

Section 4: The Fate of Those Who Disbelieved Noah

Surah Hud – Verse 36

وَأَوْحِيَ إِلَىٰ نُوحٍ أَنَّهُ لَنْ يُؤْمِنَ مِنْ قَوْمِكَ إِلَّا مَن قَدْ ءَامَنَ فَلَا تَبْتَئِسْ بِمَا كَانُوا
يَفْعَلُونَ

36. “And it was revealed unto Noah: ‘None of your people will believe except those who have already believed, so do not grieve as to what they used to do.’”

The previous holy verses thoroughly covered the stage of inviting the people to the religion on Divine unity and Noah’s indefatigable propagation and dissemination of the Divine message which he accomplished using all the devices he had available. This verse deals with the second stage of the campaign; the final stage of the propagation phase.

Here, the second phase of the campaign has not been dealt with, it is the end of the propagation stage, and the second stage is the preparation for the Divine purge.

At first, we read that it was revealed to Noah that no one else except those who had already adhered to him would become believers.

The verse says:

“And it was revealed unto Noah: ‘None of your people will believe except those who have already believed...”

Reference is here made to the fact that alignments had already been made and finalized and no further

call or reformation would have been useful, hence a state of readiness for the upheaval and the purge must be declared.

Towards the end of the verse, consoling Noah, the Qur'an implies that he should not despair at all despite whatever wrongful deeds they used to do.

The verse says:

"...so do not grieve as to what they used to do'."

In the meantime, one can infer from this verse that Allah made those aspects of the knowledge of the secrets of the Unseen that He had deemed necessary, accessible so that His prophet should know.

Surah Hud – Verse 37

وَاصْنَعِ الْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحِينَا وَلَا تُخَاطِبُنِي فِي الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِنَّهُمْ مُغْرَقُونَ

37. "And make you the Ark under Our eyes, and as We reveal; and address Me not about those who are unjust; verily they shall be drowned."

At any rate, this unruly and obstinate group must be punished with the kind of punishment that would remove their polluting existence from the entire world, thus liberating the faithful believers from their yoke.

At first, the Qur'an implies that Allah commanded Noah to build an Ark according to His order and in His presence.

The verse says:

"And make you the Ark under Our eyes, and as We reveal;..."

Towards the end of the verse, Noah is warned against any form of mediation on behalf of the oppressors. Saying to him that he should not ask for any amnesty or clemency for they are certainly condemned to chastisement and to be drowned as soon as they are convicted.

The verse says:

"...and address Me not about those who are unjust; verily they shall be drowned."

One can very easily infer from this sentence that taking up the act of mediation requires certain preconditions which, when they are lacking in someone, even Allah's prophet is not rightful to mediate

on his behalf.

Surah Hud – Verse 38

وَيَصْنَعُ الْفُلْكَ وَكَلَّمَا مَرَّ عَلَيْهِ مَلَأَ مِنْ قَوْمِهِ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُ قَالَ إِنْ تَسْخَرُوا مِنَّا فَإِنَّا
نَسْخَرُ مِنْكُمْ كَمَا تَسْخَرُونَ

38. “And he began making the Ark; and whenever the chiefs of his people passed by him they scoffed at him. He said: ‘If you scoff at us, we (too) shall surely scoff at you, as you scoff’ .”

Let us briefly discuss the situation of Noah’s People. Instead of taking Noah’s call seriously for a moment, and allowing some room for accepting the probability of the truth of his repeated calls which might have had their origins in Divine Providence and that the subject of punishment through storms might be serious, Noah’s people went on mocking and ridiculing as is the case with all arrogant and vainglorious people, however he went on building the Ark.

Whenever some of his people passed by him they would watch Noah and his companions struggle to prepare the timber, nails and other ship–building instruments, and they would laugh and ridicule them. The verse says:

“And he began making the Ark; and whenever the chiefs of his people passed by him they scoffed at him...”

