

Section 3: Allah's Blessings On Solomon

Surah Sad – Verses 27–28

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَاطِلًا ذَلِكَ ظَنُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا مِنَ النَّارِ

أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَالْمُفْسِدِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ
الْمُتَّقِينَ كَالْفُجَّارِ

27. “And We did not create the heaven and the earth and what is between them in vain; that is the opinion of those who disbelieve; then woe to those who disbelieve on account of the Fire (of Hell)!”

28. “Shall We treat those who believe and do righteous deeds like the mischief makers in the earth? Or shall We treat the pious like the wicked?”

In the Divine world-view, creation is done with an aim. Since the system of existence is based on the truth, then arbitration must be based on the truth, too, so that the system of law and the system of creation can be in the same path.

Therefore, following the life story of David and his Divine Deputy in the earth, this verse talks about this fact that the world of existence pursues an aim so that the direction of the government on the earth, which is a part of it, can be specified.

It says:

“And We did not create the heaven and the earth and what is between them in vain; that is the opinion of those who disbelieve; then woe to those who disbelieve on account of the Fire (of Hell)!”

The important issue, from which all rights originate, is the existence of aim in creation.

When we accept this matter in our world-view that this vast world has not been created in vain from the side of Allah, the Exalted, we immediately look for its aim, the aim which is summarized in the short but expressive words of: ‘development, education, training’.

It is from this line that we conclude that governments must also pave this very line. They must make the foundations of education and training firm and cause men to be spiritually developed.

In other words, the foundation of the world of existence is based on truth and justice, and governments must also be consistent with the whole world, i.e. they should act according to the criteria of right and justice.

By the way, the last sentence of the previous verse, which was about the man’s forgetfulness of the Day of Reckoning, is completely consistent with the content of this holy verse, too, because the aim of the creation of the world requires that there should exist a Reckoning Day, as it was said in the discussions about Resurrection (at the end of Surah Yasin) that if there were not a Reckoning Day, the creation of this world would be rather useless, meaningless, and ambiguous.

It is interesting that at the end of this holy verse the Qur’an points to one of the clear lines which separates the school of belief from infidelity. It is the belief of the futility of the world in atheistic schools the kinds of which we encounter today, too.

They explicitly announce that this world is futile and aimless. By this way of world-view, how can they execute the right and justice in their governments?

Only that government can execute the right and justice which originates from a Divine world-view that believes an aim for the world and has an accurate system in whose path the government runs, too. And, if the modern atheistical world has reached to a blind lane in its government, in its peace and war, and in its economy and culture, its main root must be sought in this very matter.

And that is why that they base their own activities on ‘force’ and domination, and they think that everybody can gain it by force. How horrible is the world which is founded and controlled upon this form of thinking.

However, Allah is Wise and it is impossible that He creates this world without any aim. This aim will be safeguarded in the case that this world can be a premise for a vaster world, a world which connects to eternity and justifies the legitimacy of this world.

In the next verse, the Qur'an adds:

***“Shall We treat those who believe and do righteous deeds like the mischief makers in the earth?
Or shall We treat the pious like the wicked?”***

There exists neither the possibility of aimlessness in the creation nor the equality of the righteous and the mischief makers, because the first group take steps alongside the path of godly aims and go forward unto the destination, but the second group are in the opposite side.

In fact, the discussion of the subject of Resurrection with all its dimensions has reasonably been stated both in this verse and its previous verse.

From one side it indicates that the Wisdom of Allah requires that the creation of the world to have an aim (and this aim is not acquired without other world because the few days of the life of this world, is not so worthy that can be the aim of this great creation.

On the other side, wisdom and justice require that the good ones and the bad ones, or the just and the unjust, should not be equal, and this is the whole collection of: resurrection, reward, retribution, and Paradise and Hell.

Moreover, when we look at the human society in this world, we see that the mischief-makers and believers are in the same row; and the evildoers are beside the good doers. And, in many cases, we see that the wrong doers are in a better welfare.

If there were not another life next to this fleeting world in which justice will be executed, the circumstance of this world is both against 'wisdom' and against 'justice', and this itself is counted another proof for the existence of Resurrection.

In other words, for proving the Resurrection sometimes it is reasoned from the way of 'wisdom' and sometimes from the way of 'justice'. The former verse refers to the first reasoning and the next verse to the second reasoning.

Surah Sad – Verse 29

كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ

29. “(The Qur'an) is a blessed Book which We have sent down unto you, that they may meditate on its verses and that men of understanding may receive admonition.”

The Holy Qur'an is surely blessed. (Its recitation, reflection, history, reasoning, story, the samples of

sciences, hidden news, similes, bids and forbids, all in all are full of mysteries and secrets.

Qur'an is for contemplation and it is not merely for taking a good omen to its apparent. And contemplation in the Qur'an is for admonition, else there may happen that a person perceives the scientific secrets and subtle essences of the Qur'an, but it causes his pride.

