

Section 24: The Conclusive Warnings Against Polytheism

Surah al-'Araf – Verse 189

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّاهَا حَمَلَتْ حَمْلًا خَفِيفًا فَمَرَّتُ بِهِ فَلَمَّا أَثْقَلَتْ دَعَوَا اللَّهَ رَبَّهُمَا لَئِنْ آتَيْتَنَا صَالِحًا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ

189. “He it is Who created you from a single soul, and of the same (kind) did He make his mate, that he might take rest in her. So when he covered her, she bore a light burden and passed (sometime) with it. Then when she grew heavy, they both invoked Allah, their Lord: ‘If you give us a righteous son, certainly we shall be of the grateful ones’.”

Another part of the circumstances of the pagans and the way of their thinking and the answer to their mistakes are hinted to here. And, since the former verses referred to the Unity of Divine Acts, the substitutive verses are counted as their complement. At first, it says:

“He it is Who created you from a single soul, and of the same (kind) did He make his mate, that he might take rest in her...”

The couple had a pleasant life with each other, but when the spouse had sexual intercourse with his wife, she bore a light burden such that, at the beginning, that burden did not bother her and she could easily continue performing her affairs. The verse says:

“...So when he covered her, she bore a light burden and passed (sometime) with it...”

Later, by passing some days and nights, her burden gradually grew heavier. When she became heavy, the couple expected a child and hoped that Allah would grant them a righteous child. The verse says:

“...Then when she grew heavy, they both invoked Allah, their Lord...”

Therefore, they both invoked their Lord as follows:

“...‘If you give us a righteous son, certainly we shall be of the grateful ones.’”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verses 190-191

فَلَمَّا آتَاهُمَا صَالِحًا جَعَلَا لَهُ شُرَكَاءَ فِيمَا آتَاهُمَا فَتَعَالَى اللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

أَيُّشْرِكُونَ مَا لَا يَخْلُقُ شَيْئًا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ

190. “But when He gave them a righteous son, they (Adam’s children) ascribed partners to Him in what He had given them. But Exalted is Allah above any partners that they ascribe (to Him).”

191. “Do they ascribe (to Him) partners that create nothing and themselves are created?”

Allah gave Adam and Eve the safe and sound child that they had asked for, but thereafter the children of Adam and Eve ascribed partners to Allah. The Qur’anic phrase **‘they ascribed partners to Him’** means ‘the children of the couple ascribed partners to Him’. The verse says:

“But when He gave them a righteous son, they (Adam’s children) ascribed partners to Him in what He had given them. But Exalted is Allah above any partners that they ascribe (to Him).”

Then, the second verse questions whether they ascribe some creatures as partners to Allah that not only they cannot create anything but also they themselves are created, since the fact is that the worshippers have produced those partners, therefore, they are more incapable and incompetent than the worshippers. The verse says:

“Do they ascribe (to Him) partners that create nothing and themselves are created?”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verses 192-193

وَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ لَهُمْ نَصْرًا وَلَا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَنْصُرُونَ

وَإِنْ تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَى لَا يَتَّبِعُوكُمْ سِوَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَدْعَوْتُمُوهُمْ أَمْ أَنْتُمْ صَامِتُونَ

192. ***“And they can neither help them nor help themselves.”***

193. ***“And if you invite them unto guidance, they will not follow you; it is the same to you whether you invite them or whether you are silent.”***

These created things are able to help neither the worshippers nor themselves to ward off the evil events that happen against them. This verse continues the meaning of the previous verse by saying:

“And they can neither help them nor help themselves.”

Thus, if you invite the objects of worship to what is useful for their guidance, or you ask them to guide you, they will not pursue your purpose and they do not answer you as Allah answers you. The verse says:

“And if you invite them unto guidance, they will not follow you...”

Whether you invite them or you be silent for inviting them, it is the same to you, because there is not any rescue and felicity for them, and they are unable to do anything. It says:

“...it is the same to you whether you invite them or whether you are silent.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 194

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ عِبَادٌ أَمْثَلُكُمْ فَادْعُوهُمْ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

194. ***“Verily those whom you call upon other than Allah are creatures like your own selves. So call on them, then they should answer you if you are truthful.”***

The objective meaning of the Arabic term /‘ibād/ (worshipping creatures) may be the creatures or men who are taken as deities, like Jesus (as) or the angels. Or, the purpose may be the very idols which the idol-worshippers imagine as ‘gods’.

Therefore, worshipping needs both reason and privilege. Worshipping creatures or human beings, like our own selves, has neither any reason nor any privilege. The verse says:

“Verily those whom you call upon other than Allah are creatures like your own selves...”

