

## Sūrat al-Hud Verse 47

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَسْأَلَكَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِهِ عِلْمٌ ۖ وَإِلَّا تَغْفِرْ لِي وَتَرْحَمْنِي أَكُنَ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

11:47 - He said, 'My Lord! I seek Your protection lest I should ask You something of which I have no knowledge. If You do not forgive me and have mercy upon me, I shall be among the losers.

### Questions for Reflection

- 1) From what does the Prophet seek protection?
- 2) What are three things the Prophet asks for in this verse?
- 3) How would the Prophet be in a loss?

### Commentary

Prophet Nuh realized that the promise of Allah would not include a son who rejected all belief in God. He turns to Allah and asks him for protection from asking about that which he does not know and cannot understand. He does not want to be those who are deprived of God's pleasure and thus are in a loss.

The point to understand here is that Prophet Nuh did not ask for something he did not have knowledge about, but he seeks protection that he should ever do so. He had asked for his son to be saved, with the underlying understanding that only if God thought there was good in that. He did not persist in that plea. When Allah says the son is not from his family and will not be saved, the message is that there is no potential good in the son being rescued. The Prophet might wonder why, and he may not understand it as he has no knowledge about it. Allah tells him not to ask Him about His decision as he has no knowledge of it. The Prophet seeks refuge from ever doing such a thing. There is trust and acceptance of Allah's decision as being in the best interest of all, the individual, the family, and the society. This is always true even when we don't understand it and refrain from questioning it.

It is not something wrong the Prophet did which God is rebuking him for. It is the possibility of doing so that he is being warned about. A similar warning can be seen in verse 65 of Sura Zumar, addressed to the Prophet (s); *And it was already revealed to you and to those before you that if you should associate [anything] with Allah, your work would surely become worthless, and you would surely be among the losers.* It was not that the Prophet (s) would ever associate anyone with Allah. But the sentence reveals a potential condition that would lead to loss.

The above sentence shows the humility and submission of Prophet Nuh. A believer is very much aware that he/she is just a servant of Allah, created by Him and utterly dependant on Him. The self is not a being separate from God. It is from God and will go to God. The self should only desire that which God desires. Life should not be self-centred. It has to be God centred.

The second part of the verse in which the Prophet says that were it not for Your forgiveness and mercy I would be in a loss, is a statement of gratitude. God has prevented the Prophet from being in a loss and the Prophet acknowledges that. Acknowledgement of a favour is a form of gratitude. Even when faced with the loss of his son the Prophet is concerned about God's pleasure and is grateful that he was saved from doing or asking anything that would displease Him.

### Lessons

- 1) A believer does not question God's decision.
- 2) Humility and submission are praiseworthy qualities of a true servant of God.
- 3) God protects believers from potential loss and they should be grateful for that.

### Connecting Topics

- 1) Servitude

<https://imam-us.org/servitude-islamic-tradition>

<https://www.al-islam.org/faith-and-reason/question-5-being-allahs-servant>

- 2) Submission and acceptance

<https://www.shiavault.com/books/the-light/chapters/9-inner-peace-of-mind/>