

# Al-Maidah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## Introduction

This is the last of the first group of *Madinan* surahs which started from surah *Al-Baqarah*. Some Scholars believe that it was revealed in 6 A.H, while others identify it as one of the last surahs to be revealed, as it is reported by Al-Hakim that Jubayr bin Nufayr said: *"I performed Hajj once and visited Aishah (RA) and she said to me, "O Jubayr! Do you read Al-Maidah" I answered "Yes." She said: "It was the last surah to be revealed. Therefore, whatever permissible matters you find in it, then consider them permissible. And whatever impermissible matters you find in it, then consider them impermissible."*<sup>1</sup> Like surah *An-Nisa*, surah *Al-Maidah* also carries instructions for the consolidation of an Islamic Community and secondary injunctions mostly related to dealings and contracts. The Muslims have been directed to fulfill their obligations that Allah (SWT) has ordained for them and they have been admonished over and over again to be just and not to follow the wrong behavior of their predecessors i.e. the People of the Book. They are further enjoined to remain steadfast to the Covenant that they had made with Allah (SWT) and be obedient to Him. The *People of the Book* have also been admonished to give up their evil behavior and accept the guidance and the truth revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

(1) *"O you who believe! Fulfill and be true to your obligations."* The Arabic word 'Aqd' literally means tying together. Here all types of covenants, agreements, promises and treaties are meant whether between man and Allah (SWT) or His prophets, or between human beings. Thus Allah (SWT) commands His servants to fulfill all their covenants and treaties, made with Him i.e. refrain from what He has prohibited and take what He has permitted, with His Prophets i.e. to have faith in them and follow them, and those made with their fellow beings, i.e. contracts which bind two persons, two groups or parties. *"Lawful to you (for food) are all the quadruped cattle except that which will be announced to you"* These are the first instructions given concerning the lawful and unlawful food. All four-legged animals like camels, cows and sheep are made lawful by Allah (SWT) except for those prohibited in the *Qur'an* and the *Ahadith* of the Prophet (SAW). Thus believers must eat from the animals that

Allah (SWT) has made lawful for them to eat. Similarly, they should abstain from eating those animals which He has declared unlawful. This is because Allah (SWT) knows what is better for His creatures and what can cause them harm, as He is the one who has created them all and makes what is good and pure lawful for them and only forbids unclean and impure animals that may be harmful for them. *“But hunting is unlawful when you wear Ihram for pilgrimage.”* i.e. even those animals which are lawful to eat in normal circumstances become unlawful to hunt in the state of Ihram. *“Verily, Allah (SWT) commands that which He wills.”* i.e. from His infinite knowledge, He knows what is better for His creatures, so it is better for them to obey Him in all that He has commanded and refrain from what He has prohibited.

(2) *“O you who believe! Violate not the sanctity of the rites of Allah (SWT), nor of the Sacred Month.”* *Sha’air* or symbols of Allah (SWT) refers to signs or marks by which something is known to belong to some particular person or a group of persons, like *Safa* and *Marwa* and the station of Abraham (AS), which have been described as the signs of Allah (SWT) in surah *Al-Baqarah*. Thus respect or honor towards anything which stimulates the remembrance of Allah (SWT) is a symbol or a sign. In this *ayah* the symbols of Allah (SWT) refer to the rituals of *Hajj* (pilgrimage). Further Allah (SWT) commands the believers not to violate the sanctity of the Sacred month (*Dhul-Hijjah*) by refraining from what He has prohibited in them e.g. killing and fighting. *“Nor of the animals brought for sacrifice, nor the garlanded animals, etc.”* Allah (SWT) commands the Muslims not to prevent others from bringing their animals to the Sacred House for sacrifice, with garlands in their necks to mark them out as sacred. *“Nor the people coming to the Sacred House, seeking the bounty and good pleasure of their Lord.”* i.e. do not prevent the pilgrims from entering the Sacred House of Allah (SWT), nor stop those who are heading towards the Sacred House to seek the grace and good pleasure of their Lord. *“But when you finish the Ihram, you may hunt”* Permission is being given for hunting once a pilgrim comes out of the state of Ihram. *“And let not the hatred of some people, who (once) hindered you from the Sacred Mosque, lead you to transgression.”* The *Quraysh* prevented the Muslims from reaching the Sacred House for pilgrimage at the event of *Hudaybiyah*. Thus the Muslims returned to *Madinah* with increase in their

anger and enmity towards the *Quraysh*. But now when Allah (SWT) has given the Muslims power over the *Quraysh*, He commands them not to take revenge for what happened in the past and that their hatred for them should not make them transgress Allah's limits and thus turn them away from justice. *"Help one another in righteousness and piety; but do not help one another in sin and transgression."* This is the spirit of justice and righteousness i.e. helping one another in piety and virtue but not assisting each other in sin and transgression. *"And fear Allah (SWT). Verily, Allah (SWT) is Severe in punishment."* Although He is the Most-Gracious and the Most-Merciful, He is also severe in punishment for those who transgress His limits. Have fear of Allah, for He is stern in retribution.

(3) *"Forbidden to you are: the dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and the meat of that which has been invoked the name of other than Allah (SWT), and that which has been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by the goring of horns, and that which has been (partly) eaten by a wild animal unless you are able to slaughter it"* In this *ayah* Allah (SWT) commands His servants to refrain from eating those animals that are made unlawful herein. The first is a dead animal who die before they are slaughtered but dead animals of the sea are excluded from the ruling as we have already explained in *ayah* 173 of *Al-Baqarah*. Second is the blood and the flesh of swine whether it is slaughtered or not. Third are those offerings that are sacrificed in the name of other than Allah (SWT) or they have been slaughtered for idols etc. Other animals that have been made unlawful to eat are those who have been strangled to death or died with a violent blow or have fallen from a high place and died. Another in the category of animals made unlawful is the gored and those which have been killed by wild beasts, unless one finds it alive and slaughters it before it dies. *"And that which is sacrificed on stone altars."* The altar refers to slabs of rocks placed around the *Ka'bah*, which the people of ignorance took as objects of worship. They named them after their *gods* and they would bring animals near the altars and sacrifice them dedicated to these gods. But Allah (SWT) declared such practices as a type of *Shirk* and forbade the believers from it. *"(Forbidden) also is the decision by raffling of arrows."* The Arabs during the time of ignorance used to draw arrows for making a decision or for the distribution of the meat amongst themselves. But Allah (SWT) forbade such practice for

the believers. *"All these are sinful acts."* This refers to all the prohibitions mentioned in this *ayah*. *"This day, those who disbelieved have given up all hope of your religion, so fear them not, but fear Me."* After the conquest of *Makkah* and almost all of the Arabia, Islamic law prevailed all over the Peninsula. Thereupon, because of the increase in strength and success of the Muslims, the disbelievers had lost all hope in eliminating Islam or its followers. Thus Allah (SWT) commands the Muslims not to fear them, but instead should fear Allah (SWT) alone i.e. follow His commandments. *"This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion."* This *ayah* was revealed on the day of *Arafat* of the Last *Hajj* of the Holy Prophet (SAW), in the tenth year of *Hijrah*. On that great day the divine blessing and true faith which was to be bequeathed to all human beings in this world, beginning from Prophet Adam (AS) had reached its perfection with the Final Messenger, Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Thus, there is now no need of a new religion or any other Prophet to be sent after Prophet Muhammad (SAW). *"But as for him who is forced by severe hunger, with no inclination to sin, then surely, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."* According to this *ayah*, it is permissible for a person to take any of the things prohibited by Allah (SWT) in cases of extreme necessity, provided that he only consumes that much amount which is necessary for his survival, and he himself is not inclined to eat what is prohibited. If such is the case then surely Allah (SWT) will forgive him. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

(4) *"They ask you what is lawful for them. Say: "All good and pure things are lawful for you. And those beasts and birds of prey which you have trained as hounds, training and teaching them (to catch) in the manner as directed to you by Allah (SWT); so eat of what they catch for you, but pronounce the Name of Allah (SWT) over it"* Some of the Companions of the Holy Prophet (SAW) asked him questions regarding lawful food and the permissibility of training beasts like dogs for hunting purposes. This *ayah* gives an answer to that question. Allah (SWT) clarifies that all pure things that have been mentioned herein are lawful for the Muslims to eat. Secondly, Allah (SWT) gives permission to train one's beasts like dogs or falcons to hunt an animal for them, if the following conditions are met. First is that the beasts should be trained according to the manner

directed by Allah (SWT) i.e. it should be trained in such a manner that when it catches the prey for you, it brings it back to you and does not start eating it. The second condition is that when you release the dog or the falcon after the game, mention the name of Allah (SWT) over it. If these conditions are met then it becomes lawful to eat and there is no need to slaughter the animal caught. *"And fear Allah (SWT). Verily, Allah (SWT) is Swift in reckoning."* i.e. be mindful of your duty to Allah (SWT) and take whatever He has made permissible for you, but refrain from what He has prohibited. Surely, He is swift in taking account of your deeds.

(5) *"Made lawful to you this day are all good and pure things."* i.e. all kinds of lawful foods Allah (SWT) has made permissible to eat e.g. meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits, etc. *"And the food of the people of the Book is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them."* The meat slaughtered by the *Jews* and the *Christians* has been made lawful for the Muslims, provided that it is of an animal that Allah (SWT) had made lawful. Similarly the meat slaughtered by the Muslims can also be presented to the People of the Book. *"(Lawful to you in marriage) are chaste women from the believers and chaste women from those who were given the Book before your time, when you have given their dowry, desiring chastity neither committing fornication, nor taking them as mistresses."* Allah (SWT) has made it lawful for the Muslims to marry chaste women amongst the believers as well as amongst the People of the Book, provided that they pay their dowry and live in honour with them i.e. their intention is not to commit fornication or keep them as secret concubines. *"And whosoever rejects faith, then fruitless is his work, and in the Hereafter he will be among the losers."* i.e. whoever disbelieves in the Oneness of Allah (SWT) and in all the other articles of Faith, then all of their deeds will be in vain and in the Hereafter he will be amongst the losers.

(6) *"O you who believe! When you intend to offer the prayer, wash your faces and your hands (forearms) up to the elbows, rub your heads, and (wash) your feet up to ankles."* In this *ayah* Allah (SWT) commands the believers to perform ablution before they pray. Before the start of ablution it is prescribed to make an intention and say *Bismillah* (In the name of Allah (SWT)). Then one should start his ablution

by washing his hands and his face. Then he should wash his forearms up to his elbows. Then he should take some water in his palm and rub his head. In the end he should wash his feet up to his ankles. *"If you are in a state of impurity, purify yourself."* This *ayah* commands the Muslims to take a bath and cleanse themselves when in a state of conjugal impurity. *"But if you are ill or on a journey or any of you comes from answering the call of nature, or you have been in contact with women and you find no water, then take clean earth and rub therewith your faces and hands."* This *ayah* has already been commented upon in *ayah* 43 of surah *An-Nisa*. *"Allah (SWT) does not want to place you in difficulty, but He wants to purify you, and to complete His Favor on you that you may be thankful."* Allah (SWT) does not burden any human being with more than he can bear. Thus He makes things easier for His servants, purifies them and bestows His blessings on them, so that they may show gratefulness.

