

in the Qur'an. If the context is discussing some minor issues, and Allah wants to refer to some reward or punishment connected to the minor issues, and that minor issue comes under the same general heading, He connects the reward to that general heading under which that minor issue and others come, so that no one would think that the ruling is limited only to this minor issue. This is one of the brilliant subtleties of the Qur'an. Thus the former hypocrite who repents is included with the believers and will have the same reward as them.

Then Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the perfect nature of His self-sufficiency and the vastness of His forbearing, mercy and kindness: ﴿Why would Allah punish you, if you are grateful and believe?﴾. Because Allah is Appreciative and All-Knowing, He will give those who carry the heavy burden of commitment for His sake and persist in doing righteous deeds an immense reward and abundant kindness. Whoever gives up something for the sake of Allah, Allah will give him something better than it.

Furthermore, He knows how you appear outwardly and what is in your hearts, and He knows what you do and what it is based on, be it sincerity or the opposite. He wants you to repent and turn back to Him, then if you turn to Him, why should He punish you? He does not find any joy in punishing you and He does not benefit from punishing you; rather the sinner only harms himself, just as the deed of one who is obedient is to his own benefit.

Gratitude is humility in the heart and acknowledgement of Allah's blessings, utterance of thanks to the Bestower of those blessings, and physical acts of obedience to Him; it also means not making use of His blessings to disobey Him.



﴿ لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلِمَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا عَلِيمًا ﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٤٨) ﴿ إِنَّ تُبْدُوا خَيْرًا أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ أَوْ تَعْفُوا عَنْ سُوءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا قَدِيرًا ﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٤٩)

النساء: ١٤٨-١٤٩

- 4:148. Allah does not like anyone to speak ill [of others] in public, except the one who has been wronged. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.
- 4:149. If you do good openly or conceal it or pardon a wrong [done to you], then verily Allah is Pardoning, Omnipotent.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He does not like anyone to speak ill (of others) in public; in other words, He dislikes and hates that, and will punish for it. That includes all bad words that cause offence and upset others, such as insulting, slandering, reviling and so on. All of that is forbidden and is hateful to Allah.

This indicates that He loves good words such as dhikr and kind and gentle words.

﴿except the one who has been wronged﴾ that is, it is permissible for him to pray against the one who has wronged him, to complain about him and to say bad things back to the one who said it to him, without lying about it, going beyond the level of wrong that was done to him, or overstepping the mark and reviling anyone else. Yet it is better to pardon him and not to respond in kind, as Allah says (ﷻ):

﴿...but whoever forgives and reconciles, his reward is with Allah...﴾
(ash-Shoorâ 42: 40)

﴿Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing﴾ because the verse refers to words, whether they be bad, good or permissible. Allah tells us that He is All-Hearing and hears what you say, so beware of speaking of

anything that angers your Lord, lest He punish you for that. This is also encouragement to say good words.

﴿All-Knowing﴾ and He knows your intentions and the motives behind what you say.

Then Allah says: ﴿If you do good openly or conceal it﴾ this includes good in word and deed, open or hidden, obligatory or recommended ﴿or pardon a wrong [done to you]﴾ that is, if you pardon someone who mistreated you physically, financially, or by impugning your honour, and you forgive him, the reward is commensurate with the type of deed. If a person forgives for the sake of Allah, Allah will forgive him; if he shows kindness, Allah will be kind to him. Hence Allah says: ﴿then verily Allah is Pardoning, Omnipotent﴾ that is, He forgives the mistakes of His slaves and their grave sins, so He conceals their errors, then He grants them His perfect forgiveness that stems from His might and power.

From this verse we learn the meanings of the names and attributes of Allah, and that His is the creation and the command (7: 54); this is the implication of His names. Therefore the rulings are connected to His beautiful names, as in this verse.

When He mentioned doing good and pardoning wrongs, He made a connection between that and learning about His names; that is sufficient and there is no need to mention the specific reward.



﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ، وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ، وَيَقُولُوا نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٥٤﴾ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا ﴿٥٥﴾ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ، وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ أُولَئِكَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرَهُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٥٦﴾﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٥٠-١٥٢)

- 4:150. Those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers, and want to make a distinction between [belief in] Allah and [belief in] His Messengers, and say: We believe in some and disbelieve in others, and seek to adopt a way in between,
- 4:151. it is they who are indeed disbelievers, and We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating punishment.
- 4:152. To those who believe in Allah and His Messengers, and make no distinction between [belief in] any of them, He will give their [due] rewards. For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

These are two categories that are clear to everyone: the believer who believes in Allah, all of His Messengers and His Books, and the disbeliever who disbelieves in all of that.

But there is a third category, which is the one who claims to believe in some of the Messengers but not others, and thinks that this way will save him from the punishment of Allah. But this is no more than wishful thinking, because these people want to make a distinction between Allah and His Messengers.

The one who believes in Allah in the true sense will believe in all of His Messengers, because that is part of perfect belief. The one who opposes any of His Messengers has in fact opposed Allah and opposed all of His Messengers, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Whoever is an enemy to Allah and His angels and Messengers, to Jibreel and Meekâl [Meekâ'eel], – then indeed, Allah is an enemy to the disbelievers.﴾ (al-Baqarah 2: 98)

Similarly, the one who disbelieves in any Messenger has disbelieved in all of the Messengers, even the Messenger in whom he claims to believe. Hence Allah says: ﴿it is they who are indeed disbelievers﴾. That is lest anyone imagine that their position is a kind of middle way between faith and disbelief.

The reason why they are disbelievers – even in that in which they claim to believe – is that for every proof that led them to believe in the Messengers in whom they do believe, there is the same or equally strong or even stronger evidence for the Prophet in whom they disbelieve, and for every specious argument that they use to undermine the Prophet in whom they disbelieve, there is an equal or stronger argument to undermine the one in whom they do believe.

After establishing the above, there is nothing left except whims and desires, and nothing but mere claims that anyone could counter with a similar claim. As the Qur'an states that these people are indeed disbelievers, it then refers to a punishment that applies to them and to all disbelievers: ﴿and We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating punishment﴾. Just as they were too arrogant to believe in Allah, He will humiliate them with a painful punishment and disgrace.

﴿To those who believe in Allah and His Messengers﴾ – this includes belief in all that Allah has told us about Himself and all that the Messengers brought of stories of the past and rulings ﴿and make no distinction between [belief in] any of them﴾ that is, the Messengers; rather they believe in all of them. This is true faith and certainty that is based on proof.

﴿He will give their [due] rewards﴾ that is, as a reward for their faith and what resulted from that of righteous deeds, good words and good attitudes, each according to his situation. Perhaps this is the reason why the reward is described as being theirs

﴿For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful﴾ – He forgives bad deeds and accepts good deeds.