This verse points to a matter which, in fact, is the provider of the aim of creation.

It says:

“(The Qur’an) is a blessed Book which We have sent down unto you, that they may meditate on its verses and that men of understanding may receive admonition.”

Its instructions are eternal, its commandments are really deep and expressive, and its programs are refreshing and leading for human beings on the way of the aim of creation.

The aim of the descent of this great Book has not been that the believers suffice to its mere recitation by the tongue, but its aim has been in a manner that its verses become the source of contemplation and cause conscience to become vigilant, and it, in its turn, brings a fairly movement alongside the path of ‘action’.

As we know, usually the application of the Qur'anic word */mubarak/* means something which has a continuous and constant good, and the usage of this meaning for the Qur'an points to the permanent usage of the human societies from its teachings; and since this word has been used in an absolute form, it involves any kind of goodness and the prosperity of both this world and the next.

Shortly speaking, in it there is all kind of goodness that you want, upon condition that you contemplate in it, and get inspiration from it.

Now, pay attention to these two traditions:

1- In the commentary upon these verses we study that the Qur'anic phrase:

“Those who believe and do righteous deeds”

refers to Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Ali (as) and his followers, while the Qur'anic phrase:

“The mischief makers in the earth”

points to the opponents of them.¹

2- In another tradition that Ibn-i-'Asakir has narrated from Ibn-i-'Abbas, it is said that the purpose of the Qur'anic phrase:

“Those who believe”

is Ali (as), Hamzah, and ‘Ubayd who stood against ‘Uqbah, Walid, and Shaybah from the troops of polytheists in the Battle of Badr and in their battles that they overcame upon them. The purpose of the mischief makers in the earth is those three persons of the army of polytheists who stood against the three above persons of Islam.

Surah Sad – Verses 30–33

وَوَهَبْنَا لِدَاوُدَ سُلَيْمَانَ نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ

إِذْ عُرِضَ عَلَيْهِ بِالْعَشِيِّ الصَّافِنَاتُ الْجِيَادُ

فَقَالَ إِنِّي أَحْبَبْتُ حُبَّ الْخَيْرِ عَن ذِكْرِ رَبِّي حَتَّى تَوَارَتْ بِالْحِجَابِ

رُدُّوهَا عَلَيَّ فَطَفِقَ مَسْحًا بِالسُّوقِ وَالْأَعْنَاقِ

30. “And We gave to David Solomon, an excellent servant (he was)! Verily he was a penitent.”

31. “When there were brought before him in the evening light-footed courses,”

32. “Then he said: ‘Verily I love the love of good things, (these horses), for the sake of the remembrance of my Lord, (the watching of parade continued) until they (the horses) got hidden in the veil.’”

33. “(Then he ordered:) ‘Bring them (horses) back to me’. And he began to rub (their) legs and necks.”

Holding review of an army and its possibilities and strivers is a praise-worthy action. A leader must personally review of the troops and to be aware of the quality and quantity of the troops and possibilities is the condition of leadership.

In the continuation of the discussion about David, the first verse of this group of verses informs of giving a noble child, Solomon, to him who was the one who continued his Divine government and prophecy. It says:

“And We gave to David Solomon, an excellent servant (he was)! Verily he was a penitent.”

What a good servant he was! because he always used to return to Allah and to the bosom of the truth.

The application of the Qur'anic term */wahabnal/ (we gave)*, from one side, and the application of the Qur'anic phrase *Ini'mal 'abd/ (an excellent servant)*, on the other side, and saying its reason *'innahu 'awwab/ (he who constantly returns to the obedience and command of Allah and repents from the slightest negligence and errs.)*, and from the third side all of these are the signs of the greatness of the rank of this great prophet.

The application of the Qur'anic phrase: *'innahu 'awwab/* is just the same meaning which was recited about his father David in verse 17 from this very Surah.

Regarding to the fact that the word *'awwab/* which is an Arabic amplification form and its meaning is 'a very returning one' and there is no condition in it, can be in the sense of the one who returns to the obedience from the commandment of Allah, returning to the truth and justice, returning from negligence and leaving the betters.

Through the next verse, the Qur'an says:

“When there were brought before him in the evening light-footed courses,”

The Arabic term */safinat/* is the plural form of */safinah/*, as many commentators and philologists have recorded, it is used for the horses which stand on three legs at the time of standing and slightly raise only one hand and they put only the front top of the hoof on the ground, and this state is mostly particular to the swift horses which, if necessary, every moment are ready to move.

The Arabic word */jijad/* is the plural form of */jawad/* which here is in the sense of swift horses and originally it has been taken from */jud/* (remittal), but remittal in human beings is done through the way of granting wealth and in horses through speed in running.