Another matter is the silence of deities which itself is the sign of their inability and incompetence.

Besides, a deity must promote its servant, not to stop him. The verse continues saying:

“...So call on them, then they should answer you if you are truthful.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 195

أَلَهُمْ أَرْجُلٌ يَمْشُونَ بِهَا أَمْ لَهُمْ أَيْدٍ يَبْطِشُونَ بِهَا أَمْ لَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا أَمْ لَهُمْ
ءَاذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا قُلِ ادْعُوا شُرَكَاءَكُمْ ثُمَّ كِيدُوا فَلَا تُنظِرُونَ

195. “Have they feet with which they walk? Or, have they hands with which they hold (firmly)? Or, have they eyes with which they see? Or, have they ears with which they hear? Say (O’ Prophet!): ‘Call your associates, then contrive against me and give me no respite’.”

The Arabic term /yabtiḥn/ is derived from /batḥaḥa/ which means ‘to take or seize by force’.

This meaning has been used as a reprimand upon the pagans who take some partners for Allah. These partners are more incapable than they themselves, since they can walk, see, hear and act, but those lifeless statues do not have these abilities, and if they were wished to do something they would be unable. So, why do the idol-worshippers, as a notion, adore them?

Strange to say, pagans do not accept the Prophet (S) since he says he is a human as they are, but they are convinced with idols which are not like them even, or they are lower than them. The verse says:

“Have they feet with which they walk? Or, have they hands with which they hold (firmly)? Or, have they eyes with which they see? Or, have they ears with which they hear? Say (O’ Prophet!): ‘Call your associates, then contrive against me and give me no respite’.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 196

إِنَّ وَلِيَِّّ اللَّهِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ وَهُوَ يَتَوَلَّى الصَّالِحِينَ

196. “Verily my guardian is Allah Who sent down the Book, and He guards the righteous.”

Following the former verse which, addressing pagans, said they themselves and their idols could not harm the Prophet (S) the least thing, this verse refers to its reason, and says:

“Verily my guardian is Allah Who sent down the Book...”

It is not only the Prophet’s self that He guards but He also supports and guards all the good doers and the righteous, and His grace and favour encompass them. The verse concludes as follows:

“...and He guards the righteous.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verses 197-198

وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُونَ نَصْرَكُمْ وَلَا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَنْصُرُونَ

وَإِنْ تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَى لَا يَسْمَعُوا وَتَرَاهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ

197. “And those whom you call upon other than Him can neither help you, nor help themselves.”

198. “And if you call them to guidance, they do not hear; and you see them looking towards you, but they do not see.”

The verse implies that the idols and deities of pagans are not able to help them or defend them. They are also incapable even to help their own selves. This meaning has been repeated here again, because in previous verse, the purpose was to premand the idol-worshippers, while here the purpose is to discriminate between Allah (s.w.t.) and something which is not adorable.

It seems that the Prophet of Islam (S) says that his Deity helps him but their deities help neither them nor their own selves. The verse says:

“And those whom you call upon other than Him can neither help you, nor help themselves.”

The second verse indicates that if you call the idols to guidance and rectitude, they do not hear your invitation. That is, if you call idolaters to the upright religion, they do not hear you to follow. The verse says:

“And if you call them to guidance, they do not hear...”

The verse, addressing idol worshippers, implies that they have made the idols in a shape that they gaze them, but they do not see anything. This looking, of course, is metaphorical, since an inanimate thing cannot look at something. The verse continues saying:

“...and you see them looking towards you, but they do not see.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 199

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

199. “Keep to forgiveness and enjoin kindness, and turn away from the ignorant.”

Here, the Qur’ān, in a very short and interesting way, states the circumstances of leadership, preaching, and guiding people. It also corresponds with the previous verses which referred to the theme of the propagation of pagans.

At first, addressing the Prophet (S), the verse points to three parts of the duties of leaders and preachers. It begins telling the Holy Prophet (S) not to be strict with people and to accept their excuses; and to avoid demanding them anything beyond their ability. However, he should conciliate people. The verse says:

“Keep to forgiveness...”

The second command is that he (S) should enjoin people to do good deeds and what wisdom approves as worthy achievements, and Allah has introduced them as good things. The verse says:

“...and enjoin kindness...”

In the third stage, it commands him to have patience and endurance against the ignorant people without having any dispute with them. The verse says:

“...and turn away from the ignorant.”

In the course of their activities, the leaders and preachers may face with some fanatic, obstinate, ignorant and unaware persons, or some people whose level of thought and morals are very low. Such people might abuse them, accuse them, and put them into trouble.

