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25. Why is it that some of the Oppressors and Sinners are Drowned in Comfort and Bounties and do not Witness any Punishment?

From the verses of the Noble Qur'an it can be inferred that those who have not become greatly polluted by means of sins, Allah (s.w.t.) – by means of alarm bells, reactions of their deeds or at times, punishments in accordance with the deeds committed by them – awakens them and returns them to the correct path. These are those, who until possess the worthiness to be guided aright and hence are eligible for the grace of Allah (s.w.t.). In truth, their punishments and troubles can be regarded as bounties for them, as the Qur'an says:

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

“Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea on account of what the hands of men have wrought, that He may make them taste a part of that which they have done, so that they may return.”¹

However those who have drowned themselves in sins and disobedience, and have transgressed all limits of rebelliousness, Allah (s.w.t.) leaves them to their own selves and grants them an open field in order that they commit more sins and thus become deserving of the maximum punishment. These are those, who have advanced such that they cannot return; they have ripped apart the curtains of shame and modesty, and have stripped themselves of the worthiness to attain Divine guidance.

Verse 178 of Surat Ale 'Imran emphasises this purport when it says:

And let not those who disbelieve think that Our granting them respite is better for their souls; We grant them respite only that they may add to their sins; and they shall have a disgraceful chastisement.

The courageous lady of Islam, Zaynab-e-Kubra (s.a.), in the sermon which she delivered in Syria based her argument upon this verse vis-à-vis the rebellious Yazid – a manifest example of a sinner, who could never turn back – when she said to him: You are ecstatic today and imagine that confining the world for us, shutting out the horizons of the heavens upon us and leading us like captives from one city to another, is a sign of your strength? (You imagine that) you possess power and rank in the eyes of Allah (s.w.t.) while we have no standing before Him? You are mistaken! Allah (s.w.t.) has granted you this freedom and respite so that your back becomes heavy by the burden of your sins and (do know that) a painful chastisement awaits you...

Answer to one Question

Incidentally, the above verse also answers this question which plagues the mind of many as to why is it that many of the oppressors and sinners are surrounded by comfort, and do not taste chastisement?

The Qur'an says that these are individuals that are beyond rectification and, according to the law of creation, have been left to their own selves so that they drop down to the maximum extent possible and consequently become deserving of the severest punishment.

Apart from this, it can also be concluded from some of the verses of the Qur'an that, at times, Allah (s.w.t.) grants numerous bounties to such individuals and, at a time when they are completely engrossed and absorbed in their pleasures, suddenly takes them away so that they may taste the maximum torment in the life of this very world. This is because losing such an affluent and leisurely life is intensely disturbing, as we read:

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا
أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِغْتَةٍ فَاذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ

“But when they neglected that with which they had been admonished, We opened for them the doors of all things, until when they rejoiced in what they were given We seized them suddenly; then lo! they were in utter despair.”²

In truth, such individuals are like one, who wickedly and unjustly climbs a tree, becoming happier as he ascends higher until he reaches the top of the tree; suddenly a storm begins to blow and he falls down from that height – a fall that leaves all his bones shattered.³

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1. Suratul Rum (30), Verse 41
 2. Suratul An'am (6), Verse 44
 3. Tafsir-e-Namuna, vol. 3, pg. 183

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