However, Noah pursued his goal with an extraordinary persistence whose origins lay in his faith, and paying no attention to what they said, he made rapid progress in his efforts. Day after day, the structure of the ship came closer and closer to completion. Noah would sometimes raise his head, and told them this short out expressive statement:

“You ridicule us today, but we will surely do the same thing to you soon, the day when you are caught, lost and wandering in the storm, terrified, running in all directions with no shelter, crying in the midst of the waves, begging for mercy, the believers then and there will laugh at your negligence, and ignorance.”

The verse says:

“...He said: ‘If you scoff at us, we (too) shall surely scoff at you, as you scoff’ .”

Surah Hud – Verse 39

فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ يَأْتِيهِ عَذَابٌ يُخْزِيهِ وَيَحِلُّ عَلَيْهِ عَذَابٌ مُقِيمٌ

39. “So you shall know soon to whom a Penalty (that) will confound him comes, and upon whom there shall fall a lasting Penalty.”

The meaning of the punishment which is modified by the term /yuxzihi/ is the devastating worldly punishment, i.e. their being drowned which would humiliate and belittle them, whilst the meaning of the term /‘aḥabun muqim/ is the punishment to be imposed on the Day of Resurrection.

The verse says:

“So you shall know soon to whom a Penalty (that) will confound him comes, and upon whom there shall fall a lasting Penalty.”

In some Islamic narrations, one reads that forty years prior to the appearance of the storm, a type of disease had spread among the women of the People of Noah which had prevented them from giving birth to children. This event, in fact, marked the beginning of their punishment.

Noah’s Ark

Noah’s Ark, undoubtedly, was not an ordinary ship and its manufacture in those days with the technology of the time was not easily accomplished. It was a large vessel which, in addition to the believers, accommodated pairs of an extremely wide variety of animals, it also carried a large amount of food supplies for the human passengers, as well as food for the animals which was unprecedented for that time.

In particular, this ship had to be safely navigated through a sea that covered the entire world with mountain-sized waves and still remain intact. In their commentaries, some Qur’an commentators have expressed their admiration for the magnitude of the ship. Refer to the comments of Majma‘-ul-Bayan for further information.

Surah Hud – Verse 40

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَمْرُنَا وَفَارَ التَّنُّورُ قُلْنَا احْمِلْ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَأَهْلَكَ إِلَّا مَنْ سَبَقَ عَلَيْهِ الْقَوْلُ وَمَنْ آمَنَ وَمَا آمَنَ مَعَهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ

40. “(Thus it was) till, when Our Command came, and the oven gushed forth (water)! We said: “Embark therein, of each kind a pair, and your family (apart from your wife and a son) – except for those him against whom the Word has already passed – and whoever believed. But there believed not with him but a few.”

The Onset of the Flood

In the previous verses, we noted how Noah and the true believers became occupied in building the Ark of Salvation and, while subjected to all kinds of difficulties and sarcasms of the arrogant unbelieving majority, they prepared themselves for the flood.

Here, the Qur’an expounds upon the third highlight or the climax of the story which relates to the punishment inflicted upon this oppressive nation.

First of all, it says that this situation continued until Allah’s command was issued and the dawning of the divine punishment appeared, and waters of the earth gushed forth. The verse says:

“(Thus it was) till, when Our Command came, and the oven gushed forth (water)!...”

Those people who were inattentive and unaware probably noticed the bubbling water in their wells, but, as usual, they did not heed these Divine warnings much less try to understand their meaning. They probably did not pay any attention to it at all to see if a cataclysm was about to occur, and maybe to at least entertain the possibility that Noah’s warnings might be real.

At this time, the Command was issued to Noah that he should put a pair of each animal on the Ark so that they would not be exterminated in the flood. And that he, his family, except those for whom word had already had been marked for their punishment, and the believers should board the Ark of Salvation. However few were those who had believed in him.

The verse says:

“...We said: “Embark therein, of each kind a pair, and your family (apart from your wife and a son) – except for those him against whom the Word has already passed – and whoever believed. But there believed not with him but a few.”

This verse, on the one hand, refers to the wife of Noah and his son ‘Kan’an’, who, deviating from the path of belief and being in collaboration with the sinners, had broken off their relationship with Noah and were not entitled to embark on the Ark.

