

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Friday Khutbah – 27/03/2015

Root cause of the trials of doubt and what protects one from it

Our last Friday's talk was about the *fitnah* (trail) of doubt (scepticism) about the decree of Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta'ala*) and its wisdom. This *fitnah* is a very dangerous one as it throws doubts over the fundamental beliefs of the religion and leads a person to deny the existence of Allah. It is spreading through the internet and the modern means of communication and the writings of the anti-religion westerners and others.

The root cause of this *fitnah* is the futile attempt by some to delve into the hidden unseen and question the actions of Allah and their wisdom and interpret (or misinterpret) them. This is futile because human beings have only limited intellect and cannot understand many things in this universe and within themselves, so how can they fully grasp the wisdom of the actions of Allah which is part of the unseen.

There are few people whom their denial of the creator led them to atheism because belief in the creator is deeply rooted in human nature. However, most of those who became atheist became so as a result of their questioning of the actions of Allah. Instead of accepting the decree of Allah (or at least admit that they cannot grasp it in full) they started asking: What and why? Why did Allah create the unbelievers and then punishes them? What is the wisdom of creating harmful things? What is the wisdom of the creation of *Iblis* and the *Shayateen*? Why do innocent children made to suffer from illnesses? And they likes of these questions by which they challenge the decree of Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta'ala*) and deny the wisdom of His actions. This eventually led them to deny the existence of Allah.

Wisdom follows knowledge. Whoever is more knowledgeable, his actions will be wiser and more perfect. The actions of an adult sane person cannot be like that of a young child who has little or no knowledge. The Lord, (*Subhanahu wa ta'ala*), has the unique and absolute knowledge, and his wisdom is according to the measure of his knowledge. A human being who is ignorant cannot grasp the wisdom of the actions of the All-Knowing - if He hides it from him and Allah has hidden this knowledge of the unseen from us.

The issue of the decree and actions of Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta'ala*) has always preoccupied human minds since old times. Since this issue is part of the unseen then only Allah has full knowledge of it.

Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta'ala*), has illustrated the limitation of the human knowledge – including that of his prophets - in three examples in one of the most significant stories of the Qur'an. This is the story of Musa (*alayhis-Salam*) and *al-Abid as-Salih* (the righteous servant of Allah) called *al-Khidhr*.

This story is mentioned in *surah al-Kahf*, which a Muslim is recommended to read once a week, every Friday, because there are many lessons and morals in it. It instructs a Muslim with regard to what his/her attitude should be towards the four *fitan* (trials) in this life. These are the trail of the *Deen* in the story of *ashab al-Kahf*, the trail of money in the story of the owner of the two gardens, the trail of knowledge in the story of Musa (*alayhis-Salam*) and *al-Abid as-Salih* which is the subject of our talk today and finally the *fitnah* of power in the story of *Dhul-Qarnayn*.

The summary of the story is that Musa Ibn Imran (*alayhis-Salam*) thought he was the most knowledgeable person of his time. Allah revealed to him that he was not and told him about a man who was more knowledgeable than him. Musa asked his Lord to tell him how he could meet him. Allah told him the whereabouts of that man. When Musa met him he asked him to let him follow him so that he could learn from him. *Al-Khidhr* told him: You will not be able to have patience with me! "And how can you have patience about a thing which you know not?" However, Musa insisted and *Al-Khidhr* took a promise from him and said: if you follow me do not ask me about anything till I mention it to you. Musa agreed and they started their journey.

They boarded a boat which belonged to poor men working in the sea. The men knew *Al-Khidhr* and so they let them board free of charge. While they were sailing a small bird sat on the edge of the boat and dipped its beak (mouth) in the sea. *Al-Khidhr* said to Musa: Your knowledge and my knowledge and the knowledge of all creation compared to the knowledge of Allah is equal to the water which this bird took from the sea.

When they were in the middle of the sea, *Al-Khidhr* made a hole in the boat. Musa objected: These people let us board the boat free of charge and then you make a hole in it to drown its people. You have done a terrible thing. *Al-Khidhr* reminded him saying: Have I not said that you will not be able to have patience with me! Musa remembered his promise and kept silent.

They proceeded until they came across a boy whom *Al-Khidhr* killed. Musa objected: "Did you kill an innocent soul while he did not kill anyone? You have committed a heinous act indeed." *Al-Khidhr* reminded him and Musa promised that this would be the last time he would object.

They entered a city and there they asked the people of the city to give them food but they did not oblige. *Al-Khidhr* found a wall that was about to fall and he repaired it and set it up straight. Musa objected: We entered this city and the people refused to entertain us. If you have wished, you could have taken payment for repairing the wall.

That third objection brought the journey to an end. When it was time for the two to part *Al-Khidhr* said to Musa: I shall now tell you the interpretation of the things about which you could not remain patient. As for the boat, it belonged to some poor people who worked at sea. It was the source of their provision. There was behind them an oppressive king who was taking every ship by force. So I wanted to make it defective, so that he would not take it.

As for the boy, his parents were believers. Allah in pre-knowledge knows that if he were to live he would be a transgressor and *Kafir* and would impose transgression and *Kufr* upon his parents because they loved him.

As for the wall, there was beneath it a treasure that belonged to two orphan boys in the city, and their father was a pious man. I repaired the wall so that the treasure would not be uncovered before the two orphans reach their maturity and dig out their treasure.

I did not do all the things I did on my own accord but by the command of Allah.

Causing a boat to sink without an obvious reason and killing an innocent child who did not do anything wrong at the time – seem outwardly to be heinous acts. However, there was hidden wisdom behind these acts which human beings would not be able to realise due to

their limited knowledge which stops short of knowing the final outcome of the acts of Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta'ala*) – and indeed of their own acts.

In the hadith: Rasulullah (*Salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*) said: May Allah have mercy upon my brother Musa! I wished he was patient so that Allah would tell us more about what they would have done. Had he (Musa) remained with his companion, he would have really seen amazing thing.”

There is a direct relationship between knowledge and wisdom. The more knowledgeable a being is the wiser and more perfect his actions would be. Our actions are sometimes are not wise (by human standard) because our knowledge is limited.

A Muslim, by the virtue of his Iman, acknowledges that Allah (*Subhanahu wa ta'ala*) does not create or do anything but for some wisdom – even though this wisdom might be hidden from us. If a Muslim comes across an action of Allah that he does not see the wisdom behind it, he should not dwell on it and allow one's mind to delve into something he has no knowledge of.

There are many lessons and morals in this story. Time would not allow me to go one. One lesson is that man does not know where good lies for him/her. A believer should have firm belief in the wisdom of all the decrees of Allah. He should not be distressed if something bad happens to him. Perhaps there is some good in it which he does not know.

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