

Sūrat al-Mu'min

Verses 34-35

وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ يُوسُفُ مِنْ قَبْلِ الْبَيِّنَاتِ فَمَا زِلْتُمْ فِي شَكِّ مِمَّا جَاءَكُمْ بِهِ ۗ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا هَلَكَ قُلْتُمْ لَن يَبْعَثَ
اللَّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ رَسُولًا ۗ كَذَلِكَ يُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ مُرْتَابٌ

Q 40:34 *Certainly Yūsuf brought you manifest proofs earlier, but you continued to remain in doubt concerning what he had brought you. When he died, you said, “Allah will never send any Messenger after him.” That is how Allah leads astray one who transgresses and is doubtful.*

الَّذِينَ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي آيَاتِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ سُلْطَانٍ أَتَاهُمْ ۗ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَعِنْدَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ۗ كَذَلِكَ يَطْبَعُ
اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ قَلْبٍ مُتَكَبِّرٍ جَبَّارٍ

Q 40:35 *Those who dispute the signs of Allah without any authority that may have come to them, that is greatly outrageous to Allah and to those who have faith. That is how Allah seals the heart of every arrogant tyrant.*

Questions for Reflection

- 1) Why is Prophet Yūsuf (a) mentioned here?
- 2) Why does Allah misguide and put a seal on the heart of some people?
- 3) What four vices are mentioned in these verses? How do we stay away from them?

Commentary

Hizqīl brought up the story of Prophet Yūsuf, a Prophet who had been sent to the people of Egypt earlier on. This was from their own history. He reminded them of how the Egyptians had treated Prophet Yūsuf although he also had brought clear proofs with him. They doubted him when he was with them. When he died, they accepted that he had been a Prophet but said there would be no more Prophets after him. This was so they could continue their old ways. Their transgression and skepticism did not allow them to accept the guidance of God.

Hizqīl reminded the people that they too were following the wrong ways like the people of Prophet Yūsuf. They were extravagant in their ways and had transgressed the boundaries of truth and virtue. They had doubts in the Prophet despite the clear signs they had brought. These qualities that they possessed would result in God’s mercy being removed from their lives. They would be left to themselves.

Skepticism is a disease that starts with a few doubts. If these lead to a search for answers, then it is healthy. That way faith becomes stronger and more grounded. But when doubts are left to fester and eat away at faith it is dangerous. It can become a deadly disease that leads to hardening of the heart.

Verse 35 explains who the transgressors and the doubtful ones are. They argue against the signs of Allah (swt) without any proof or authority. They reject the signs, not paying attention to their true inner nature (*fitrah*), misusing their *aql*, and making false excuses. These tactics keep them away from the truth and they persist in their blindness. These tactics also arouse the anger of Allah and those who believe. This is because baseless and illogical are a source of misguidance, not only for the people doing it but also for others who listen and are influenced by them. It seeks to diffuse the light of truth in society and establishes a foundation of falsehood and wrongdoing.

Their lack of submission to the truth and stubborn rejection of it becomes a curtain over their thought process. They lose the ability to discern the truth and cannot see the light. They are described in this verse as being arrogant (thinking they know the truth) and oppressive (they have oppressed their souls and oppress others by influencing them wrongly). They become such that truth seems wrong and bitter to them while falsehood is sweet and appealing.

These words of Hizqil affected the listeners and made Fir'awn put a halt to his decision to kill Prophet Mūsā or at least delay it. He could not ignore Hizqil's speech nor be oblivious to the sentiments of the people. The courageous and firm speech at a sensitive time had maximum impact in the court of Fir'awn.

Connecting verses

1) Effective words

- a) Prophet Ibrāhīm to his people making them think about idol worship – Q 21:62-67
- b) Prophet Yūsuf to his family after reuniting with them – Q 12:100-101

Connecting topics

1) Doubts and skepticism.

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