(7) *"And remember Allah's favor upon you and His Covenant with which He bound you when you said: 'We hear and we obey.'"* This *ayah* reminds the Muslims of the blessings of Allah (SWT) and the covenant which He took from them to obey His commandments and follow His Messenger, when they said *"we hear and we obey."* *"And fear Allah (SWT). Verily, Allah (SWT) knows the secrets of your hearts."* i.e. be mindful of Allah (SWT) Who knows those who fulfill their covenants and those who turn away. Have fear of Allah (SWT). He knows of those (thoughts) in your hearts.

(8) *"O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah (SWT) and be just witnesses and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice."* Allah (SWT) commands the Muslims to maintain justice and forbids them not to let enmity and hatred of others incite them to do injustice. Rather they are commanded to fight against injustice and tyranny and bear witness for Allah (SWT) i.e. say the truth whenever a testimony is needed. *"Be just: that is nearer to piety, and fear Allah (SWT). Verily, Allah (SWT) is Well-Acquainted with what you do."* Again Allah (SWT) states that piety and righteousness is much better than abandoning justice. And fear Him alone, as He is well aware of all your actions.

(9) *“Allah (SWT) has promised those who believe and do deeds of righteousness, that for them there is forgiveness and a great reward.”* Those who believed in Allah (SWT) and His Messengers and did righteous deeds, will have their sins forgiven and will be admitted into Paradise.

(10) *“They who disbelieve and deny our ayat are those who will be the dwellers of the Hellfire.”* On the other hand, those who disbelieved in Allah (SWT) and His revelations will be thrown into the Hellfire.

(11) *“O you who believe! Remember the favor of Allah (SWT) unto you when some people desired to stretch out their hands against you, but (Allah (SWT)) withheld their hands from you.”* After the battle of the trench the enemies of Islam stretched their hands again and again against Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his followers, especially at the time of treaty of *Hudaybiyah*. But Allah (SWT) bestowed His favor upon the Muslims and His Messenger (SAW) and restrained their hands from them and made the disbelievers powerless. *“So fear Allah (SWT). And in Allah (SWT) let believers put their trust.”* Allah (SWT) commands the believers to fear Him alone and put their whole trust in Him. For if they do so, then Allah (SWT) will surely help them and protect them against the disbelievers.

(12) *“Indeed Allah (SWT) took the covenant from the Children of Israel, and We appointed twelve leaders among them.”* This refers to the covenant that Allah (SWT) took from the *Children of Israel* that they will follow Allah’s revelations and will obey Him and all His Messengers. For this purpose Allah (SWT) appointed twelve leaders amongst them, one from each tribe who took this pledge. Similarly, the number of leaders appointed by the Prophet (SAW) was also twelve, when he took pledge from the *Ansar* in *Madinah*, with three people from the tribe of *Aws* and nine from the tribe of *Khazraj*. *“And Allah (SWT) said: “I am with you if you establish regular prayers and give the obligatory charity and believe in My Messengers; honor and assist them, and lend to Allah (SWT) a good loan. Verily, I will remit your sins and admit you to Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise).”*” After the covenant, Allah (SWT) assured them His support and help if they establish regular prayers, pay their regular obligatory charity and not only believe in His Messengers, but also support them in establishing Allah’s *Deen*, and spend

generously in its cause. Whoever does this then Allah (SWT) will forgive his sins and admit him in Paradise. *"But if any of you after this, disbelieved, he has indeed gone astray from the Straight Path."* On the contrary, those who break their covenant have surely strayed from the right path.

(13) *"So because of the breach of their covenant, We cursed them, and made their hearts grow hard. They change the words from their (right) places and have abandoned a good part of the Message that was sent to them."* Allah (SWT) says that He cursed the Children of Israel and made their hearts so that they do not heed any advice. This was a punishment because they distorted His revelations and neglected much of what they were enjoined. *"And you will not cease to discover deceit in them, except a few of them. But forgive them, and overlook."* i.e. they always try to deceive the Muslims and make plots against them, but Allah (SWT) encourages His believers to forgive them and overlook their misdeeds. *"Verily, Allah loves good-doers"*. Allah (SWT) loves those who do good.

(14) *"And from those who call themselves Christians, We took their covenant, but they have abandoned a good part of the Message that was sent to them. So We planted amongst them enmity and hatred till the Day of Resurrection, and Allah will inform them of what they used to do."* This refers to the covenant that Allah (SWT) made with the disciples of Jesus (AS) that whenever He sends His Last Prophet (SAW), they would follow him and support him. But they also broke the covenant and neglected much of what they were enjoined, discarding Allah's Book and disobeying His Prophet (SAW). This is why as a punishment Allah (SWT) stirred among them enmity and hatred for each other, which will last till the *Day of Judgment* when Allah will declare to them all that they have done.

(15) *"O people of the Book! Now Our Messenger (SAW) has come to you revealing to you much of that which you used to hide from the Book and passing over much."* The Jews and the Christians used to conceal and distort the true teachings of the Books given to their Prophets. Then Allah (SWT) sent His Last Messenger (SAW) explaining to them the true teachings that they used to hide and guiding them to the truth. *"Indeed, there has come to you from Allah (SWT) a light and a plain*

*Book.*" Here the light refers to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) i.e. the light of guidance, and the Book refers to this *Qur'an*.

(16) *"Wherewith Allah (SWT) guides all those who seek His Good Pleasure to ways of peace, and He brings them out of darkness by His Will unto light and guides them to a Straight Way."* i.e. with this light and Book, Allah (SWT) guides those who seek His pleasure to the ways of peace. And He brings them out of the darkness of disbelief and evil into the light of truth. As mentioned earlier in ayah 257 of surah *Al-Baqarah*, the light is always mentioned in a singular form while the darkness in the plural, because disbelief comes in different shades of evil and sin while there is only one truth.

(17) *"Surely, in disbelief are they who say that Allah (SWT) is the Messiah, son of Mary (AS). Say: "Who then has the least power against Allah (SWT), if He were to destroy the Messiah, son of Mary (AS), his mother, and all those who are on the earth?" And to Allah (SWT) belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them. He creates what He wills. And Allah (SWT) is Able to do all things."* Although all the Prophets of Allah (SWT) have a very high status and are the most honored, yet they are but men and creations of Allah (SWT). Christians claim that Jesus (AS) is God incarnate, but Allah (SWT) refutes them in this *ayah* and reminds them of His Sovereignty and that He is the Creator of everything, even Jesus (AS) and all other creatures. And He is able to do whatever He Wills. Thus, if He were to destroy Jesus (AS), or His mother or anyone else, then there is no one who can stop Him or prevent Him from doing that. He creates what He wills and has power over all things.

(18) *"And the Jews and the Christians say: "We are the children of Allah (SWT) and His loved ones." Say: "Why then does He punish you for your sins?"*" The *Jews* and the *Christians* thought of themselves as the chosen ones and they say they are the children of Allah (SWT). But Allah (SWT) commands His Prophet (SAW) to ask them that if you really are true in your claims that you are His loved ones then why does He punish you and make you suffer for your crimes. *"Nay, you are but human beings, of those He has created, He forgives whom He wills and He punishes whom He wills."* i.e. you are no different than the rest of His creations,

thus your being *Jews* or *Christians* does not make you immune from His punishment; rather He punishes whom He Wills and He forgives whom He wills. *“And to Allah (SWT) belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, and to Him is the return (of all).”* i.e. everything is under His Supreme control and power and everything is eventually going to return to him. He has control over the heavens and the earth and all that lies between them. And all shall return to Him.

#### **Foot Notes**

[1] Al-Hakim 2 : 311, who said, "It is Sahih according to the criteria of the two Shaikhs (Bukhari and Muslim) and they did not record it."

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

(19) *"O people of the Book! Now has come to you Our Messenger (SAW) making (things) clear unto you, after a break in Messengers, lest you say: "There came unto us no bringer of glad tidings and no Warner" But now has come unto you a bringer of glad tidings and a Warner."* There has not been a time period when Allah (SWT) did not send His Messengers to mankind up till Prophet Jesus (AS). Then He sent His Last Prophet (SAW), after whom there will be no Prophet or Messenger, who came after a long break in the series of Prophets between him and Jesus (AS). This interval between the time of Jesus (AS) and the time of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is known as *Fatrah*. Allah (SWT) sent His Final Prophet (SAW), so that on the *Day of Judgment* people should not be able to give an excuse for their not following Islamic Monotheism and say that no one came to give us good news or warn us. Thus the Final Messenger (SAW) came to them as one who brought good tidings for the believers and as a Warner from evil. *"And Allah is Able to do all things."* Allah has power all things.

(20) *"And (remember) when Moses (AS) said to his people: "O my people! Remember the Favor of Allah (SWT) to you, when He made Prophets among you, made you kings, and gave you what He had not given to any other among the mankind." "* There was a continuous chain of Prophets sent to the *Children of Israel*. He bestowed on them His blessings, made them kings and gave them kingdoms which were never given to anyone of His creatures but they neglected His Prophets and rejected them. Thus because of their evil deeds and disobedience, there came a time when there was no Prophet among them and Allah (SWT) made their enemies overwhelm them, who captured many of them, killed them and took possession of their lands.

(21) *"O my people! Enter the holy land which Allah (SWT) has assigned to you, and turn not back (in flight) for then you will be returned as losers." "* Allah (SWT) directed His Prophet Moses (AS) to lead the Children of Israel to the Promised Land i.e. Palestine, which had been promised to Abraham (AS) as a land in which the pious and Allah-fearing of his offspring would live and uphold Allah's law. Thus Moses (AS) commanded His people to enter the holy land and recapture

it from their enemies; otherwise they themselves will be the losers in the sight of Allah (SWT).

(22) *"They said: "O Moses (AS)! In it are a people of great strength, and we shall never enter it, till they leave it; when they leave, then we will enter."* The Children of Israel refused to enter the Promised Land and gave excuses that our enemy is strong and vicious and more powerful than us. And therefore we will never be able to defeat them and we will only enter this city, when they leave.

(23) *"Two Allah-fearing men among them on whom Allah (SWT) had bestowed His Grace said: "Assault them through the gate, for when you are in, victory will be yours, and put your trust in Allah (SWT) if you are believers indeed."* The Children of Israel were six thousand strong but still there was no one amongst them who agreed to fight for Allah's cause except for two pious, Allah-fearing men. They were Joshua and Caleb. They encouraged their people to go forward and fight in Allah's cause, and they said to them that if you obey Allah (SWT) and follow His commandments then surely He will help you and make you victorious over your enemies.

