

## **Module II**

### **Section IV: Attributes of God**

### **Section V: Miniature Days of Judgement**

## **Section IV: The Attributes of God**

The fourth thing is the attributes of God the effects of which are evident in every speck of this universe. The attributes of providence and mercy in particular need one's attention. After witnessing the extra-ordinary arrangement made by the Lord of this world to nurture and nourish man, how can a person of intellect think that his Lord will leave him unaccountable and how can it be expected from the merciful and gracious God to not punish people who have made this world a place of oppression and injustice. For this very reason, the Qur'ān has pointed out at a number of places that the Day of Judgement is the consequence of God's providence and mercy, power and wisdom. After professing belief in God, no one can deny it.

In Sūrah An'am, it is said:

كَتَبَ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ لِيَجْزِيَكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ط (١٢:٦)

He has made mercy mandatory on Himself. He will definitely gather you to take you to the Day of Judgement about which there is no doubt. (6:12)

In Sūrah Nabā', it is said:

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ مِهْدًا. وَالْجِبَالَ أَوْتَادًا. وَخَلَقْنَاهُ أَزْوَاجًا. وَجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُبَاتًا. وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا. وَجَعَلْنَا النَّهَارَ مَعَاشًا. وَبَنَيْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعًا شِدَادًا. وَجَعَلْنَا سِرَاجًا وَهَّاجًا. وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْمُعْصِرَاتِ مَاءً ثَجَّاجًا. لِنُخْرِجَ بِهِ حَبًّا وَنَبَاتًا. وَجَنَّاتٍ أَلْفَافًا. (١٧: ٦-١٤)

[They should behold:] Have We not made the earth a cradle and made the mountains [its] pegs? And not created you in pairs? And not made your sleep a means of comfort [for you]? And not made the night a clothing [for

you] and the day a time to earn [your] livelihood? And not built above you seven sturdy [skies]? And not placed [in them] a glowing lamp [this sun]? And not sent down abundant water from dripping clouds that We may bring forth grain and vegetation and gardens of luxurious growth? [All this clearly testifies that] indeed the Day of Judgement has an appointed time. (78:6-17)

### Section V: Miniature Days of Judgement

The fifth thing is the manifestation of God's judgement in this very world. It took place through prophets who were elevated to the status of messengers. The Almighty blessed them with extra-ordinary miracles, helped them through Gabriel and before the actual Day of Judgement set up through these messengers miniature Days of Judgement on this earth. The objective was to prove the existence of God and the Hereafter before the people in the very manner scientific facts are proven through empirical evidence in a laboratory. After this, obviously no one is left with an excuse before the Almighty to not accept the truth.

The methodology adopted for presenting this empirical evidence was that these messengers communicated the truth to their people and then declared that they will set up a court of justice for their people on behalf of the Almighty. The reward and punishment on the basis of one's faith and deeds which they have been informed of will take place for their people in this very world. Just as physical laws are unalterable and manifest come what may, in the same manner this moral law of God shall manifest itself before them once they are left with no excuse to deny the truth. Thus those among the people of these messengers who accept their calls shall attain salvation both in this world and in the next and shall be dominant on their adversaries. And those who reject these calls shall be humiliated and will receive divine punishment.

Whenever this prediction was made and about whichever people it was made, it was made in the most impossible and unbelievable of circumstances; however, it is an amazing historical reality that it came true whenever it was made and came true in such a manner that people in fact witnessed God administering justice and the heavens and the earth were filled with His majesty and grandeur. The Qur'ānic words used are: (١٦٥: ٤) *يَعْلَمُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ الْكُلَّ* (so that mankind after the coming of these messengers is left with no excuse against the Almighty, (4:165)). Then, as a general principle, it was stated:

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولٌ فَإِذَا جَاءَ رَسُولُهُمْ قُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ. (١٠: ٤٧)

And for each community there is a messenger. When their messenger comes, their fate is decided with justice and they are not wronged. (10:47)

It is evident from the Qur'ān that the first instance of this worldly judgement

took place with the people of Noah (sws). Noah (sws) had warned them that if they do not give up polytheism and worship God only, they will soon be confronted with a punishment which would wipe them out from the face of the earth. This is indeed what happened when those who denied him were drowned in a fierce flood.