﴿يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَىٰ أَكْبَرًا مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالُوا أَرِنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّاعِقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ مِنْ

بَعْدَ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَعَفَوْنَا عَنْ ذَلِكَ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسَىٰ سُلْطٰنًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١٥٣﴾ وَرَفَعْنَا
فَوْقَهُمُ الطُّورَ بِمِيثَاقِهِمْ وَقُلْنَا لَهُمُ ادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ لَا تَعْدُوا فِي السَّبْتِ
وَإِذَا قُلْتُمْ لِلنَّاسِ عِزًّا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٥٤﴾ فِيمَا نَقُضِيهِمْ مِيثَاقَهُمْ وَكَفَرِهِمْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَقَالِهِمْ
الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقِّ وَقَالِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا
قَلِيلًا ﴿١٥٥﴾ وَبِكُفْرِهِمْ وَقَالِهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ بُهْتِنًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٥٦﴾ وَقَالِهِمْ إِنَّا قُلْنَا لِلنَّبِيِّ
عِيسَىٰ ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ رُسُولًا اللَّهُ وَمَا قُلُّوهُ وَمَا صَلَّبُوهُ وَلٰكِنْ شِئْنَا لَهُمْ وَإِنَّا لَنَّا خٰلِفُوهُ
فِيهِ لَقِيَ سَلَكٌ مِنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا أَنْبَاعُ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قُلُّوهُ يَقِينًا ﴿١٥٧﴾ بَلْ رَفَعُوهُ
اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٥٨﴾ وَإِن مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ
وَيَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِدًا ﴿١٥٩﴾ فَيُظَاهَرُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَمًا عَلَيْهِمْ طَبِئَتْ
أُحْلَتْ لَهُمْ وَبِصَدِّهِمْ عَنِ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا ﴿١٦٠﴾ وَأَخَذَهُمُ الرِّبَا وَقَدَّحُوا عَنْهُ وَأَكَلِهِمْ
أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٦١﴾ ﴿سورة النساء: ١٥٣-

(١٦١)

- 4:153. The People of the Book ask you to bring down for them a Book from heaven. Indeed they asked Moosâ for something even greater than that, when they said: Let us see Allah with our own eyes. But a thunderbolt struck them for their transgression. Then they took the calf [for worship] after the clear signs had come to them. Yet We pardoned [even] that, and gave Moosâ clear authority.
- 4:154. And We raised above them the Mount, while making a covenant with them [so as to make them accept it]; and We said: Enter the gate bowing down with humility; and We said to them: Do not break the Sabbath. And We took from them a solemn covenant.
- 4:155. [We punished them] because of their breaking of their covenant, their rejection of the revelations of Allah, their slaying of the Prophets unjustifiably and their saying: Our hearts are impenetrably wrapped [against whatever you say] – Nay, Allah

has sealed up their hearts for their disbelief; little is it they believe –

- 4:156. [And We punished them] because of their disbelief and their uttering a terrible slander against Maryam.
- 4:157. And because of their saying: We slew the Messiah 'Eesâ son of Maryam, the Messenger of Allah. But they did not slay him or crucify him; rather [another man] was made to resemble him to them [and that man was crucified]. Those who differ concerning this matter are in doubt concerning it, with no [certain] knowledge, but only conjecture to follow. But they certainly did not slay him.
- 4:158. Rather Allah took him up to Himself; and Allah is Almighty, Most Wise.
- 4:159. There is none among the People of the Book but will believe in him before his death; and on the Day of Resurrection he will be a witness against them.
- 4:160. Because of the wrongdoing of the Jews, We forbade to them certain good things that had [previously] been permitted to them; and because of their barring many from the path of Allah,
- 4:161. and because of their taking usury, even though it had been forbidden to them, and because of their devouring people's wealth wrongfully. We have prepared for the disbelievers among them a painful punishment.

This demand from the People of the Book to the Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) was due to stubbornness and was an audacious suggestion. They made this request a condition of their believing or otherwise. They asked him to bring down the Qur'an to them all at once, as the Torah and Gospel had come down. This was the utmost wrongdoing and ignorance on their part, because the Messenger (ﷺ) was a human being, a slave under the command of Allah who had no power to do anything. Rather all matters are under the control of Allah

and it is He Who sends and reveals whatever He will to His slaves, as Allah tells us about the Messenger (ﷺ), when mentioning the signs that the polytheists suggested to Muhammad (ﷺ):

﴿...Say: Glory be to my Lord! Am I anything but a man, sent as a Messenger?﴾ (al-Isrā' 17: 93)

The same applies to their making the criterion between truth and falsehood nothing more than the matter of whether the Book is sent down all at once or piecemeal. This is simply an idea of theirs for which there is no proof and no reason, or even any weak argument to support it. Where do we find in the story of the prophethood of any of the Prophets that if a Messenger brings to you a Book that was revealed piecemeal, then you should not believe in him or accept him?

Rather the fact that the Qur'an was revealed piecemeal, according to the circumstances, is one of the indications of its greatness and Allah's care for the one to whom it was sent down, as He says:

﴿Those who disbelieve say: Why was the Qur'an not sent down to him all at once? [It has been revealed] thus so that We may strengthen your heart thereby, and We have imparted it to you by gradual revelation. Whenever they come to you [O Muhammad] with an argument, We reveal to you the truth and the best explanation.﴾ (al-Furqān 25: 32-33)

When Allah mentioned their invalid objections, He pointed out that there is nothing strange in their attitude, because in the past there has been a suggestion of something even more reprehensible to the Messenger in whom they claimed to believe, when they asked him to let them see Allah with their own eyes, and they took the calf as a god and worshipped it, after they had seen signs with their own eyes that no one else had seen.

They also refused to accept the rulings of their own Book, namely the Torah, until the mountain was raised above their heads and they

were threatened that if they did not believe, it would fall on them. So they accepted that reluctantly, as they had no choice but to believe.

They also refused to enter the gates of the town which they were commanded to enter bowing down in humility and seeking forgiveness, but they went against that in word and deed, and some of them also transgressed the Sabbath, therefore Allah has sent that horrible punishment upon them.

When Allah took from them a solemn covenant, they cast it behind their backs, rejected the revelations of Allah and killed His Messengers unlawfully. Moreover, they said that they killed the Messiah 'Eesâ and crucified him, when in fact they did not kill him or crucify him; rather (another man) was made to resemble him to them, and they killed and crucified that man.

They claimed that their hearts were impenetrably wrapped and could not understand what was said to them, and they barred people from the path of Allah, so they were barred from the truth. They called people to their way of misguidance and transgression, and devouring unlawful earnings and usury, even though Allah had issued a stern prohibition against their doing that. So it comes as no surprise that the people who did these deeds would ask the Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) to bring down to them a Book from heaven.

This is the best way to counter arguments that are founded on an invalid basis. If the other person produces a false argument that becomes a source of confusion to him and others and is the cause of them rejecting the truth, we should highlight his evil characteristics and some of his misdeeds that are among the worst of what he did, so that everyone will know that this objection comes from this ignoble man, and that he has previous misdeeds along with this invalid argument of his.

Similarly, any argument they may present to cast aspersions on the prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ) may be countered by a similar

or stronger argument about the prophethood of those in whom they claim to believe, so as to ward off their evil thereby and suppress their falsehood.

