

Archangel Jibrael Seeks Proximity

فَقَالَ جِبْرَائِيلُ : يَا رَبِّ أَتَأْذِنُ لِي أَنْ أَهْبِطَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ لِأَكُونَ مَعَهُمْ سَادِسًا ؟ فَقَالَ
اللَّهُ : نَعَمْ قَدْ أَذِنْتُ لَكَ

**"O my Lord," Gabriel asked, "Will You allow me to descend to the earth to be the sixth of them?"
Allah the Almighty and All-majestic said, "Yes, I allow you."**

Upon hearing and absorbing this divine declaration from Allah (SWT), one can imagine how Jibrael (AS) felt elated as his existing love and veneration to the Prophet (SA) intensified further and thus he wisely made a request which displays his sense of yearning and appreciation to the position of the AhlulBayt (AS). He requested from Allah (SWT) that he descend to the earth and join them under the cloak!

It was a bold request as one can imagine even though Jibrael (AS) himself must have realized that the door is not opened for just anyone to enter the cloak. It is only the most closest and beloved creatures to the Lord whom the universe has been created for and only they attain the honor of entering the cloak. Jibrael (AS) recognized that the members of the cloak are already 'completed' and there is no any other person alive at that time who deserves to be in that position but has not yet entered. Then why did he make that request?

Although he knows that his rank among the angels is the highest and he has attained an exceptional proximity towards Allah (SWT), Jibrael (AS) is reminded of the incident of Me'raj which took place on the 27th of Rajab in the year 621 A.D. when he accompanied Prophet Muhammad (SA) in the journey towards the heavens and he was made to stop at a position that was very close to the divine throne of Allah (SWT). At that point, Jibrael (AS) was commanded by Allah (SWT) not to proceed and instead, the Prophet (SA) was given permission to continue forward at a position which no one else was ever given permission to enter. As the Holy Qur'an describes:

ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّى فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ. وَهُوَ بِالْأُفُقِ الْأَعْلَىٰ

“When he was on the highest part of the horizon, Then he approached and came closer, Till he was at a distance two bows' length or even nearer.” (53:7-9)

Even Archangel Jibrael (AS) couldn't cross past the seventh heaven at the place called *Sidrat Al Muntaha* (Lote-Tree)! When the Prophet (SA) asked him if he would abandon him at this stage, Jibrael (AS) excused himself and assured him that only the Prophet (SA) was given the permission to proceed due to his exceptionally great rank in the eyes of Allah (SWT). Hence, Jibrael (AS) was well aware that the Prophet (SA) has attained a very high station as well as his AhlulBayt (AS) whom he had witnessed their holy names inscribed near the Throne of Allah (SWT).

Yet, Jibrael proceeded to make that request to join the AhlulBayt (AS) under the cloak in this very blessed gathering.

The only thing he seeks is proximity and service of the chosen ones whom Allah (SWT) has raised their station above all stations. He recognized the fact that when a creature associates himself and draws himself closer to that which is honorable and esteemed, then he also will benefit by his association to that pure good. In essence, Jibrael (AS) acted upon the idea of seeking Qurba (proximity) to the AhlulBayt (AS) as Allah (SWT) has ordered:

قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

“Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives.” (42:22)

It was an immediate and spontaneous reaction of any being that recognizes the truth, appreciates it, and desires to come closer to the symbol of righteousness. Jibrael (AS) requested to become the “sixth member” even though he knows very well that the members of the cloak are only five without an addition.

As a side note, it is worth reflecting on the fact that angel Jibrael (AS) sought the permission of Allah (SWT) and the permission of the Prophet (SA) to enter his house. Now compare this example with that of certain companions of the Prophet (SA) who with all audacity barged in the house of Lady Fatima (AS) without her permission and against her will, as they intentionally squeezed her behind the door causing her immense pain and abortion of her unborn child and setting her house on fire! May Allah (SWT) punish the transgressors and enemies of the AhlulBayt (AS)!

Allah's answer to Jibrael's request was an approval and a granted permission for him to join the Prophet (SA) and his AhlulBayt (AS) under the cloak! The divinely-bestowed infallibility which Jibrael (AS) has

(as an angel) from committing disobedience may be a reason why Allah (SWT) qualified him to join the blessed caravan of the Prophet (SA) as there is no harm in him being an addition to this gathering.

This is contrary to the position of Umm Salamah whom the Prophet (SA) testified to be in good standing; however she is not infallible and hence was not granted permission to join the AhluBayt (AS).

What a great honor Jibrael (AS) has just attained!! Surely, he has achieved a status that no other creature, whether human or angel, will ever achieve, simply by being blessed with the opportunity to physically join them under the cloak, even if it is just as an unofficial member of the cloak. We will come to understand shortly what is the main wisdom behind the divine permission for Jibrael (AS) to descend to the earth and join this momentous occasion.

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