The account of Moses (sws) related in the Qur'ān is also a depiction of this worldly judgement. When he presented the message of God before the Pharaoh and his supporters and they rejected this message, he demanded from them to let him and his people migrate from the land. The Pharaoh, however, did not accept this demand just as he did not accept his message. At this, the Almighty sent portent signs one after the other to admonish him after which he, with great hesitation, allowed them to go for a few days. However, when Moses (sws) set off with his people, he changed his opinion and embarked upon their pursuit with his armies. He thought that he would be able to compel them to return. However, the time had come for the decree of God to arrive. Hence, the judgement was delivered and was delivered with such majesty that it seemed as if the Almighty took them in His custody and made them cross the river while this potent ruler of his times and his armies were drowned in it.<sup>1</sup> Then within this great sign of God appeared another great sign: the corpse of the Pharaoh was not accepted by the river and was thrown out so that this could become a means of admonition and a lesson for tyrannical rulers of all times.

A further step was taken in this regard by the Almighty that after Abraham (sws), He made his progeny a symbol of this worldly judgement. It was thus declared that if the progeny of Abraham (sws) stand by the truth and present with full certainty and with full clarity the truth the way it is before other people of the world, then they will be made dominant over these people in case they do not accept the truth, and if the progeny of Abraham (sws) deviates from the truth they shall suffer the humiliation of subservience through these very people of the world.

The last time this miniature Day of Judgement took place was in seventh century AD. This amazing event of human history occupies extra-ordinary significance because it took place in the light of known history. Thus the minutest of the details about it are preserved and all its phases are before us and anyone can witness them by turning the pages of history.

The prophet who was selected for this was Muḥammad (sws). As regards character and morality, he is unrivalled in the annals of mankind being the best of men epitomizing an ideal human being. He was designated as a prophet at the age of forty. Prior to this, his life was so morally outstanding that he was called *ṣādiq* (the truthful) and *amīn* (the trustworthy) by his people. Each and every person of his nation was ready to bear witness that he was unflinching and incontestable in his honesty and trustworthiness and that he could never lie. Even after being designated as a prophet his people at all instances always bore

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1. For details, see the following verses of the Qur'ān: 7:103-136; 10:75-89; 17:101-103; 20:40-79; 23:45-48; 26:10-68; 28:36-40; 37: 114-119; 43:46-56; 51: 38-40; 79: 15-26.

witness to these aspects of his character even though they had become his dreadful enemies.

With this character and disposition, he called upon his people to profess true faith in God and in the Hereafter; however, they refused to accept it. He warned them that he is not merely a prophet (*nabī*), he is a messenger (*rasūl*) also and has been sent by God to set up a miniature Day of Judgement in this world for his people if they deny him even after being convinced of his veracity. This miniature judgement will be in line with and of the same sort which was delivered to the people of Noah (sws), Lot (sws), Shu‘ayb (sws), ṣāliḥ (sws) and Hūd (sws) by their respective messengers.

This was an extra-ordinary declaration. It meant that those who reject him would be punished by God and those who profess faith in him would necessarily prevail in the land of Arabia. When this declaration was sounded, except for a few close companions, he had no other supporters. Later also, he faced perilous times during the course of his struggle. His companions had to migrate to Abyssinia to seek refuge from the hostility of their enemies; they had to vacate Makkah forever and when they reached Madīnah, the whole of Arabia united to eliminate him and his message. Means such as power, money, propaganda and internal conspiracies were adopted to sabotage his mission. Every instant it seemed that enemies would be able to overpower and seize him. In these circumstances, it was very improbable that he would be able to prevail over his enemies; however, the Qur’ān in every situation assured him that he is the messenger of God and, in spite of all this antagonism, God will have him prevail over his enemies:<sup>2</sup>

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحَادُّونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ فِي الْأَذَلِّينَ. كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَأَعْلَبَنَ أَنَا وَرُسُلِي إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ. (٥٨: ٢٠-٢١)

Indeed those who are opposing Allah and His Messenger are bound to be humiliated. The Almighty has ordained: “I and My Messengers shall always prevail.” Indeed Allah is Mighty and Powerful. (58:20-21)

The Baytullāh was a sign of leadership for the people to whom the Prophet (sws) was sent. They were its custodians. No one could even imagine that one day he would remove them from its custodianship and the leadership of the Quraysh would one day be humbled before him. This was because of the extent of influence they commanded in Makkah and in its whereabouts. However, right at the instance they were planning to turn him out of Makkah, the Qur’ān declared:

إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ. فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْحَرْ. إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ. (١٠٨: ١-٣)

Upon you [O Prophet!] have We bestowed this abundance of good [this House of Ours]. So pray only for your Almighty and offer sacrifice only

2. See also: 6:4-5, 66-67, 158; 10:13, 102-103; 11:8; 13:40-41; 17:77, 18:57-58; 27:71-72; 37:171-173; 40:51, 77-78; 43:41-42; 46:35; 48:22-25, 28; 54:43-45; 92:21; 93:5; 94:5-6.

for Him. Indeed, it is this enemy of yours who is rootless: none of his followers will remain. (108:1-3)

Then these concise words were explained and after naming Abū Lahab as the biggest foe of his call, the Qur'ān asserted:

تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ. مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ. سَيَصْلَىٰ نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ. وَامْرَأَتُهُ حَمَّالَةَ  
الْحَطَبِ. فِي جِيدِهَا حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍ. (١١١: ١-٥)

The hands of Abu Lahab have been broken and he himself has perished. Neither did his wealth benefit him nor the [good] he earned. Soon shall this man [of glowing countenance] be put in a glowing Fire and [with him] his wife also such that [in Hell] she will be carrying firewood on her back [for her own self]; [like a slave woman], there will be a twisted rope round her neck. (111:1-5)

What would happen after this? The Qur'ān mentioned each and every phase with great clarity: The help of God would come and Makkah would be conquered and the Prophet (sws) would see from his very eyes his people entering the folds of Islam in multitudes:

إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ. وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا. فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ  
إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا. (١١٠: ٣-١)

When comes the help of God and that victory [which We have promised you O Prophet!] and you see men embrace the religion of God in multitudes, extol His glory while being thankful to Him and seek His forgiveness. For, indeed, He is ever disposed to mercy. (110:1-3)

These were not the words of a human being which had all the chances of not being materialized. They were the words of God which were spoken by His messenger. Thus they materialized and became part of history – in fact created history which has no parallel in the annals of this world. Consequently, the help of God arrived, the rule of the Prophet (sws) was established in Madīnah, the battle of Badr ensued and all hostile and antagonistic enemies of the Prophet (sws) were killed in it.<sup>3</sup> Abū Lahab did not take part in the battle in an effort to save himself from torment. However, just seven days after the battle of Badr, this prediction of the Qur'ān was fulfilled word for word and this leader of the Banū Hāshim was killed by plague. And such was the condition of his dead body that no one came near it till three days after his death. Ultimately, his body got decomposed and a stinking smell started to come out from it.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyah*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., vol. 3 (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1411 AH), 263-272.

Eventually, his corpse was placed near a wall and covered with leaves.<sup>4</sup> Makkah was conquered, the custodianship of the Baytullāh was transferred to the Muslims, the rituals of the prayer and animal sacrifice were specifically offered for the Almighty only after the Baytullāh was cleansed of the idols, all Arabs became Muslims and every one saw with their very eyes people entering the folds of Islam in multitudes as predicted by the Qur'ān. Consequently, Islam found a hold in the society, the *sharī'ah* of God was enforced and thenceforth no other religion held dominance in Arabia. After this, people who still insisted on denial were vehemently told in 9<sup>th</sup> AH at the occasion of the grand *hajj* that once the sacred months pass they shall have to face punishment and shall be executed where found.<sup>5</sup> After the death of the Prophet (sws), his successors conquered all the countries to whose heads the Prophet (sws) had written letters calling them to Islam. In these letters, he had told them that if they wanted peace they should accept Islam because after the truth has been communicated to them by the Messenger of God, they will have to live in subjugation and that their own independent states could no longer persist. Among these countries were those of Rome and Iran also about whose mutual conflict the Qur'ān, at one instance, had predicted that though the Romans have been subdued by the Iranians, soon they will subdue the Iranians and this amazing prediction of the Qur'ān was fulfilled word for word as were the other predictions it made.<sup>6</sup>

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4. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā al-Turāth al-'Arabī, n.d. ), 479.

5. The Qur'ān, 9:5.

6. The Qur'ān, 30:1-6.