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## Ayat 18-21

*In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.*

*They said: Surely we augur evil from you; if you do not desist, we will certainly stone you, and there shall certainly afflict you a painful chastisement from us. They said: Your evil fortune is with you; what! if you are reminded! Nay, you are an extravagant people. And from the remote part of the city there came a man running, he said: O my people! Follow the messengers; Follow him who does not ask you for reward, and they are the followers of the right course; (36: 18-21)*

### Attributors of bad omens to others suffer badly

The people of Antioch, instead of considering the messengers of God as auspicious for them, attributed bad omens to them and said, "If you do not stop talking like this, we will stone you and give you a painful torture. Do not talk about God and Hereafter in this town. Get out of here at once."

The messengers replied, "Your bad omen is with you. Adversity is only with you." If you are warned about idol making it is not a concocted talk. Is this word of admonition ominous and sinister? Is it a bad word if you are asked to make prearrangement for the next world after death?

You are in abomination yourself from head to toe.

Your adversity is the very belief of yours. You think that wood is lucky, which is a calamity, which you yourselves bring upon yourself. Everyone who attributes bad omen to others himself gets its bad result. He is not harmed by outsiders.

By the way, people cast bad omens to others and then get badly affected themselves. This is self-made trouble. For example you come out of house and the very first person you see is a blind person; or you see a dead body. You say, "Alas! What is going to happen to me today?" Or if the eye falls on a sick person, one returns home saying, "Today I will not go to work."

Or, as it used to happen in olden days, when people were preparing to go on a journey. If then a bird

moved from their left side, they considered it to be a bad omen and they postponed their journey. Even today, some people think that owl is an inauspicious bird. If it sits on roof they imagine it to be a bad sign.

They also regard the crowing of a crow as a sign of bad luck. Likewise, in the night of Wednesday or Sunday, if someone arrives to visit a sick person they regard it a bad omen, whereas, there is no reservation for these two days in this world of existence, rather they are also like all other days of the week.

If some think that this visit worsened the condition of the sick person, it is superstition. As a general rule, such bad omens do not have any external harm. The incorrect and superstitious belief itself brings adverse effect. Its misfortune clings to them. This suffering is due to the falseness of belief and due to the sinisterness of that point.

## **Muhammad (‘s) never made a sortilege**

You should be respectful towards the last Prophet, Muhammad (‘s). Throughout his life he never resorted to bad omen and he always hated it. On the contrary, he was pleased with good augury. You too must be like that. For example if you come out of your house and see Mirza Nasrullaah. You can say, “Good, good! Help (Nasr) of God is with us.” God would surely fulfill this.

It is mentioned in the events of the Holy Prophet (‘s) that once, while migrating, a man came to him. The Prophet asked, “What is your name?” The man replied, “Abu Bardah.” The Prophet said, “Our work became cold.” That is it was nice.<sup>1</sup> Then he asked, “To which tribe do you belong?” The man replied, “Bani Aslam.”

The Holy Prophet said, “We are in safety”.<sup>2</sup> This is taking good augury and it is a tradition of the Holy Prophet. Strengthen our hopes with respect to what we encounter. Hope for good results. Thus you have relied on God hoping for good, which you would surely get.

If you expect bad as a result of improper belief, coldness from the Grace of God may overtake you. It then is due to inauspiciousness in your own self. You did not see God. Instead you looked at the creation. The adversity of imagining bad omen is by way of polytheism and disbelief whereas hoping for good is through guidance of God.

***...what! if you are reminded!***

Meaning: If we warn you along with admonitions, should you abuse us? Is the response to admonition hitting with stick and stone? We are your well-wishers. We are showing the path of salvation and to remedy your inner diseases, but:

***Nay, you are an extravagant people.***

You yourselves are extravagants. You are exceeding limits. Whoever crossed limits of moderation, acted absolutely against wisdom in his behavior with God and His creation and even with himself or herself, as well as with spouse, children and relatives is an extravagant. Every extremism is extravagance. To abuse an admonisher is extremism. There are many people who become angry if they are advised.

## **Supporters of prophets slain**

***And from the remote part of the city there came a man running,***

In this populous town that was twelve miles in length the three sages did not leave a single area without giving people therein an invitation towards Oneness of God and Hereafter. According to some narrations the number of persons who accepted their admonition and put faith in them were not more than forty.

