The Greatest Blessing

The Bedouins tell you O' Muhammad that) you owe them (a great deal) for their embracing)} (the religion of Islam). Say to them (O' Muhammad, blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny) that, 'You are not doing me any favour by embracing Islam. In fact, it is Allah who has done a great favour to you by guiding you to the true faith. (Think about this) if you are people of truth.'}

The services of the Prophet of Islam (blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny) and the Noble Qur'an that he brought to the world of humanity can never be forgotten. The value of this service can only be made clear when we study the thoughts, beliefs, customs and traditions of the nations at that time in history (leaving aside those animalistic nations and civilizations who possessed no culture) and compare these to the lofty goals and teachings of Islam and the blessings that the nations of the world were given due to the influence of the Islamic teachings. At this time would the value of the services that the teachings of Islam conferred upon the human society be made evident for all to see.

Eventually from the depths of their hearts, mankind will have to acknowledge that the superior teachings of the Qur'an and the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny) are the greatest blessings of Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He).

Eventually, people will have to confirm that it is these teachings which is protecting the future generations, the culture of humanity and is the connection that lies between the old and new civilizations. It is this truth that has been mentioned in the Qur'an by Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) when He said:

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولاً مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلالٍ مُّبِينٍ

Certainly Allah granted a great favour to the believers when He raised up from amongst their" own people a Messenger (Muhammad, blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny) to recite to them His (Allah's) signs, to purify them (of moral defects), to teach them the Book and the Wisdom, and before this they had surely lived in manifest error."

We simply need to take a cursory glance at the past history of mankind, especially in those parts of the world in which the life-giving call of Tawhid and the prophetic missions of the appointed leaders of Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) had not reached and then judge for

ourselves to what extent Islam has helped and assisted the world of humanity.

The country of India - which is a vast region and from the point of view of being a machine-driven society - is one of the most advanced countries in the East, however their government and nation still are held captive to the authority of the sacred cow.

Some time back, in order to prevent a massive famine and starvation which was placing the lives of its' people in danger, the government gave the permission to kill cows (for food), however mass confusion engulfed the entire country which was followed up with fierce fighting and riots! Due to this, one of the ministers of the Government was fired from his job and thus the state of the country and the government in power was made unstable!

There is not a single person in all of India who enjoys the same level of freedom, respect and character as the sacred cow does and it suffices us to mention this final point that many times, it has been seen that from out of nowhere, a cow will come and sit in the middle of the street and behind him, a large line-up of cars will be waiting (for the cow to move).

The police will not interfere in this issue nor would anyone else have the courage to touch the cow or cause him any sort of discomfort. Thus in the end, it is up to the cow and his own intentions to decide when he will get up and move out of the way, ending this inconvenience to the people.

If the cow was to sit down on the railway tracks, the train operator would be obliged to apply the breaks and stop there in waiting until the cow gets up and moves away on his own free will, thus removing this inconvenience from the passengers in the train!

The number of sacred cows in this country is well over 150,000,000. Just picture for one minute if all of these cows were completely free (to do as they want) and were at peace (with whatever they were doing) - what would be the outcome?

Without doubt they would destroy all the farms. They would manage to eat up the food that is earmarked for hundreds of millions of people for the upcoming years and in the end who knows what the outcome would be? Nothing. In addition, when these cows die, their corpses must be disposed of in such a way (that does not show any disrespect for them) and this too creates great headaches for the people.

Another point of amazement to us is that how is it possible for humanity - who have ascended into the heavens on the wings of knowledge and intelligence – to be so separated from the teachings of the Heavenly Prophets and show such humility and humbleness to a cow!

How do we know that if the call of the life-saving teachings of Tawhid had not reached our country we too may have fallen into this same state or even worse? How do we know that if the Noble Qur'an and the Prophet of Islam (blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny) - with

the logic that (they brought) that knocked sense into us and that unseen self-sacrifice - had not stood up against the idols and the various types of idol worshipping, that today, just like a large number of people of the world and those countries that are around us who have beliefs such as the cow-worshippers of India, fire-worshippers, sun worshippers, those who worship rocks and pieces of wood – that we too would have not have been as they are?

The country of Japan is one of the most advanced countries in the world today. The products of this country are in competition in the free market with the goods made in America and the European countries; however this nation, which has reached to and conquered the machine age are so engulfed in shameful thoughts and imaginations such that the pen is even ashamed to write such things.

One of the businessmen of our country (Iran) who has been quite active in trade and commerce in Japan for some time now once said, “Unfortunately, the majority of the people of the nation of Japan are idol worshippers and for every event that comes up in their lives, they believe that a separate god and creator is responsible for that event and they attribute it to him. For example, they have fashioned a god of rain, a god of war and a god of peace, etc… One of their gods is the god that brings a man to a woman who is looking to get married. In the idol-worshipping centres of this country, these idols are made to resemble shocking and repulsive shapes; for example (the god that they believe helps a woman find her mate) actually resembles what they think such a god would look like. Women who are single actually pay visitation to this place at specific times and ask their requests from such things!”

This act shows the level and degree of intelligence of a nation who has penetrated through the realms of the heavens and has explored deep into the oceans and whose entire life and existence has been changed through technology and expertise.

