

Sura Luqman (Chapter 31)

Verses 12 – 19

Objectives:

- ❖ The advice of Luqman to his son are a source of guidance in our daily lives
- ❖ Parents are a blessing and we need to respect them
- ❖ Imam Sajjad (AS) teaches us how to pray for our parents

Part I: Quranic Vocabulary:

(see handout)

Part II: Benefits of Reciting Sura Luqman:

Sura Luqman is the 31st Chapter of the Holy Quran and it has 34 verses.

The Holy Prophet (SAW) has said that whoever recites this sura during the night, Allah (SWT) will assign thirty angels to protect him from Iblis and his hosts till the morning, and if he recites it during the day, these angels will protect him from Iblis and his hosts till the night.

Part III: Topics for discussion:

a) The 15 advices:

From these verses (12 to 19) we note that Luqman gives valuable guidance to his son. These can be summarized as 15 important tools that can guide us in our day to day living:

- 1) Be grateful to Allah
- 2) Keep away from Shirk (polytheism)
- 3) To Allah is our return (remember death)
- 4) Be grateful to your parents (be thankful to them)
- 5) Be kind to your parents (show respect and obedience)
- 6) Follow the path of one who repents to Allah (meaning, such a person is sincere in his actions)
- 7) You are accountable for all of your acts
- 8) Establish prayer
- 9) Enjoin good
- 10) Forbid evil
- 11) Be patient
- 12) Do not be arrogant
- 13) Do not be boastful
- 14) Have a moderate lifestyle
- 15) Keep your voices low (be humble)

b) Who was Luqman:

The esteemed scholars Mir Ahmed Ali and Mirza Mahdi Pooya have written the following in their commentary of the Holy Quran:

Luqman, it is said, was not a prophet of Allah but was blessed with wisdom. He was the nephew of prophet Ayyub. He lived for one thousand years, from the time of Dawud to the time of Yunus. Once, when he was asleep, angels came and asked if he would like to be Allah's

deputy on the earth. To this, he replied that if it was a command from Allah, he would accept it, however, if Allah had asked his desire he would like to be excused because it was a great responsibility to dispense justice among men, and he could not bear the burden.

Another saying about Luqman is that he was an Ethiopian carpenter whom the Greeks called Aesop. He was a very obedient servant of the Lord, extremely pious and modest who mostly remained silent, engrossed in higher thoughts. His fear of sins was such that he never rejoiced over any gain nor grieved over any loss, even at the death of his children.

It is said that whenever he passed over any vegetation they used to disclose their respective properties latent in them. He used to visit Dawud and discuss with him complicated issues to find out their solution.

c) Parents are a blessing and we need to be obedient and take their guidance seriously:

In a beautiful saying (Number 38) extracted from Nahjul Balagha, Imam Ali (AS) gave the following guidance to Imam Hassan (AS). He says:

My son, learn four things from me and through them you will learn four more. If you keep them in your mind your actions will not bring any harm to you:

The greatest wealth is wisdom; the greatest poverty is stupidity; the worst imagination is that of vanity and self-glorification; and the best nobility of descent exhibits itself in politeness and in refinement of manner.

The next four things, my son, are: "Do not make friendship with a fool because when he will try to do you good he will do you harm; do not make a miser your friend because he will run away from you at the time of your dire need; do not be friendly with a vicious and wicked person because he will sell you and your friendship at the cheapest price and do not make friend of a liar because like a mirage he will make you visualize very near the things which lie at a great distance and will make you see at the great distance the things which are near to you".

Imam Ali (AS) in the above advice guides his son on what type of friends to choose and how we should lead our lives. This is typical of how our parents out of kindness and love share their wisdom with us. Many times in our lives, we see our parents going out of their way to teach us and give us guidance. They have experienced the difficulties of this life and as a result learnt many lessons. They share these with us in the hope that we do not make the same mistakes. This is an important element in our upbringing and we should not take it for granted.

We as children should cherish the time we have with our parents, because it would not be too long before they depart for the next world. While in their company, we should treat them with respect and be obedient to them. This is mentioned in Verses 14 and 15 of Sura Luqman.

d) What can we as children do for our parents:

Now that we know that the Holy Quran orders us to be kind to our parents, we have to make every effort to be obedient to them and pray for them. Imam Sajjad (AS) has the following to say about the Rights of our Parents upon us (as stated in Treatise on Rights also known as RISALAT AL-HUQUQ):

☉ *The right of your mother is that you know that she carried you where no one carries anyone, she gave to you of the fruit of her heart that which no one gives to anyone, and she protected you with all her organs. She did not care if she went hungry as long as you ate, if she was thirsty as long as you drank, if she was naked as long as you were clothed, if she was in the sun as long as you were in the shade. She gave up sleep for your sake, she protected you from heat and cold, all in order that you might belong to her. You will not be able to show her gratitude, unless through God's help and giving success.*

☉ *The right of your father is that you know that he is your root. Without him, you would not be. Whenever you see anything in yourself which pleases you, know that your father is the root of its blessing upon you. So praise God and thank Him in that measure. And there is no strength save in God.*

As stated in the words of the Imam, we cannot show gratitude to our parents except asking Allah to help us in returning the great sacrifice they have made for us. Hence, we should pray for them. This is a great responsibility since our connection with our parents does not break after their death.

