

Qhutbah, Insha Allah, Friday, May 28, 2010

Alhamdu lillah, wa ash hadu ala ila ha ill lallah

Bismillah hir Rahman nir Rahim

We have always believed and will continue to do so, Insha Allah, that God's message is based on strong and rational foundations. Yet there was a time and it may still be continuing with some people as to why Prophet Muhammad did not display any miracle. This, they claim, is the reason for neither accepting him nor his message. *Old Kind of Miracles Made Obsolete [17:59] What stopped us from sending the miracles is that the previous generations have rejected them. For example, we showed Thamoud the camel, a profound (miracle), but they transgressed against it. We sent the miracles only to instill reverence.*

We know that the only miracle the Prophet showed was the Quran and some impossible victories in battle. Yet he was ordered in *[16:125] How to Spread God's Message - You shall invite to the path of your Lord with wisdom and kind enlightenment, and debate with them in the best possible manner. Your Lord knows best who has strayed from His path, and He knows best who are the guided ones.* He was to use his understanding and excellent preaching. This implies the intelligent use of knowledge and reasoning during the process of discussing and proselytising the religion. *[20:114] Most Exalted is GOD, the only true King. Do not rush into uttering the Quran before it is revealed to you, and say, "My Lord, increase my knowledge."*

All Prophets and Messengers practically proved the Divine revelations by channelling their lives accordingly. *The Prophet's Courage [33:21] The messenger of GOD has set up a good example for those among you who seek GOD and the Last Day, and constantly think about GOD.* They all brought one and the same message from God which some people could not easily accept as they were accustomed to a life of avarice and sin. *[6:84-87] And we granted him Isaac and Jacob, and we guided both of them. Similarly, we guided Noah before that, and from his descendants (we guided) David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron. We thus reward the righteous. Also, Zachariah, John, Jesus, and Elias; all were righteous. And Ismail, Elisha, Jonah, and Lot; each of these we distinguished over all the people. From among their ancestors, their descendants, and their siblings, we chose many, and we guided them in a straight path.*

We have now entered the new millennium and yet people are unable to understand a simple and straightforward message in a Quran which is inimitable. *[39:28] An Arabic Quran, without any ambiguity, that they may be righteous.*

God wants us to be guided and deserve His mercy and renounce the ways of Satan. *[39:17-18] As for those who discard the worship of all idols, and devote themselves totally to GOD alone, they have deserved happiness. Give good news to My servants. Follow the Word of God - They are the ones who examine all words, then follow the best. These are the ones whom GOD has guided; these are the ones who possess intelligence.*

During our life we always try to achieve different aims and goals and at times, we feel disappointed when it does not materialize. We turn despondent when the outcome of our efforts does not achieve the desired results. When this happens, we should reflect on Quranic Ayats and apply them practically in our lives. We have to remember that our efforts in the cause of God will never go to waste. *[29:69] As for those who strive in our cause, we will surely guide them in our paths. Most assuredly, GOD is with the pious.*

God has given us the *Siraat al Mustaqim* (the right path). We have to strive for it and yearn for it. If we reject it we will never receive His Guidance. Though we mention this at least 17 times in a day where do we find it detailed in the Quran? *6:151-153 and 17:22-38.*

The Quran warns us not to fragment ourselves into sects and so-called schools of thought. *Religious Sects Condemned [6:159] Those who divide themselves into sects do not belong with you. Their judgment rests with GOD, then He will inform them of everything they had done. Sectarianism Condemned [30:32] (Do not fall in idol worship,) like those who divide their religion into sects; each party rejoicing with what they have.*

Shortly after the death of the Prophet came the injection of two false verses in the Quran. Around two centuries later began the menace of Hadith and Sunna and then in the garb of religious jurisprudence came the Hanafis, Shaafis, Malikis, Hanbalis and Jafaris. A deadly and unrelenting *Pandora's Box* was unleashed. More and more sects and sub sects were born. People injected their own concepts and beliefs into Islam and changed it into a Satanic cult. People are expected to follow their "religious scholars and leaders" without a rational basis.

Disastrous Jealousy [2:213] The people used to be one community when GOD sent the prophets as bearers of good news, as well as warners. He sent down with them the scripture, bearing the truth, to judge among the people in their disputes. Ironically, those who received the scripture were the ones who rejected any new scripture, despite clear proofs given to them. This is due to jealousy on their part. GOD guides those who believe to the truth that is disputed by all others, in accordance with His will. GOD guides whoever wills in a straight path. [3:138] This is a proclamation for the people, and a guidance and enlightenment for the righteous.

