explanation.

Argument of monotheism

And what reason have I that I should not serve Him Who brought me into existence? And to Him you shall be brought back... (36:22)

The above verse is the statement of the believer of 'Ilyaaseen' in this Surah, which shows why one must worship Only One God, explaining that the only Manifester is One God towards Whom all are to return. Both the First creation and the hereafter are one and the same. Then why shouldn't we honor and accept the One Who has brought us from non-existence into existence and granted us every kind of bounty?

Various kinds of foods are signs of God

And a sign to them is the dead earth: We give life to it and bring forth from it grain so they eat of it. And We make therein gardens of palms and grapevines and We make springs to flow forth in it, That they may eat of the fruit thereof, and their hands did not make it; will they not then be grateful? (36:33-35)

Among the Signs of God for monotheists is the enlivening of the dead earth. He brings out therefrom grains and provides food for living beings. He creates gardens of date palms and grapevines, and makes rivers to flow for the growth of natural fruits; from which vinegar, juices and all permitted eatables and drinks come for all living beings. So that the creatures may relish them and praise and be thankful to the Creator Lord of all these bounties.

Creation of pairs and of days and nights

Glory be to Him Who created pairs of all things, of what the earth grows, and of their kind and of what they do not know. And a sign to them is the night: We draw forth from it the day, then lo! They are in the dark; And the sun runs on to a term appointed for it; that is the ordinance of the Mighty, the Knowing. And (as for) the moon, We have ordained for it stages till it becomes again as an old dry palm branch. Neither is it allowable to the sun that it should overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day; and all float on in a sphere. (36:33-35)

Altogether perfect and absolutely faultless is Allah Who created all pairs from things growing from the soil and from male, female, figure and shape or existence and quality, and from that which is not known to people. Paying attention to the way of creating pairs, we reach to the One Who created them and

know that He is free of every fault or error and that He possesses every possible virtue.

Among all the signs of God, are day and night, and rising and setting of sun.

He made night restful and means of peace, calmness and relaxation, and caused the day to be bright and shining, fit for activities and for obtaining livelihood. He also made the sun, like all stars, run towards its abode so that it may go on moving along with its system in the limitless space.

He made the moon change its shape systematically from crescent to full moon and from full moon to its disappearance so that it may be possible to calculate lunar months and also to know the time of night from the rising and setting, as the Quran says:

...that you might know the computation of years and the reckoning... (10:5)

Likewise the verse:

...nor can the night outstrip the day... (36:40)

hints that days and nights are subject to the Will of Almighty God. None can dare overtake one another. They must move in the manner decreed by the Lord, in a fixed way whereby night enters day and day in night. In the beginning of spring and autumn, days and nights are equal in length.

Thereafter from the start of autumn till the start of summer, days become longer and nights shorter and, thereafter gradually, length of days decrease and that of nights get increased until the beginning of fall when days and nights, for the second time, become equal in length and thereafter, the days becomes shorter and nights longer till the night of the winter solstice and the earlier part of the winter.

Then the days becomes longer and nights shorter until the end of winter and the start of spring. This goes on continuously. This regular and fixed system, which is due to the inclination of the earth's axis, is a great sign showing the knowledge, power and wisdom of the Creator.

The ship and other means of transportation are also signs of God

And a sign to them is that We bear their offspring in the laden ship. And We have created for them the like of it, what they will ride on. And if We please, We can drown them, then there shall be no succorer for them, nor shall they be rescued, But (by) mercy from Us and for enjoyment till a time. (36:41-44)

Among the signs of God are ships, which pass over water, carrying passengers. In what nature has He made the wood and metal enabling them to overcome water and what intelligence and ability of knowing nature and qualities of materials He has granted to man that he assembles different materials to make a

ship that floats on water, automobiles that run on earth and planes that fly in the atmosphere; so much so that he also sends rockets between stars.

And We have created for them the like of it, what they will ride on. (36:42)

Also sometimes to make man realize that the actual power is God, He occasionally causes a ship to sink and a plane to crash so that people may understand that help should be sought from none but Only One God, the same Lord Who caused the ship, the car and the plane to move. The same Almighty Allah is powerful enough to disconnect the cause from effect. Hence no protection from destruction is available except through His mercy until the fixed time and the destined hour arrives.

