

Lesson 13: THE PROPHETS AND MESSENGERS OF ALLAH سبحانه وتعالى

Allah سبحانه وتعالى says in the Qur'an:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾

We have not created the Jinns and humans except to worship us.

(Al-Zariyat 51:56)

To worship Allah سبحانه وتعالى means to believe in *Tawhid*; that He is One, and no one is like Him. He is the Creator and Lord of everyone, and no one shares His power. Worshipping Him also means to follow His *Shariah* (Islamic laws, rules and regulations) and lead our lives according to His Will.

How can human beings know what *Tawhid* is, and what His Will is? Allah سبحانه وتعالى, in His Kindness, has sent many prophets (*Anbiya*) and messengers (*Rusul*) to lead humanity to success in the hereafter.

A prophet (*Nabi*) is a human being chosen by Allah سبحانه وتعالى to receive His message and deliver it to human beings. A prophet is not an angel, *Jinn* or other non-human creature. He is an ordinary human being, a servant of Allah سبحانه وتعالى, whom Allah سبحانه وتعالى chooses for His divine purpose.

One cannot choose to be a prophet, it is a gift of Allah سبحانه وتعالى that he has given to whomsoever He wishes. A prophet is not required to have any special qualifications, family background or social connections. Only Allah's سبحانه وتعالى decision ordains a particular individual a prophet, and only He knows the reasons for His choice.

Allah سبحانه وتعالى sent His prophets to enlighten people all over the world. All of the prophets brought the same message:

- Worship no one but one God
- Do not commit *Shirk* by accepting partners with Him.
- Do not commit *Kufr* by denying His favors to humanity.
- Follow his religion of submission, Islam.
- Lead a moral life according to the divine guidance.

- Prepare yourself for the *Akhirah*, you will be judges for actions committed in this world.

Thus, the message of Allah **سبحانه وتعالى** reached all the people and Allah left no people or nations without His guidance. Yet, humans have a tendency to become forgetful, and if they are not vigilant, they lose their way. Sometimes, the believers were ruled by evil people who, for their personal interest, changed these pure teachings of Islam. They introduced *Shirk* (hypocrisy) and *Kufr* (disbelief) among the people. They made rules to suit their own needs, instead of adhering to the authentic rules of *Shariah*.

For centuries, Allah **سبحانه وتعالى** kept sending his prophets to lead humanity back to the right path. According to a tradition of the Prophet **صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ**, over one hundred thousand prophets came to this world. We know some of their stories. However, there are many prophets that we know very little besides their name. And still there were others of whom no record remains (Qur'an 4:164). There are twenty-five prophets mentioned by name in the Qur'an: Adam, Nuh, Salih, Shu'aib, Hud, Ibrahim, Lut, Isma'il, Ishaq, Ya'qub, Yusuf, Yunus, Musa, Harun, Ayyub, Da'ud, Sulaiman, Ilyas, Al-Yas'a, Dhul-Kifl, Idris, Zakariyyah, Yahya, 'Isa, and of course, Muhammad **صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ**.

A Muslim must believe and respect all the prophets. The Qur'an says:

ءَامَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ ۚ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ
وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ ۚ وَكُتُبِهِ ۚ وَرُسُلِهِ ۚ لَا تَفْرُقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ ۚ وَقَالُوا
سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۚ غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ

The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to Him from His Lord, as do the believers. Each one of them believes, in Allah, and His angels, and His books and His prophets. We make no distinction between one and another of His messengers. And they say we hear and we obey. We seek your forgiveness our Lord, and to you is the end of all journeys.

(Al Baqarah 2:285)