For every argument they present to affirm the prophethood of those in whom they believe, there is a similar or stronger argument to prove and affirm prophethood of Muhammad (ﷺ).

Because the aim of listing their evil actions was to establish this argument, Allah did not discuss them in detail here. Rather He referred to them here, and discussed them in detail elsewhere, where it was appropriate to do so.

«There is none among the People of the Book but will believe in him before his death» – it may be that the pronoun in the phrase «before his death» refers to the People of the Book. According to this view, every individual Jew or Christian will believe in 'Eesâ (ﷺ) when death approaches and the truth becomes clear to him, but that faith will be of no benefit because it will be faith by compulsion. This is an implicit threat and warning to them that they should not continue as they are, for they will regret it before death; so how will they be on the day when they are gathered and resurrected?

Or it may be that the pronoun in the phrase «before his death» refers to 'Eesâ (ﷺ). In that case, what is meant is: there is no one among the People of the Book but he will surely believe in the Messiah (ﷺ) before the Messiah's death. That will be when the Hour approaches and its major signs appear. There are numerous ṣaḥeeḥ hadiths which speak of his descent at the end of this Ummah; he will kill the Dajjāl and abolish the jizyah, and the People of the Book will believe in him along with the believers. On the Day of Resurrection, 'Eesâ (ﷺ) will be a witness against them and will testify concerning their deeds and whether or not they were in accordance with the laws of Allah.

On that day he will only testify to the falseness of everything they believed and did that was contrary to the teachings of the Qur'an and

the message of Muhammad (ﷺ). We know that because we know about the perfect justice and sincerity of the Messiah (ﷺ) and that he will testify only to that which is true. That which was brought by Muhammad (ﷺ) is true and everything other than that is misguidance and falsehood.

Then Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He forbade to the People of the Book many good things that had previously been permissible for them. This prohibition was a punishment because of their wrongdoing and transgression, their barring people from the path of Allah, their preventing them from following true guidance, and their consuming *ribā* when they had been forbidden to do so. Hence Allah gave them a fitting punishment by withholding from them many of the good things that were originally permitted, even though they are good. In the case of the things that are prohibited to this Ummah, this prohibition is to keep them away from unclean things that are detrimental to their spiritual and worldly interests.



﴿لَكِنَّ الرّٰسِخُوْنَ فِي الْعِلْمِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِمَا اُنزِلَ اِلَيْكَ وَمَا اُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ
وَالْمُقِيْمِيْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَالْمُوْتُوْبَاتِ الزَّكٰوةَ وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ اُولٰٓئِكَ
سَنُوْتِيْهِمْ اَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٦٢)

4:162. But those among them who are firmly grounded in knowledge, and the believers, believe in what has been sent down to you [O Muhammad], and what was sent down before you; who establish regular prayer and give zakāh, and who believe in Allah and the Last Day – to these We will grant an immense reward.

Having mentioned the bad characteristics of the People of the Book, Allah then mentions those among them who are praiseworthy, as He says: ﴿But those among them who are firmly grounded in

knowledge» that is, those in whose hearts knowledge is deeply entrenched and faith is firmly rooted. That resulted in them having complete faith «in what has been sent down to you [O Muhammad], and what was sent down before you». It also resulted in them doing righteous deeds, namely establishing prayer and giving zakâh, which are the best of deeds, for they include sincerity towards Allah and kindness towards people. They also believed in the Last Day, hence they feared punishment and hoped for the promised reward.

«to these We will grant an immense reward» because they combined knowledge, faith and righteous deeds with belief in the earlier and later Books and Messengers.



﴿ إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَى وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُونُسَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا ﴿١٦٣﴾ وَرُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا لَمْ نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ ﴿١٦٤﴾ وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْوِيمًا ﴿١٦٥﴾ رُسُلًا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٦٣-١٦٥)

4:163. We have sent revelation to you [O Muhammad], as We sent it to Nooh and the Prophets after him; We sent revelation to Ibraheem, Isma'eel, Is-hâq, Ya'qoob and his sons, to 'Eesâ, Ayyoob, Yoonus, Hâroon, and Sulaymân, and to Dâwood We gave the *Zaboor* [Psalms].

4:164. And [We sent revelation to] Messengers of whom We have told you, and other Messengers of whom We have not told you. And Allah spoke directly to Moosâ.

4:165. Messengers sent as bearers of glad tidings and as warners, so that humankind would have no excuse before Allah, after the [coming of the] Messengers. For Allah is Almighty, Most Wise.

Here Allah tells us that He revealed to His slave and Messenger (ﷺ) great teachings and laws, and true news of the past, such as He revealed to these earlier Prophets. From this we learn a number of things:

- That Muhammad (ﷺ) is not a new phenomenon among the Messengers. Before him Allah sent many Messengers, so there is no reason to find his being sent strange except ignorance or stubbornness.
- That he received revelation as they did concerning the fundamentals of faith and enjoining of justice, on which all the Messengers are agreed; they confirmed one another and their messages were in harmony.
- That he comes under the same category as those Messengers, so people should think of him as a brother to them, for his call is the same as theirs and their attitudes are in harmony. The source of their message is one and their aims are one. He is not mentioned alongside unknown figures or liars or unjust kings.
- That listing these Messengers is by way of praising and commending them and describing their character, which strengthens the believers' belief in them and love for them, and their desire to emulate them, follow their path and learn more about them. This is a confirmation of the verses in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Peace be upon Nooh among all nations.﴾ (as-Şaffât 37: 79)

﴿Peace be upon Ibrâheem.﴾ (as-Şaffât 37: 109)

﴿Peace be upon Moosâ and Hâroon.﴾ (as-Şaffât 37: 120)

﴿Peace be upon Ilyâs. Thus do We reward those who do good.﴾ (as-Şaffât 37: 130-131)

Every doer of good is praised by people commensurate with his good deeds, and the Messengers – especially those named – attained the highest level of doing good.

As Allah referred to what they have in common (which is that they all received revelation), He then mentions how some of them were singled out for particular blessings. He tells us that He gave Dâwood the Zaboor (Psalms), which is the well-known scripture. Allah gave it especially to Dâwood (ﷺ) because of his virtue and high and honourable status. He spoke directly to Moosâ, with no intermediary, and Moosâ became well known for that among all humankind and is known as “Moosâ to whom the Most Gracious spoke directly.”

Allah tells us that He has told His Messenger (ﷺ) about some of the Messengers, and there are others about whom He has not told him. This indicates that they are many and that Allah sent them with glad tidings, to those who obey Allah and follow them, of happiness in this world and in the hereafter, and with a warning, to those who disobeyed Allah and opposed them, of misfortune in both realms, so that people would have no excuse before Allah, after the coming of the Messengers, and they would not be able to say:

﴿...No bearer of glad tidings and no warner ever came to us. But now there has come to you a bearer of glad tidings and a warner...﴾

(*al-Mâ'idah* 5: 19)

So people no longer have any excuse before Allah, because He sent the Messengers one after another to explain to them matters of religion and what pleases and displeases their Lord, and the paths that lead to paradise and those that lead to hell. So whoever disbelieves after that has no one to blame but himself.