On the other hand, it refers to the limited success that Noah (as) had had in persuading people to follow his way of life during his long years of continuous struggle that had resulted in getting only a small number of believers.

Surah Hud – Verse 41

وَقَالَ ارْكَبُوا فِيهَا بِسْمِ اللَّهِ مَجْرِيهَا وَمُرسَاهَا إِنَّ رَبِّي لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

41. “And he (Noah) said: ‘Embark in it! In Allah’s Name shall be its sailing and its berthing. Verily my Lord is the Forgiving, the Merciful.’”

Noah assembled his relatives and companions quickly and as the time of the devastating storm and the striking Punishment approached, he ordered them to embark in the name of Allah and to remember Allah both when the Ark was in motion or standing still for He is the All Forgiving, the All Compassionate.

The verse says:

“And he (Noah) said: ‘Embark in it! In Allah’s Name shall be its sailing and its berthing. Verily my Lord is the Forgiving, the Merciful.’”

Owing to His blessings, Allah had made these instruments available to you, His faithful servants, and because of His forgiveness, He may pardon your offences.

Surah Hud – Verse 42

وَهِيَ تَجْرِي بِهِمْ فِي مَوْجٍ كَالْجِبَالِ وَنَادَى نوحُ ابْنَهُ وَكَانَ فِي مَعْزِلٍ يَا بُنَيَّ ارْكَبْ
مَعَنَا وَلَا تَكُنْ مَعَ الْكَافِرِينَ

42. “So, it sailed with them amid waves like mountains. And Noah called out to his son and he was aloof: ‘O my son! Embark with us and be not with the unbelievers.’”

At long last, the final moment arrived and the Command for the punishment of this unruly nation was issued. Dark and ominous clouds darker than the darkest night covered the entire sky, massing on top of each other in an unprecedented manner. There was the terrible clap of thunder and the flash of lightning ceaselessly filled up the sky. They informed of a great disaster mounting in magnitude and terrible in character.

It started raining. The droplets grew bigger and bigger in size. The level of underground water rose and gushing fountains emerged everywhere.

The surface of the earth was soon turned into an ocean, and with the wind howling, mountain-like waves

raged over this ocean, rising over each other, to come crashing down upon the surface of the stormy sea. Noah's Ark parted the mountain-like waves and made headway.

The verse says:

“So, it sailed with them amid waves like mountains. And Noah called out to his son and he was aloof:...”

Addressing his son, who was standing on the side and not far from him, Noah shouted:

“...‘O my son! Embark with us and be not with the unbelievers.’”

However, his son's companionship and association with evil company had overtaken him to such an extent that his father's compassion against annihilation made no impact upon him.

Surah Hud – Verse 43

قَالَ سَأُوِي إِلَىٰ جَبَلٍ يَعْصِمُنِي مِنَ الْمَاءِ قَالَ لَا عَاصِمَ الْيَوْمَ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا مَنْ رَحِمَ وَحَالَ بَيْنَهُمَا الْمَوْجُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْمَغْرُقِينَ

43. “He said: ‘I will take refuge in a mountain; it will save me from the water.’ Said he (Noah): ‘Today, there is no protector from Allah’s decree but (of whom) He has mercy.’ And the waves came between them, and he was among the drowned.”

This obstinate and shortsighted son, thinking that he could escape Allah's anger, shouted implying that his father should not be worried about him. He would take to the mountain which could never be overtaken by flood-waters, and it would shelter him.

The verse says:

“He said: ‘I will take refuge in a mountain; it will save me from the water.’...”

Noah still did not despair. He advised his son once more, so as to lead him onto the True Path and overcome his son's shortsightedness and arrogance. He said to him that no power was able to save anyone from Allah's command. The only hope of being saved remained for him who was covered by Allah's blessing.

The verse says:

“...Said he (Noah): ‘Today, there is no protector from Allah’s decree but (of whom) He has mercy.’...”