...and for enjoyment till a time. (36:44)

Animals are signs for men

Do they not see that We have created cattle for them, out of what Our hands have wrought, so they are their masters? And We have subjected them to them, so some of them they have to ride upon, and some of them they eat. And therein they have advantages and drinks; will they not then be grateful? (36:71-73)

Yet another sign of God for monotheists and the worshippers of Only One God, is the creation of quadrupeds over whom He gave control to man. Carrying on their business, they eat their flesh, drink their milk and use them for riding and cultivating fields. The noteworthy point is:

We have subjected them to them...

Meaning: We have given them in the service and control of mankind. How were they humbled so that man is able to take all this work from them and they do not revolt? For the sake of truth, shouldn't such a Lord be thanked? Shouldn't man be grateful to Him?

Resurrection—the second Islamic belief

The second part of the basic idea of Quran is related to Resurrection, which is also mentioned in this chapter. Proofs are cited to support the arguments. Among such evidences is the enlivening of the dead earth, which, besides proving the existence of the Creator, also proves that He is able to resurrect. In other words, enlivening dead earth is a sign of the life-giver and also of His power to enliven the dead.

Another remarkable argument for Resurrection is in the last verses of this chapter:

And he strikes out a likeness for Us and forgets his own creation. Says he: Who will give life to the bones when they are rotten? Say: He will give life to them Who brought them into existence at first, and He is cognizant of all creation, He Who has made for you the fire (to burn) from the green tree, so that with it you kindle (fire). Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like of them? Yea! and He is the Creator (of all), the Knower. His command, when He intends anything, is only to say to it: Be, so it is. (36:78-82)

Here God alludes to the incident of the polytheist who crushed decayed bones in front of the Holy Prophet ('s) and said, "Who is there to give life to this when it is decayed and rotten?" God says, "He puts forth an example to me and asks", 'How this rotten bone can be enlivened again,' whereas he has forgotten his own creation."

Tell him, "the One Who created him will resurrect him (after he is dead) and He is well aware of His entire creation."

As you have observed, a single argument, which is easily understood by all, suffices to prove Resurrection; and the argument is such that it leaves no scope for doubt.

Resurrection, Paradise and Hell

And they say: When will this threat come to pass, if you are truthful? They wait not for aught but a single cry which will overtake them while they yet contend with one another. So they shall not be able to make a bequest, nor shall they return to their families. And the trumpet shall be blown, when lo! from their graves they shall hasten on to their Lord. They shall say: O woe to us! who has raised us up from our sleeping-place? This is what the Beneficent God promised and the apostles told the truth. There would be naught but a single cry, when lo! they shall all be brought before Us; So this day no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least; and you shall not be rewarded aught but that which you did. Surely the dwellers of the garden shall on that day be in an occupation quite happy. They and their wives shall be in shades, reclining on raised couches. (36:48-56)

This chapter also mentions the beginning of resurrection at the blow of the horn and how people would be raised and then it describes the luxurious conditions of the dwellers of paradise and the abject destiny of those condemned to Hell.

On that day, the inmates of paradise would be reclining in comfortable couches with their wives, and

fruits, and all that they desire would be readily available to them. They would be greeted with 'Peace' from the Merciful Lord.

As for the others, the Quran says:

And get aside today, O guilty ones! Did I not charge you, O children of Adam! That you should not serve the Shaitan? Surely he is your open enemy... (36:59-60)

Likewise, in the story of Habib Najjar (Believer of Ilyaseen), there is a mention about the Barzakh Paradise (in grave or during the period between death and resurrection).

Invitation towards truth and help to messengers

In the story of Habib Najjar, God mentions his conversation with disbelievers and the opponents of messengers, and brings proofs of truthfulness of messengers, the fallacy of deniers and their blindness and disbelief in the punishment of the Hereafter. He also teaches a lesson in the matter of remaining steadfast (on truth) as to how the believer of Ilyaseen, while inviting all towards Truth and in supporting the divine callers, showed courage till his death. It is mentioned how, soon after the release of his soul from body, the believer entered the paradise of Barzakh (grave life). He wishes: How nice if my people know that my Lord has forgiven me and placed me among the honorable ones.

It was said: Enter the garden. He said: O would that my people had known; Of that on account of which my Lord has forgiven me and made me of the honored ones! (36:26-27)

There also is the description of torments to which the deniers will be subjected after the messengers have concluded their arguments soundly:

And We did not send down upon his people after him any hosts from heaven, nor do We ever send down.

It was naught but a single cry, and lo! They were still. (36:28-29)

The above verses mention how death overtook everyone with a terrible shriek resulting in loss for them both in this world and in Hereafter. This also provides a lesson for the deniers.

