

Sūrat al-Hud Verses 33-34

قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَأْتِيكُمْ بِهِ اللَّهُ إِنْ شَاءَ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُعْجِزِينَ

11:33 - He said, 'Allah will indeed bring it on you if He wishes, and you will not escape.

وَلَا يَنْفَعُكُمْ نُصْحِي إِنْ أَرَدْتُ أَنْ أَنْصَحَ لَكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُغْوِيَكُمْ ۗ هُوَ رَبُّكُمْ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

11:34 - And if I intend to give you good advice, my advice will not profit you if Allah intends to leave you astray; He is your Lord, and to Him shall you be returned.

Questions for Reflection

- 1) What words show that the Prophet is telling them that everything depends on Allah's decisions (33 - if He wishes, 34 - if Allah intends)
- 2) Why would Allah intend to leave people astray (He only helps those who help themselves, see commentary).

Commentary

When the people ask him to bring down the punishment from Allah if he is indeed truthful, Prophet Nuh (a) explains to them that it will only come if Allah wishes. The punishment is not from him, nor is in his hands to decide when it will come down. It is Allah's decision when, and if, that will happen. Even the Prophets (and the Imams) do not know everything of Ilmul Ghayb. They only know what Allah discloses to them.

But the Prophet warns them that once the punishment comes, there will be no escape from it. There will be no place of refuge for them. The word bimujiz comes from the word I'jaz meaning;

- making someone incapable of doing something
- stopping someone from doing something
- fleeing from someone to be beyond their reach

All these meanings apply here. The Prophet tells them that they will not be able to stop Allah from punishing them and will not have anywhere to flee to.

A Mu`jizah (miracle) means an act which people are unable to do, but Allah performs it at the hands of one of His chosen ones.

The Prophet then tells them that his advice will not benefit them if they have reached a level of disbelief and stubbornness such that Allah leaves them to their misguidance. He will not help them out of it as they themselves have chosen that path. Allah only helps and strengthens those who try and take the first steps themselves. When a human being is firmly against the truth and commits sins continuously, his behaviour becomes a seal on the heart. No light of wisdom and truth can then

enter the heart. It is a choice that the human being has made himself. This only happens after a long, continuous, and rigid period of defiance against Allah. Such a person will not be guided by Allah.

Allah does not misguide people. Misguidance is actually the absence of guidance. When verses of Quran talk about misguidance, it means that Allah will not guide certain people. They are left to fend for themselves and are afflicted with the punishment of losing out on guidance. Basic guidance has been given to all through the Fitrat and through Divine guides. But there is an extra guidance given to those who deserve it. Not being given that is termed as misguidance, but it is not a deliberate leading astray. That would be against the Justice of Allah.

Lessons

- 1) Prophets do not control anything on their own.
- 2) Allah only helps those who help themselves.
- 3) Continuous opposition to the truth and committing sins seals the heart.

Cross reference verses

- 1) No refuge from Allah's punishment – 18:27, 42:47, 75:10-12
- 1) Allah puts a seal on the heart of those who are firm in disbelief. This is the natural result of the system He has created – 4:155, 40:35, 61:5.

Connecting topic

Seal on the hearts

<https://www.al-islam.org/faith-and-reason/question-2-free-choice-divine-seal-lock-upon-hearts-perverse>

Misguidance in the Quran

<https://www.al-islam.org/faith-and-reason/question-4-misguidance-allah>