

Section 3: Abraham and Lot

Surah Al-'Ankabut – Verse 23

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَلِقَائِهِ أُولَئِكَ يَئْسُوْا مِنْ رَحْمَتِي وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

23. “And those who disbelieved in the signs of Allah and His meeting, these are despaired of My mercy, and these it is that shall have a painful chastisement.”

The only people who are disappointed and deprived from the mercy of Allah are pagans.

So, in this verse the Qur'an decisively says:

“And those who disbelieved in the signs of Allah and His meeting, these are despaired of My mercy...”

Then, in order to emphasize, it adds and implies that this punishment is a requisite of being disappointed from the mercy of Allah.

The objective of the Qur'anic phrase *'ayatillah'* (**the signs of Allah**) is either 'the signs of nature'; that is, the signs of the greatness of Allah in the system of creation, which refers to the subject of Monotheism; and the Arabic term /liqa'ih/ (His meeting) refers to the subject of Resurrection. That is, they deny both the Origin and Resurrection.

Or it refers to 'the signs of religion; that is, the verses that Allah has sent down to His prophets, which talk about both Origin, and prophethood, and Resurrection, and in this case, the application of /liqa'/ is of the kind of mentioning 'general' after 'specific'.

This probability also exists that the purpose is the entire signs of Allah in the world of creation and religion.

It is also necessary to mention this point that the Qur'anic term *lya'isul* (**they despaired of**) is a past form verb, though its main aim is future. The reason is that it is customary in Arabic literature that when the occurrence of future events is completely certain, they are sometimes said in the form of past tense of the verb.

Then, the verse continues saying:

“...and these it is that shall have a painful chastisement.”

Surah Al-‘Ankabut – Verse 24

فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا اقْتُلُوهُ أَوْ حَرِّقُوهُ فَأَنْجَاهُ اللَّهُ مِنَ النَّارِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

24. “But the answer of his people was only that they said: ‘Kill him, or burn him’. Then Allah saved him from the fire. Verily in this there are signs for a people who believe.”

When a believer overcomes the whole disbelievers, the worst plots are nullified, and fire becomes safe and sound. Each of them is one sign out of the signs of Allah.

Now we may see what this misguided group said in answer to those three clear proofs of Abraham (as) in the field of Monotheism, prophethood, and Resurrection.

Certainly they had no logical answer; therefore, like all strong violent persons with no logic, they relied on their satanic power and issued the command of his slaughter, as the Qur’an says:

“But the answer of his people was only that they said: ‘Kill him, or burn him’...”

It is understood from this meaning that a group of the pagans said that Abraham should be burnt while another group suggested his annihilation by sword or the like. Finally, the first group won since they believed, indeed, that the worst kind of execution was burning by fire.

There is also this probability that at first all of them were thinking upon his execution with ordinary means, but later all of them decided to burn him and use the maximum intensity of action.

Here, there is mentioned no word about the quality of burning Abraham. It is only mentioned at the end of the verse:

“...Then Allah saved him from the fire...”

The explanation of burning Abraham (as) in the fire is mentioned in Surah Al-‘Anbia’, No. 21, verses

68–70 which was discussed before.

At the end of the verse, the Qur'an says:

"... Verily in this there are signs for a people who believe."

Not only one sign but also there are several signs in this event. From one side, the lack of effect of fire on the body of Abraham was a clear miracle. Change of fire into safety was another miracle. Then inability of this great powerful group against a single person, who apparently had no means, was the third miracle.

And the lack of effect of this wonderful and extraordinary event of the heart of those cruel persons was also a sign from the Providence. It took the success from those obstinate people so miraculously that the greatest signs do not affect on them.

A tradition indicates that when Abraham was thrown in the middle of the fire, the only thing that was burnt from him was the rope with which Abraham was fastened firmly. 1

Yes, the fire of ignorance and crime of those mischief-mongers burnt only the means of captivity, and Abraham became free; and this is counted another sign.

It may be because of these things that in the story of Noah and his deliverance by the Ark, the Qur'an says:

"...we made it a sign for all peoples."2

(In the singular form), and here it says:

"Signs"

(in the plural form.)