(24) *"They said: "O Moses (AS)! We shall never enter it as long as they are there. So go you and your Lord and fight, we are sitting right here."* The Children of Israel showed cowardice and refused to fight their enemy. They rebelled against Allah's commandments and committed blasphemy to such an extent that they replied to Moses (AS) that you and your Lord fight yourself with the enemies and we are not going to join you.

(25) *"He said: "O my Lord! I have power only over myself and my brother, so separate us from these rebellious people!"* After the Children of Israel disobeyed Allah's commandments and refused to fight, Moses (AS) invoked Allah (SWT) against them and supplicated to Him to separate him and his brother Aaron (AS) from these disobedient people.

(26) *"Allah (SWT) said: "Therefore it is forbidden to them for forty years; in distraction they will wander through the land. So be not sorrowful over these rebellious people.""* This refers to the exodus of the *Children of Israel*. As a punishment for their cowardice Allah (SWT) let them wander homeless in the desert for forty years till one full generation of Israelites died and was replaced by a new generation brought up in the tough conditions of the desert life.

(27) *"And recite to them (the Jews) the story of the two sons of Adam in truth; when each offered a sacrifice, it was accepted from the one but not from the other. The latter said to the former: "I will surely kill you." The former said: "Verily, Allah accepts only from those who are pious.""* This story is about the two sons of Adam (AS) and Eve, Abel and his brother Cain. Eve used to give birth each time to twins: a boy and a girl. Allah (SWT) revealed to Adam that he should marry each son to the twin sister of the other. Adam (AS) instructed his children according to Allah's (SWT) command, but Cain was displeased with the partner chosen for him, for Abel's twin-sister was not as beautiful as his own. This attraction caused Cain to envy his brother Abel and he rebelled against Allah's (SWT) command by refusing to accept his father's advice. Then to settle the dispute Allah (SWT) commanded Prophet Adam (AS) that each of his son should offer a sacrifice, and he whose offering was accepted he will marry with his choice. Abel offered his best camel, while Cain offered his worst grain. His sacrifice was not accepted by Allah (SWT) because of his disobedience to his father and the insincerity in his offering. This enraged Cain even further and he threatened to kill his brother. But Abel advised his brother that instead of threatening him he should look into his own mistakes as to why Allah (SWT) did not accept his sacrifice.

(28) *"If you do stretch your hand against me to kill me, I shall never stretch my hand against you to kill you, for I fear Allah (SWT); the Lord of the Worlds.""* Abel was an Allah-fearing person and very obedient to His commandments. Thus he refused to fight Cain even after he had threatened him because he did not want to hurt his brother and attain Allah's displeasure.

(29) *"Verily, I intend to let you draw my sin on yourself as well as yours, then you will be one of the dwellers of the Fire, and that is the recompense of the wrongdoers."* Abel reminded his brother of the consequences of the evil of killing an innocent person. He warned Cain that if he kills him then he will not only bear the burden of the sin of the murder but he will also be burdened by his sins, and thus will become an inmate of Hellfire, which is the punishment for the wrong-doers.

(30) *"So the soul (self) of the other encouraged him to the murder of his brother; he murdered him and became one of the losers."* i.e. his *Nafs* (inner-self) prompted him to kill his brother making it seem fair to him, thus he killed him and in the process ruined his life.

(31) *"Then Allah (SWT) sent a crow who scratched the ground to show him to hide the dead body of his brother. He said: "Woe to me! Am I not even able to be as this crow and to hide the dead body of my brother?" Then he became one of those who regretted."* After killing his brother, Cain did not know what to do with his corpse. He carried it on his back wandering from place to place with his conscience saddled with guilt. Then, Allah (SWT) sent two ravens that began fighting, causing the death of one. The victorious bird used its beak and claws to dig a hole in the ground, rolled its victim into it and then covered it. After Cain saw this, he felt ashamed and regretted of what he had done. He then buried his brother in the sand and thus it became the first burial of man.

(32) *"Because of that We ordained for the Children of Israel that if anyone killed a person not in retaliation of murder, or (and) to spread mischief in the land - it would be as if he killed all mankind, and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind."* Allah (SWT) decreed for the *Children of Israel* that whoever kills an innocent soul will be as if he has killed the whole of humanity except for the punishment of murder i.e. *Qisas*<sup>1</sup>, or making mischief in land. Likewise, Allah (SWT) ordained for them that whoever saved a life, it is as if he saved the whole humanity. It is stated in *Talmud*<sup>2</sup> that *"He who destroys one soul of a human being, the Scripture considers him as if he destroyed a whole world, and him who saves one soul of Israel, the Scripture considers him as if he saved a*

*whole world...*"<sup>3</sup> In Islam also, the protection of one soul from being killed is regarded equal to giving life to all humankind. Similarly, the killing of a soul without any justification is equal to the killing of the entire human race, as stated in this *ayah*. Further Allah (SWT) states: *"And indeed, there came to them Our Messengers with clear proofs, evidences, and signs, even then after that many of them continued to exceed the limits in the land!."* Allah (SWT) sent His Messengers to the *Children of Israel* one after the other. They came with teachings and clear evidences of truth, but still they transgressed the limits set by Allah (SWT) by committing major sins and doing oppression unjustly.

(33) *"The recompense of those who wage war against Allah (SWT) and His Messenger and do mischief in the land is only that they shall be killed or crucified or their hands and their feet be cut off on the opposite sides, or be exiled from the land. That is their disgrace in this world, and a great torment is their lots in the Hereafter."* This *ayah* mentions the punishments for those who oppose Allah's commandments and His Messenger (SAW) i.e. commit treason against an Islamic state, thus making mischief on land. These four punishments are applied according to the gravity of the crime committed viz. execution for committing murder or becoming an apostate, crucifixion, cutting hands and feet from opposite sides for the crime of theft and exile from the land. Those who commit these crimes will be humiliated in this world by these punishments and they will suffer a grievous punishment in the Hereafter.

(34) *"Except for those who repent before you overpower them; in that case, know that Allah (SWT) is OftForgiving, Most Merciful."* This *ayah* refers to idolators that rebel against an Islamic state and make mischief in land. It means that the punishment for such people who repent afterwards is annulled provided they repent before they are caught by the authorities. Surely Allah (SWT) is Forgiving and Merciful and He forgives all sins of those who repent.

(35) *"O you who believe! Do your duty to Allah (SWT) and fear Him. Seek the means of approach to Him."* In this *ayah* Allah (SWT) commands His servants to obey Him sincerely and avoid everything which is against His Will or law and seek the means of nearness to Him. Allah (SWT) has prescribed for us a number of

types of means to approach Him<sup>4</sup>. The best of which is to call upon Allah (SWT) by means of His perfect Names such as a Muslim saying in his supplication: “O Allah (SWT) I ask you by your Mercy...I ask you being the Most Gracious...” etc. The proof of this is in the following *ayah*: “*The most beautiful names belong to Allah (SWT), so call on Him by them...*”<sup>5</sup> “*And strive hard in His Cause as much as you can. So that you may be successful.*” Then Allah (SWT) encourages His servants to do *Jihad* in His cause and fight against the enemies of Islam and promises eternal bliss and happiness for those who obey His commandments.

(36) “*Verily, those who disbelieve, if they had all that is in the earth, and as much again therewith to ransom themselves thereby from the torment on the Day of Resurrection, it would never be accepted of them, and theirs would be a painful torment.*” This is the actual reality of this world, which is close to nothing as compared to the blessings of the Hereafter. Thus on the *Day of Judgment*, no amount of ransom will be accepted from those who rejected faith in order to save themselves from the grievous punishment of the Hellfire, even if they bring this earth full of gold or twice as much.

(37) “*They will long to get out of the Fire, but they will never get out therefrom, and theirs will be a lasting torment.*” i.e. they will never be able to escape the torment of Hellfire and they will live there forever.

(38) “*Cut off the hand of the thief, male or female, as a recompense for that which they committed, an exemplary punishment from Allah (SWT).*” An Islamic state has an obligation to protect the five essentials of life and ensure that they remain safe viz. religion, life, honor, mental health and one’s property. Thus Islam protects these essentials of life by means of the punishments which Allah (SWT) has prescribed to attain peace and security. This *ayah* describes one of these punishments prescribed for theft in Islam i.e. to cut off the right hand of the thief, whether male or female, from the wrist joint, so as to deter others from committing such crimes. “*And Allah (SWT) is All-Powerful, All-Wise.*” i.e. Allah (SWT) is All-Powerful to punish whoever He wants in whatever way

He Wills, and He is also All-Wise i.e. He knows what is better for His servants.

(39) *"But whosoever repents after his crime and does righteous good deeds, then verily, Allah (SWT) will pardon him. Verily, Allah (SWT) is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."* Sometimes a Muslim may fall into that which Allah (SWT) has forbidden. But Allah (SWT) says that He is Kind and Merciful to His servants. Thus if anyone repents sincerely after he has committed the crime, Allah (SWT) will accept his repentance and forgive him.

(40) *"Don't you know that to Allah (SWT) belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth! He punishes whom He wills and He forgives whom He wills. And Allah (SWT) is Able to do all things."* i.e. Allah (SWT) owns everything and He does what He Wills for His creatures and no one can question His decision or judgment.

(41) *"O Messenger (SAW)! Let not those who plung headlong into unbelief grieve you, of such who say: "We believe" with their mouths but their hearts have no faith."* This *ayah* refers to the hypocrites who embrace Islam but soon after deviate from belief in Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW). They only pretend to be faithful but in reality they are the bitter enemies of Islam and its followers. *"And of the Jews are men who listen much and eagerly to lies, listen to others who have not come to you."* i.e. there are those amongst *Jews* who are eager to catch up any lies against Prophet Muhammad (SAW). They also attend his gatherings and listen to what he says, so that they can convey it to his enemies who cannot attend Prophet's (SAW) gatherings or come near him. *"They change the words from their places; they say, "If you are given this, take it, but if you are not given this, then beware!"* i.e. they distort their books and alter its meanings so that they can hide its knowledge from their people. Further, whenever they brought their disputes to Prophet Muhammad (SAW), they would decide beforehand that they would accept Prophet's (SAW) decision if it is in their favor, otherwise they will not accept it and walk away. *"And whomsoever Allah (SWT) wants to put in trial; you can do nothing for him against Allah (SWT). Those are the ones whose hearts Allah (SWT) does not want to purify; for them there is a disgrace in this world, and in the Hereafter a great*

*torment.*" i.e. whoever Allah (SWT) intends to put on trial and error then there is none who can save him from His punishment, in this world and in the Hereafter.