This is indicative of the perfect might and wisdom of Allah (ﷻ), that He sent the Messengers to them and sent down the Books to them. This also happened by His grace and kindness, because people are in the greatest and most desperate need of the Prophets. So Allah

met this need, to Him be praise and thanks and we ask Him, as He blessed them initially by sending them, to complete His blessing by enabling them to follow their path, for He is most generous and kind.



﴿لَكِنَ اللّٰهُ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا اَنْزَلَ اِلَيْكَ اَنْزَلَهُ بِعِلْمِهِ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يَشْهَدُوْنَ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ شَهِدًا﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٦٦)

4:166. But Allah bears witness to the truth of what He has sent to you, as He has sent it with His knowledge, and the angels bear witness; and sufficient is Allah as a witness.

Having mentioned that He sent revelation to His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) as He sent revelation to his fellow Messengers, Allah tells us here of His testimony to the truth of his mission and the soundness of the message he brought, and He tells us that «He has sent it with His knowledge». It may be that what is meant is that He has sent it down containing His knowledge; in other words, it contains divine knowledge, Islamic rulings and news of the unseen, which is part of the knowledge of Allah (ﷻ) that He has taught to His slaves.

Or it may be that what is meant is that He sent it down knowingly, and this is by way of testifying to it. In other words, He sent down this Qur'an, containing commands and prohibitions, knowing that and knowing the character of the one to whom He sent it down, and that he (the Prophet [ﷺ]) called the people to it. So whoever responds and believes is His ally, and whoever disbelieves and is hostile is His enemy. Allah (ﷻ) will give support to His Prophet (ﷺ), grant him victory after victory, answer his prayers, defeat his enemies and help his supporters.

Is there any testimony greater than this?

It is not possible to doubt this testimony, except by doubting the knowledge, might and wisdom of Allah.

Allah (ﷻ) also tells us of the testimony of the angels in support of what He has sent down to His Messenger (ﷺ), because of their perfect faith and the importance of the thing witnessed. None can testify about important matters but the elites, as Allah (ﷻ) says concerning testimony to His oneness:

﴿Allah bears witness that there is no god but He, as do His angels and people of knowledge; He is the upholder of justice. There is no god but He, the Almighty, the Most Wise.﴾ (Āl 'Imrān 3: 18)

And Allah is sufficient as Witness.

Allah tells us about the message of the Messengers whom He sent (blessings and peace of Allah be upon them), and He tells us about the message of the final one, Muhammad (ﷺ). He testifies in its favour and the angels also testify. This indicates that the matter in question is to be affirmed and it is true and sound, so we must believe in them (the Prophets), accept their message and follow them.

Then Allah warns us against disbelieving in them:



﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قَدْ ضَلُّوا ضَلًّا بَعِيدًا ﴿١٦٧﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَظَلَمُوا لَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا يَهْدِيَهُمْ طَرِيقًا ﴿١٦٨﴾ إِلَّا طَرِيقَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا ﴿١٦٩﴾﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٦٧-١٦٩)

- 4:167. Verily those who disbelieve and bar others from the path of Allah have indeed gone far astray.
- 4:168. Those who disbelieve and do wrong, Allah will not forgive them nor guide them to any path,
- 4:169. except the path that leads to hell, to abide therein forever. And that is easy for Allah.

«Verily those who disbelieve and bar others from the path of Allah» that is, they combine their own disbelief with barring others from the path of Allah. This refers to the leaders of disbelief and the proponents of misguidance.

«have indeed gone far astray» and what misguidance can be greater than that of one who goes astray himself and leads others astray? He carries the burden of two sins and incurs two losses, and he misses out on guidance twice (his own guidance and that of those whom he leads astray). Hence Allah says:

«Those who disbelieve and do wrong» – this wrongdoing is in addition to their disbelief; when wrongdoing (*dhulm*) is mentioned on its own, it includes disbelief.

What is meant by wrongdoing here is the deeds of disbelief and getting carried away in them. These people are far removed from forgiveness and guidance to the straight path. Hence Allah says:

«Allah will not forgive them nor guide them to any path, except the path that leads to hell».

It is not possible for them to be forgiven or guided, because they persisted in transgression and increased in disbelief. So a seal has been placed on their hearts and the ways of guidance have been barred to them, because of what they have earned.

«...And your Lord is never unjust to His slaves.» (*Fuṣṣilat* 41: 46)

«And that is easy for Allah» that is, Allah does not care about them and is not concerned with them, because they are fit for nothing good, and nothing suits them but the way they chose for themselves.



﴿يَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمُ الرَّسُولُ بِالْحَقِّ مِنَ رَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ وَإِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٧﴾﴾ (سورة النساء:

4:170. O humankind, the Messenger has come to you with the truth from your Lord, so believe, for it is better for you. But if you disbelieve, then surely to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth, and Allah is All-Knowing, Most Wise.

Here Allah commands all people to believe in His slave and Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ), and He mentions the reason why they should believe in him, the benefits of believing in him, and the harm that results from not believing in him. The reason is, as He tells us, that he brought the truth to them; in other words, his coming as a Messenger in and of itself is true, and the teachings that he brought are true.

The wise person would realise that for people to continue wandering blindly in ignorance and disbelief, without receiving any message for a long time, is not in accordance with the wisdom and mercy of Allah. The sending of the Messenger (ﷺ) is in itself part of His great wisdom and mercy, and is aimed at showing them guidance away from misguidance. Simply looking at his message offers definitive proof of the soundness of his claim to prophethood.

The same may be said of looking at the great message he brought and the straight path. His message tells us about matters of the unseen, in the past and in the future, and about Allah and the Last Day; these matters cannot be known except through revelation and the sending of Messengers. Islam enjoins all that is good and righteous, wisdom, justice, kindness, truthfulness, righteousness, upholding of ties and good attitudes, and it prohibits evil, corruption, transgression, injustice, bad attitudes, lying, and disobedience to parents. All of this offers definitive proof that it comes from Allah. The more a person increases in knowledge of the message, the stronger his faith and certainty become. This is the reason for believing.

As for the benefits of faith, Allah says that it is good for us, and good is the opposite of evil. So faith is good for the believers,

physically, mentally and spiritually, in this world and in the hereafter. That is because of what results from faith of interests and benefits, and rewards in this world and in the hereafter. The fruits of faith include divine help, guidance, knowledge, righteous deeds, happiness, joy and paradise with all that it contains of delights. All of that results from faith. By the same token, misery in this world and the hereafter stems from a lack of faith or a deficiency therein.

With regard to the harm of not believing in the Prophet (ﷺ), that is known from the opposite of what results from believing in him. The individual only harms himself, for Allah (ﷻ) has no need of him; the sin of the sinners does not harm him in the slightest. Hence He said: ﴿then surely to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth﴾ that is, He created everything and everything belongs to Him and is subject to His control.

﴿and Allah is All-Knowing﴾ – He knows everything
 ﴿Most Wise﴾ in what He creates and commands.

Thus He knows who is deserving of guidance or misguidance, and is wise in His allocation of both.



