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Ayat no. 5–9

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

A revelation of the Mighty, the Merciful. That you may warn a people whose fathers were not warned, so they are heedless. Certainly the word has proved true of most of them, so they do not believe. Surely We have placed chains on their necks, and these reach up to their chins, so they have their heads raised aloft. And We have made before them a barrier and a barrier behind them, then We have covered them over so that they do not see. (36:5–9)

Holy Prophet shown all ways and kingdoms

This Quran, which is full of intelligence and wisdom, is the Word of the Lord of the Worlds Who is needless of His creation. But it is the demand of His Mercifulness that he shows man the right and true path so that man may fear his falling down (into Hell) from the Sirat Bridge (in the Hereafter). “That you may warn a people...” So, O Prophet! Frighten by this Quran those, whose forefathers were not warned, and hence they remained unaware.

I have already said that it denotes the intervening period between two prophets. For six hundred years before the arrival of the Holy Prophet (‘s), they did not have any prophet to warn them.

...so they are heedless.

But then God did a favor upon man and sent His Light or Radiance in the form of Muhammad (‘s). God showed all the paths to Muhammad (‘s) including this world and the Hereafter, the angels, the Dominion and Paradise and Hell so that he may warn the creation. He showed the Divine Kingdom to the Holy Prophet during the Night of Ascension so that he may warn the people.

Meccan polytheists being people of hell, news from the unseen

Certainly the word has proved true of most of them, so they do not believe.

That is, your truthfulness became indisputable. What is meant by this? At the beginning of creation God addressed Satan:

Get out of this (state), despised, driven away; whoever of them will follow you, I will certainly fill hell with you all. (7:18)

This proved true in the case of most of them (People of Mecca) that they would go to Hell. This verse is one of the Divine secrets or prophecies from the unseen that, according to Quran, these polytheists will not believe till their last and will not follow Muhammad ('s).

...so they will not believe.

That is they are not believers. How is it so? Let us read on and it will soon become clear.

Yokes in necks and barriers both in front and behind

Surely We have placed yokes on their necks, and these reach up to their chins, so they have their heads raised aloft.

And We have made before them a barrier and a barrier behind them, then We have covered them over so that they do not see. (36:8-9)

These verses either relate to Qiyamat or they are by way of example. Despite all kinds of warnings, they did not fear and hence We gave this punishment to them. This is the apparent meaning of these two verses. A deeper pondering is needed here.

Most of the commentators have mentioned three reasons. One: That these two verses pertain to the Hereafter. That it would happen thus in Qiyamat. Another aspect is that it is by way of example; that it is a parable; that nothing of this kind is actual but their condition is like that of a man tied from neck to chin by chains and whose face is up in the air, they cannot understand anything.

But the third aspect, which appears better, is like this: It is a truth among practical truths. What has been mentioned will appear before us with out present physical bodies. Yokes are placed around you. You cannot comprehend anything.

Barriers are set before you eyes. Behind your back is another big screen. This meaning is explained in another description as to what is a "yoke?" If this word is understood, everyone will himself follow what it denotes.

Passions and aspirations make one blind and deaf

We have iron yokes around our necks. Thus we cannot see what is before our feet, obviously. But this holy verse pertains to the truth and is aimed at our soul and heart. One is unable to see in any direction as the yokes have restricted his senses.

The yokes are, in a sense, fallen on our heart and soul in such a way that it makes us raise our heads up in bewilderment. It can be said that these yokes are our desires and aspirations, longings of passion and love for material world, power, and lust. Wherever they arise they make one blind as well as deaf.

Everyone whom his passions, desires and aspirations have blinded and deafened does not see what is in front of him. In front of him is his house in the grave; he sees everything except his grave “before them”.

Everyone who looks into himself and looks justly finds a similar rank in himself. The ignorant and careless think about everything except their own death. They are afraid of everything but a death of disbelief.

He also does not see what is behind him. He has forgotten all his sins.

Most truly and appropriately, God owns up and says, “*We* did it.”

And We have made...

We decided it, but it were you only who desired it. God gives everything to you and you compromised the Hereafter for this world.

God releases water for Firaun also

There is a narration in Majlisi’s *Hayat-ul-Quloob* regarding Firaun. The people said, “You claim divinity since a long time. The waters of Nile have dried up. Since you claim to be God, make the waters of this river run again.” Firaun said, “All right, I will do so.”

He came out of the city with his army. In the desert, he told his soldiers, “Remain in your place until I myself come out and make the river flow.” Then he hastened to a remote place from where he could not be seen by anyone and where no one was present.

He dismounted from his horse threw down his crown, fell on the ground headlong and said, “O Lord of the Worlds! I know very well that I am a liar. But I do not want the Hereafter. I desire only this worldly kingdom. Do not disgrace me. My God! I know that everything is in Your Power. I beg You make the waters of this river flow again.” Soon the water began to flow.

Do not be amazed that He grants anyone his or her heartfelt desires. Firaun himself said, “I want the

world and I do not need the Hereafter”, just as Satan did not want the Hereafter and desired that he should live in this world till the Day of Judgment.

No one is dejected in His court

Implicitly, no one should say that resumption of water was due to the waywardness of man; it is not so. Common sense says that it is not the work of human beings. God is extremely merciful. He does not deprive even His enemies.

No one returns empty handed from His court. So one should say, “O God! Who did not deprive even Firaun who claimed to be god, when he came to Your Court bowing down before You, today we are your guests, observing fasts and we have come to Your house (Mosque).

Please remove the yokes around our hearts. These yokes have dragged us down and do not allow us to think about the Hereafter. Passions and desires have chained us, but Thou art Merciful. Be kind to me! How will you deprive the friends when You don't even reject the foes?

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