Thus, the above mentioned horses both at the state of standing showed their readiness for moving, and at the time of moving by quick action.

It is understood from this verse entirely, and with different contexts which exist around it, that one day in the evening Solomon was parading his quick 'horses' that he had prepared for the battle-field of Holy Struggle and the officers, riding their horses, were passing by in front of him.

And since a just and influential king must have a powerful army, and one of the important means of an army had been quick horses, this quality has been mentioned in the Qur'an, after pointing to the rank of Solomon, as one of the samples of his deeds.

In the third verse, in order that none thinks that his interest to these quick powerful horses is for worldly affairs, Solomon said that he loved them for the remembrance of his Lord and His command.

He said he wanted to use them in war and the battlefield of Holy Struggle against His enemies.

The Holy Qur'an says:

“Then he said: ‘Verily I love the love of good things, (these horses), for the sake of the remembrance of my Lord, (the watching of parade continued) until they (the horses) got hidden in the veil.’”

It is a custom among Arabs that they render the Arabic word */xayll/ (horse)* into */xayr/ (goodness)*.

And an Islamic tradition indicates that the Holy Prophet of Islam (S) said:

*“Goodness has been tied on the forehead of the horse until the Day of Hereafter.”*²

In the fourth holy verse, it indicates that the scene was so interesting and beautiful for a great commander such as Solomon that he ordered that those horses would be returned again for him.

When his officers obeyed this command and returned the horses, Solomon personally soothed them and touched their legs and necks.

The verse says:

“(Then he ordered:) ‘Bring them (horses) back to me’. And he began to rub (their) legs and necks.”

And by this way he both encouraged their coaches, and appreciated them, because it is customary that when they want to appreciate a horse, they touch the head, face, neck and legs of the horse; and such an action for a useful means which helps man in his excellent aims done by a great prophet like Solomon, is not surprising.

The Arabic term */tafiq/* means to start something. The Arabic word */suq/* is the plural form of */saq/*, and the Arabic word */a'naq/* is the plural form of */unuq/* (neck). So the whole sentence means: ‘Solomon began touching and soothing their necks and legs’.

Surah Sad – Verses 34–35

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا سُلَيْمَانَ وَأَلْقَيْنَا عَلَيَّ كُرْسِيَهُ جَسَدًا ثُمَّ أَنَابَ

قَالَ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَهَبْ لِي مُلْكًا لَا يَنْبَغِي لِأَحَدٍ مِّنْ بَعْدِي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ

34. “And certainly We did try Solomon, and We cast on his throne a (mere) body; then he repented.”

35. “He said: ‘My Lord! Forgive me and grant me a dominion such as shall not be fit anyone after me, verily You are the Bounteous (without measure).”

Trial is a means for polishing the soul and getting nigh to Allah.

These verses explain another part of Solomon’s life story, and show that how much high the power of a man may grow, again he has nothing from his own and whatever exists is from the side of Allah. Here, the Qur’an says:

“And certainly We did try Solomon, and We cast on his throne a (mere) body; then he repented.”

The Arabic word */kursi/* means a throne with short legs. It seems such that the ancient kings had two kinds of throne: one was for ordinary times, which had short legs, and a throne for their formal meetings and official ceremonies which had long legs. The former was called */kursi/* and the latter was called */arš/*.

The Arabic word */jasad/* means a body without soul, and as Raqib says in Mufradat, it has a concept more limited than the concept of body, because the word */jasad/* is not used for anything other than man (but scarcely) while the word */jism/* (body) is general.

It is understood from this verse that Solomon’s trial had been through a soulless body which was on his throne before his eyes, the thing which he did not expect, and he hoped for something other than it. The Qur’an has delivered no more explanation on this matter.

The commentators and traditionists have mentioned some news and commentaries on this field.

The most fitting and clear of all of them is that Solomon desired to have some brave and fruitful children who could help him in running the country and specially in struggling against the enemy, but since he did not say the holy phrase: **‘if Allah wills’**, the same sentence which shows the man’s reliance to Allah in all circumstances, at that time, he got no child from his wives except a handicapped child like a soulless body that was brought and put on his throne.

Solomon thought very much and became inconvenience that why he neglected Allah for a moment and relied on his own power.

Then he repented and returned to Allah.

In the next verse, the Holy Qur’an reiterates Solomon’s repentance in more details. It says:

“He said: ‘My Lord! Forgive me and grant me a dominion such as shall not be fit anyone after me, verily You are the Bounteous (without measure).”