(42) *"(They like to) listen to falsehood, to devour anything forbidden."* i.e. they eagerly listen and indulge in falsehood so that they can eat what is forbidden for them e.g. usury and bribes. *"So if they come to you, either judge between them, or turn away from them. If you turn away from them, they cannot hurt you in the least. And if you judge, judge with justice between them. Verily, Allah (SWT) loves those who act justly."* When the *Jews* came to the Prophet (SAW) for a judgment, they did not seek the truth and justice but hoped that some partiality will be shown in favor of them. Therefore Allah (SWT) says to His Prophet (SAW) that there is no harm on you O'Muhammad (SAW) if you do not want to adjudicate between them because of their behavior and partiality, but if you do act as judge, then judge between them in fairness, for Allah (SWT) loves those who judge with fairness.

(43) *"But how do they come to you for judgement while they have the Torah, in which is the (plain) judgement of Allah (SWT); yet even after that, they turn away. For they are not (really) believers."* It was reported that this *ayah* was revealed regarding some *Jews* who came to the Prophet (SAW) for a judgment concerning a man and a women amongst them who committed adultery. The Prophet (SAW) said to them: *"What would you do in this case"* They said: *"We would humiliate and expose them."* The Prophet recited: *"Bring here the Torah and recite it, if you are truthful."* So they brought a man who was blind in one eye and who was respected among them and said to him, *"Read (from the Torah)."* So he read until he reached a certain verse and then covered it with his hand. He was told, *"Remove your hand,"* and it was the verse about stoning. So that man said, *"O Muhammad (SAW)! This is the verse about stoning, and we had hid its knowledge among us."* So the Messenger ordered that the two adulterers be stoned, and they were stoned to death.<sup>6</sup>

(44) *“Verily, We did send down the Torah, therein was guidance and light, by which the Prophets, who submitted themselves to Allah's Will, judged the Jews. And the rabbis and the priests for to them was entrusted the protection of Allah's Book, and they were witnesses thereto.”* In this *ayah* Allah (SWT) praises the *Torah* which He revealed to His Prophet Moses (AS), for the *Children of Israel*. It contained the guidance and the light from Allah (SWT) to take them out of the darkness of ignorance and show them the right path. All the Prophets sent to the *Children of Israel* followed the laws of *Torah* by which they judged the *Jews* and they did not deviate from the straight path i.e. they submitted themselves to the Will of their Lord. Not only the Prophets but also the Rabbis and their Jurists judged according to the laws of *Torah*. They were entrusted with its protection and to be the witnesses of its truth and to testify that they had made it known to the people. Then Allah (SWT) said: *“Therefore fear not men but fear Me and sell not My revelations for a miserable price.”* Allah (SWT) commanded the *Children of Israel* to fear Him alone and not to distort or conceal what He has revealed to them in fear of other men or to suit their own desires. *“And whosoever does not judge by what Allah (SWT) has revealed, such are the disbelievers.”* Along with the People of the Book, this *ayah* also applies to those Muslims who do not follow the *Qur'an* and judge their matters according to it. There is not a single Islamic country on the face of this earth today that judges or decides its matters solely according to what Allah (SWT) has revealed. This *ayah* concludes that those who judge or rule according to what Allah (SWT) has revealed are Muslims and those who do not judge or rule according to what Allah (SWT) has revealed and distort Allah's revelations then they are *Kafiroon* (disbelievers).

(45) *“And We ordained therein for them: "Life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and for wounds equal punishment.”* This *ayah* indicates that Allah (SWT) ordained the law of retribution in the *Torah* as it is in Islam, but the *Jews* defied the ruling and refused to accept the divine commandments. *“But if anyone remits the retaliation by way of charity, it shall be for him an expiation.”* i.e. if the victim forgives the aggressor and does not retaliate then it becomes an expiation for his sins and he will have his reward with Allah (SWT). *“And*

*whosoever does not judge by that which Allah (SWT) has revealed, such are the wrongdoers."* Here this *ayah* refers to the *Jews* who do not follow Allah's commandments and give false judgments. They only follow their lusts and desires and do not judge their matters according to what Allah (SWT) has revealed to His Messenger (SAW). Thus Allah (SWT) says that they are unjust and evildoers (*Zalimoon*).

(46) *"And in their footsteps, We sent Jesus (AS), son of Mary (AS), confirming the Torah that had come before him, and We gave him the Injeel, in which was guidance and light and confirmation of the Torah that had come before it, a guidance and an admonition for the pious."* In the continuous chain of the Prophets sent to the *Children of Israel*, Jesus (AS), son of Mary (AS) was the last one. He was sent to confirm and verify the truth of *Torah* and rule by its laws. Allah (SWT) gave him *Injeel* which also contained guidance and light to direct people towards the right path. It was a guidance and admonition for the pious and the righteous and it came verifying the truth of the previous Scriptures, like the *Torah*. Jesus (AS) said that he did not come to abrogate the *Torah*<sup>7</sup>, but to complete it by going to the spirit of its substance and to get at its essence.

(47) *"Let the people of the Injeel judge by what Allah has revealed therein."* The *Christians* are being warned to judge according to what Allah (SWT) revealed to them, and believe in all that is present therein including the coming of the Allah's Last Messenger (SAW) with His Last and final revelation i.e. the *Qur'an*. *"And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such are the transgressors."* Here this *ayah* specifically refers to the *Christians* who rebelled against and abandoned the truth that Allah (SWT) revealed to them through His Prophet Jesus (AS). But this *ayah* does not only apply to the *Christians* or the *Jews*, but to any one, a Muslim or a non-Muslim who does not submit himself totally to the authority of Allah (SWT) and abandons the truth. He becomes a disbeliever, a wrongdoer or a transgressor (*Fasiq*) according to the degree of his disobedience.

(48) *"And We have sent down to you the Book in truth, confirming the Scripture that came before it and to safeguard it."* Allah (SWT) revealed this *Qur'an* to Prophet

Muhammad (SAW) with the truth that it is indeed coming from Him. It came confirming the truth of all the earlier scriptures, guarding them in truth i.e. preserving them from distortion and corruption, for it has within it the teachings of all the previous Books. *“So judge between them by what Allah (SWT) has revealed, and follow not their vain desires, diverging away from the truth that has come to you.”* Allah (SWT) commands His Prophet (SAW) to judge and rule according to the laws prescribed in the Holy *Qur’an* and do not judge according to the desires of these ignorant people, thus diverging away from the truth. *“To each among you, We have prescribed a law and a clear way.”* Allah (SWT) ordained a law and a way of life for every Messenger and his nation, and when human thought and intellect progressed from infancy to maturity reaching its climax, He revealed His final law and way of life for all mankind to come, to His Last and Final Messenger, Muhammad (SAW). *“If Allah (SWT) willed, He would have made you one nation, but that (He) may test you in what He has given you.”* i.e. if Allah (SWT) had Willed He would have made all mankind into a single nation with one language, one religion and one law. But in His perfect Wisdom He divided mankind into different nations and gave them different laws to govern at their given time so as to test their abilities and obedience to Him in everyone’s own capacity. He will thus reward them or punish them accordingly. *“So strive as in a race in good deeds. The return of you (all) is to Allah (SWT); then He will inform you about that in which you used to differ.”* Allah (SWT) encourages His servants to vie with one another in doing virtuous and righteous deeds. And commands them to be always mindful of the fact that your final return is to Allah (SWT), who will show you the truth of those matters in which you disputed.

(49) *“And so judge between them by what Allah (SWT) has revealed and follow not their vain desires”* This *ayah* is repeated here to emphasize the importance of this command. *“take heed lest they turn you far away from some of that which Allah (SWT) has sent down to you.”* i.e. beware of the *Jews* who are always in search of an opportunity to deceive you and wish to turn you away from the truth. *“And if they turn away, then know that Allah's Will is to punish them for some sins of theirs.”* i.e. if they disbelieve then know that it is Allah's Will to deviate them from the

truth and scourge them for some of their sins. *“And truly, most of men are transgressors.”* i.e. majority of the people in the world have rebelled against Allah's obedience and thus deviated from the truth.

(50) *“Do they then seek the judgment of (the Days of) Ignorance.”* This *ayah* applies to all those who seek judgment from laws other than what Allah (SWT) has prescribed for His servants, defy His commandments and instead follow their own desires and lusts. In other words every judgment which does not come from the Book of Allah (SWT) or the Sunnah of His Messenger (SAW) is of the *Jahiliyyah* (days of pagan ignorance). *“And who is better in judgment than Allah (SWT) for a people who have firm Faith.”* Allah (SWT) is the Creator of mankind and He has the perfect knowledge of everything. Therefore He knows best what is beneficial for them and what is harmful to them.

#### Foot Notes

[1] Execution for committing deliberate murder.

[2] The collection of ancient rabbinic writings consisting of the Mishnah, text of the Oral Law, and the Gemara, a commentary on the Mishnah, constituting the basis of religious authority in Orthodox Judaism.

[3] Talmud, Mishnah Tractate Sanhedrin 4:5 (37a).

URL: [www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Talmud/sanhedrin4.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Talmud/sanhedrin4.html)

[4] Cf. Tawassul; Its types and its rulings. By Sheikh Naasiruddeen al-Albanee.

[5] Surah Al-A'raf (7) : 180.

[6] Sahih Al-Bukhari : 4556.

[7] Gospel of Matthew 5 : 17.

(51) *“O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians as friends and protectors; they are but friends and protectors to one another.”* Allah (SWT) prohibits the Muslims to take the *Jews* and the *Christians* as their friends and protectors. Because they are only friends and protectors to one another against Islam and have a strong enmity against the Muslims.

This *ayah* is more applicable in present times because we see that throughout the long Judeo-Christian history the relationship between the *Jews* and the *Christians* has not been good and it is quite understandable as the latter not only hold the former responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus (AS) but also resent their slander that Jesus (AS) was born out of wedlock. Today, however, all this has changed. The *Jews* have gradually eroded the *Christian* society dividing them into different factions, most of which support them. Protestant *Christians*, in general, and among them Evangelical *Christians*, in particular, provide massive financial and political support to the *Jews* to the extent that these *Christian* conservatives are sometimes often referred to as *Christian Zionists* for their blatant bias.<sup>1</sup> *“And if any amongst you takes them as friends and protectors, then surely he is one of them. Verily, Allah (SWT) guides not those people who are the wrongdoers.”* Allah (SWT) warns the believers that if they take them as friends and protectors then they will be counted as one of them and surely they will have wronged themselves and He will not guide such wrongdoers.