Surah Al-'Ankabut – Verse 25

وَقَالَ إِنَّمَا اتَّخَذْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْثَانًا مَّوَدَّةَ بَيْنِكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكْفُرُ بَعْضُكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ وَيَلْعَنُ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا وَمَأْوَأَكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ

25. "And said (Abraham): 'You have chosen only idols instead of Allah; the love between you is only the life of the world. Then on the Day of Resurrection some of you shall deny the others, and some of you shall curse the others and your abode shall be the (Hell) Fire, and for you shall not be any helpers.'"

Among the idolater tribes the idols were the axis and every tribe had a particular idol; for example, Quraysh had an idol called 'Uzza, Thaqif had an idol called Lat, the idol of tribes 'Aus and Khazraj was called Manat, and these idols were the means of the link of idolaters with their ancestors.

However, by the grace of Allah, Abraham (as) delivered extraordinarily from that great fire, but he only did not desist from stating his aims but also strengthened it with more speed and enthusiasm.

The verse says:

“And said (Abraham): ‘You have chosen only idols instead of Allah; the love between you is only the life of the world. Then on the Day of Resurrection some of you shall deny the others, and some of you shall curse the others and your abode shall be the (Hell) Fire, and for you shall not be any helpers.’”

How was the choice of idols as the cause of love between the idolaters?

This question can be answered in different ways:

The first is that worshipping an idol in every tribe was the secret of unity between them and for every tribe there was a chosen idol. It has been cited about the famous idols of the Age of Ignorance that the people of every city or tribe had an idol, (including the idol of 'Uzza belonged to Quraysh, Lat belonged to Thaqif tribe and Manat was particular to 'Aus and Khazraj).³

Another matter was that worshipping idols had created a relation between them and their ancestors and they often pretended by the same pretext that those things were the traces of their ancestors which they followed.

Besides, the chiefs of the pagans invited their followers to worship idols and this was a ring of join between 'the chiefs' and their 'followers'.

But on the Day of Hereafter, all these chaffy and rotten links will be broken, and everyone puts its sin on another one's shoulder while he curses him and repudiates the deed of the other.

Even their objects of worship that they wrongly thought they were the means of their relation with Allah and about which they said:

“...‘We only serve them in order that they may bring us nearer to Allah...’”⁴,

will repudiate them, as the Qur'an says:

“No, soon they (gods) shall deny their worship, and become adversaries against them.”⁵

Therefore, the purpose of 'denying some of them the others and some of them shall curse the others' is that on that Day they will repudiate each other, and what was the cause of their link and false love in this

world will change into enmity and hatred in Hereafter, as the Qur'an, in Surah Az-Zukhruf, No. 43, verse 67 says:

“Friends on that Day will be foes, one to another, except the pious ones.”

It is understood from some Islamic narrations that this meaning is not particular to idol worshippers but all those who chose a false leader for them and followed him, and had covenant of love with him, on Hereafter Day, will be foes of each other.⁶

The love connection between the believers is based upon Monotheism, theism, and obedience of the command of Allah in this world, which will take the colour of perpetuance here and will be become stronger there.

It is understand from some traditions that in Hereafter the believers even ask forgiveness and intercession for each other, while the polytheists will be busy cursing each other.⁷

Surah Al-‘Ankabut – Verse 26

فَأَمَّنَ لَهُ لُوطٌ وَقَالَ إِنِّي مُهَاجِرٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

26. “Then Lot believed in him (Abraham) and he said: ‘I am a fugitive unto my Lord, for verily He is the Mighty, the Wise.’”

Sometimes there had been several Divine prophets at the same time among people, but only one of them had been Imam and leader.

This holy verse points to the Faith of Lot and migration of Abraham when it says:

“Then Lot believed in him (Abraham)...”

Lot was one of the great prophets of Allah and he was a close relative of Abraham; (it is said that he was Abraham’s nephew) and in view of the fact that following a great person is as following an Ummah, Allah here specially speaks of Lot’s faith, the great personality contemporary to Abraham, in order to make clear that if others did not believe it would not have been important.

Of course, it seems that there were some receptive hearts in the land of Babylon to accept the invitation of Abraham, and after observing that great miracle they believed in him, but they were a minority.

Then the verse adds:

“...and he said: ‘I am a fugitive unto my Lord, for verily He is the Mighty, the Wise.’”

It is clear that when the Divine leaders had fulfilled their mission in a region and the atmosphere of the environment was so polluted and under the pressure of the tyrants that it stopped the progress of their invitation, they ought to migrate from that place to another region so that they can spread the invitation of Allah.