Muslims have this totally phony delusion that if you are born "Muslim" whatever you do will be permissible and correct and that no one can prevent them from reaching Heaven due to God's immense mercy, Prophets and Saints intercession etc. These concepts lead them to arrogant claims of superiority over others; they do not realise that this is not the way God's system works. *The Test is Mandatory [29:2] Do the people think that they will be left to say, "We believe," without being put to the test? [43:72] Such is the Paradise that you inherit, in return for your works. [46:19] They all attain the ranks they have deserved, in accordance with their works. He will pay them for their works, without the least injustice.*

True direction comes from God alone and this should, Insha Allah, be our prime objective. *[5:105] O you who believe, you should worry only about your own necks. If the others go astray, they cannot hurt you, as long as you are guided. To GOD is your ultimate destiny, all of you, then He will inform you of everything you had done. [6:54] When those who believe in our revelations come to you, you shall say, "Salamun `Alaykum (Peace be upon you). Your Lord has decreed that mercy is His attribute. Thus, anyone among you who commits a transgression out of ignorance, and repents thereafter and reforms, then He is Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

The only guidance we turn to is the Quran. All human made standards could be imperfect and ambiguous. Only God knows what is the true guidance. *[28:85] Surely, the One who decreed the Quran for you will summon you to a predetermined appointment. Say, "My Lord is fully aware of those who uphold the guidance, and those who have gone astray." [28:87] Nor shall you be diverted from GOD's revelations, after they have come to you, and invite the others to your Lord. And do not ever fall into idol worship.*

The importance that the Quran gives to knowledge is clear from the very first verses revealed to the Prophet which said *[96:1-5] Read, in the name of your Lord, who created. He created man from an embryo. Read, and your Lord, Most Exalted. Teaches by means of the pen. He teaches man what he never knew.* Immediately after that there was the 2nd Revelation. *[68:1] NuN, the pen, and what they (the people) write.* Also the importance of knowledge is conveyed to us through a practical example which was the result of the test that we all underwent.

The Quran stresses the significance of knowledge attainment by referring to it in more than 500 places. It enhances our capacity to ponder and reflect and makes it capable of being utilised for the benefit of humankind. We think that we have probed the frontiers of knowledge and are exploring space and ocean deeps but the ultimate knowledge rests only with God. *Divine Revelation: The Source of All Knowledge [17:85] They ask you about the revelation. Say, "The revelation comes from my Lord. The knowledge given to you is minute."* God alone has total authority over everything. The Quran helps those who wish to seek guidance from it. *[2:2-5] This scripture is infallible; a*

beacon for the righteous; who believe in the unseen, observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), and from our provisions to them, they give to charity. And they believe in what was revealed to you, and in what was revealed before you, and with regard to the Hereafter, they are absolutely certain. These are guided by their Lord; these are the winners.

Islam is not just a religion but a way of life which lays down our relationship with God and also between ourselves. The Quran gives us spiritual commandments and laws through which we can live in peace and agreement with our brethren and all other creatures. It leads to an internal arousing and more evaluated approach to values in life. Unlike some other beliefs it does not contradict the study of the laws of nature.

In fact it encourages the search for truth amidst the grandeur, beauty and mystery of the universe and to a greater understanding of the Primal Force and Authority which is responsible for all we see and feel round us. Above all, we are not expected to follow the Quran blindly. *No Compulsion in Religion [2:256] There shall be no compulsion in religion: the right way is now distinct from the wrong way. Anyone who denounces the devil and believes in GOD has grasped the strongest bond; one that never breaks. GOD is Hearer, Omniscient.*

We are advised to believe in the unseen but we are also informed to ponder and reflect on the various facets of creation. Any sincere believer can test the authenticity by reasoning and drawing a conclusion therefrom. *[6:104] Enlightenments have come to you from your Lord. As for those who can see, they do so for their own good, and those who turn blind, do so to their own detriment. I am not your guardian. [20:2] We did not reveal the Quran to you, to cause you any hardship.*

True believers love as well as fear God and reject all other types of idols. An unbeliever / disbeliever has his own “gods” and worldly standards and seeks guidance from them. *The Idols Disown Their Idolizers [2:165] Yet, some people set up idols to rival GOD, and love them as if they are GOD. Those who believe love GOD the most. If only the transgressors could see themselves when they see the retribution! They will realize then that all power belongs to GOD alone, and that GOD's retribution is awesome.*

There are many who believe that the Quran is for Muslims alone but this is a misconception. The message of God is universal and hence unlimited. We are categorically informed in the Quran that Islam is the religion of our father Abraham. *Abraham: Original Messenger of Islam [22:78] ... He is the one who named you "Submitters" originally....* We claim that we believe in God and His Divine Message but in reality everyone sets his own standards and pays only lip service to His Commandments. *[10:57] O people, enlightenment has come to you herein from your*

Lord, and healing for anything that troubles your hearts, and guidance, and mercy for the believers.