Therefore, the way of solving this difficulty is not disputing with such ignorant people. The best way is to tolerate them with patience and ignoring these kinds of actions of theirs. Experience has shown that this way is better to be paved for awakening the ignorant and quenching the fire of their anger, envy, and bigotry.

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 200

وَأِمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

200. “And if a temptation from Satan afflicts you, then seek refuge in Allah; surely He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.”

There is another command in this verse which forms the fourth duty of the Islamic leaders and preachers. They should be careful that on their way usually the satanic temptations, in the form of social position, wealth, lust and the like of them, attract their attention. The command of the Qur’an is as follows:

“And if a temptation from Satan afflicts you, then seek refuge in Allah; surely He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verses 201-202

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ

وَإِخْوَانُهُمْ يَمُدُّونَهُمْ فِي الْغِيِّ ثُمَّ لَا يُقْصِرُونَ

201. “Verily, those who keep from evil, when a visitation from Satan afflicts them they become mindful. Then behold, they see (aright).”

202. “And their brethren draw them into perverseness, and they do not stop short.”

Predominance upon the temptations of Satan is stated in this verse. It implies that when the satanic temptations surround the pious ones, they remember Allah, the All-Mighty and the Glorious, and His endless bounties, and that committing sin brings forth some inauspicious results for them with the painful retributions of Allah.

At this time, the dark clouds of evil temptations will get apart from their hearts (minds) and they clearly see the path of truth, and then they choose it. The verse says:

“Verily, those who keep from evil, when a visitation from Satan afflicts them they become mindful. Then behold, they see (aright).”

As the above verse points out, the pious ones can relieve themselves from the grasps of the temptations of Satan under the light of the remembrance of Allah. But, those who are stained with sin, and are counted as brethren of Satan, are captured in his net.

In this regard, the second verse mentioned in the above, implies that the brethren of Satans ceaselessly draw the immoral persons forward into aberration and they not only do not stop doing that, but also

constantly continue their cruel attacks. The verse says:

“And their brethren draw them into perverseness, and they do not stop short.”

Yes, Satans follow the track of the believing persons and the pious ones. They do not stop turning round them in order to delude them.

The satanic temptations and mental suggestions go everywhere, and like microbes, which seek for the weak bodies they also seek for those whose faiths are weak to influence in them.

“...when a visitation from Satan afflicts them...”

The temptations of Satans sometimes act from a distance. Surah T^hh, No. 20, verse 120 says:

“But Satan whispered unto him...”

It is sometimes done through penetrating into men’s soul and spirit. Surah An-N^s, No. 114, verse 5 says:

“Who whispers into the breasts (hearts) of the people.”

It sometimes works by means of companionship. Surah Az-Zukhruf, No. 43, verse 36 says:

“...and he shall be his close companion.”

And, sometimes it is by means of turning round and affliction. This case is referred to in the current verse where it says:

“...when a visitation from Satan afflicts them...”

It may happen that sometimes the religious scholars, trainees, and those who try to make peace might be suspiciously visited with the purpose that a particular line of thought be inspired upon them.

Therefore, they must be careful not to incline toward the desires of the enemy, and they should refuge Allah.

The remembrance of Allah gives insight to man and keeps him safe from evil temptations. The verse says:

“...They become mindful...”

Correct belief is very important. If a society becomes pure and pious from the point of morals, politics, economy, and army, the communications and hauntings of satanic persons can not affect them.

Allah takes the pious ones and the good doers under His guardianship, but the impious persons will be encompassed with the satanic brotherhood.

“And their brethren...”

The final word of the verse is that there is no finite or limitation for the way of perversion, and Satan has no pity in casting aberration upon the believers. The verse says:

“And their brethren draw them into perverseness, and they do not stop short.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 203

وَإِذَا لَمْ تَأْتِهِمْ بآيَةٍ قَالُوا لَوْلَا اجْتَبَيْتَهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَتَّبِعُ مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ مِنْ رَبِّي هَذَا
بَصَائِرُ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

203. “And when you do not bring them a sign, they say: ‘Why do you not choose one?’ Say: ‘I follow only what is revealed to me from my Lord. This (Qur’ān) is insight from your Lord, and a guidance and a mercy for a people that believe.’”

The Arabic word /’ijtibā’/ is derived from the root /jibāyat/ which originally means ‘to store water in a pound’. This term is also used for ‘collecting taxes’. Therefore, any gathering of chosen things has been called /’ijtibā’/, in the Arabic language.

