118139 - Commentary on the verse in which Allaah says: “Verily, Allaah will not change the (good) condition of a people as long as they do not change their state (of goodness) themselves (by committing sins and by being ungrateful and disobedient to Allaah)” [al-Ra’d 13:11]

the question

What is the meaning of the words of Allaah, may He be blessed and exalted, in Soorat al-Ra’d (interpretation of the meaning): “Verily, Allaah will not change the (good) condition of a people as long as they do not change their state (of goodness) themselves (by committing sins and by being ungrateful and disobedient to Allaah)” [al-Ra’d 13:11]?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

This is an important verse which indicates that Allaah, may He be blessed and exalted, in His perfect justice and wisdom does not change the condition of the people from good to bad or from bad to good, from ease to hardship or from hardship to ease, unless they change their condition themselves. So if they are in a state of righteousness and goodness and they change, Allaah will change things for them with punishment, calamities, hardship, drought, famine, disunity and other kinds of punishments as appropriate requital. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): “And your Lord is not at all unjust to (His) slaves” [Fussilat 41:46].

Or He may give them respite and give them time so that they might turn to the right path, but if they do not then they will be seized unexpectedly, as He says (interpretation of the meaning): “So, when they forgot (the warning) with which they had been reminded, We opened for them the gates of every (pleasant) thing, until in the midst of their enjoyment in that which they were given, all of a sudden, We took them (in punishment), and lo! They were plunged into destruction with

deep regrets and sorrows” [al-An’aam 6:44]., meaning despairing of all goodness -- we seek refuge in Allaah from the punishment and wrath of Allaah. Or they may be given respite until the Day of Resurrection, when their punishment will be more severe, as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Consider not that Allaah is unaware of that which the Zâlimûn (polytheists, wrongdoers) do, but He gives them respite up to a Day when the eyes will stare in horror”[Ibraaheem 14:42], meaning that they are given respite until after death, and that will be a greater and more severe punishment.

Or they may be in a state of evil and sin, then they repent to Allaah and turn back to Him, and they regret their sins and adhere to obedience, so Allaah changes their state of wretchedness, hardship and poverty to ease, unity and righteousness because of their good deeds and their repentance to Allaah, may He be glorified and exalted. It says in another verse (interpretation of the meaning): “That is so because Allaah will never change a grace which He has bestowed on a people until they change what is in their ownselves” [al-Anfaal 8:53]. This verse tells us that if they are in a state of ease, comfort and goodness, then they change and turn to sin, their situation will be changed -- there is no power and no strength except with Allaah -- or they may be given respite, as stated above. The opposite is also true: if they were in a state of evil and sin, or disbelief and misguidance, then they repent, regret their sin and adhere to obedience to Allaah, Allaah will change their situation from bad to good; He will change their disunity into unity and harmony; He will change their hardship to ease, well being and plenty; He will change their situation from draught, famine, , lack of water and so on to rainfall, fertile land and other kinds of goodness. End quote.