(52) *“And you see those in whose hearts there is a disease, they hurry to their friendship, saying: “We fear lest some misfortune of a disaster may befall us.”* This refers to the hypocrites of *Madinah* who made the disbelievers their friends in secret and in public, and when they were asked as to why they befriended these enemies of Islam, they said that they fear that the disbelievers might defeat the Muslims. Therefore, if this be the outcome of a battle they should be in a position to have their support and favor in return. *“Perhaps Allah (SWT) may bring a victory or a decision according to His Will. Then they will become regretful for what they have been keeping as a secret in themselves.”* i.e. whenever Allah (SWT) made the

Muslims victorious or gave a decision according to His Will, the hypocrites would regret for what they hid in their hearts. Scholars say that in this *ayah*, victory refers to the conquering of *Makkah*<sup>2</sup> and the decision according to His Will refers to the *Jizyah* paid by the *Jews* and the *Christians*.

(53) *"And those who believe will say: "Are these the men who swore their strongest oaths by Allah (SWT) that they were with you?"*" The hypocrites had promised help and protection to the enemies of Islam in secret, but when the Muslims became victorious, the true reality of the hypocrites was exposed. Then, not only the Muslims abandoned them but they also turned back from their promises with the disbelievers. This made the Muslims ask the disbelievers: are these hypocrites not the same people who promised help for you? *"All that they did has been in vain, and they have become the losers."* i.e. all their claims and promises were nothing but lies and they surely have not succeeded in their schemes.

(54) *"O you who believe! Whoever from among you turns back from his religion, Allah (SWT) will bring a people whom He will love and they will love Him; humble towards the believers, stern towards the disbelievers, fighting in the Way of Allah (SWT), and never afraid of the blame of the blamers."* In this *ayah* Allah (SWT) gives a stern warning to the Muslims not to turn back from Islam, and if they do so then He will replace them with people who are more obedient and righteous than them and whom He loves and they will love Him. They will have the following qualities: they will be stern towards the unbelievers and very lenient and humble with their fellow believers. They will do *Jihad* in His cause and will have no fear of reproach from any critic. *"That is the Grace of Allah (SWT) which He bestows on whom He wills. And Allah (SWT) is All-Embracing, All-Knower."* i.e. this is only from His bounty and Grace that He gives such qualities to whoever He wishes and this is very easy for Him. Surely Allah (SWT) is All-Sufficient for the needs of His creatures and knows everything. He is Munificent, Knowing.

(55) *“Verily, your Protector or Helper is Allah (SWT), His Messenger (SAW), and the believers; those who perform regular prayers, and give regular charity and they bow down.”*

The hypocrites take their friends from the disbelievers or others from the Jews and the Christians instead of the believers but the real protecting friends are Allah (SWT), His Messenger (SAW) and the faithful believers who perform their regular prayers, give the poor their due and bow down in humility when they give charity. Alternatively it also means that they bow down in prayers in congregation with other believers.

(56) *“And whosoever takes Allah (SWT), His Messenger (SAW), and those who have believed, as Protectors, then the party of Allah (SWT) will be the victorious.”* i.e. these are the people who will gain success in this world and in the Hereafter. Allah's followers are sure to triumph.

(57) *“O you who believe! Take not for protectors and helpers, those who take your religion for a mockery and fun from among those who received the Scripture before you, nor from among the disbelievers; and fear Allah (SWT) if you indeed are true believers.”* To emphasize the importance of this command, it has been repeated here, which clearly forbids the Muslims from taking the enemies of Islam and its followers as their friends and protectors. Allah (SWT) then commands His servants to fear Him alone and have faith in Him.

(58) *“And when you call for prayers, they take it (but) as a mockery and fun; that is because they are a people who understand not.”* i.e. the disbelievers used to ridicule and mock at the pronouncement of *Adhan* (Call for prayer). They treated it as a jest and a pastime. They did this because they are devoid of understanding.

(59) *“Say: “O people of the Book! Do you criticize and blame us for no other reason than that we believe in Allah (SWT), and in which has been revealed to us and in that which has been revealed before, and that most of you are transgressors.”* Allah (SWT) commands His Messenger (SAW) to ask those who make fun of Islam and its followers that you ridicule the Islamic teachings and make fun of the Muslims just for the

fact that they believe in Allah (SWT) and this *Qur'an*, along with all the scriptures revealed before it. The fact is that most of them are rebellious in nature and evil-doers.

(60) *"Say: "Shall I inform you of something worse than that, regarding the recompense from Allah (SWT): those (Jews) who incurred the Curse of Allah (SWT) and His Wrath, those of whom (some) He transformed into monkeys and swine, those who worshipped Taghut (forces of evil); such are worse in rank, and far more astray from the Right Path.""* This *ayah* criticizes the *Jews* who did not think well about the Muslims. So, Allah (SWT) says that the *Jews* themselves are the worst in retribution from Allah (SWT). They have incurred His curse and wrath upon themselves and some of them were even transformed into apes and swine, because they worshipped the devil and forces of evil which rebel against Allah (SWT). Such in Allah's (SWT) sight are the worst and those who have strayed farther from the right path.

(61) *"When they come to you, they say: "We believe." But in fact they enter with (an intention of) disbelief and they go out with the same."* i.e. the hypocrites proclaim their faith and pretend to be Muslims when they are in Prophet's presence or with the Muslims. But Allah (SWT) informs His Prophet (SAW) about the disbelief and hypocrisy that the hypocrites conceal in their hearts and the matter of fact is that they came with disbelief and they went out in the same condition. *"And Allah (SWT) knows all what they were hiding."* i.e. He knows their intentions. Allah knows best what they conceal.

(62) *"And you see many of them vie with one another in sin and transgression, and eating illegal things."* This refers to the *Jews* and we have already gone through the details of the crimes and sins committed by the *Jews* in the previous surahs. And *"Evil indeed is that which they have been doing."* Evil indeed are their actions.

(63) *"Why do not the rabbis and the religious learned men forbid them from uttering sinful words and from eating illegal things. Evil indeed is that which they have been performing."*

One of the reasons behind the degeneration of a society is that their scholars and those in authority do not enjoin good or forbid their people from committing sinful things. This is what Allah (SWT) explains about the *Jews* in this *ayah*. Their *Rabbis* and religious leaders not forbid their people from uttering sin or consuming illegal things and persisted in their evil, which eventually became the reason for their decline and punishment.

(64) *"The Jews say: "Allah's Hand is tied up." Be their hands tied up and be they accursed for what they uttered."* By this statement the *Jews* meant that Allah (SWT) does not give and spend from His bounty thus they say that He is poor and we are rich. But far holier and Glorified is He than what they utter about Him. Because of such rebellious attitude and blasphemy against Allah (SWT), He has cursed them with ignorance and misery in this world and humiliation in the Hereafter. *"Nay, both His Hands are widely outstretched. He spends as He wills."* Allah (SWT) spends and gives from His limitless bounty to whomever He Wills. He gives His servants what they ask for and bestows on them His blessings by day and by night, yet His bounty does not decrease but is perfectly full. *"Verily, the Revelation that has come to you from Allah (SWT) increases in most of them their obstinate rebellion and disbelief."* i.e. they had so much hatred and jealousy for the Prophet (SAW) and the Muslims that whenever Allah's revelations were sent to His Prophet (SAW), it increased them in their wickedness and unbelief. *"We have put enmity and hatred amongst them till the Day of Resurrection."* i.e. because of their defiance and rejection of Allah's (SWT) revelations and His Prophet (SAW). *"Every time they kindled the fire of war, Allah (SWT) extinguished it."* This refers to the plots and schemes they used to conspire against the believers. *"And they (ever) strive to make mischief on earth. And Allah (SWT) does not like the mischief makers."* When they fail in their plots and schemes, then they strive hard to spread mischief but Allah (SWT) does not love the mischief mongers.

(65) *"And if only the people of the Book had believed and been righteous. We would indeed have blotted out their sins and admitted them to Gardens of bliss."* i.e. if they would

have sincerely believed in Allah (SWT) and followed His Messenger (SAW), then surely He would forgive their sins and admit them in Paradise.

(66) *“And if only they had acted according to the Torah, the Injeel, and what has been sent down to them from their Lord, they would surely have gotten provision from above them and from underneath their feet.”* This means that if the People of the Book had established the laws revealed to their Prophets and believed in what was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) i.e. the *Qur’an*, then surely Allah (SWT) would have blessed them with provisions descending from the sky as well as from those grown in the earth. *“There are from among them people who are on the right course.”* This refers to those *Jews* and *Christians* who adhered to their Books and followed their laws and when Allah (SWT) sent His last Prophet (SAW) with His last revelation, they also believed in him and followed him. Amongst them was Abdullah bin Salaam (RAA), who was a very knowledgeable and pious *Jewish* scholar and as soon as he heard of Prophet’s message, he embraced Islam. *“But many of them do evil deeds.”* i.e. majority of them do nothing but evil.

(67) *“O Messenger (SAW)! Proclaim which has been sent down to you from your Lord.”* Allah (SWT) commands His Messenger (SAW) to convey His message to mankind and thus fulfill his mission. *“And if you do not, then you have not conveyed His Message.”* i.e. if you do not deliver the message revealed to you O Muhammad (SAW) then you have not done justice to your mission and conveyed Allah’s message. That is why at the Farewell *Hajj* the Prophet (SAW) asked his Companions (RAA), did I convey Allah's message. The Companions (RAA) unanimously replied, "we bear witness that you have conveyed the message and fulfilled your mission". He raised his finger towards the sky and said, O'Allah! Be witness". He repeated it thrice. *“Allah (SWT) will protect you from mankind.”* Allah (SWT) encourages His Messenger (SAW) to convey His message to mankind and asked not to fear any of them for He will support him and protect him from his enemies. *“Verily, Allah (SWT) guides not the people who disbelieve.”* i.e. Prophet’s duty is only to convey the message and it is Allah

(SWT) who guides whom He Wills and He has decided that He will not guide those who disbelieve. He does not guide the unbelievers.

(68) *"Say: "O people of the Book! You have no ground to stand on unless you act according to the Torah, the Injeel, and what has (now) been sent down to you from your Lord.""* This *ayah* warns the People of the Book that you cannot attain salvation unless you adhere to the laws revealed to you by Allah (SWT) and believe in that which He has sent to His last Prophet (SAW). *"Verily, that which has been sent down to you from your Lord increases in many of them their obstinate rebellion and disbelief."* This *ayah* has already been commented upon in *ayah* 64 of this surah. *"So be not sorrowful over the people who disbelieve."* i.e. O Muhammad (SAW) you should not grieve about those who reject faith for they will certainly be punished for their disbelief.

(69) *"Surely, those who believe, those who are the Jews and the Sabians and the Christians; whosoever believed in Allah (SWT) and the Last Day, and do what is right – on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve."* We have already commented upon this *ayah* in the explanation of *ayah* 62 of surah *Al-Baqarah*.

