

DAILY QUR'ANIC REFLECTIONS

From Juz' 2: The Nearness of Divine Help

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالصَّرَاءُ وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصُرُ اللَّهُ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ

Do you suppose that you will enter paradise though there has not yet come to you the like of [what befell] those who went before you? Stress and distress befell them and they were convulsed until the apostle and the faithful who were with him said, 'When will Allah's help [come]?' Behold! Allah's help is indeed near! (Baqarah 2:214)

Reflections:

To be born into the faith is indeed a blessing. At times, however, we may think that our individual belief in God is sufficient to achieve salvation. This is an erroneous view, and in multiple places in the Qur'an¹, Allah (swt) desires to awaken us from our slumber, the above being one of them. Faith in Allah is the beginning of the road; strengthening our faith through trials and tribulations is what allows us to reach our destination. The Prophet (s) has said, "Truly Jannah is surrounded by adversities and truly the Fire is surrounded by desires."²

The above verse reminds us of the Sunnah of Allah (swt), which is to test His servants in order to strengthen them. Those in the past endured similar tests, and the purpose of Allah reminding us of them is to give us hope and to calm our hearts. Whether they survived the trials or gave their lives in preserving Islam, they were victorious.³

Sometimes the difficulties that come our way are from the outside—loss of wealth or position, war; at other times, the difficulties are from within—illness, injury, loss of loved ones. At times, the two come together to the point where we may be shaken to the core. If at that moment, we are still able **to remember Allah** (swt) and not compromise on our principles or capitulate to our enemies or hope in other than Allah, then we will be successful.

The Prophets of the past and their strong devotees never doubted the timing of Allah's help. When they asked, "When is the help of Allah?" it was a supplication to their Lord. When Prophet Mūsā (ʿa) found himself caught between water and fire (of war), and the weak hearted from his people articulated their doom, his calm response was "Certainly not! Indeed, my Lord is with me."⁴ God's assistance is always near those who are near God.

The Muslim Ummah has often faced challenges in the month of Ramaḍān, but Imam Ṣādiq (ʿa) has taught us a beautiful *duʿā* to recite during this month which includes the following lines: "And make me from among those through whom **You help** the religion, and do not substitute any other in my place."⁵ To "participate" in God's help on earth is one of the greatest achievements for any believer.

To ponder: What are the different manifestations (inner and outer) of the *naṣr Allah* (God's help) in our lives?

Discussion (with a scholar): What does it mean to "participate" in the acts of God?

References: Āyatullāh Jawādī Āmulī, *Tafsīr Tasnīm*, v. 10.

¹ 3:143, 9:16, 49:14

² *Bihār al-anwār*, v. 67, p. 78

³ 3:169

⁴ 26:62

⁵ *Al-Kāfi*, v. 4, p. 161