

Fast 15: The Holy Prophet granted *Kauthar* or abundance of good

“¹Surely We have given you (O Prophet) abundance of good. ²So pray to your Lord and sacrifice. ³Surely your enemy is cut off (from good).”— ch. 108

إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ ۝ فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْحَرْ ۝
 إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ ۝

This is a very early revelation, addressed to the Holy Prophet. Like chapter 94 discussed in the last Study, this also was revealed when the Holy Prophet possessed nothing and was entirely helpless.

Verse 1: This verse states in the most certain and powerful terms that God has granted him *Al-kauthar*, which means *the abundance* or, in fact here, *the abundance of good*. Here it means *the abundance of good* which God gave the Holy Prophet — he was promised the triumph of Islam over all religions, and granted help against his enemies and intercession with God for his community. In fact, he was granted so much of goodness of all kinds that it cannot be counted. It was bestowed upon him in the greatest measure not granted to any mortal before or after him.

Some of the things he was granted abundantly were: both spiritual and worldly rule over a nation, honour and renown, devotion from his followers, nobility and refined culture, and the highest of morals. And the prophecy that he would be granted all this was made when he started his mission, was alone and helpless, and there was no visible prospect that he would make any headway at all.

Verse 2: This makes it clear that it is not the Holy Prophet alone who is promised this abundance of good but also every true follower of his who makes use of the means for the attainment of it. Two ways to attain the abundance of good promised in v. 1 are: *praying to God*, and *sacrifice* which means the devoting of one's life to the good of humanity.

Prayer is communion with God which raises in a person's heart the highest aspirations and makes him focus deeply on the attributes of God, which become his model to follow. If there is no aspiration for good, it is simply impossible to do good; hence prayer is mentioned first. And when these noble aspirations arise, a person should be willing to give or sacrifice his whole life for the service of humanity. That is not service of one group or one nation or one community, but humanity itself.

The Holy Prophet's life was the perfect example of prayer and sacrifice. As the following verse shows, his prayer and sacrifice occupied his entire life, even unto death. He is instructed in the Quran to declare to the world:

“My prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are surely for Allah, the Lord of the worlds — no partner has He. And this am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit.” — 6:162–163.

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ
 الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ۗ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ
 الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٦٣﴾

Through such a life, he becomes the first and foremost of those who submit to God, the one who is ahead of everyone else in submitting to God. This is the highest rank of being a Muslim.

Prayer and sacrifice are mutually bound together. When you utter the first *takbir* of prayer, you cut off all worldly connections, just like an animal which is sacrificed. For the prayer, you sacrifice your time, your desire to do other things, and even a little of your earning and livelihood. Then, once the prayer is over, for it to be perfect it requires sacrifice in your daily activities, otherwise you are merely uttering words of service to God in prayer and not carrying it out in practice. Similarly, sacrifice for its perfection requires prayer to beseech God that one’s actions of sacrifice may be accepted. They can only be accepted if the sacrifice was sincere, and not for show, for name and fame, or for other personal motive.

Verse 3: The word for “cut of” is *abtar*. It means a person or people from whom *all good* is cut off. They leave behind no good mention of them, there is no one to take their place, continue their work or follow their example. It is also applied to a person who leaves behind no progeny or successors.

This verse refuted the allegation of the opponents of the Holy Prophet that, as he had no male offspring, his name and mission would come to an end after him. The verse contains a prophecy that it is his enemies who would be cut off and leave no successors to continue their name or work. The Holy Prophet would be blessed with spiritual progeny till the Day of Judgment, as he has been granted “abundance of good”: he has *al-Kauthar* and is not *abtar*.

This, of course, proved true during the life of the Holy Prophet, when the next generation, who were descended from his enemies, did not follow in their fathers’ footsteps but instead became Muslims. The spiritual progeny of the Holy Prophet continues to exist till now, and if they work to present a true picture of Islam and its Prophet to the world then the next generation *of the present-day opponents of Islam* might become admirers and well-wishers of Islam.