(70) *"Verily, We took the covenant of the Children of Israel and sent them Messengers. Whenever there came to them a Messenger with what they themselves desired not – a group of them they accused of lying and killed some."* Allah (SWT) reminds the *Jews* of their covenant that He took from them at Mount *Sinai* that they will obey Him and His Messengers and worship none with Him. But instead they followed their desires and whenever Allah (SWT) sent them His Messengers with guidance and truth, they either called them imposters or killed them.<sup>4</sup>

(71) *"They thought there will be no trial, so they became blind and deaf; after that Allah (SWT) turned to them; yet again many of them became blind and deaf."* i.e. those who mocked at Allah's Messengers and killed them thought that no affliction would follow and they will never be punished or put to trial for their crimes. So they became blind from the truth and turned a deaf ear to Allah's

message. Even after that Allah (SWT) turned to them in mercy and forgave them but they still persisted in their disbelief and many of them again turned blind and deaf. *"And Allah (SWT) is the All-Seer of what they do."* i.e. Allah observes all their actions. He is ever watching over what they do.

(72) *"Surely, they have disbelieved who say: "Allah (SWT) is the Messiah, son of Mary." But the Messiah (AS) said: "O Children of Israel! Worship Allah (SWT), my Lord and your Lord.""* Allah (SWT) criticizes the Christians for their claim that Jesus is God incarnate. They believe that Jesus (AS) claimed divinity for himself but Allah (SWT) rebukes them and says that Jesus (AS) never uttered such words, instead he commanded the *Children of Israel* to worship Allah (SWT) alone, besides whom none stands worthy of worship. *"Verily, whosoever sets up partners in worship with Allah (SWT), then Allah (SWT) has forbidden Paradise for him, and the Fire will be his abode. And for the wrongdoers there are no helpers."* This is the worst crime a person can commit i.e. associating partners with Allah (SWT), and it deserves the severest of punishments. Thus Allah (SWT) has forbidden Paradise for such and has chosen Hellfire as their eternal abode, and their will be no helper or protector for such wrongdoers.

(73) *"Surely, disbelievers are those who said: "Allah (SWT) is the third of the three (in a Trinity)." But there is no God but One Allah (SWT). And if they desist not from saying so, verily, a painful torment will befall the disbelievers among them."* Allah (SWT) rebukes the *Christians* for their false belief of Trinity and commands them to refrain from uttering such words and worship Him alone without attributing any partners or sons to Him, and believe in Jesus (AS) only as His Messenger and His servant. But if they persist in their disbelief and *Shirk* then a painful punishment awaits them in the Hereafter.

(74) *"Will they not repent to Allah (SWT) and ask His Forgiveness? For Allah (SWT) is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."* Although they had committed such grave sins and persisted in their *Shirk*, yet Allah (SWT) in His mercy, calls them to repent from their sins and from associating partners to Him, so that He forgives

them. For surely, He forgives those who repent and mend their ways. He is Forgiving, Merciful.

(75) *"The Messiah, son of Mary, was no more than a Messenger; many were the Messengers that passed away before him."* The true status of Jesus (AS) in Islam is that he is one of the honorable Messengers of Allah (SWT) just like all other Prophets and Messengers that came before him, thus refuting the false beliefs of the *Christians* that he claimed divinity. *"His mother was a truthful woman. They both used to eat food."* She was a very pious and virtuous woman and contrary to the beliefs of the *Christians* she never claimed divinity for herself or her son Jesus (AS). In fact both of them were mere mortals and human beings and like the rest of Allah's creatures they were also subject to necessities and needed food to live, whereas Allah (SWT) does not eat. *"Look how We make the revelations clear to them, yet look how they are deluded away (from the truth)."* Allah (SWT) has made His revelations clear to them, yet see how they ignore the truth.

(76) *"Say: "How do you worship besides Allah (SWT) something which has no power either to harm or to benefit you?"* Allah (SWT) commands His Prophet (SAW) to ask those who worship other deities besides Him that how can your minds be so perverted that you worship those who cannot prevent any harm from you nor can they benefit you. *"But it is Allah (SWT) Who is the All-Hearer, All-Knower."* i.e. it is only Allah (SWT) who has the authority and power to protect you and bring benefit for you, as He sees all His servants and He hears all what they say.

(77) *"Say: "O people of the Book! Exceed not the limits in your religion other than the truth, and do not follow the vain desires of people who went astray in times gone by, and who misled many, and strayed from the Right Path."* Allah (SWT) commands His Messenger (SAW) to say to the *Jews* and the *Christians* that do not transgress the bounds set by Him and do not exaggerate in your religion e.g. Allah (SWT) sent Jesus (AS) as His Messenger but the *Christians* exaggerated his status and gave him the rank of *God*. And do not follow the evil ways and

misguidance of those who were before you. They misled many others before you and they themselves strayed from the straight path.

### **Foot Notes**

[1] Cf. Why Protestants are supporting Jews, by Abid Ullah Jan.

[2] At-Tabari 10 : 405.

[3] Sahih Muslim 2 : 886.

[4] For more on the covenant, Refer to ayah 83 of surah Al-Baqarah and its ayah 87 on Children of Israel slaying the Prophets.

(78) *“Those among the Children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of David (AS) and Jesus (AS), son of Mary (AS). That was because they disobeyed and were ever transgressing beyond bounds.”* Psalms of David (AS) and Injeel given to Jesus (AS) has different passages and statements by these noble Prophets cursing the *Children of Israel*. David (AS) prophesied about the wickedness of the *Jews* and said: *“The sinner speaketh what will condemn him, and there is no fear of God before his eyes.”*<sup>1</sup> And he said: *“They brought forth against me the word of error; he who slept shall he not awake? Shall then the man of my peace (i.e., my friend), whom I trusted, who ate my food, lift up his foot against me?”*<sup>2</sup> Likewise Prophet Jesus (AS) also condemned them and he said: *“Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?”*<sup>3</sup> They were cursed because they disobeyed Allah’s commandments and transgressed against His creatures.

(79) *“They did not to forbid one another from committing iniquities. Verily, evil was what they used to do.”* As we already mentioned in the previous discourse, one of the reasons for the downfall of a society is that they do not enjoin good and forbid one another from committing evil deeds. The same applies to the *Children of Israel*; they in their time did not forbid each other from the wickedness they did and indeed it was evil what they used to commit.

(80) *“You see many of them taking the disbelievers as their protectors and helpers. Evil indeed is that which their souls have sent forward before them, for that Allah's Wrath fell upon them and in torment they will abide.”* Allah (SWT) curses the *Jews* for taking the disbelievers as their friends and protectors. The *Jews* of *Madinah* had so much hatred against Prophet Muhammad (SAW) that they even made friendship ties with the pagan Arabs and considered them better than the Muslims. But Allah (SWT) says that they have only sent forth for themselves their evil deeds in

the Hereafter and for that reason they incurred His wrath and punishment upon themselves, which they will suffer forever.

(81) *“And had they believed in Allah (SWT), and in the Prophet (SAW) and in what has been revealed to him, never would they have taken them as protectors and helpers, but many of them are the transgressors.”* i.e. if the *Jews* had believed in Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW) and what was revealed to him i.e. the *Qur’an*, then surely they would have not sided with the disbelievers and made them their friends and protectors instead of the believers. But Allah (SWT) says that most of them disobeyed and became evildoers.

The following *ayaat* were revealed concerning the delegation that *An-Najashi* of Ethiopia sent to Prophet Muhammad (SAW). They were the followers of the teachings of Jesus (AS), who when came to the Prophet (SAW) and heard the *Qur’an*, they wept and felt humbled and immediately embraced Islam.

(82) *“Verily, you will find the strongest among men in enmity to the believers (Muslims) are the Jews and the Pagans.”* The *Jews* and the Pagan Arabs were the worst enemies of Islam. This is because the *Jews* knew that what Prophet Muhammad (SAW) brought was the truth but they in their arrogance and defiance rejected his message and rebelled against the commandments of Allah (SWT). Even today we see that Israel is the worst enemy of Islam and has even made ties with the Pagan Hindus<sup>4</sup> against the Muslims. *“And you will find the nearest in love to the believers (Muslims) are those who say: “We are Christians.” That is because amongst them are priests and monks, and they are not proud.”* This does not refer to those *Christians* who merely say that we are *Christians*, but to those who sincerely follow the true teachings of Prophet Jesus (AS) and the *Injeel*. This is because amongst them are those who are monks and priests who worship their Lord and they are free from pride.

(83) *“And when they listen to what has been sent down to the Messenger (SAW), you see their eyes overflowing with tears because of the truth they have recognized. They say: “Our Lord! We believe; so write us down among the witnesses.”* When the delegation from Ethiopia came to the Prophet (SAW) and heard the *Qur’an*, they cried and were humbled, as they recognized the truth of the Prophethood of Muhammad (SAW), whose advent was already prophesized in their Scriptures. Thus they embraced Islam and prayed to Allah (SWT) to count them among the witnesses of the truth.

(84) *“And why should we not believe in Allah (SWT) and in that which has come to us of the truth? And we wish that our Lord will admit us along with the righteous people.”* They further supplicated to Allah (SWT) and humbled themselves in His obedience. They very much wished for admission among the righteous.

(85) *“So because of what they said, Allah rewarded them Gardens under which rivers flow, they will abide therein forever.”* Thus Allah (SWT) rewarded them for their obedience and recognizing the truth and admitted them in Paradise, which will be their abode forever. *“Such is the reward of good-doers.”* i.e. those who devote their lives for Allah’s religion and worship Him alone with full sincerity and devotion. This indeed is the recompense of the righteous.

(86) *“But those who disbelieved and belied Our revelations, they shall be the dwellers of the (Hell) Fire.”* On the contrary, the disbelievers and those who deny Allah's revelations will be the inmates of Hellfire and they will remain in it forever.

(87) *“O you who believe! Make not unlawful the good things, which Allah (SWT) has made lawful to you, and transgress not. Verily, Allah (SWT) does not like the transgressors.”* i.e. do not exaggerate in your religion and make it difficult for you to follow by even prohibiting those things which Allah

(SWT) has made lawful for you and do not fall into extravagance; rather accept what He has made lawful for you with gratitude, because He does not like those who exceed the bounds set by Him.

(88) *“And eat of the things which Allah (SWT) has provided for you, lawful and good, and fear Allah (SWT) in Whom you believe.”* i.e. eat all the pure and lawful things that Allah (SWT) has made lawful for you and always remain conscious of Allah (SWT) in whom you believe, by fulfilling His commandments and obeying Him sincerely.

