

MAKALAH AL-FURQAN

SURAH 1 VERSE 6

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ “Sirat al Lazina” The meaning of the word صِرَاطَ “Sirat”, as discussed in 1:5 as meaning to swallow something without chewing; or a long straight sharp sword; and thus an open and wide road is also referred to as صِرَاطٌ this is either because of the straightness of the sword or the traveler on a road who swallows the road bit by bit as he progresses on his travels as explained under إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ previously. In this instance meaning the “straight path on whom (Those who)” there is:

أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ , The favour

The supplication that was made for الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ “Sirat al Mustaqeem” is now being answered as those on whom there is *N’emat* of Allah, meaning roughly, “soft (or easy) delightful, happy, high and away from any difficulty or misery”. Also meaning the benefits and fruits of being steadfast on *Deen*, whether in this world or the hereafter. It is thus imperative to fully understand the meaning of these benefits of the *N’emat* of Allah from the Qur’an as this is the only way to find out if this *N’emat* is with us or not. If this is in the positive then our E’eman is according to the measure of the Qur’an and our actions are all good; if it is in the negative then we are misleading ourselves and defrauding our belief system as our actions are mere ritualistic worship and nothing more. In the

desert تَنْعِيمَةً “taneemah” is a plant with very green leaves and grows on water and does not lose its freshness. Then again, *An N’amat* is a building that had been erected on a mountain or lofty place. It also refers to a signpost or flag. These meanings illustrate that human experience needs to be pleasant, spacious, restful, lofty and upright-this is the extract of *N’emat* of Allah. Examples of Verses of the Qur’an give further elucidation.

Moosa AS reminds his people of the *N’emat* of Allah that freed them from the enslavement and torment of Pharaoh, Surah 2 Verse 47 to 49:

47 O Children of Israel, call to mind My favour which I bestowed on you and that I made you excel the nations.^a

يَبْحَثْ إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And guard yourselves against a day when no soul will avail another in the least,^a neither will intercession be accepted on its behalf,^b nor will compensation be taken from it, nor will they be helped.

وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا لَّا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَلَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 And when We delivered you from Pharaoh’s people, who subjected you to severe torment,^a killing your sons and sparing your women,^b and in this there was a great trial from your Lord.

وَإِذْ نَجَّيْنَاهُمْ مِّنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ يُذَبِّحُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ وَفِي ذَلِكُمْ بَلَاءٌ مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٤٩﴾

“Since you have become habituated to following the easy way of your self-made *Shari’at*, you will find the path of *Deen* difficult to travel. But if you keep in mind that you will eventually have to confront *Allah’s* Law of *Mukaf’at* (cause and effect), you may be able to overcome your egotistical tendencies and adhere to the Divine Laws. You need not be told that the consequences of adherence to these Laws would be as follows:

“You have witnessed them yourselves. When you adhered to them you were blessed with all the boons of life and were pre-eminent amongst your contemporaries (Refer also 2/122). When you gave up your adherence, your respect for Law and justice disappeared. But this state of affairs can continue no longer for when the *Qur’anic* Order is established no one shall avail another in anything, nor shall any intercession of one for another be considered, nor shall any form of compensation be accepted neither shall they be succoured (Further References 6/165, 2/123). This would be the case both in this world and in the Hereafter.”

“Recall the time when you were in servitude to the Pharaoh who inflicted many torments upon you, the worst of which was that he created dissension amongst you (Refer also 28/24). He degraded those respected members of your community who had courage and vitality and posed a danger to him (particularly those who believed in Moosa AS – Refer 90/25) while elevating those who were devoid of such qualities. Thus you as a people became weak (This is how the politics of despotism works – Refer 27/34). When you submitted to the Divine Laws, *Allah* delivered you from Pharaoh’s grip. This was a great turning-point in your life.”

The adherence to the Law of *Allah* raises the status of the followers to heights that one cannot imagine as stated in Surah 3 Verse 139:

139 And be not weak-hearted, nor grieve, and you will have the upper hand if you are believers.

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

And this what Suleiman AS experienced when he said in Surah 28 Verse 19:

رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي
أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ

"O my *Rabb*, you have granted me a great empire. Therefore, also grant me adequate restraint and self-control so that instead of causing destruction to mankind, the strength and stately splendour you have bestowed on me and my parents....."