At this time, a wave, coming between them, overwhelmed his son, uprooting him as if he was a straw, and placed him among the drowned ones.

The verse continues saying:

“...And the waves came between them, and he was among the drowned.”

The Educational implications of Noah’s Flood

As we notice, the main aim of the Qur’an is to teach us lessons by recounting the didactic teachings of past history, from which one can draw the following inferences:

1- Purging the Face of the Earth

It is true that Allah is Compassionate and Kind. However, one must not forget that He is at the same time Wise. Whenever a nation becomes corrupt and does not answer the call of His messengers He judges it appropriate that that nation has no right to continue to live. Ultimately, their system will be overthrown through some natural or social revolutions.

This has not been confined to the Noah’s nation, nor has it been confined to a particular time and place. As a result of the Divine Providence this has taken place throughout all ages and among all nations up to our time. The first and the second World Wars might be regarded as examples of such a purge.

2- Why Punishment Was Inflicted by a Flood

It is true that a corrupt nation must be exterminated, but their means of annihilation can vary. The holy verses of the Qur’an provide evidence that punishments are commensurate with sins of the nations punished.

The Pharaoh relied on the River Nile which was the backbone of his power, and, interestingly, it became the source of his annihilation.

The People of Noah was an agricultural and a livestock–breeding nation. That ungodly nation had relied upon rainfall for everything, and ultimately that very nation was wiped out by rainfall.

If we notice that our contemporary fellow human beings are being devastated with their most modern arms and ammunitions, we must not be surprised, for the advanced industries which they relied upon for the exploitation of oppressed nations, would be eventually used for their own destruction.

3- Unreliable Shelters of Straw

It is usual for everyone to take shelter to something when in need. Some take refuge in their wealth, some find shelter in their position, some rely upon their bodily strength, and finally, some rely upon their power of thinking.

However, as the above verses show, and as history has demonstrated for us, none of these can resist the command of the Almighty, and they will easily disappear just like a spider's web standing in the storms.

The ignorant and stiff-necked son of the prophet Noah committed the same fault. He thought that the mountains could protect him from Allah's Wrath. But, what a grave mistake! The sweep of a wave put an end to his life.

4- The Ark of Salvation

As it has been quoted from the blessed Prophet (S) which is found in Shi'ah and Sunni books, the Prophet's family, which are the Imams and Ahl-ul-Bayt (as), as well as the content of the school of Islam, have been designated as 'the Ark of Salvation'.

That is, when tremendous changes occur in the mental, ideological, and social spheres of the Islamic community, the only means of salvation is to take refuge in the School of the Ahl-ul-Bayt (as).

The tradition which talks about this 'Ark of Salvation', the tradition of /safinah/ (ship) has been generally accepted by the consensus of the Imamiah scholars and by more than 100 Sunni scholars as well. It has been narrated as follows:

"Abuthar, the great companion of the Prophet (S), while holding the knob of the door of the Ka'bah, said with a loud voice:

'O you people! I heard the Prophet (S) saying with my own ears, that the Prophet (S) said 'The similitude of my Ahl-ul-Bayt (family) is like Noah's Ark; he who embarks upon it is rescued, and he who distances himself from it, will perish.'

Certainly, other great personalities at the dawn of Islam like Abu Sa'id Khedri, Ibn Abbas, Abdullah-Ibn Zubayr, and Anas Ibn-Malik have also quoted this tradition of the Prophet (S) which has been mentioned in the known books of the Ahl al Sunna. 1

If we place this sequential 'Hadith' (tradition) alongside another sequential 'Hadith' which says: "*The Muslims will be divided into 73 sects, out of which only one will be saved,*" it would become evident that the Prophet (S) himself considered this sect to be the one that follows the Ahl-ul-Bayt, (as) and where he says '*He who embarks upon it will be saved,*' he means the same term /najiyah/ (saved).