It happened that, as a result of delay in revelation, the recitation was ceased for several days. Some of the disbelievers told the Prophet (S) why he had not chosen a verse to proclaim. Or, maybe the meaning of the verse is that they said why he did not choose the miracle they had asked him to bring and that he brought another miracle which was not according to their taste.

However, infidels are often the seekers of pretexts. They considered the verses of the Qur’ān which were revealed to the Prophet (S) as some chosen material, not the Divine revelations.

The verse says:

“And when you do not bring them a sign, they say: ‘Why do you not choose one?’ Say: ‘I follow only what is revealed to me from my Lord...”

A godly leader should not be affected by some pretexts or undue wants, but he must express his subject matter clearly and decisively.

Leadership and guidance should be based upon insight. Therefore, the Qur’ān is a Book of both mental knowledge and insight, and also a guidance of practical movement. But only the possessors of Faith can enjoy this kind of guidance, and those blind-hearted people who are aloof from the insight and guidance of Allah, are also deprived from His mercy.

The verse continues saying:

“...This (Qur’an) is insight from your Lord, and a guidance and a mercy for a people that believe.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 204

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ الْقُرْآنُ فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ وَأَنْصِتُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

204. “And when the Qur’an is recited, then listen to it and be silent, so that mercy may be shown to you.”

The Islamic jurisprudents do not give decree upon the act of keeping silence to be absolutely obligatory, except in prayer. This verse emphasizes that when the Qur’an is being recited, from the point of courtesy, the audience ought to keep silence and listen to the recitation of the verses.

It happened that Hazrat Ali (as) was establishing prayers and a hypocrite began reciting the Qur’an loudly. Ali (as) kept silence and after that he continued reciting the rest of the Surah.

The Arabic term /’insiq/ philologically means to be silent in order to listen.

Thus, the Qur’an, which is a means of insight and mercy, should be politely listened to when it is being recited. The verse says:

“And when the Qur’an is recited, then listen to it and be silent...”

The sound of the recitation of the Qur’an should pass through the ears and affects on the heart (mind). In this case the person may be shown the divine mercy to. The verse concludes as follows:

“...so that mercy may be shown to you.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 205

وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ وَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ

205. “And remember your Lord within your self in humility and awe; without being loud of voice, in the morning and the evening, and do not be of the heedless ones.”

The discipline of the recitation of the Qur'ān was referred to in the previous verse. Now, here in this verse, the discipline of the remembrance of Allah (s.w.t.) and supplication is dealt with.

The Arabic term /'asr/ is the plural form of the term /'asil/, which means 'around the time of sunset, or evening'.

Some of the commentators have rendered the holy term /'ikr/ (remembrance), mentioned here in this verse, into the statutory prayers'.

The Qur'ān admires not only the verbal remembrance of Allah(s.w.t.), but also the heartily and innate remembrance of His Essence.

The Lordship of Allah is permanent, then His remembrance should be maintained ceaselessly, too. The verse says:

“And remember your Lord within your self...”

That remembrance is spiritually helpful for the believers which is performed amorously and touchingly every morning and evening. In this concern, the verse says:

“...in humility and awe...”

This meaning should be noted that the divine prophets must also ceaselessly remember Allah, still less the others.

The phrase '*in the morning and the evening*' means 'at the beginning of an action and at the time of making decision' and also when we come to a conclusion, we ought to remember Allah.

“...in the morning and the evening...”

The remembrance of Allah removes negligence when it is done without any pretence and shouting, otherwise it will become itself a kind of amusement and negligence. The verse says:

“...without being loud of voice, in the morning and the evening, and do not be of the heedless ones.”

Surah al-‘Araf – Verse 206

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَيُسَبِّحُونَهُ وَلَهُ يَسْجُدُونَ

206. “Verily those who are (stationed) near your Lord do not disdain to worship Him, and they

glorify Him and prostrate for Him.”

It is probable that the phrase “...***those who are (stationed) near your Lord...***” encompasses both the angels and the pious servants of Allah who connect His Essence and feel themselves at His presence.

Be not proud of your worship, for Allah has some angels that are always in the state of worshipping.

“Verily those who are (stationed) near your Lord...”

The worst kind of arrogance is ‘disobedience and arrogance before Allah’ by abandoning His worship.

It is certain that an arrogant person will never reach the rank of being stationed near to Allah. We must be humble before Allah (s.w.t.), and we ought to be attentive to His purification, too. We must specialize our prostrations for Him alone. The verse continues saying:

“...do not disdain to worship Him, and they glorify Him and prostrate for Him.”

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/enlightening-commentary-light-holy-quran-vol-6/section-24-conclusive-warnings-against-polytheism>