



The Fortress

26 رجب 1439
12.4.18



The surah is about protection. The word الحجر also means to deny, abandon or prohibit something for protection. This is the message of Surah Al-Hijr. The protection of Allah comes in ways we cannot imagine. None but Allah can protect your faith. Allah protects so many things by prohibiting them. The sky is protected because no one can touch it. The Qura'an is protected because no one can change it. When someone is sick, the doctor will prohibit some food and drink because it will harm him.

In life there are so many directions, so Allah has set boundaries for our protection. Allah protects the people of the Qura'an by making so many boundaries that there is no room to move. The baby in the womb of the mother is protected from all directions. All the boundaries are protection.

Ibrahim عليه السلام was protected when he received the glad tiding of a knowledgeable son, by being prevented from being deliriously happy. Instead, he wavered close to despair; excitement was denied to him.

Lut عليه السلام was with his people, advising them against the haram that they committed, but not one of them believed in him. So as a protection for him and his two daughters, Allah prepared him to abandon his nation. Allah protects us from ourselves. Lut عليه السلام

lived with them for many years, so he would have feelings for them, and would feel sorry for them when they faced the inevitable punishment. But the last incident which occurred with them removed any soft feelings which he would have had for them, and convinced him that they would not change. So when the decree came, he wouldn't have any feelings of pity and mercy for them. The last clash was the cutoff point.

The angels came to Lut عليه السلام with so much conformation, because he had to move out of his town, with his family, quietly, in the darkest part of the night, not in the day, when everyone would see him leave. This was also protection for him, because in the daytime, he would see his house, and be reluctant to leave. His real priority was his household. The greatest support you get is from your family. Lut عليه السلام was instructed to be behind his daily, guiding and protecting them, like a shepherd, and not to look back, or his heart would soften.

Submit to the will of Allah, leave the past, and embrace the future, it is always better. The decision of Allah was to abandon the people and the city. When you have to make a decision, and you make istikharah, Allah cuts one choice, so that you are guided to the best way. The decree is protection, taking you to the best direction, cutting all others. This needs belief.

And the people of the city came rejoicing.

وَجَاءَ أَهْلُ الْمَدِينَةِ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا امْرَأَتَ نُوحٍ وَامْرَأَتَ لُوطٍ كَانَتَا تَحْتَ عَبْدَيْنِ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا صَالِحِينَ فَخَانَتَاهُمَا فَلَمْ يَغْنِيَا عَنْهُمَا مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَقِيلَ ادْخُلَا النَّارَ مَعَ الدَّاخِلِينَ

Allah presents an example of those who disbelieved: the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot. They were under two of Our righteous servants but betrayed them, so those prophets did not avail them from Allah at all, and it was said, "Enter the Fire with those who enter."

سورة تحریم
66:10

This last incident took place at the house of Lut عليه السلام itself, making it more difficult. All previous altercations may have taken place in their clubs and bars. But this time, it was on his own property, his house, and involved his guests.

The three angels came in the form of handsome men, making the test all the more challenging. His wife was the one who alerted the townsmen to their presence, because she knew their inclination. The betrayal for Lut عليه السلام came from his own wife, when she exposed his secret and that of her own household. This is one of the reasons why she was included in the punishment. She encouraged them to sin, so she had to carry the burden of punishment too.

Lut عليه السلام never imagined that the danger would come from within his own household. This is like the munfiqeen, the hypocrites, who were a hidden danger within the ranks of the muslimeen. The hypocrisy within her heart was exposed.

The Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said :

أَيُّ الْمُنَافِقِ ثَلَاثٌ إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذِبًا، وَإِذَا وَعَدَ أَخْلَفَ، وَإِذَا أُؤْتِمِنَ خَانَ

The signs of a hypocrite are three: Whenever he speaks, he tells a lie; and whenever he promises, he breaks his promise; and whenever he is entrusted, he betrays.

صحيح البخاري ، حديث #6095

So the people of the town came to the house of Lut عليه السلام, rejoicing, telling each other, the news of the handsome men in his house.