Surah Hud – Verse 44

وَقِيلَ يَا أَرْضُ ابْلَعِي مَاءَكَ وَيَا سَمَاءُ أَقْلَعِي وَغِيضَ الْمَاءِ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَاسْتَوَتْ
عَلَى الْجُودِيِّ وَقِيلَ بُعْدًا لِلْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

44. “And it was said: ‘O earth! Swallow down your water, and O sky! Withhold (your rain)!’ And the water abated, and the matter was ended, and it (the Ark) rested on the (Mount) Judi, and it was said: ‘Away with the unjust people!’”

The End of an Adventure

Noah left the ship up to Allah to take the rudder in His own hands. The waves had taken the ship in an undesignated direction. It has been quoted that the ship drifted for six months, passing by various places, including Mecca and the area surrounding the House of the Ka’ba.

Eventually, the decree ending the punishment and the return of the earth to its original state was issued. This verse explains the details and the conditions as well as the ensuing consequences in a concise, and at the same time, extraordinarily beautiful and eloquent manner in a few sentences.

The earth was commanded to absorb all its water and the sky was ordered to stop raining; the water subsided and the work was accomplished.

The verse says:

“And it was said: ‘O earth! Swallow down your water, and O sky! Withhold (your rain)!’ And the water abated, and the matter was ended...”

The ship came to rest on the slopes of Mount Judi, which is a famous mountain near Mosul and it was at this time that it was proclaimed that off with the oppressors!

The verse says:

“...and it (the Ark) rested on the (Mount) Judi, and it was said: ‘Away with the unjust people!’”

According to a number of Arab men of knowledge this verse is counted as the most eloquent and the most fluent of the Qur’anic verses.

According to the narrations and the books of Islamic history it is said that some unbelievers of the Quraysh, starting a campaign against the Qur’an, decided to fabricate verses like those of the Holy Book.

Their supporters provided them with the best food and drink for forty days including the kernel of a particular type of wheat, mutton, and old wine, so that their minds would be free of every kind of anxiety in order to compose the verses.

However, when they arrived at the above verse, they were so moved by it that they gazed at one another in surprise, saying:

“These are words unsurpassed and unequalled by all means, and they do not resemble those made by

human beings.”

Saying this, they abandoned their decision and dispersed in despair.

Surah Hud – Verse 45

وَنَادَى نُوحٌ رَبَّهُ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنَّ ابْنِي مِنْ أَهْلِي وَإِنَّ وَعْدَكَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنْتَ أَحْكَمُ
الْحَاكِمِينَ

45. “And Noah called unto his Lord, and said: “O my Lord! Verily, my son is of my family, and certainly Your promise is true and You are the Most just of Judges.”

The Tragic Story of Noah’s Son

In the foregoing verses, we noted that Noah’s son did not listen to his father’s advice, and did not stop being obstinate and stiff-necked to the last moment.

Another part of this same story is being dealt with here. That is, when Noah noticed his son buffeted by the waves, his fatherly emotions were provoked and he was reminded of Allah’s promise that his family would be saved.

Facing Allah’s sanctuary, he cried: that his son was a member of his family and He had promised him that He would save his family from the storm and His promises are always true. Allah is superior to all rulers, and He is a staunch keeper of His promise.

This promise refers to the same subject that was discussed in the fortieth verse of this Surah.

The verse says:

“And Noah called unto his Lord, and said: “O my Lord! Verily, my son is of my family, and certainly Your promise is true and You are the Most just of Judges.”

Surah Hud – Verse 46

قَالَ يَا نُوحُ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ إِنَّهُ عَمَلٌ غَيْرُ صَالِحٍ فَلَا تَسْأَلْنِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ
إِنِّي أَعْظُكَ أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ

46. “He (Allah) said: ‘O’ Noah! Verily he is not of your family. Verily he is (of) conduct other than righteous. So do not ask of Me that of which you have no knowledge! I admonish you, lest you should be among the ignorant.”

However, the thought provoking answer was provided, recalling a stern reality and the secondary status of the family relationship as separated from religious school of thought.

Allah tells Noah that he was not of his kind, on the contrary, he was an evil doer; a man of misdemeanor, whose family relationship was of no value and kinship of no avail owing to the fact that he was cut off from Noah’s school of thought, as such Noah should not make any requests about which he had no knowledge and therefore he should not be among the ignorant.