﴿يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةٌ ۚ أَنْتَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ ۚ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ ۚ أَن يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ ۚ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ

وَكَيلاً ﴿١٧١﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٧١)

- 4:171. O People of the Book, do not exceed the bounds [of truth] in your religion, and do not say anything about Allah except the truth. The Messiah 'Eesā son of Maryam was [no more than] a Messenger of Allah, and His word, which He bestowed upon

Maryam, and a soul created by Him. So believe in Allah and His Messengers. Do not say: Three [trinity]; desist, for that will be better for you. Allah is indeed only one God. Glory be to Him, [far exalted is He] above having a son. To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth, and sufficient is Allah as a disposer of affairs.

Here Allah (ﷻ) forbids the People of the Book to exaggerate in matters of religion, which means overstepping the mark and going beyond the prescribed limit, and doing something which is not prescribed. This is what the Christians did when they exaggerated about 'Eesâ (ﷺ), and raised him from the status of a Prophet and Messenger to the status of divinity which is not befitting for any but Allah.

Just as falling short and being heedless is prohibited, so too is exaggeration. Hence Allah says: ﴿and do not say anything about Allah except the truth﴾. These words imply three things, two of which are prohibitions: it is forbidden to tell lies about Allah and to speak without knowledge about His names, attributes, deeds, religion and Messengers. The third thing is a command, which is to speak the truth in all matters.

Because this principle is universal, and the context here has to do with 'Eesâ (ﷺ), the verse states that one must speak the truth about him, which is contrary to what the Jews and Christians say. Allah says: ﴿The Messiah 'Eesâ son of Maryam was [no more than] a Messenger of Allah﴾ that is, the most that the Messiah (ﷺ) can be, and the highest level of perfection he can reach – which is the highest level any created being can reach – is the level of being a Messenger of Allah, which is the highest status and brings the greatest reward.

﴿and﴾ he is ﴿His word, which He bestowed upon Maryam﴾ that is, a word which Allah spoke and 'Eesâ came into being thereby. He

was not that word **per se**; rather he came into being by means of that word. Describing him as His word is by way of honour and respect (and is not to be taken literally, as the Christians do).

The same applies to the phrase ﴿and a soul created by Him﴾, that is, one of the souls that He created, and He perfected it by bestowing upon it attributes of virtue and perfection. Allah sent Jibreel (ﷺ), who breathed into the womb of Maryam, and she became pregnant, by Allah's leave, with 'Eesâ (ﷺ).

Having explained the true nature of 'Eesâ (ﷺ), Allah then commands the People of the Book to believe in Him and His Messengers, and He forbids them to describe Allah as "the third of three", which is what the Christians say, and how wrong is what they suggest.

Allah instructs them to desist, and tells them that this will be better for them, because it is the only way to salvation; any other way only leads to doom. Then He declares himself to be above having any partner or child, as He says: ﴿Allah is indeed only one God﴾ that is, He is the only divine being, and it is not appropriate to worship any but Him.

﴿Glory be to Him﴾ – this is a declaration of His Highness and holiness

﴿[far exalted is He] above having a son﴾ because ﴿To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth﴾. Everything belongs to Him and is in need of Him, so it is impossible for Him to have a partner or child among them.

Then Allah tells us that He is the owner of the higher and lower realms, and that He is taking care of their interests in this world and in the hereafter, He is watching over them, and He will requite them accordingly.



﴿لَنْ يَسْتَنْكِفَ الْمَسِيحُ أَنْ يَكُونَ عَبْدًا لِلَّهِ وَلَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ وَمَنْ يَسْتَنْكِفْ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ، وَيَسْتَكْبِرْ فَسَيَحْشُرُهُمْ إِلَيْهِ جَمِيعًا﴾ (١٧٣) ﴿فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدُهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْتَنكَفُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فَيُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا وَلَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٧٢-١٧٣)

- 4:172. The Messiah would never disdain to be a slave to Allah, nor would the angels who are close to Him. Whosoever disdains His worship and is arrogant, then surely Allah will gather them all before Him.
- 4:173. Then, as for those who believe and do righteous deeds, He [Allah] will give them their reward in full, and will give them yet more out of His bounty. But as for those who are disdainful and arrogant, He will give them a painful punishment, and they will not find for themselves, besides Allah, any protector or helper.

Having mentioned the exaggeration of the Christians about 'Eesâ (ﷺ) and having affirmed that he is His slave and Messenger, Allah tells us here that 'Eesâ would never disdain to worship his Lord. In other words, he would not refuse to worship Him out of resentment. Neither he ﴿nor... the angels who are close to Him﴾ would show such disdain. Thus Allah declares them to be above having such an attitude, so it is more appropriate that they should be above arrogance. Negating a thing affirms its opposite, hence we know that 'Eesâ and the angels who are close to Allah worship their Lord willingly and they love to strive hard in doing so, each according to his circumstances. Hence they deserve that great honour and triumph, for they did not disdain to be slaves and acknowledge His Lordship and divinity.

Rather they realised that their need for that was greater than their need for anything else.

No one should think of 'Eesâ or anyone else being above the position that Allah gave him or think that raising him above the status of being a slave is a kind of ascribing perfection to him; rather it is the essence of imperfection and is something blameworthy and punishable. Hence Allah says: ﴿Whosoever disdains His worship and is arrogant, then surely Allah will gather them all before Him﴾ that is, He will gather all people before Him, those who were disdainful and arrogant, as well as His believing slaves. He will judge between them with justice and requite them decisively.

Then Allah gives more details of His judgement concerning them: ﴿Then, as for those who believe and do righteous deeds﴾ that is, they combine faith as enjoined with righteous deeds, both obligatory and encouraged, with regard to the rights of Allah and the rights of His slaves.

﴿He [Allah] will give them their reward in full﴾ that is, the rewards that He connected to good deeds, each according to his level of faith and action

﴿and will give them yet more out of His bounty﴾ of reward that is not earned by their deeds and which never crossed their minds. This includes everything that there is in paradise of food, drink, marriage, scenery, happiness, joy, comfort and physical pleasure. It also includes all good things, both spiritual and worldly, that are connected to faith and righteous deeds.

﴿But as for those who are disdainful and arrogant﴾ that is, they are too arrogant to worship Allah (ﷻ)

﴿He will give them a painful punishment﴾ which is the wrath and anger of Allah, and the kindled fire that leaps up to the hearts

﴿and they will not find for themselves, besides Allah, any protector or helper﴾ that is, they will not find anyone among humanity to protect them and help them to get what they want, or to help them

and ward off what they fear. Rather they will be abandoned by the Most Merciful of those who show mercy, and He will leave them to their eternal punishment. Whatever Allah (ﷻ) decrees, none can put back His decree and none can change His will.



﴿يَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بُرْهَانٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا مُبِينًا ﴿١٧٤﴾ فَأَمَّا
الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِهِ، فَسَيُدْخِلُهُمْ فِي رَحْمَةٍ مِنْهُ وَفَضْلِ
وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمًا ﴿١٧٥﴾﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٧٤-١٧٥)

- 4:174. O humankind, proof has come to you from your Lord, and We have sent down to you a manifest light.
- 4:175. As for those who believe in Allah and hold fast to Him, He will admit them to His mercy and grace, and guide them to Him on a straight path.