Through a cursory glance at this scene and by studying this part of the world which has been deprived of the spiritual bounties of Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He), do we still fail to recognize the service and benefits that Islam has brought to civilization?

Seeing as how Ja`far ibn Abi Talib had observed - from close up - the corruption that idol worshipping had brought and the dangers that were brought about by being distanced from the teachings of Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He), when the ruler of Habasha (present day Ethiopia) asked him about the true visage of Islam, he replied in the following manner: “O King, we were an unenlightened people plunged in ignorance. We worshipped idols, we ate animals that died on their own, and we committed many other abominations. We broke the natural ties (of family) and mistreated our neighbours and the strong amongst us exploited the weaker ones.

We lived in this manner until Allah raised among us a Prophet of noble birth and lineage, truthfulness, honesty and purity that we were all aware of. He invited us to acknowledge the Unity of Allah and to worship Him and to renounce the stones and idols that our forefathers and we ourselves used to venerate.

He enjoined us to speak the truth, to redeem our pledges, to be kind and considerate to our kin and neighbours; he forbade and told us to refrain from every vice including bloodshed, shamelessness, lies, deceit and told us not to encroach upon the rights of the orphans nor to vilify chaste women.

He commanded us to pay divine homage to Allah alone and never associate others with Him; he ordered us to offer prayers, to pay the Zakat, to observe the fast (thus enumerating other injunctions of Islam).

We acknowledged his truthfulness and believed in him; we followed him in whatever he brought from Allah and we worshipped only One God without associating anything or anyone else with Him; we treated as unlawful what he prohibited and accepted what he made lawful for us.

From then on, we were estranged from our own people such that they persecuted us, tried to seduce us from our faith and forced us to take back the idols as our gods and they even compelled us to return to the abominations we had committed earlier. So when they tortured us and held us under their tyranny and stood between us and our religion, we fled to your country having chosen you above all others for refuge. We have come here, O' King, to your land seeking your protection and we hope that we shall not be dealt with unjustly."

Since Ja`far ibn Abi Talib and those who were with him had seen the manifestation and outcome of not subscribing to a religion and the state of those who were free in their (religious) practices, they realized the true importance of the teachings of Islam and thus considered it even more worthy than their own lives.

However, those people who have been born into a religious and spiritual family and have not had to travel the difficult path to find religion, nor have they been abused and had wounds inflicted upon them in this path to the point where their blood has been shed, would never understand the true importance that religion has and the important role that it plays in the improvement and well-being of a society.

شب باران و بیم موج و گردابی چنین هایل

کجا دانند حال ما سبکباران ساحلها!؟

A rainy night and the scary ocean swells with uneasy storms,

The light rain on the coasts can never know this (turbulent) state.

The Qur'an considers religion as being the greatest spiritual blessing that has been given to mankind:

وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْـمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْـتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَـأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُـوبِكُمْ

And recall (O' Muslims) the blessings of Allah that were showered upon you during the time" when you were enemies of one another and (through the blessings of Allah) He united your hearts."

On the day that the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny) made known his Wasi (successor), the revelation of Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) came down to him and referred to this event (18th of Dhul Hijjah) as the greatest blessing:

أَلْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَ أَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي...

This day (18th of Dhul Hijjah) have I (Allah) completed your religion for you and have I" perfected upon you My bounties."

The `Arabs that lived in the desert imagined that by simply accepting Islam, they had done a service to the Prophet of Islam (blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny) and through this act of theirs, they felt as if they had put an obligation upon the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny).

However, if they had truly and sincerely accepted Islam, then at the first level (of their submission) they would have derived much benefit, since the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny) would have been obligated to grace and bless them since they had chosen the path of happiness and the road to complete perfection just as it has been mentioned in the Qur'an:

بَلِ اللَّهُ يَمُنُّ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ هَدَاكُمْ لِلإِيـمَانِ

Rather, it is Allah who has laid upon you an obligation by guiding you to the faith.""

One of the distinctions of the Qur'an is that there is not a single instance in which it neglects to mention any detail or aspect and it tackles every issue that it speaks about from various different aspects. For example, in the verse under discussion, when it is mentioned in regards to the desert `Arabs and their apparent acceptance of the religion of Islam and attributing this

:as being Iman or true faith, the Qur’an then says

أَنْ هَدٰاكُمْ لِلإِيـمٰانِ

by guiding you to the faith.”…“

:And immediately it ends with the following sentence

...إِنْ كُنتُمْ صٰادِقِينَ

if you are truthful.”…“

By this it is meant that attributing true faith (Iman) to these people is something that they themselves had said in regards to their own souls, but in the opinion of the Qur’an, true faith (Iman) had not yet entered into their hearts.

By the Qur’an mentioning this condition, it removes any kind of contradiction that might be imagined in relation to this verse and the previous verse (verse number 14) since in the 14th verse of this Surah, it is clearly mentioned that these people had accepted Islam however they were devoid of true faith (Iman).

Thus, if in this verse they were to be counted amongst the ranks of the Believers (Mu’minin) which is the greatest blessing of Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He), then it is only due to the fact that this is what they themselves claimed about their own souls and it is for this reason :that immediately, the Qur’an replies to them that

...إِنْ كُنتُمْ صٰادِقِينَ

”.if you are truthful…“