Having understood the *N’emat*, Bounties and favours of *Allah*, man is required to submit to the Laws of *Allah* and implement it, Surah 16 Verse 80:

81 And Allāh has made for you, of what He has created, shelters, and He has given you in the mountains, places of retreat, and He has given you garments to save you from the heat,^a and coats of mail to save you in your fighting. Thus does He complete His favour to you that you may submit.^b

وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِمَّا خَلَقَ ظِلَالًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ أَكْنَانًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ سَرَابِيلَ تَقِيكُمُ الْحَرَّ وَسَرَابِيلَ تَقِيكُم بَأْسَكُمْ كَذَلِكَ يُتِمُّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

Look at the *N’emat* and bounties of *Allah* provided for your physical life. He has caused dwellings to be built for your rest and tents to be built with the skins of cattle which are light enough to carry on

your journeys and may be pitched whenever you halt. He has provided you with their wool, fur and hair to make garments, and other means of comfort to utilise for a while.

In Surah Luqman 31 this aspect is described in such a way that it encompasses all of creation, Verse 20:

20 See you not that Allāh has made subservient to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, and granted to you His favours complete outwardly and inwardly?

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَاَسْبَغَ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَةً ظٰهِرَةً وَّ بَاطِنَةً

In Surah Ibrahim 14 after the description of creation the Quran states in Verse 32-34:

34 And He gives you of all you ask of Him. And if you count Allāh's favours, you will not be able to number them. Surely man is very unjust, very ungrateful.

وَاَنْتُمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ سٰلِسُوۡمَةٌ وَاِنْ تَعَدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ لَا تُحْصُوۡهَا اِنَّ الْاِنْسَانَ لَظٰلِمٌ كَافِرٌ

Man cannot and will not ever be able to compute the N'emmat, bounties and favours of Allah, as Allah has provided all that man will ever need.

All the above have described the *N'emmat* of Allah in reference to the physical needs of creation, but there are other specific requirements of mankind which are fulfilled through the agency of Ambia AS and *Wahi*. In Surah Maryam after the reporting on some of the Ambia AS the Quran states in Surah 19 Verse 58 states:

اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ اَنْعَمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنَ النَّبِيِّينَ

“All of them fall in the category of *Ambia*, upon whom *Allah* had bestowed His bounties.”

In this Verse the work of the Ambia are described as a *N'emmat* for mankind and this too is from Allah as stated in Surah 5 Verse 3:

وَاَنْتُمْ عَلَيَّ نِعْمَتِيْ

“This explains that mankind will have at their call the *Wahi* of the Qur'an till the end of time”. This *N'emmat* is not just anywhere and will not be available to man after the demise of the last Nabi, Muhammad AS.

Those who are endowed with this favour, *N'emmat* of Allah, will never be divided; their hearts will be one as the Qur'an has so rightly explained in Surah 3 Verse 103:

103 And hold fast by the covenant of Allāh^a all together and be not dis-united. And remember Allāh's favour

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللّٰهِ جَمِيْعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوۡا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ اِذْ كُنْتُمْ اَعْدٰٓءًا

to you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts so by His favour you became brethren. And you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it.^b Thus Allāh makes clear to you His messages that you may be guided.

فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ
إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ
النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ
لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

“This Code, the Quran, should be held fast by all of you together and be not divided into sects and parties. Remember Allah’s Blessings to you in that when you were each other’s enemy and He brought your hearts together and thus you became brothers; this strong brotherhood formed on the basis of an ideology was a great blessing, although before that you were on the brink of a pit of fire and He drew you back from it. In this way Allah makes His Directives clear so that you may take the right path.”

The above examples thus explain to man what are the many facets of favours and bounties , *N’emat* of Allah and how these are part of the *Sirat-e-Mustaqeem*, الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ , and this is the supplication that was thought to man in Verse six of Surah Fateha but these favours and bounties will not be attained by mere lip-service of *Dua*. In the language of the Qur’an it is that destination that is truly regarded as *Jannah*, and this *Jannah* is referred to in Surah 39 Verse 74 as:

فَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَمِلِينَ “So goodly is the reward, favour, of the workers”. This aspect is discussed in much detail in Surah 4 Verses 64-70. ذَلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ “Such is the grace from Allah”. One has to see how these bounties, favours and grace from Allah is put to use; if used according to the Laws of Allah for the betterment of mankind then this is regarded as “*Shukr-e-Ne’mat*” or else it is “*Kufr-e-N’emat*”; for it will be asked of man, Surah 102 Verse 8: شِمًا كُنْتُمْ عَنْ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ , “Then it will be asked of you as to how did you expend the bounty of Allah?” If the Ne’mat is utilized in non-Quranic way then it would be snatched away and man will be in “fear and apprehension for lack of the sustainable requirements and “punishment””. Allah explains this phenomenon in Surah Nahl, 16 Verse 112:

112 And Allāh sets forth a parable: A town safe and secure, to which its means of subsistence came in abundance from every quarter; but it disbelieved in Allāh’s favours, so Allāh made it taste a pall of hunger and fear because of what they wrought.^a

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا قَرْيَةً كَانَتْ آمِنَةً
مُطْمَئِنَّةً يَأْتِيهَا رِزْقُهَا رَغَدًا مِنْ كُلِّ
مَكَانٍ فَكَفَرَتْ بِأَنْعُمِ اللَّهِ فَأَذَاقَهَا اللَّهُ
لِبَاسَ الْجُوعِ وَالْخَوْفِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

This “fear” is not something that was from an external force, but, it was as a result of their own way of life and belief. This is further illustrated in Surah 14 Verse 28-29:

28 Seest thou not those who change Allāh’s favour for disbelief^a and make their people to alight in the abode of perdition —
29 Hell. They will burn in it. And an evil place it is to settle in!

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ بَدَّلُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ
كُفْرًا وَآخَلَوْا قَوْمَهُمْ دَارَ الْبَوَارِ ﴿٢٨﴾
جَهَنَّمَ يَصَلُّونَهَا وَبِئْسَ الْقَرَارُ ﴿٢٩﴾

It must, however, be remembered that the responsibility for this downfall is not only of the leaders but all will bear the responsibility; Surah 8 Verse 53:

53 This is because Allāh never changes a favour which He has conferred upon a people until they change their own condition — and because Allāh is Hearing, Knowing —

ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَمْ يَكُ مُغَيِّرًا نِّعْمَةً اَنْعَمَهَا عَلٰى قَوْمٍ حَتّٰى يُغَيِّرُوْا مَا بِاَنْفُسِهِمْ ۗ وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٥٣﴾

And again in Surah 13 Verse 11:

Surely Allāh changes not the condition of a people, until they change their own condition.

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتّٰى يُغَيِّرُوْا مَا بِاَنْفُسِهِمْ

“Allah’s law of *Mukaf’at* (cause and effect) encompasses human beings from all sides and brings all of their actions to their conclusions (Refer also 82/10-12). (And since a nation comprises of people, the same law is applicable to all, it should, therefore, be remembered that) Allah does not alter the condition of a people until they bring about a change in their inner-selves (Refer also 8/53) and this change obviously takes place in accordance with their intentions, desires and action. The law of *Mukaf’at* is so strict that when chastisement comes, none can avert it nor can people have any protector besides Allah.”

To be recipients of the *N’emat* of Allah or to be deprived of it is dependent on intentions, desires and actions of man and if this happens according to the Law of Allah then this is *E’eman*, or consequence of *E’eman* else it would be regarded as *Kufr*.

The discussion had started with اِيَّاكَ تَعْبُدُ (Refer 1.4(a)) and the response to that is given in Surah 16 Verse 114:

وَاَشْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ اِيَّاہُ تَعْبُدُوْنَ ﴿١١٤﴾

“If you are truthful in your claim that you serve only the Sustainer, then utilise the favours, bounties, *N’emat* of Allah according to the rules and regulations dictated in the Qur’an and if this is practiced by you then the *N’emat* will be constant and be capable of increasing, as stated in Surah 14 Verse 7:

وَاِذْ تَاذَنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَنْ يُّسَكِّرَنَّ لَكُمْ اَنْعَامَكُمْ وَلَنْ يُّكْفِّرَنَّ عَنْكُمْ اَنْعَامَكُمْ ۗ وَلَٰكِنْ لَّكُمْ عَذَابٌ لَّسِيْدٌ ﴿٧﴾

“Your *Rabb* had proclaimed that if you utilise the bounties given to you according to His laws He will surely increase them but if you do otherwise you will have to face a grievous chastisement.” What will be this “chastisement” is recorded in

عَبْرٍ الْمَعْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