Here Allah (ﷻ) reminds all people of what He has shown them of definitive proof and manifest light, thus establishing proof against them and making the path clear to them, as He says: ﴿O humankind, proof has come to you from your Lord﴾ that is, definitive proof of the truth and clarification of truth and its opposite. This includes both rational and textual evidence, and the signs in every region of the earth and in people themselves:

﴿We will show them Our signs in the universe and in their own selves, until it becomes clear to them that it [the Qur'an] is the truth...﴾
(Fussilat 41: 53)

The words ﴿from your Lord﴾ indicate how great and honourable this proof is, as it comes from your Lord, Who is guiding you in your religious and worldly affairs. Part of His guidance for which He should be praised and thanked, is that He has sent you proof in order to guide you thereby to the straight path, so that you might reach paradise.

«and We have sent down to you a manifest light», which is this Holy Qur'an, which includes all branches of knowledge attained by the earlier and later generations; true and beneficial information; prescription of everything that is fair, sublime and good; and prohibition of everything that is wrong and evil. People will remain in darkness unless they seek its light, and they will remain in deep misery unless they are guided by it.

But the people are divided – according to their belief in the Qur'an and the extent to which they benefit from it – into two categories:

«As for those who believe in Allah» that is, they acknowledge His existence, ascribe all attributes of perfection to Him, and believe that He is above all shortcomings and faults

«and hold fast to Him» that is, they turn to Allah, rely upon Him, acknowledge their own lack of power and strength, and seek the help of their Lord

«He will admit them to His mercy and grace» that is, He will shower them with a special kind of mercy, guide them to that which is good, reward them abundantly and ward off from them calamities and harm.

«and guide them to Him on a straight path» that is, He will enable them to acquire knowledge and do good deeds, and to recognise the truth and act upon it.

In other words, whoever does not believe in Allah, hold fast to Him and adhere to His Book, He will deprive them of His mercy and grace, and He will leave them to their own devices. Hence they will not be guided; rather they will go far astray, as a punishment to them for not believing. Therefore all they will gain is doom and loss. We ask Allah (ﷻ) to keep us safe and sound, and to forgive us.



﴿سَتَفْتُنُكَ قُلُوبُ اللَّهِ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِي الْكَلْبَةِ إِنَّ آيَاتِنَا لَكُنْزٌ لَّهُ، وَلَدٌ وَلَهُ أُخْتٌ فَلَهَا نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ وَهُوَ يَرِثُهَا إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهَا وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَتْ أَنْثَىٰ فَلَهُمَا الْثُلُثَانِ

مِمَّا تَرَكَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا إِخْوَةً رِجَالًا وَنِسَاءً فَلِلَّذَكَرِ مِثْلَ حَظِّ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ ۗ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ
 أَنْ تَضِلُّوا وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٦﴾ (سورة النساء: ١٧٦)

- 4:176. They ask you for a ruling. Say: Allah gives you a ruling concerning those who die leaving neither ascendants nor descendants. If it is a man that dies, leaving a sister but no child [or surviving parent], she will have half of the estate. If [the deceased] is a woman who left no child [or surviving parent], her brother will have the [entire] estate. If there are two sisters [or more], they will have two-thirds of the estate [between them]. If there are brothers and sisters, [they will share the estate], each male having a portion equal to that of two females. Allah explains things to you lest you go astray. And Allah has knowledge of all things

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that the people asked His Messenger (ﷺ) about cases in which a person dies, leaving neither ascendants nor descendants, as He says «Say: Allah gives you a ruling concerning those who die leaving neither ascendants nor descendants». This refers to one who dies leaving behind no child of his own, and no grandchild, father or grandfather. Hence Allah says: «If it is a man that dies, leaving a sister but no child» that is, neither male nor female, and neither a child of his own nor a grandchild.

He also leaves behind no father, based on the fact that the share of inheritance is to be given to his siblings; according to scholarly consensus, siblings do not inherit if there is a father. But if a person dies and he leaves behind no son or father, but he leaves «a sister», that is, a full sister or a half-sister through the father – not through the mother; the ruling on the latter case has been mentioned above.

«she will have half of the estate» that is, half of what her brother left behind of cash, real estate, furniture and so on, after debts have been settled and bequests have been carried out, as mentioned above.

﴿If [the deceased] is a woman who left no child [or surviving parent], her brother will have the [entire] estate﴾ that is, her full brother or her half-brother through the father will inherit from her. There is no mention of how much he will take, because he is 'âṣib, that is, a male relative on the father's side, so he will take all of her wealth, if there is no one else who has an allocated share, or some other male relative to share it with him, or what is left after giving the allocated shares.

﴿If there are two sisters [or more], they will have two-thirds of the estate [between them]. If there are brothers and sisters﴾ that is, if there are both males and females, siblings from different mothers ﴿[they will share the estate], each male having a portion equal to that of two females﴾ thus the allocated share of the females is waived and the estate is divided among the siblings.

﴿Allah explains things to you lest you go astray﴾ that is, He explains to you in detail the rulings that you need to know, as a favour and kindness on His part, so that you will be guided by His explanation and will act upon His rulings, lest you go astray from the straight path because of your ignorance and lack of knowledge.

﴿And Allah has knowledge of all things﴾ that is, He has knowledge of the unseen and the seen, the past and the future; He knows that you need explanations and to learn, so He teaches you from His knowledge that which will benefit you always, in all times and places.

This is the end of the commentary on Soorat an-Nisâ'.

All praise and thanks are for Allah, and may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), his family, and his Companions abundantly until the Day of Judgement.



05.

Soorat al-Mâ'idah

(Ma'dani)



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the name of Allah,
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*



﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَوْفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ أُحِلَّتْ لَكُمْ بَهِيمَةُ الْأَنْعَامِ إِلَّا مَا يُتْلَى عَلَيْكُمْ غَيْرَ مُحِلِّي الصَّيْدِ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرْمٌ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ مَا يُرِيدُ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ١)

5:1. O you who believe, fulfil your covenants. Lawful to you [for food] are all livestock animals, with the exception of that which is hereby announced to you. But you are forbidden to kill game while you are in the state of iħrām [for Hajj or 'umrah]. Verily Allah ordains what He wills.

This is a command from Allah (ﷻ) to His believing slaves, telling them what faith requires of fulfilling covenants, which is that one should adhere to them properly and completely, and not break them or fall short in fulfilling them.

That includes all covenants between the individual and his Lord, which require one to be a true slave to Him and to do one's duty

properly, without falling short therein. It also includes the covenant between the individual and the Messenger (ﷺ), and the duty to obey him and follow him; the covenant between the individual and his parents and relatives, which requires him to honour them and uphold ties with them, and not to sever those ties; the covenant between the individual and his companions, which requires him to uphold the ties of companionship in times of wealth and of poverty, in times of ease and of hardship; the covenant between the individual and other people, in transactions such as buying and selling, renting, and so on, and covenants that involve giving something for free, such as gifts and the like. It also requires the individual to fulfil the rights of the Muslims which Allah has established among them when He said:

﴿The believers are but brothers...﴾ (al-Hujurât 49: 10)

So they should support one another in adhering to the truth, co-operate in doing so, establish loving ties of friendship among the Muslims, and not sever ties with one another.