Surah Sad – Verses 36-40

فَسَخَّرْنَا لَهُ الرِّيحَ تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِهِ رُخَاءً حَيْثُ أَصَابَ

وَالشَّيَاطِينَ كُلَّ بَنَّاءٍ وَغَوَّاصٍ

وَأَآخِرِينَ مُقَرَّنِينَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ

هَذَا عَطَاؤُنَا فَامْنُنْ أَوْ أَمْسِكْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

وَإِنَّ لَهُ عِنْدَنَا لَزُلْفَىٰ وَحُسْنَ مَأْوَ

36. “So We made subservient unto him the wind; that it ran at his command, softly, wherever he desired,”

37. “And the Satans, every builder and diver,”

38. “And others (of the Satans) fettered in chains.”

39. “(We said:) ‘This is Our free gift, therefore bestow or withhold without reckoning.’”

40. “And verily for him unto Us is a nearness and an excellent resort.”

In these verses, Allah points to the favours He had given to Solomon (as), among them are the wind made subservient to him, his taking benefit from the power of the jinn, controlling the destructive powers, and having the authority and the rank of nearness to Allah with a bright future.

These bounties are a part of the sample government that Solomon had asked for. So this verse hints to another merit that Allah had bestowed on Solomon (as).

The verse says:

“So We made subservient unto him the wind; that it ran at his command, softly, wherever he desired,”

He was also given the act of controlling the disobedient beings for performing some positive activities, as the second verse announces:

“And the Satans, every builder and diver,”

Allah made them subservient to him so that a group of them would accomplish every building he desired in the land, and a group of them would work in the sea.

Thus Allah gave Solomon some ready-made powers for some positive actions, and made the Satans, whose nature is to be disobedient and rebellious, so subservient to him that they worked for him in buildings on the land and extraction of precious things from mines.

Not only in this verse, but also in some other numerous verses of the Qur’an this meaning has been pointed out that Satans were made subservient to Solomon and they did some positive activities for him. In these verses as well as Surah An-Naba’, No. 78, verse 82 the word ‘Satans’ has been used while in Surah Saba, No. 34, verse 12 they have been called ‘Jinn’.

As we have also said before, jinn is a being which is concealed to us, but it has intellect, understanding, and power. They are also divided into believers and disbelievers. It does not matter that under the command of Allah they should be used by a divine prophet and be busy in some useful jobs.

This probability exists, too, that the Qur’anic word **‘Satans’** has a vast meaning which encompasses both the rebellious human beings and other than them, and this vast meaning for Satan has been used in the Qur’an³. Thus, Allah gave such a power to Solomon that he could make all rebellious ones submit.

In the next verse, another merit of Allah to Solomon is mentioned that he controlled a group of the destructive forces, because, in any case, there were some members among Satans who were not counted as a useful and constructive power, and there was no way save that they should be in fetter in order that the society could be in security from their vice, as the Qur’an says:

“And others (of the Satans) fettered in chains.”

The Qur’anic term ***/muqarranin/*** is derived from */qarana/* in the sense of ‘resistance’ and nearness, and here it points to the act of putting hand and foot or neck in chain and fetter.

The Arabic word ***/’asfad/*** is the plural form of */safad/* in the sense of chain and fetter, (like the fetters put on the hands and feet of prisoners). Some commentators have rendered the Qur’anic phrase: ***/muqarranina-fil-’asfad/*** into a complete yoke and it has been a chain which fastened the hands on the neck.

This fits to the concept of the Qur’anic term ***/muqarranin/*** which contains the meaning of ‘nearness’.

The fourth merit of Allah to Solomon was the abundant abilities he had and they let him to give or

restrain things, as the next verse says:

“(We said:) ‘This is Our free gift, therefore bestow or withhold without reckoning.’”

The application of the phrase ‘without reckoning’ refers either to this that: for the sake of the rank of your justice Allah has given you a vast authority which will not be reckoned or asked about; or it is in the sense that the Divine bestowal on you is so much that whatever you grant it will not be counted in it.

Some commentators have considered this meaning only related to the fettered Satans, meaning that whoever you desire you may let him go, and whomever you want you may keep in fetter.

In the fourth verse, the fifth and the last merit that Allah had given to Solomon is referred to. It was his spiritual rank that Allah had bestowed on Solomon because of his eligibilities. In this verse, Allah says:

“And verily for him unto Us is a nearness and an excellent resort.”

This sentence, in fact, is an answer to those who, following to what is mentioned in the present Torah, polluted the sacred realm of this great prophet by kinds of undue and superstitious attributes. And, thus, it counts him free from all these wrong accusations, and honours his position with Allah, specially with the holy phrase: ‘an excellent resort’.

A tradition from the holy Prophet (S) indicates he said:

“Have you heard that how much of property and government Allah gave Solomon, the son of David? Yet, with all these merits, it did not increase in him (anything) except to his humility, in a manner that because of intense humility and discipline he did not look at the sky because of humility for his Lord.”⁴

1. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, P. 453

2. Majma‘-ul-Bayan, Under the verse

3. Surah Al-‘An‘am, No. 6, verse 112

4. Rauh-ul-Bayan, the commentary, Vol. 8, P. 39

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