Abraham (as) accompanied with Lot and his wife (Sarah) also started to go to Syria, the site of Divine prophets and Monotheism, in order to be able to gather some persons and means for developing the invitation of Monotheism.

It is interesting that Abraham (as) says:

“I am a fugitive unto my Lord”.

The reason was that this path was the path of Allah, the Almighty, the path of His pleasure, and the path of His religion.

Of course, some commentators have said that probably the pronoun in the Qur’anic word *iqala/* refers to Lot; that is, Lot said that he is fugitive unto his Lord. The apparent of the sentence is consistent to this meaning, but the historical and Qur’anic evidence shows that the antecedent is Abraham and the emigration of Lot (as) was done in subordination to Abraham (as).

The Qur’anic evidence of this statement is Surah As-Saffat, No. 37, verse 99 that from the tongue of Abraham says:

“He said: ‘I will go to my Lord! He will surely guide me’.”⁸

Surah Al-‘Ankabut - Verse 27

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي ذُرِّيَّتِهِ النُّبُوَّةَ وَالْكِتَابَ وَءَاتَيْنَاهُ أُجْرَهُ فِي
الدُّنْيَا وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

27. “And We granted him Isaac and Jacob, and We appointed the Prophecy and the Book to be among his progeny, and We gave him his recompense in the world, and verily in the Hereafter he will certainly be of the Righteous.”

The reward of the sincere services and goodness to father is seen in one’s descendants. In this verse, the Qur’an refers to the four merits that Allah gave Abraham after his emigration.

The first merit was some worthy offsprings, those who could keep the torch of faith and prophethood light in his progeny.

The verse says:

“And We granted him Isaac and Jacob...”

They were two great and eligible prophets each of whom could continue the way and the line of Abraham, the iconoclast prophet.

The second merit was as follows:

“...and We appointed the Prophecy and the Book to be among his progeny...”

The third merit was what is said by the Qur’an as follows:

“...and We gave him his recompense in the world...”

This reward, which has been mentioned secretly, may refer to different affairs; such as ‘good name’ and ‘truthful tongue’ among all nations, because all nations respect Abraham as a great prophet, and boast for his existence, and call him ‘the chief prophet’.

Among his other rewards can be mentioned as: the flourish of Mecca by his supplication, the attraction of all hearts toward him and the yearly recollection of his glorious instructive, faith-creative remembrance in the rites of Hajj ceremonies.

The fourth merit is as follows:

“...and verily in the Hereafter he will certainly be of the Righteous.”

As it is understood from many verses of the Qur’an, being among the righteous ones is the utmost honour that a person may earn. That was why many prophets asked Allah that He would appoint them in the row of the righteous.

After gaining the highest apparent victories, Yusuf asked Allah and said:

“...cause me die Muslim (in submission unto You) and join me with the righteous.”⁹

Solomon, with all glorious rank and magnificence he had, said:

“...and admit me, by Your mercy, among Your righteous servants.”¹⁰

When the contract of Shu‘ayb with Moses finished, he said:

“If Allah wills, you will find me one the righteous ones”.¹¹

Abraham asked Allah that He might count him among the righteous, saying:

“My Lord! Bestow wisdom on me, and join me with the righteous.”¹²

And he would have a righteous son. 13

In many verses of the Qur'an when Allah admires the great prophets, He characterizes them as being among the righteous.

It is well understood from the totality of these verses that 'being righteous' is the highest stage of the development of a man.

What does 'to be righteous' mean? It means eligibility from the point of faith and belief, eligibility from the point of action, and eligibility from the point of speech and morals.

The opposite point of 'righteous' is 'corruptible', and we know that corruption envelops all injustice, cruelties, and indecencies.

In the Qur'an sometimes /salah/ is used instead of /fasad/ and sometimes instead of /sayyi'ah/ which means sin and evils.

Some commentators have said that there is a tender point in the above verse and it is that Allah changed all the inconvenient things of Abraham (as) into their opposites:

- 1- The idol-worshippers of Babylon decisively wanted to burn Abraham by fire, but fire was changed into safety.
- 2- They desired that he should be alone forever, but Allah set a very abundant population for him so that throughout of the world was filled with the progeny of Abraham.
- 3- Some of the close persons to Abraham went astray and became idol worshippers, including 'Athar, instead of it Allah gave him some children that not only they themselves were guided aright but also they guided others.
- 4- At the beginning Abraham had not any wealth and dignity, but at last Allah gave him great wealth and dignity.
- 5- At the beginning Abraham was so undistinguished that even when the idol worshippers of Babylon wanted to mention him, they said:

"... 'We heard a youth making mention of them, who is called Abraham'."¹⁴

But Allah gave him such a fame that he became known as 'the chief of prophets, or 'the chief of Messengers'.¹⁵

Surah Al-‘Ankabut – Verses 28–30

وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ

أَنتُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ وَتَقْطَعُونَ السَّبِيلَ وَتَأْتُونَ فِي نَادِيكُمُ الْمُنْكَرَ ۚ فَمَا كَانَ
جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ

قَالَ رَبِّ انصُرْنِي عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

28. “And (remember) Lot when he said to his people: ‘Verily you commit a lewdness which none of the people of the worlds has ever done before you’.”

29. “Do you approach males and cut the way (of natural matrimony), and you commit dishonour in your assemblies? But his people gave no answer except that they said: ‘Bring us the chastisement of Allah if you are of the truthful (ones)’.

30. “He (Lot) said: ‘My Lord! Help me against the mischievous people!’”

The religious leaders should note the corruptions, evils, and public dangers of the society and try to remove them.

After stating a part of life story of Abraham, in this verse the Qur’an refers to a part of life story of his contemporary prophet, Lot (as), when it says:

“And (remember) Lot when he said to his people: ‘Verily you commit a lewdness which none of the people of the worlds has ever done before you’.”

The Arabic word /fahišah/ (lewdness), as was mentioned before, is derived from /fuhš/ which originally means: any word or saying which is very ugly, sharp and biting, and here it ironically means ‘sodomy’.

It is clearly understood from the Qur’anic sentence, saying:

“...which none of the people of the worlds has ever done before you”

that this ugly and shameful action, at least in the public and general form, had not been done among no nation and group.

Around the qualities of the people of Lot (as) it has been recorded that one of the main factors of their pollution in this action was that they were some miser people.

Their cities were on the way of caravans of Syria and, by this action unto some of their guests and travelers, they caused them to become hateful to them, but the desire of sodomy strengthened among them and they were accustomed to it.

However, they carry both the burden of their own sin and the burden of the sin of those who will follow their action in the future (without that their sin may be decreased anything), because they were the founders of this ugly and evil deed; and we know that whoever creates a tradition he will share the acts of those who commit it.

Through the next verse, the Qur'an implies that Lot, this great prophet, stated his purpose more clearly, when he said:

“Do you approach males and cut the way (of natural matrimony), and you commit dishonour in your assemblies?...”

The Arabic word /nadi/ is derived from /nada'/ in the sense of 'public meeting', and sometimes it is used with the sense of 'a pleasure center' and 'to call' since the people there usually call each other.

The Holy Qur'an has not explained here that what kind of lewdnesses they used to commit in their meetings, but without saying it is evident that they were some deeds consistent to their own ugly action, and as some records written in history books indicate that they used to exchange some abuses and ugly biting words between them.

They used to beat at the backs of each other with their palms; they gambled; they had some childish plays, in particular that they threw pebbles to each other and to the wayfarers; they played kinds of musical instruments; and even at the presence of public they committed indecent exposure and sometimes they showed their pudenda.

A tradition from 'Umm-i-Hani from the Prophet (S) indicates that in answer to the question about

“...you commit dishonour in your assemblies...”

he (S) said:

*“They used to throw pebbles toward whoever passed by and mocked them.”*¹⁶

Now we are going to see what the answer of this astray and shameful people was to the logical words of Hadrat Lot (as).

The Qur'an says:

“...But his people gave no answer except that they said: ‘Bring us the chastisement of Allah if you are of the truthful (ones)’.

Yes, those sensual persons, who had not enough intellect and comprehension, said this saying with mockery in answer to the logical invitation of Lot.

It is understood from this answer of theirs that, besides his reasonable words, Lot also threatened them by the painful chastisement of Allah if they continued their own way. But they left all and took only this one mockingly. Something similar to this meaning has also been mentioned in Surah Qamar, No. 54, verse 36.

It says:

“And (Lot) did warn them of Our violent seizure but they disputed about the warning.”

This statement of the astray people shows that they wanted to take result from the lack of descent of chastisement and say that Lot was a liar, while it is from the mercy of Allah that He gives respite to the most polluted people in order to study, review, and return to the truth.