Imam Sajjad has the following supplication (Dua No. 24 from Sahifa Sajjadiya also known as The Psalms of Islam) where he teaches us how to pray for our parents and emphasizes this responsibility (part of this dua is presented below):

*O God, single out my parents for honour with Thee and blessings from Thee,
O Most Merciful of the merciful!*

*O God, bless Muhammad and his Household, teach me through inspiration knowledge of
everything incumbent upon me toward them (my parents),*

*O God, fill me with awe of my parents, the awe one has toward a tyrannical sovereign, and let
me be devoted to them, with the devotion of a compassionate mother!
Make my obedience and devotion to them more gladdening to my eyes than sleep to the drowsy*

*O God, lower before them my voice, make agreeable to them my words, make mild before them
my temper, make tender toward them my heart, and turn me into their kind companion, their
loving friend!*

*O God, thank them for my upbringing, reward them for honouring me, and guard them as they
guarded me in my infancy!*

*(O God) and help me, O Best of those whose help we seek! Give me success, O Most Guiding
of those whom we beseech! Place me not among the people of disrespect to fathers and*

mothers on the day when every soul will be repaid for what it has earned, they shall not be wronged

O God, let me not forget to remember them after my ritual prayers, at every time throughout my night, and in each of the hours of my day!

O God, bless Muhammad and his Household, forgive me through my supplication for my parents, forgive them through their devotion toward me with unfailing forgiveness,

O God, if Thy forgiveness reaches them first, make them my intercessors, and if Thy forgiveness reaches me first, make me their intercessors, so that we may gather together through Thy gentleness in the house of Thy generosity and the place of Thy forgiveness and mercy!

Verily Thou art Possessor of abounding bounty and ancient kindness, and Thou art the Most Merciful of the merciful!

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ ۚ وَمَن يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ ۗ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ
 اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿١٢﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ ۖ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ رِيبُنِي لَّا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ
 لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٣﴾ وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصْلَهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ
 أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَىٰ الْمَصِيرِ ﴿١٤﴾ وَإِن جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَن تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ
 بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا ۗ وَصَاحِبَهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا ۗ وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَن أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ
 مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ يَبْنِيٰ إِنَّهَا إِن تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ
 فَتَكُن فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٦﴾ يَبْنِيٰ
 أَقِمِ الصَّلٰوةَ وَامْرًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَنَّهُ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأَصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَكَ ۚ إِنَّ ذٰلِكَ مِّنْ عَزْمِ
 الْأُمُورِ ﴿١٧﴾ وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ
 مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿١٨﴾ وَأَقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَأَغْضُضْ مِن صَوْتِكَ ۚ إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ
 الْحَمِيرِ ﴿١٩﴾

Translation of Sura Luqman (Chapter 31), Verses 12 - 19

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent and the Merciful:

[12] And certainly We gave wisdom to Luqman, saying: Be grateful to Allah. And whoever is grateful, he is only grateful for his own soul; and whoever is ungrateful, then surely Allah is Self-sufficient, Praised.

[13] And when Luqman said to his son while he admonished him: O my son! do not associate aught with Allah; most surely polytheism is a grievous iniquity—

[14] And We have enjoined man in respect of his parents-- his mother bears him with faintings upon faintings and his weaning takes two years-- saying: Be grateful to Me and to both your parents; to Me is the eventual coming.

[15] And if they contend with you that you should associate with Me what you have no knowledge of, do not obey them, and keep company with them in this world kindly, and follow the way of him who turns to Me, then to Me is your return, then will I inform you of what you did—

[16] O my son! surely if it is the very weight of the grain of a mustard-seed, even though it is in (the heart of) rock, or (high above) in the heaven or (deep down) in the earth, Allah will bring it (to light); surely Allah is Knower of subtleties, Aware;

[17] O my son! keep up prayer and enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and bear patiently that which befalls you; surely these acts require courage;

[18] And do not turn your face away from people in contempt, nor go about in the land exulting overmuch; surely Allah does not love any self-conceited boaster;

[19] And pursue the right course in your going about and lower your voice; surely the most hateful of voices is braying of the asses.