

Fast 13: God's extensive favours to all human beings

- The creation of man is thus spoken of in the Quran in chapter 32:

“(6) Such is the Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Mighty, the Merciful, (7) Who made beautiful everything that He created, and He began the creation of man from dust. (8) Then He made his progeny of an extract, of worthless seeming water. (9) Then He made him complete and breathed into him of His spirit, and gave you ears and eyes and hearts; **little thanks you give!**” (32:6–9)

ذٰلِكَ عَلِيْمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْعَزِيْزُ
 الرَّحِيْمُ الَّذِيْ اَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ وَ
 بَدَا خَلْقَ الْاِنْسَانِ مِنْ طِيْنٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ
 نَسْلَهُ مِنْ سُلٰلَةٍ مِنْ مَّاءٍ مَّهِيْنٍ ثُمَّ
 سَوَّاهُ وَنَفَخَ فِيْهِ مِنْ رُّوْحِهِ وَجَعَلَ
 لَكُمْ السَّمْعَ وَالْاَبْصَارَ وَالْاَفْئِدَةَ
 قَلِيْلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُوْنَ

In His creation God displayed not only His power and might of creation but also his **mercy** (verse 6). God being Merciful, or *Rahīm*, created man as a mark or sign of this attribute, and in order to manifest His mercy in the world. So man is not a curse for this world and planet, despite his destructive behaviour, but a manifestation of mercy.

Man's creation from dust (v. 7) does not mean, as many thought traditionally, that God cast in clay the figure of a complete human form and then breathed life into it and it became a real physical human being, called Adam. Verse 9 clearly gives us to understand that it happens to every human being that God makes him complete and breathes His spirit into him.

Beginning man's creation from “dust”, if taken physically, means that his life originated from elements that are in the earth. If taken metaphorically, it means that man is created with humbleness in his nature and the inclination to submit to God.

Verse 8 points man to the origin of each and every individual: a drop of semen which looks to have no worth or value. And, as verse 9 says, it becomes a full-fledged human being who can hear, see, feel and think. He is granted the power to obtain knowledge through these senses, and then to analyse that knowledge and draw conclusions from it and make decisions by means of his brain. “Little thanks you give” means that man fails to use these faculties for his full development. There are:

- Those who blindly follow and obey others, and refuse to use their own intelligence.
- Those who deny education to themselves, or those who, while having the power in the country, fail to make education accessible to the masses.

— Those who, while they acquire great knowledge of the material world, ignore completely the spirit that has been breathed into man for moral and spiritual development, and care not to read or learn about the guidance sent by God.

- As every human being, man or woman, has the Divine spirit breathed into him, and has been given the senses of hearing and sight to gather information, and a brain and mind to process it and reach a conclusion, it means that **the most basic human right** of any person, as envisaged by Islam, is **to use his own senses and to make up his own mind**.
- Allah’s mercy and favours are granted to all, even to those who choose to reject the message sent by Allah:

“Whatever Allah grants to humans of (His) mercy, there is none to withhold it, and what He withholds, none can grant thereafter. ...

O people, call to mind the favour of Allah to you. Is there any Creator besides Allah who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? There is no God but He. How are you then turned away (from truth)!” (35:2,3)

مَا يَفْتَحِ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ رَحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا وَمَا يُمْسِكُ فَلَا مُرْسِلَ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ هَلْ مِنْ خَالِقٍ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَأَنَّى تُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٣﴾

The passage goes on, in 35:4, to mention those who reject the message of the Prophet Muhammad. While Allah has had mercy on them and granted them His favours in the form of the provisions they benefit from, they choose to reject His spiritual bounties.

- In one place the Quran mentions the one who aims for “this transitory life” and Allah grants him his desires, but he loses in the Hereafter and has no share of spiritual life. It then mentions the one who desires spiritual good, and is rewarded amply. It then says:

“All do We aid — these as well as those — out of the bounty of your Lord, and the bounty of your Lord is not limited.” (17:20)

كُلًّا نُمِدُّ هُوْلَاءَ وَهَؤُلَاءَ مِنْ عَطَاءِ رَبِّكَ وَ مَا كَانَ عَطَاءُ رَبِّكَ مَحْظُورًا

The unbeliever is also aided by God in his striving, which might only be for material gain. The bounty of God is “not limited” to some particular section of mankind.