This issue includes both the fundamentals of Islam and the minor issues; all of them are part of the covenants which Allah enjoins us to fulfil.

Then Allah reminds His slaves of His blessings to them: ﴿Lawful to you [for food]﴾ as a mercy to you ﴿are all livestock animals﴾ – the word *an'âm* (translated here as ﴿livestock animals﴾) includes camels, cattle and sheep. It may also include wild animals such as gazelles, onagers (wild asses) and other animals that are hunted.

Some of the Şaḥābah quoted this verse as evidence for it being permissible to eat the foetus that dies in the womb after its mother is slaughtered in the prescribed manner.

﴿with the exception of that which is hereby announced to you﴾ that is, the prohibition thereof is announced to you in the subsequent verse: ﴿Forbidden to you [for food] are: the meat of animals found

dead, blood, the flesh of swine... ﴿5: 3﴾ the things mentioned in that verse, even if they are livestock animals, are prohibited.

Because the permissibility of livestock animals is general and is applicable in all circumstances and at all times, an exception is made in the case of hunting whilst in iḥrām, as Allah says:

﴿But you are forbidden to kill game while you are in the state of iḥrām [for Hajj or 'umrah]﴾ that is, livestock animals are permissible to you in all circumstances, except when you are in a state in which hunting is not permissible, which is when you are in iḥrām. At that time you should not transgress the limit by killing such animals when you are in the state of iḥrām and within the limits of the Ḥaram (sanctuary) zone. Doing so is not permissible for you if the animal is game, such as gazelles and the like. "Game" refers to wild animals that may be eaten.

﴿Verily Allah ordains what He wills﴾ that is, whatever Allah (ﷻ) wills, He ordains it in accordance with His wisdom, just as He instructed you to fulfil your covenants in order to attain your best interests and to ward off harm from you.

He has permitted livestock animals to you out of mercy and compassion towards you, and He has prohibited to you exceptions from that, such as meat found dead and the like, so as to protect you from harm, and He has prohibited hunting whilst in iḥrām, out of respect for the state of iḥrām.



﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحْلُوا شَعِيرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَائِدَ وَلَا آمِينَ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ يَنْفَعُونَ فَضْلًا مِمَّن رَزَقُوا وَرِضْوَانًا وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوا وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ أَن صَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ أَن تَعْتَدُوا وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ﴾

- 5:2. O you who believe, do not violate the sanctity of the rites of Allah, or of the sacred month, or of the animals brought for sacrifice, or the garlands that mark out such animals, or those who are travelling to the Sacred House, seeking bounty from their Lord and to please Him. But when you come out of ihrâm [following Hajj or 'umrah], then you may hunt. Do not let your hatred of those who prevented you from reaching the Sacred Mosque lead you to transgress. Help one another in righteousness and piety, but do not help one another in sin and transgression. Fear Allah, for Allah is severe in punishment.

Here Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿O you who believe, do not violate the sanctity of the rites of Allah﴾ that is, do not transgress the sacred limits that He has instructed you to respect or do that which He has told you not to do. This prohibition includes both doing it and believing that it is permissible to do it. That includes the prohibition on doing an evil action and believing it is permissible.

It also includes the prohibition on doing the things that are forbidden when in the state of ihrâm and when in the Haram (sanctuary) zone.

﴿or of the sacred month﴾ that is, do not violate the sanctity thereof by fighting during those months, or committing other kinds of wrongdoing, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Verily, the number of months with Allah is twelve, as ordained by Allah on the day He created the heavens and the earth, of which four are sacred. This is the correct calculation. So do not wrong yourselves during them...﴾ (at-Tawbah 9: 36)

The majority of scholars are of the view that the prohibition on fighting during the sacred months was abrogated by the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Then when the sacred months are over, slay the polytheists²¹ wherever you find them...﴾ (at-Tawbah 9: 5)

²¹ This refers only to the polytheists who had broken their treaty with the Muslims and supported their enemies against them.

And there are other texts which speak of slaying the disbelievers in general terms, and which warn against refraining from fighting them in general terms. The Prophet (ﷺ) fought the people of Taif during Dhul-Qa'dah, which was one of the sacred months.

Others said: The prohibition on fighting during the sacred months was not abrogated by this verse or others, because the prohibition was mentioned in specific terms, and the permissibility was mentioned in general terms, and what is mentioned in general terms is to be understood in light of what is mentioned in specific terms.

Some of them explained the matter by saying that it is not permissible to initiate fighting during the sacred months, but in the case of continuing and completing the fight, if it began during other months, that is permissible.

They interpreted the Prophet's fighting the people of Taif on that basis, because that fight started at Hunayn during Shawwāl.

In all cases, this has to do with fighting that is not for the purpose of defence. In the case of defensive fighting, if the disbelievers initiated the fight with the Muslims, then it is permissible for the Muslims to fight in order to defend themselves during the sacred months or otherwise, according to scholarly consensus.

﴿or of the animals brought for sacrifice, or the garlands that mark out such animals﴾ that is, do not violate the sanctity of the sacrificial animals that have been brought to the House of Allah during Hajj or 'umrah or otherwise. Do not prevent them from reaching their place of sacrifice, do not seize them by theft or otherwise, and do not mistreat them or make them carry burdens greater than they can bear, lest they die before reaching their place of sacrifice. Rather you should respect them and respect the people who brought them.

﴿or the garlands that mark out such animals﴾. This refers to a special type of sacrificial animal, which is the one for which strings have been twisted or tied into knots, then placed on its neck as a

manifestation of the rituals of Allah, and to encourage people to follow this example and to teach them the Sunnah; this is also done so that it will be known that this is a sacrificial animal and should be respected as such. Hence putting a garland on the sacrificial animal is Sunnah.

﴿for those who are travelling to the Sacred House﴾ that is, heading towards it

﴿seeking bounty from their Lord and to please Him﴾. This refers to those who are heading towards the Sacred House, seeking Allah's bounty by means of trade and permissible earnings, or to attain the pleasure of Allah by means of performing Hajj or 'umrah, circumambulating the House, praying and doing other acts of worship. Do not mistreat them or humiliate them; rather you should honour them and respect those who are coming to visit the House of their Lord.

This carries an implicit instruction to make safe the roads that lead to the House of Allah, and to make those who are coming to it feel safe and at ease, not fearing for their lives or other kinds of harm, or fearing that their wealth may be subjected to unjust taxes, plunder and the like.

This verse excludes those who are mentioned in another verse, namely:

﴿O you who believe, truly the polytheists are impure, so do not let them come near the Sacred Mosque after this [final] year of theirs...﴾

(at-Tawbah 9: 28)

– the polytheists should no longer be allowed to enter the Ḥaram zone.