(89) *“Allah (SWT) will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths.”* We already commented upon the subject of unintentional oaths in *ayah* 225 of surah *Al-Baqarah*. *“But He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten poor persons, on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families; or clothe them; or set free a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths. Thus Allah (SWT) makes clear to you His revelations, that you may be grateful.”* This *ayah* describes the expiation for breaking one’s deliberate oaths. Allah (SWT) has given a person the choice of three things; Feeding ten poor persons with the average kind of food that he feeds his family, by giving each person half a *Saa*<sup>5</sup> of the usual local staple, such as rice, wheat etc. This is equivalent to approximately one-and-a-half kilograms. If he cannot feed ten persons then he should give clothing for ten poor people, which means giving each of them clothing that is suitable for praying in and if he cannot afford then he has to free a believing slave. And whoever cannot do any of the above should fast for three consecutive days. Therefore, be mindful of your oaths and pay their expiation if you broke them. In this way Allah (SWT) explains His revelations and makes clear His signs to the mankind, so that they are grateful to Him.

(90) *“O you who believe! Intoxicants and gambling, dedication to stones, and raffling by arrows are an abomination of Satan’s handiwork. So avoid that in order that you*

*may be successful.*" In this *ayah* Allah (SWT) forbids the believers from the consumption of intoxicants and gambling. For further explanation on the prohibition of intoxication and gambling refer to *ayah* 219 of *Al-Baqarah* and *ayah* 43 of *An-Nisa*, and refer to *ayah* 3 of this surah for dedication to stone alters and making decision by raffling of arrows. All these are filthy works of the cursed *Satan*. Therefore Allah (SWT) commands His servants to avoid such things and stay away from them as far as possible, so that they may be successful in this world and in the Hereafter.

(91) *"Satan wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah (SWT) and from the prayer."* These are the tools of *Satan* to distract a believer from the worship and remembrance of his Lord and to stir up hatred and discord between the believers. *"So, will you not then abstain?"* This is a stern and final warning from Allah (SWT) concerning the consumption of Intoxicants and gambling.

(92) *"And obey Allah (SWT) and the Messenger (SAW), and beware. Then if you turn away, you should know that it is Our Messenger's duty to convey (the Message) in the clearest way."* Allah (SWT) commands His servants to obey Him and His Messenger (SAW) and abstain from all these things which He has prohibited for you. But those who do not then only they themselves will be responsible for the consequences and there will be no blame on the Prophet (SAW) as his duty is only to convey His message clearly to mankind and it is Allah (SWT) who guides whom He Wills and He will not guide those who disbelieve in Him and His Messengers.

(93) *"Those who believe and do righteous good deeds, there is no sin on them for what they ate (in the past)."* At that time when the *ayaat* prohibiting the intoxicants were revealed, some people asked the Prophet (SAW) about those who died drinking it i.e. before its prohibition. Thus Allah (SWT) revealed these *ayaat*, which meant that He will forgive those who

consumed intoxicants before its prohibition if they had firm faith in Him and His Messenger (SAW) and performed righteous deeds afterwards. *“If they fear Allah (SWT), and believe and do righteous good deeds, and again fear Allah (SWT) and believe, and once again fear Allah (SWT) and do good deeds with perfection. And Allah (SWT) loves the good-doers.”* This is a very important *ayah* which gives an explanation of the three essential elements of *Deen: Islam, Iman* and *Ihsan*. This is also explained in the hadith of Gabriel in which he asked the Prophet (SAW) about these three essential elements. When angel Gabriel asked him about Islam, he replied: *“Islam is that you bear witness that there is no God, except the One Allah (SWT) and that Muhammad (SAW) is the Messenger of Allah (SWT); that you establish your prayers; that you pay Zakah (obligatory charity); that you fast during Ramadan; and that you undertake the Hajj of the Bait Allah, if you are in a position to do so.”* Then Gabriel asked the Prophet (SAW) about Iman, he replied: *“It is to believe in Allah (SWT), His angels, His books, His Messengers, and the Last Day, and to believe in divine destiny, both the good and the evil thereof.”* Then he asked about Ihsan, so the Prophet (SAW) replied: *“It is to worship Allah (SWT) as though you are seeing Him, and while you see Him not, yet truly He sees you”*. Within these three stages the driving force that carries a person from one stage to a higher one is *Taqwa*. It is a state of mind and heart which reflects in every aspect of a believer’s life. It can also be termed as God-consciousness i.e. consciousness of one's duty towards Him, and an awareness of one's accountability to Him. Thus increase in consciousness and awareness of a believer’s duty towards Allah (SWT) also increases him in faith, and spiritually takes him up to a higher level.

(94) *“O you who believe! Allah (SWT) will certainly make a trial of you with something in the game that is well within reach of your hands and your spears, that Allah (SWT) may test who fears Him unseen.”* Allah (SWT) tests His servants with bounties, calamities and afflictions, so that the earnest and sincere believers who fear Him, though unseen, can be distinguished

from those who lack zeal and genuine belief. In this *ayah* the game refers to the hunt of animals which is not allowed in state of *Ihram*. Thus Allah (SWT) says that He tests the believers by making a lawful animal well within their reach of their hands or their spears. *"Then whoever transgresses thereafter, for him there is a painful torment."* This is a threat for those who transgress and disobey Allah (SWT) even after they have been warned and they will suffer a painful punishment in the Hereafter.

(95) *"O you who believe! Do not game while you are in a state of Ihram, and whosoever of you kills it intentionally, the penalty is an offering, brought to the Ka'bah, of a domestic animal equivalent to the one he killed, as determined by two just men among you; or, for expiation, he should feed poor persons, or its equivalent in Fasting, that he may taste the heaviness (punishment) of his deed."* This *ayah* describes the rulings on expiation of killing an animal while in state of *Ihram*. It states that if a person hunts a domestic animal like sheep, goat, cow etc. intentionally while in state of *Ihram* for *Hajj* or *Umrah* then he has to offer a sacrifice at *Ka'bah*, of an animal similar to one that was killed, which will be judged by two men among the believers. If the guilty person cannot afford to sacrifice an animal then he must feed six poor people or fast for three days.<sup>6</sup> This is all done so that the guilty person tastes the evil consequences of his actions. *"Allah (SWT) has forgiven what is past, but whosoever commits it again, Allah (SWT) will take retribution from him. And Allah (SWT) is All-Mighty, All-Able of Retribution."* i.e. Allah (SWT) forgives those sins committed during the time of ignorance, but those who repeats it again after it has been declared prohibited, then He will take retribution from him, and surely Allah (SWT) is All-Mighty and capable of retribution.

(96) *"Lawful to you is the pursuit of water-game and its use for food for the benefit of yourselves and those who travel, but forbidden is the pursuit of land-game as long as you are in a state of Ihram."* Those who travel by sea are allowed to hunt

and eat its food even if they are in a state of *Ihram* for Pilgrimage while the prohibition of hunting on land for them remains unlawful. *"And fear Allah (SWT) to Whom you shall be gathered back."* i.e. be mindful of your duty to Allah (SWT) and refrain from what He has forbidden to you and remember that you will all be assembled in His presence.

(97) *"Allah (SWT) has made the Ka'bah, the Sacred House, an asylum of security for mankind, and also the Sacred Month and the animals of offerings and the garlanded."* Allah (SWT) has made the city of *Makkah* sacred, in which war is prohibited, thus giving a sense of security for those living in it or in its precincts. Further Allah (SWT) reminds us the sanctity of the Sacred month (*Dhul-Hijjah*) so that we refrain from what He has prohibited in it i.e. warfare, and also of those animals sent to the *Ka'bah* for sacrifice and those who have garlands in their necks to mark them off as sacred. *"that you may know that Allah (SWT) has knowledge of all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, and Allah (SWT) has full knowledge of everything."* i.e. Allah (SWT) has made all these symbols as a sign for mankind so that they know that He has supreme knowledge of everything.

(98) *"Know that Allah (SWT) is Severe in punishment and that Allah (SWT) is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."* i.e. He is severe in punishment for those who disobey Him and reject His commandments, but He forgives and bestows His mercy upon those who repent and do righteous deeds thereafter.

(99) *"The Messenger's duty is but to convey (the Message). And Allah (SWT) knows all that you reveal and all that you conceal."* The duty of the Prophet (SAW) is only to give warning and convey the message. Allah (SAW) knows all that you hide and all that you reveal.

(100) *"Say: "Not equal are the evil things and the good things, even though the abundance of evil may please you. "So fear Allah (SWT) much, O men of*

*understanding in order that you may be successful.”* This is an admonition to all mankind that all that is evil cannot be equal to all that is good even though the abundance of bad may dazzle them and they might get inclined towards it. Thus Allah (SWT) commands those who have sound minds to fear Him alone and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds that He has forbidden and perform all kinds of good things that He has permitted so that they may prosper in this world and in the Hereafter.

### **Foot Notes**

[1] Psalm 36: 1.

[2] Psalm 61: 9.

[3] Gospel of Matthew 23: 33.

[4] Bilateral relations between India and Israel have strengthened significantly in recent years with both nations experiencing a convergence of interests on a range of issues, especially in war against Islam.

[5] One Saa' is equal to four Mudd, and one Mudd is equal to the amount held by cupping the two hands together. It is a measure by volume and not by weight.

[6] At-Tabari 11: 31.

(101) *“O you who believe! Ask not about things which, if made plain to you, may cause you trouble.”* Allah (SWT) forbids His servants from asking unnecessary and useless questions for which if answer is sought, it might be difficult for them to adhere to it and they will be sorry afterwards that they had asked the question. It is also recorded in a hadith that Prophet (SAW) said: *“Allah (SWT) has ordained some obligations, so do not ignore them; has set some limits so do not trespass them; has prohibited some things, so do not commit them and has left some things without rulings, out of mercy for you, not that He forgot them, so do not ask about them.”*<sup>1</sup> *“But if you ask about them while the Qur'an is being revealed, they will be made plain to you.”* i.e. if you ask questions about things which are not yet revealed or you have been forbidden from asking them, then these things will be made plain to you by His revelation. *“Allah (SWT) has forgiven that, and Allah (SWT) is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing.”* i.e. Allah (SWT) has forgiven those who asked such questions before this prohibition, and surely He is Forgiving and Most-Forbearing.

(102) *“Before you, a community asked such questions, then on that account they became disbelievers.”* i.e. these people also put such unnecessary questions to their Prophets, and when they were given answers, it made it so difficult for them that they rejected the answers and consequently became disbelievers.

(103) *“Allah (SWT) has not instituted things like Bahirah or a Sa'ibah, or a Wasilah or a Ham. But those who disbelieve invent lies against Allah (SWT), and most of them have no understanding.”* A *Bahirah* was a she-camel whose milk was spared for the idols and no one was allowed to milk it, while a *Sa'ibah* was a she-camel let loose for free pasture for their false gods, e.g. idols, etc., and nothing was allowed to be carried on it. The third kind of animal devoted for their false gods was *Wasilah*, a she-camel set free for idols because it has given birth to a female camel at its first delivery and then again gives birth to a she-camel at its second delivery. As for the *Ham*, it was a male camel freed from work for their idols, after it had finished a number of copulations assigned for it.