The next verse implies that it was here that Lot could do nothing and turned to Allah and, with a heart full of sorrow and grief, asked Him as follows:

“He (Lot) said: ‘My Lord! Help me against the mischievous people!’”

A people who have made mischief on the earth, have ignored morals and piety, have set aside chastity and modesty, have trodden the social justice, have often mixed paganism and idolatry with immorality, injustice, and cruelty, and have threatened the generation of man to extinction and destruction. So he asked Allah to make him victorious against these astray mischief-mongers.

At the end, sodomy, whether among men (lawat) or among women, (lesbianism), is of the worst ethical deviations which can be the origin of many corruptions in the society.

In principle, the nature of woman and man has been created in such a way that they find their tranquility and sound satiation in being attached to opposite sex (by the way of sound marriage); and, otherwise, any kind of sexual inclination is deviation from the safe nature of man, and it is a kind of psychic disease that, in case of continuation, it intensifies a day after another, and its result is dislike to the ‘opposite sex’ by unsafe satiation with homosexuality.

These kinds of unlawful relations have some destructive effects on the limbs of man’s body and even they are effective in the nervous system and spirit.

They change man from being a complete man and woman from being a complete woman in a way that such women and men who are accustomed to homosexuality will be entangled with an intensive sexual

weakness and they will not be able to be a good parents for their future children, and sometimes they lose utterly the ability of producing offspring.

Those who practise homosexuality may gradually tend to reclusion and also alienation from society and then alienation from themselves, and also involve the psychotic complicated contradiction, and if they do not improve themselves they may be afflicted with various psychotic sexual sicknesses.

For this reason and for other ethical and social reasons, Islam has intensively banned the practice of homosexuality in any form and manner, and has appointed a serious punishment that sometimes it is nigh to execution.

The important matter here is that libertinism and seeking miscellaneousness of the material civilized world draw the boys and girls toward this great ugly deviation.

At first, it encourages boys to wearing frivolous woman clothing with special ornamentation, and invites girls to wear boy clothing, and from this point deviation and the practice of homosexuality begins so far that the most shameful shapes of deeds in this field are legally approved, in some countries, and are free from any punishment so impudently that pen shames to explain them.¹⁷

Some Traditions Upon Sodomy and its Punishment

1- The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“The thing I fear for my Ummah most of all is the act of the people of Lot (Sodomy).”¹⁸

2- The Prophet (S) said:

“If you find someone who does the act of the people of Lot, do know that its punishment in Islam is execution.”¹⁹

3- Imam Rida (as) said:

“The reason of banning men for men and women for women is the structure of women and the nature of men (that each of them has been created for the opposite sex), and that going men to men and women to women causes the cut of generation (of mankind) and also disturbance of the order of management (in the society) and wasting the world.”²⁰

4- In answer to the reason of banning of sodomy, Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“If the act of sodomy were lawful, the men would be needless of women, and the generation (of mankind) might be cut, women remained without husband, and there would exist many corruptions in the authorization of sodomy.

And Allah created women for men so that they associate with them and gain tranquility by them, and

1. Rauh-ul-Ma'ani, the Commentary, Vol. 20, P. 130
2. The current Surah, verse 15
3. Sirah by Ibn-i-Husham, Vol. 1, PP. 86-87
4. Surah Az-Zumar, No. 39, verse 3
5. Surah Maryam, No. 19, verse 82
6. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Commentary, Vol. 4, P. 154
7. Tauhid-i-Sadugh, according to the narration of Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4. P. 154
8. In relation to the emigration of Abraham from Babylon to Syria, there is a detailed discussion under verse 71 on from Surah Al-'Anbiya, No. 21, in Nimunah commentary, Vol. 13, P. 451 on
9. Surah Yusuf, No. 12, verse 101
10. Surah An-Naml, No. 27, verse 19
11. Surah Qasas, No. 28, verse 27
12. Surah Ash-Shu'ara, No. 26, verse 83
- 13.
14. Surah Al-'Anbiya', No. 21, verse 60
15. The Commentary by Fakhr-i-Razi
16. The Commentary by Qurtabi
17. Concerning the banning of sodomy and its philosophy in Islam, there was a detailed explanation mentioned in the commentary of Surah Hud, No. 11, verses 79-80
18. At-Tarqib wal-Tarhib, Vol. 3, P. 285
19. Ibid, and Vol. 7, P. 288
20. 'Ilal-ush-Sharayi', Vol. 1, P. 547
21. Bihar, Vol. 10, P. 181

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