The verse says:

“He (Allah) said: ‘O’ Noah! Verily he is not of your family. Verily he is (of) conduct other than righteous. So do not ask of Me that of which you have no knowledge! I admonish you, lest you should be among the ignorant.”

Imam Rida (as) has been quoted as saying that one day he asked his friends:

“How do the common folk comment on this verse, which says:

‘...Verily he is (of) conduct other than righteous.’...”

One person from among the audience replied:

“Some believe that it means that he who is referred to as Noah’s son, that is, Kan’an was not his real son.”

The Imam (as) said:

“No it is not so, he was his real son, though Allah refused him his kinship when he committed sins and disobeyed, leading himself astray. Those who also belong to our school but refuse to obey Allah should not be considered as of us.”

Surah Hud – Verse 47

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَسْأَلَكَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَإِلَّا تَغْفِرْ لِي وَتَرْحَمْنِي أَكُنَ
مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

47. “He (Noah) said: ‘O my Lord! Verily I seek refuge in You, lest I should ask You (for) that of

which I have no knowledge. And unless You forgive me and have Mercy on me I should be of the losers’.”

Noah discovered that his request for Allah’s sanctuary had been out of the question, and that he should have never considered the salvation of such a son as being covered by Allah’s promise to save his family members.

Therefore, turning to Him, he said that he would do seek refuge in Him for whatever good and evil he had no knowledge of, and so of making wrong requests. And unless He forgive him for having made such a request, and pardon him, he would be among the losers, indeed.

The verse says:

“He (Noah) said: ‘O my Lord! Verily I seek refuge in You, lest I should ask You (for) that of which I have no knowledge. And unless You forgive me and have Mercy on me I should be of the losers’.”

Surah Hud – Verse 48

قِيلَ يَا نُوحُ اهْبِطْ بِسَلَامٍ مِّنَّا وَبَرَكَاتٍ عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰ أُمَّمٍ مِّمَّن مَعَكَ وَأُمَّمٍ سَنُنْتَعِهِنَّ
ثُمَّ يَمَسُّهُم مِّنَّا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

48. “It was said: ‘O Noah! Debark in peace from Us, and blessings upon you and on the nations of those with you; and nations whom We shall afford provision, then there shall afflict them from Us a painful chastisement’.”

Noah disembarked from the Ark safely. In this verse allusions are made to Noah’s disembarkation, as well as to the regeneration of the earth.

Firstly, the holy Qur’an implies that Noah was addressed saying: that he should disembark from the Ark safely with Blessings from Allah to him and to those with him.

The verse says:

“It was said: ‘O Noah! Debark in peace from Us, and blessings upon you and on the nations of those with you;...””

Obviously, the storm had devastated all signs of life, it destroyed cultivated lands, green pastures, and the orchards that had once flourished, and everything had been rendered infertile and arid.

At this time, Noah and his companions were in grave narrowness as far as their lives and nutrition were concerned. However, Allah reassured this group of believers that the Divine blessings would not be withheld from them and therefore, they should stop worrying about their livelihood because an appropriate and a blissful environment awaited them.

Then it adds that there would descend from this faithful group, nations of people on whom We Allah would bestow different kinds of Blessings although some of them would become arrogant and negligent, and consequently a grave punishment would be inflicted upon them.

The verse says:

“...and nations whom We shall afford provision, then there shall afflict them from Us a painful chastisement’.”

Surah Hud – Verse 49

تِلْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهَا إِلَيْكَ مَا كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُهَا أَنْتَ وَلَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ هَذَا
فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ الْعَاقِبَةَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

49. “(O Prophet!) these are of the tidings of the Unseen which We reveal unto you. Before this, neither you nor your people knew them. Therefore, be you patient, verily the end is for the pious ones.”

This verse, by which ends the story of Noah in this Surah, sums up what had been covered previously. It implies that all this comes from the world beyond your powers of perception that Allah has revealed to the Prophet which neither he nor his people knew of before.