All over the world we see Muslims who swear that they believe in God and the Quran and yet we see them being humiliated in every manner. They are controlled, directed, ordered, subjugated, oppressed, tormented and exploited by non Muslims and other “Muslims” alike. So by keeping Muslim names and manifestations like “topi, dadi and tukka patlun” (beard, prayer cap and traditional attire) and professing to be followers of Islam without any belief and conviction and denying the Quran will eventually place such people as non-recipients of God’s guidance and mercy.

[57:28] O you who believe, you shall reverence GOD and believe in His messenger. He will then grant you double the reward from His mercy, endow you with light to guide you, and forgive you. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful. Healing and Mercy [17:82] We send down in the Quran healing and mercy for the believers. At the same time, it only increases the wickedness of the transgressors.

The Quran is undeniable and will remain in its immaculate form till the end of time as we know it. Even “Western” intellectuals know and acknowledge this fact that the Quran is original and limitless as compared to other books and religions. It contains simple, matter of fact and close to human nature concepts which appeal to even questioning minds. They see the respect that the Quran gives to humanity *[17:70] We have honored the children of Adam, and provided them with rides on land and in the sea. We provided for them good provisions, and we gave them greater advantages than many of our creatures.* It means that all humans are equal and the criterion to one’s position is determined by his deeds. *[46:19] They all attain the ranks they have deserved, in accordance with their works. He will pay them for their works, without the least injustice.*

In fact, with the revelation of the Quran, a new era dawned – an era of reasoning and enlightenment. God in his Infinite Wisdom sent miracles in one form or the other to the prophets and messengers which helped them spread the message. At the same time, however, we have to accept that a miracle has a restricted scope of strength and influence they are confined in time and space. They appeal to sentiments rather than reason and only those who actually witness them may be convinced. With the passage of time, people may start to forget them and could start questioning their authenticity.

So there is also an appeal to our intellect, rationale and conscience. With Quranic revelation the reliance shifted from sentimentality and emotion to reason and deduction. Out of a total of 6346 verses in the Quran, perhaps around 756 verses emphasise reflecting, listening, pondering, knowing and understanding.

The word “ayat” is used both as a sign and a miracle. But it is something definite and within the grasp of everyone. This is why whenever the word “sign” is used there is

invariably a due emphasis on reflection and pondering over what it pertains to. Some of the signs referred to frequently in the Quran are the creation and existence of countless celestial bodies that we can see with our own eyes like the sun, the moon, the stars etc. [50:6] *Have they not looked at the sky above them, and how we constructed it and adorned it, without a flaw?*

The Quran also mentions the God controlled and orderly movements and functions of the heavenly bodies, their shape and course. [36:40] *The sun is never to catch up with the moon - the night and the day never deviate - each of them is floating in its own orbit.* As these signs are straightforward, we can reflect over and appreciate the maintenance of balance and resultant harmony. [55:7-8] *He constructed the sky and established the law. You shall not transgress the law.* To sustain life on earth there is also the provision of things in due measure. [15:19] *As for the earth, we constructed it, and placed on it stabilizers (mountains), and we grew on it a perfect balance of everything.*

To the present generation and onwards the Quran implement a system that could ensure the acceptability of its message for all times to come. *The Quran's Mathematical Code: Tangible, Irrefutable Proof* [4:174] *O people, a proof has come to you from your Lord; we have sent down to you a profound beacon.*

All the signs of God are such that their existence or happening cannot be denied. [12:108] *Say, "This is my path: I invite to GOD, on the basis of a clear proof, and so do those who follow me. GOD be glorified. I am not an idol worshiper."*

When we reflect over signs and miracles in the Quran we get a two fold object. One is that our faith is strengthened on the Unity of God and we can draw conclusions from this for the benefit of fellow humans. We know that this balance could not have been established and maintained without there being a single and highly skilled Creator and Designer.

Who Is Worthy of Worship? [30:40] *GOD is the One who created you. He is the One who provides for you. He is the One who puts you to death. He is the One who resurrects you. Can any of your idols do any of these things? Be He glorified. He is much too exalted to have any partners.*

God be Glorified!