These verses also highlight the merit of Jihad (endless struggle for Truth) until one achieves martyrdom and on the other hand describes the deprivation of the deniers of Truth. There is also mention of the requitals from God for both types of people.

Imamat—An exalted divine rank

As mentioned before, this chapter contains the main themes of the Holy Quran in a discreet manner. One of the important subjects of Quran is ‘Imamat’ (leadership of the community after the Prophet). Imam is the impeccable representative of God and His created Great Name (Isme Azam), which is comprehensive of all Names and has all True elegant and majestic virtues. In one of the verses there is a description of the proficiency, knowledge and ability of the Imam, which is a manifestation of the knowledge and power of God:

Surely We give life to the dead, and We write down what they have sent before and their footprints, and We have encompassed everything in a manifest leader (Imam-e-Mubeen). (36: 12)

This verse indicates that the Imam has knowledge of everything and he is the master of everything. That is, he is the representative of God in every sense. It also indicates that his holy spirit encircles all the worlds and all things and that he is the trainer of all existing things and a manifestation of the Name of Lord. Hence, in the commentary of the verse:

And the earth shall beam with the light of its Lord... (39:69)

It is mentioned that the earth beams with the light (noor) of its Creator. Here the Imam is called Lord of the Divine Throne (Rabbul Arsh).

Indeed, the true recognition of Imam and his being verified as Divine Light (Noor) is the basis of Faith and hence the greatest of all bounties. And in this verse, a brief phrase “and We have encompassed everything in a manifest leader” declares this reality of Imamat.

The Dominion of Everything is in the control of God

Therefore glory be to Him in Whose hand is the kingdom of all things, and to Him you shall be brought back. (36:83)

As we have stated in the beginning, this chapter contains an introduction to all the main points relating to the origin of creation and the end of everything. Here we say that the summary of all the topics of this chapter is treasured in its last verses.

Kingdom (Malakoot), according to Islamic terminology, is the world corresponding to rulership or state. In other words, it is the world of command in comparison to the created world and both, in fact, belong to God, the god of creation and command.

Surely your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods of time, and He is firm in power; (7:54)

Everything in the world has a soul and a command (decree or control). Without control, kingdom is impossible. In other words, the universe is not created without command, as mentioned in the famous panegyric of Mir Fandarski:

The sky has so many beautiful and elegant stars. Here what is below is in accordance with or like what is above.

It is proved by logic and scholastic theology that everything has a controller; that just as the created world is entirely created by God, the Command also belongs to God and, therefore, the sphere of Command too, like the created world, is in the hand of Only One God.

The Quran says with regard to animals:

...there is no living creature but He holds it by its forelock... (11:56)

The return of all is also towards Him

...and to Him you shall be brought back. (36:83)

Man is moving towards perfection and the cause of his coming to this world and of undergoing sorrows and pains is for attaining perfection. Those who have not destroyed their faith would be perfected by God at the time of death, which is the moment of meeting the Lord:

Whoever hopes to meet Allah, the term appointed by Allah will then most surely come; and He is the Hearing, the Knowing. (29:5)

And also:

Allah takes the souls at the time of their death, and those that die not during their sleep; then He withholds those on whom He has passed the decree of death and sends the others back till an appointed term; most surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect. (39:42)

Others have their shortcomings corrected in the stages of Barzakh (grave life) and some on the Day of

Judgment. At last, if the character of man has not been destroyed he will, attain the desired perfection when the world ends, either in Barzakh or in Qiyamat. But those who died as disbelievers or polytheists and who destroyed their human character would be like animals, rather worse than animals:

...they are as cattle, nay, they are in worse errors...(7: 179)

Heart of Quran—the best title for this book

After reading the above you will agree that the title “Heart of Quran” is the best and most appropriate one and is also in accordance with the words of the immaculate Imam (‘a).

The commentary of this holy chapter in a light and simple style and its narration commonly comprehensible, is one of the Divine bounties upon Ayatullah Syed Abdul Husain Dastghaib (d.b.).

In consonance with his usual style it is replete with examples and stories to support the evidences of the subjects discussed. He has adopted an attractive variety in explanations and refrained from wordings, which may bore the reader or hearer. Thus he has made easy for laymen the study of difficult religious subjects.

This commentary on Surah Yasin was given in lectures during the holy month of Ramadan and thereafter the material was transcribed and published in book form.

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1. Chapter 36 of the Holy Quran.

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