The verse says:

“(O Prophet!) these are of the tidings of the Unseen which We reveal unto you. Before this, neither you nor your people knew them...”

The gist of what was revealed to the Prophet (S) about Noah was that amidst all those difficulties he had encountered in the course of his calling, still he persevered. The Prophet too, should persevere because the final victory is reserved for those who are pious.

The verse says:

“...Therefore, be you patient, verily the end is for the pious ones.”

One can infer from this verse that contrary to what some people think, the prophets were aware of the invisible world with condition that their knowledge had its source in the Divine will, and was confined to the extent that Allah wanted.

We shall now leave the story of Noah at this point, despite all the wonders and didactic lessons that can be drawn from it, and take up another great prophet, that is Hud, in whose name this Surah has been entitled.

The Feature of Noah in the Qur'an

The story of Noah (as) is mentioned in six of the suras of the Qur'an: Al-A'raf, Hud, Mu'minun, Shu'ara, Qamar, and Nuh but, it is most extensively discussed in the current Surah, Hud.

The appointment of Noah to prophecy was made after Adam (as) and during the time of the spread of unbelief, idol worship and oppression, his agenda consisted of enforcing and spreading monotheism and the daily prayers, encouraging people to decent conduct, dissuading them from committing the forbidden, and preaching justice, honesty and remaining faithful to one's own words.

The duration of Noah's prophecy extended for 950 years. When, at the end of his period, Allah told him that no one would accept his faith, he was discouraged and cursed the people. As a result, his wife and son, who did not belong to his school of thought, were drowned along with the other unbelievers.

He was the first prophet with a universal mission, a Book and a shari'ah (a specific religious law). The story of Noah (as) has also been mentioned in the Torah, as well in the Books of the Chaldeans, the Hindus, the Chinese, the Greeks and the Zoroastrians.

They have all regarded the Flood of Noah as a sign of Allah's anger because of people's oppression and corruption.

Noah's mission was universal. As the planet earth cannot remain without a savior, the drowning of all the people was due to Noah's (as) curse when he said:

"..My Lord! Leave not upon the earth any dweller from among the unbelievers." 2

The holy Qur'an testifies to the fact that the flood did occur. On the other hand, if that great man's mission had been regional and the area where the flood occurred was also limited to that region, there would have been no need for putting a pair of each animal onto the Ark in order to preserve generations of the animal kingdom on the earth.

The Story of Noah (as)

Noah's story is that of a life spanning a one thousand year history embodying the story of a world-devastating flood, the account of the extermination of an entire generation of man and the beginning of a

new chapter in human history on this earth.

It reflects the victory of truth against 'untruth' and Allah's acceptance of the prophets' curses. It is an example of how the relationship between a father and son can be broken for ideological reasons and it is a sign of the submission of existence in its entirety with respect to Allah's command.

It shows the importance of the conservation and preservation of animal life and also indicates the extent to which man may be so despicable that he may not be moved by the admonitions of the prophets, on the contrary, he can disrespect their followers as villains, and think he could escape Allah's wrath by taking refuge in physical structures like mountains.

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1. Refer to Tabari's *Al Mu'jam al Kabir*, Hakim Neyshaburi in *Al-Mustadrak*, Ibn-Kathir in his *Commentaries*; Suyuti's *Tarikh-ul-Khulafa*; Ibn Qutayba's *Uyun-ul Akhbar*; Tabari's *Zakha'ir-ul 'Uqba*, Khatib ul Baghdadi in *Tarikh ul Baghdad*, Abu Na'im in *Hilyat ul 'Auliya'*; Ibn Abil Hadid in *Sharh Nahj ul Balaqah*, 'Alusi in *Ruh ul Ma'ani*; and other detailed books which have been mentioned in *Ihqaq ul Haqq* (vol.9) from P. 270 onwards. See also *Nafahat ul Azhar fi Khulasah 'Abaqat ul Anwar*, Part 4 P. 370.
 2. Surah Nuh, No. 71, verse 26
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