The word used to describe their town is المدينة, a city. It was a modern and civilized metropolis, but

look at their moral fire. The news spread like a wildfire. This was the day before their destruction, and they were happy to receive the

news which fanned their corruption. The shaitan will deceive the people into believing that if Allah hadn't willed it, it wouldn't have happened. This makes the sin more approachable. They had received an invitation from He wife of Lut, the man who always forbade evil and advised them against it.

When the sin becomes easy, be ready for destruction. In the beginning, Allah makes the sin difficult and unapproachable, to discourage the person. But when he insists upon it, then Allah opens the doors of sin for them, and they sink deeper and deeper in the quagmire; this is الإستدراج, the protection is removed. This may seem like freedom, but it is destruction. To be able to do anything you want is not good.

[Lot] said : Indeed, these are my guests, so do not shame me.

قَالَ إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ ضَيْفِي فَلَا تَفْضَحُونِ ٦٨

Three intense punishments for one nation was very difficult, so Allah wanted to make it clear to their messenger that they deserved it. The men came to the guests of Lut عليه السلام, who were in reality angels, and they exceeded their boundaries and misbehaved with them in his own house, and this was too much for Lut عليه السلام to take. So he made it clear to them that these were his guests in his home, and they must be respected. He spoke to them logically, and from the point of view of acceptable manners and behaviour. One of the ways to honour guests is to protect them from harm. He warned them not to expose his weakness, that

قال إن هؤلاء ضيفي فلا تفضحون

فضح كشف مساوئه

he couldn't protect his guests. Imagine someone in your home as a guest, and someone comes and insults them; you won't stand for it.

And have taqwa from Allah and do not disgrace me.

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تَخْزُونِ ٦٩

Now he advised them from the point of deen, by telling them to put a barrier between them and the wrath of Allah, to make a boundary between the sin and themselves.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

O you who have believed, fear Allah as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims [in submission to Him].

سورة آل عمران

3:102

Taqwa is a precaution, putting yourself between a stone fortress for protection. The muttaqi can be recognized by the way he puts barriers between himself and his desires and behaviour. Be cautious only of Allah, not people. Make taqwa for the sake of Allah.

Lut عليه السلام didn't sin, but he felt humiliated by the behaviour of the people in front of his family and guests. If your children misbehave, you feel humiliated. Honour is

واتقوا الله ولا تخزون

شعور بالذل

when everyone recognizes their boundaries. When everyone in a country follow the rules, the country is honoured, when the majority misbehave and are disobedient, the country is humiliated. When you have taqwa you are honoured; when you follow your desires, you are humiliated.

They said : Have we not forbidden you from [protecting] people?

قَالُوا أَوْلَمْ نَنْهَكَ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾

قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأُزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

[Iblees] said, "My Lord, because You have put me in error, I will surely make [disobedience] attractive to them on earth, and I will mislead them all

سورة الحجر
15:39

The response of the people showed they were intoxicated by their desires. They had no respect for their messenger, and no guilt for their actions. So they attacked him, accusing him of being responsible for their sins by inviting these handsome men to his home when they had warned him to. They put themselves in a position of authority. This is like the shaitan when he accused Allah of misguiding him.

قالوا

أولم تنهك عالمين

ان تضيفهم

نمنعك

You cannot blame anyone else for your misconduct. You are responsible

for placing boundaries for yourself.

[Lot] said : These are my daughters - if you would be doers [of lawful marriage].

قَالَ هَؤُلَاءِ بَنَاتِي إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

قال هؤلاء بناتي ان كنتم فاعلين

شدة الامر عليه

Lut عليه السلام could see that they were uncontrollable, so he tried to offer them a halal alternative. This shows his desperation. So he offered them his daughters in marriage, even though these chaste girls didn't deserve these corrupt men as husbands. But as a last resort, he offered them so that they would desist their evil behaviour. This can only be done by a messenger. But these men didn't want these pure girls, they wanted to fulfill their corrupt desires.

The matter reached its maximum intensity, this was the end. Lut عليه السلام didn't have any mercy left for them in his heart any more.