All these animals were liberated in honor of idols as practiced by pagan Arabs in the pre Islamic era.

(104) *"And when it is said to them: "Come to what Allah (SWT) has revealed and unto the Messenger (SAW)." They say: "Enough for us is that which we found our fathers following," even though their fathers had no knowledge whatsoever and no guidance."* In this *ayah* Allah (SWT) states that when the disbelievers are asked to follow His religion and follow His commandments and those of His Prophet (SAW), they say that we will only follow our forefathers who worshipped idols and their following is enough for us. So Allah (SWT) asks them: will they still follow their forefathers and imitate their practices even when they know that those whom they follow had no knowledge and guidance?

(105) *"O you who believe! Guard your own souls."* This means that O Muslims take care of your own souls i.e. perform righteous deeds as much as you can and fear Allah (SWT) by abstaining from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden while performing good deeds that He has ordained for you. But this does not mean that people should only take care about themselves and stop enjoining good and forbidding evil to others, rather it is an obligation on every Muslims as the Messenger of Allah (SAW) once said: *"If the people witness evil and do not change it, then Allah (SWT) is about to send His punishment to encompass them<sup>2</sup>."* *"If you follow the right guidance, no hurt can come to you from those who err."* i.e. those who stray from the right path cannot affect those who follow the right guidance. Then Allah (SWT) said: *"The return of you all is to Allah (SWT), then He will inform you about (all) that which you used to do."* i.e. always be mindful of the fact that your final goal is to Allah (SWT), who will show you the truth of all that you used to do.

(106) *"O you who believe! When death approaches any of you, and you make a bequest, then take the testimony of two just men of your own folk or two others from outside, if you are traveling through the land and the calamity of death befalls you. Detain them both after the prayer, (then) if you are in doubt, let them both swear by Allah (SWT) (saying): "We wish not*

*for any worldly gain in this, even though he (the beneficiary) be our near relative. We shall not hide Testimony of Allah (SWT), for then indeed we should be of the sinful."* Allah (SWT) commands His servants to take two just witnesses for their final will. They should be from amongst the Muslims and should be men of honor and integrity. But if a person is traveling through a land and suddenly death comes upon him and he does not find any Muslims to be witnesses for his final will then he has the option to take two non-Muslim witnesses, preferably from amongst the People of the Book. If the beneficiary has any doubts in their truthfulness or integrity then he should detain them after prayers in the mosque and they should testify that they will not sell this testimony for any price, even if it is their own relative and they will not hide or distort, which they have witnessed before Allah (SWT), for if they do so then they will be counted among the sinful.

*(107) "If then it gets known that these two had been guilty of sin, let two others stand forth in their places, nearest in kin from among those who claim a lawful right. Let them swear by Allah (SWT) (saying): "We affirm that our testimony is truer than that of both of them, and that we have not trespassed (the truth), for then indeed we should be of the wrongdoers."*

This *ayah* states that if the two witnesses are found guilty of distorting the testimony or stealing from the wealth of the beneficiary, then oaths are taken from two of the nearest rightful owners as witnesses in their place. These two should also swear by Allah (SWT) and affirm that their testimony is truer than the other two and that they have not transgressed from the truth, for if they do so, then they will be counted among the evil-doers and will be punishable by Allah (SWT).

*(108) "That should make it closer (to the fact) that their testimony would be in its true nature and shape, or else they would fear that (other) oaths would be admitted after their oaths."*

This procedure has been mentioned to eliminate the chances of false evidence, so that the witnesses offer their testimony in truth or at least they have fear that their testimony can be abrogated, so they are not tempted to steal anything or hide the truth. *"And fear Allah (SWT) and listen. And Allah (SWT) does not guide those who are transgressors."* i.e. always be mindful of Allah (SWT) and

be obedient to Him, for He does not give guidance to those who are disobedient transgressors.

(109) *"On the Day when Allah (SWT) will gather the Messengers together and say to them: "What was the response you received? They will say: "We have no knowledge, verily, only You have all the knowledge of the unseen.""* On the *Day of Resurrection*, all the Messengers of Allah (SWT) will be gathered in His presence and they will be asked about the response of their nations to their teachings. The Messengers in their humbleness and out of respect to Allah (SWT) will reply that O our Lord we have no knowledge compared to your infinite knowledge and you perfectly know what our people believed in and what they hid in their breasts as we only saw what was visible thereof, for it is only You who know all that is hidden and all that they revealed.

(110) *"When Allah (SWT) will say: "O Jesus, son of Mary! Remember My Favor to you and to your mother when I supported you with the Holy Spirit."* On the *Day of Resurrection*, Allah (SWT) will remind His Prophet Jesus (AS) of the favors and blessings that He bestowed on him and his mother. He created Jesus (AS) miraculously without father and exalted her mother, purified her and chose her above the women of all nations and strengthened them and supported them with angel Gabriel (AS). *"So that you spoke to the people in the cradle and in maturity."* Jesus (AS) spoke to the people from his cradle defending his mother when they accused Mary (AS) of being unchaste and he also spoke to them when he reached his maturity. Refer to *ayah* 46 of surah *Al-Imran* for further comments on this *ayah*. *"And when I taught you the Book, the Wisdom, the Torah and the Injeel (Gospel)."* Allah (SWT) gave Jesus (AS) the knowledge of writing and Wisdom and also that which was given to Moses (AS) along with the knowledge of *Injeel*. *"And when you made out of the clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, by My Permission, and you breathed into it, and it became a bird by My Permission, and you healed those born blind, and the lepers by My Permission, and when you brought forth the dead by My Permission."* Further Allah (SWT) will remind him of His favors to him and the miracles that he performed by His permission. For further

comments on this *ayah*, refer to *ayah* 49 of *Al-Imran*. *"And when I restrained the Children of Israel from you since you came unto them with clear proofs, and the disbelievers among them said: "This is nothing but evident magic.""* The Children of Israel rejected Jesus (AS), accused him of being a magician and tried to crucify him, even though he showed them clear miracles by Allah's leave. Therefore, Allah (SWT) saved him from their plots and raised him up to heavens.<sup>2</sup>

(111) *"And when I put in the hearts of the disciples to believe in Me and My Messenger."* *Hawarieen* refers to the disciples of Jesus (AS) who believed in him and followed his teachings. Allah (SWT) states that He inspired these disciples to have faith in Him and His Messenger. Thus *"They said: "We believe. And bear witness that we are Muslims.""* i.e. we have believed and have submitted ourselves to Allah's obedience.

(112) *"Remember when the disciples said: "O Jesus, son of Mary (AS)! Can your Lord send down to us a table spread (with food) from heaven?" Jesus (AS) said: "Fear Allah (SWT), if you are indeed believers.""* The disciples requested Jesus (AS) for yet another miracle and asked to supplicate to His Lord to send down a table spread with food for them. In reply Jesus (AS) asked them to have fear of Allah (SWT) and do not make such requests, instead show gratitude to Him for the provisions that He has provided you with, if you are true believers.

(113) *"They said: "We wish to eat thereof and to be stronger in Faith, and to know that you have indeed told us the truth and that we ourselves be its witnesses.""* i.e. they asked Jesus (AS) for the miracle so that to reassure their hearts and to be stronger in faith. This is as Abraham (AS) said: *"My Lord! Show me how you give life to the dead." He (Allah (SWT)) replied: "Have you no faith in this?" Abraham said: "Yes! But I ask this to reassure my heart."*<sup>4</sup>

(114) *"Jesus, son of Mary (AS), said: "O Allah (SWT), our Lord! Send us from heaven a table spread that there may be for us - for the first and the last of us - a festival and a sign from*

*You; and provide us sustenance, for You are the Best of sustainers."* Prophet Jesus (AS) fulfilled the request of his disciples and supplicated to Allah (SWT) to send them a table spread with food, so that his followers will take this day as a festival and a sign from Him. Further he prayed to Allah (SWT) to give them the best of provisions, for surely He is the best of Providers.

(115) *"Allah (SWT) said: "I am going to send it down unto you, but if any of you after that disbelieves, then I will punish him with a torment such as I have not inflicted on anyone among (all) the mankind."* i.e. It has been the *sunnah* of Allah (SWT) that whenever a nation disbelieves after they have been shown clear signs and miracles by Him, they are inflicted with severe punishment. Thus Allah (SWT) states that whosoever disbelieves after there descends a table spread from the heavens then they will certainly suffer a severe torment in this life and in the Hereafter.

(116) *"And (remember) when Allah (SWT) will say: "O Jesus, son of Mary (AS)! Did you say unto men: 'Worship me and my mother as gods besides Allah (SWT)?' " He will say: "Glory be to You! It was not for me to say what I had no right (to say). Had I said such a thing, You would surely have known it. You know what is in my heart though I do not know what is in Yours, truly, You, only You, are the All-Knower of all that is hidden and unseen."* On the *Day of Resurrection* Allah (SWT) will take Jesus (AS) to account about the false doctrines that his followers invented about him, his mother and Allah (SWT). Prophet Jesus (AS) will disclaim any knowledge of these things attributed to him and will glorify his Lord with all due humbleness and submissiveness.

(117) *"Never did I say to them aught except what You did command me to say: "Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord." And I was a witness over them while I dwelt amongst them, but when You took me up, You were the Watcher over them, and You are a Witness to all things."* Jesus (AS) further acknowledges that he was mortal, and that his knowledge was limited like that of a mortal, and he taught his followers the true teachings of Monotheism and commanded the *Children of Israel* to worship Allah (SWT) alone, besides whom none is worthy of worship.

(118) *"If You punish them, they are Your slaves, and if You forgive them, verily You, only You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise."* i.e. Allah (SWT) does whatever He Wills and He is able to do all things. He is the Creator and Master of everything and He punishes whoever He wishes and pardons whoever He likes in His perfect Wisdom.

(119) *"Allah (SWT) will say: "This is a Day on which the truthful will profit from their truth: theirs are Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise) - they shall abide therein forever. Allah (SWT) is pleased with them and they with Him. That is the great success."* This is the proclamation of the good news of Paradise for those who always followed the truth, and also the pleasure of Allah (SWT), the greatest success indeed.

(120) *"To Allah (SWT) belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and all that is therein, and He is Able to do all things."* To Allah belongs the control over the heavens and the earth and all that they contain. He has power over all things.

#### **Foot Notes**

[1] Sahih Al-Bukhari 4623.

[2] Musnad Ahmed 1: 5.

[3] Cf. Surah An-Nisa(4): 157.

[4] Surah Al-Baqarah (2): 260.