Then, one day, the unbelievers caught them all, installed gallows and put the believers to death. They pierced their necks and hanged them on gallows so as to torture them painfully before killing them. While this cruelty was being meted out to good people, its news reached the convent of Habib Najjar at the other extreme of the town.

## **Habib Najjar rises up to support the messengers**

***And a believing man who hid his faith said... (40:28)***

Habib Najjar had concealed his faith and he apparently worked as a carpenter spending half his income in the path of God (charity) and using half for himself. This sage came out of his monastery and saw that the lives of the messengers were in danger. He tried his best to reach them soonest and save their lives. Almighty Allah, praises the supporter of His Messengers in this verse of the Holy Quran.

## **Three persons who took lead in putting faith**

A narration quoted in the Quranic commentary *Durre Manthur* says that Habib Najjar was the second of the preceding ones (Sibaaq) among all men.<sup>3</sup> It denotes one who is having great status among people after the messengers. There are three such persons in the nations. The first is the believer of the people of Firaun.

***And a believing man of Firon's people who hid his faith said: What! Will you slay a man because he says: My Lord is Allah, and indeed he has brought to you clear arguments from your Lord?***

***And if he be a liar, on him will be his lie, and if he be truthful, there will befall you some of that which he threatens you (with); surely Allah does not guide him who is extravagant, a liar: (40:28)***

Whose details are given in Surah “Ha Mim” Fussilat who came in the way of the killing of Moosa (‘a) and prevented Firaun from assassinating him.

Second is the believer of Yasin, the same Habib Najjar about whom the Holy Quran says:

***And from the remote part of the city there came a man running...***

The third is the king of Wilayat, the Victorious Lion of Allah, Ali bin Abi Talib (‘a) who supported the Holy Prophet (‘s) while no one from the Muslims preceded him in accepting Islam.

Moreover, it is the same person who testified to the Prophethood of Muhammad (‘s) six hundred years before his advent in this world. It is mentioned in books of history that Habib Najjar was one of those who had seen the prophecy of the advent of the Prophet Muhammad (‘s) in the heavenly books and also read about the attributes of the Holy Prophet and had put faith in him.

## **A sympathetic savant and selfless truth-teller is worth following**

This noble man who was a believer in Only One God rushed to the scene and cried, “O people! Follow the messengers.” Obey them who do not want any recompense. This is the proof of Prophethood. O wise people! If someone has three attributes, viz wisdom, selflessness and truthfulness, then reason demands that he must be followed.

Everyone who has wisdom and who also has no selfishness and is also speaking nothing but truth is such that his guidance must be accepted. If there is a doctor, a specialist of some illness and if you know that he has no lust for money and who examines your children without any personal gain, then reason demands that you act upon his instructions. But if he is not knowledgeable or only after moneymaking, then it would not be advisable to act on his instructions.

This noble soul said:

***O my people! follow the messengers; Follow him who does not ask you for reward,***

Meaning: O People! Follow the messengers who do not ask for anything from you, neither wealth nor kingdom, name or fame in exchange of this guidance. Do they have any material desire? No! Thus this is the proof of their Prophethood.

***and they are the followers of the right course;***

That is they are rightly guided.

What is wealth? Lure a child with it. Muhammad is aware of the Hourie so how can he overlook the divine invitation for the sake of a woman? And kingdom? It is nothing except adversity. He accepted the hardship and painfulness of Prophethood and suffered tortures inflicted by people.

## **Messengers never demand compensation for propagation**

They never demanded any wages:

***Indeed my recompense is upon Allah.***

In the final days of the Prophet's life some people assembled and said among themselves, "Muhammad (s) has to entertain many guests. His expenditure is high. Let us give him some money as he has many rights over us. The following verse was revealed:

***Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives; (42:23)***

You intend to compensate Muhammad (s), but it is only God Who will do this. If you so desire, then do one thing: as a token of recompense of his messengership, be kind and behave nicely with his household, which is also for your own good.

***Say: Whatever reward I have asked of you, that is only for yourselves; my reward is only with Allah, and He is a witness of all things. (34:47)***

It is clearly mentioned in the Holy Quran that what I asked from you in the form of friendship and 'Khums' is also for you and only for your benefit.

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1. In Arabic "Barada" means cold – Tr.

2. In Arabic "Salama" means 'Safety'

3. Tafsir Noorus Thaqaalain vol. 4, pg. 384

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