The restriction in this verse, which prohibits disturbing those who are headed to the Kaaba, seeking bounty from their Lord and to please Him, indicates that if someone is travelling there for the purpose of committing sin in that place, then part of respecting the sanctuary is to prevent anyone with such intentions from transgressing the sanctity of the House of Allah, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿...and any who intend to profane it by deliberate evildoing, We will cause them to taste a painful penalty.﴾ (al-Hajj 22: 25)

Because He had forbidden them to hunt whilst in the state of *ihrām*, Allah then says: ﴿But when you come out of *ihrām* [following Hajj or 'umrah], then you may hunt﴾ that is, when you exit *ihrām* after completing Hajj or 'umrah, and you go out of the *Haram* zone, it becomes permissible for you to hunt, and the prohibition no longer applies. This command after the prohibition serves to restore things to the way they were before.

﴿Do not let your hatred of those who prevented you from reaching the Sacred Mosque lead you to transgress﴾ that is, do not let your hatred and enmity towards some people, and their previous aggression against you when they prevented you from reaching the mosque, cause you to transgress against them, seeking revenge. One must adhere to the command of Allah and follow the path of justice, even when one has been wronged or mistreated or subjected to aggression. It is not permissible to tell lies about the one who lied about him, or to betray the one who betrayed him.

﴿Help one another in righteousness and piety﴾ that is, help one another to be righteous. The word *birr* (translated here as ﴿righteousness﴾) includes everything that Allah loves and that pleases Him of actions both outward and inward, having to do with the rights of Allah and the rights of other people.

In this context, the word *taqwā* (translated here as ﴿piety﴾) includes refraining from everything that Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) hate, of actions both outward and inward.

Thus it is commanded to do every deed that is regarded as good, and it is commanded to refrain from every deed that is regarded as evil. The individual is enjoined to do that himself and to cooperate with his fellow believers in saying and doing everything that will motivate and encourage people to do that.

﴿but do not help one another in sin﴾ that is, overstepping the mark by doing acts of disobedience that incur a burden of sin and may be a cause of unease and embarrassment

﴿and transgression﴾ that is, transgressing against people with regard to their blood, wealth and honour. One must refrain from acts of sin and wrongdoing, and help others to refrain also.

﴿Fear Allah, for Allah is severe in punishment﴾ towards those who disobey Him and transgress His sacred limits. So respect the limits, lest punishment befall you in this world and the hereafter.



﴿حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالْدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ
وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبُعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ
وَأَنْ تَسْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ فَتَسْقُوا...﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٣)

- 5:3. Forbidden to you [for food] are: the meat of animals found dead, blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which [a name] other than that of Allah has been invoked [at the time of slaughter]; that which has been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by being gored to death; that which has been [partly] eaten by a wild animal – unless you are able to slaughter it [in the prescribed manner, before it dies]; and that which is sacrificed on stone [altars]. [Also forbidden] is making decisions by means of divining arrows. All of that is an abomination. ...

This is what was referred to in the first verse, in which Allah said: ﴿with the exception of that which is hereby announced to you﴾. It should be understood that Allah only prohibited what He prohibited in order to protect His slaves from the harm that is present in that which is prohibited, and which He may or may not explain to His slaves.

Here Allah tells us that He has prohibited ﴿the meat of animals found dead﴾. What is meant by the meat of animals found dead is meat from an animal that lost its life without being slaughtered in the prescribed manner. It is prohibited because it is harmful, as its blood is still retained inside its body and its flesh is harmful to the one who eats it. In such cases the animal often dies because of some disease that killed it, so it would be harmful to the one who eats it. An exception to this prohibition is made in the case of locusts and fish found dead, which are permissible.

﴿blood﴾ that is, blood that has been shed or poured forth, as is stated in another verse.

﴿the flesh of swine﴾ that includes all parts of the pig. Allah mentioned swine out of all other impure wild animals, because some of the People of the Book, namely the Christians, claim that Allah permitted it to them. So what is meant here is: do not be deceived by them, because it is prohibited and is included among those things which are impure.

﴿and that on which [a name] other than that of Allah has been invoked [at the time of slaughter]﴾ that is, the name of something other than Allah was mentioned over it, such as the names of idols, the awliyâ' ("saints"), stars and other created things. Just as invoking the name of Allah over it at the time of slaughter makes it good and permissible, invoking the name of anything other than Him over it makes it impure, because it is associating something else with Allah (ﷻ).

﴿that which has been killed by strangling﴾, whether that was done by hand or with a rope, or putting its head into something tight from which it could not escape until it died.

﴿or by a violent blow﴾ that is, it died because of being hit with a stick or a rock or a piece of wood, or something fell on it, whether that was done intentionally or otherwise.

﴿or by a headlong fall﴾ that is, it fell from a height such as a mountain, wall or roof and the like, and died as a result.

﴿or by being gored to death﴾ – this refers to an animal that was gored by another and died.

﴿that which has been [partly] eaten by a wild animal﴾ such as a wolf, lion, tiger or birds of prey. If it dies as a result of being eaten by a wild animal, it is not permissible.

The phrase ﴿unless you are able to slaughter it [in the prescribed manner, before it dies]﴾ refers to all of these cases, namely strangling, a violent blow, a headlong fall, being gored and being eaten by a wild animal; if it is slaughtered in the prescribed manner while it is still alive and its survival is feasible, so that it is possible to slaughter it in the prescribed manner. Hence the fuqahā' said: If the wild animal or whatever took out its stomach or cut its throat, even if it is still alive, it is regarded as having been found dead, because there is no benefit in slaughtering it in the prescribed manner. (Others only pay attention to the issue of whether it is still alive; if it is slaughtered in the prescribed manner when it is still alive then it becomes permissible, even if its stomach has been taken out, and this is the apparent meaning of the verse.)

﴿[Also forbidden] is making decisions by means of divining arrows﴾ This refers to three arrows that were used during the jāhilyah. Written on one of them was the word "Do [it]"; on the second was written "Do not do [it]", and nothing was written on the third.

If one of them was thinking of travelling or getting married and so on, he would mix those three arrows that were equal in size, then he would take out one of them. If he took out the one on which was written "Do [it]", he would go ahead with his plans. If he took out the one on which was written "Do not do [it]", he would not go ahead with his plans. If he took out the one on which nothing was written, he would repeat the procedure until he took out one of the other two

arrows, then he would act upon it. Allah forbade them to do this and similar things, and he gave them an alternative in the form of *istikhârah* by means of which they could ask their Lord for guidance in all decisions.

﴿All of that is an abomination﴾ this refers to all the prohibited things mentioned above, which Allah has prohibited in order to protect His slaves. They are ﴿an abomination﴾ that is, disobedience to Him and obedience to the Shayṭān.

Then He reminds His slaves of His favours:



﴿... الْيَوْمَ يَبَسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ فِي مَخْبَصَةٍ غَيْرِ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِإِثْمِهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٣)

5:3. ... This day have those who disbelieve given up all hope of you deviating from your religion. So do not fear them, but fear Me. This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My blessing upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. But if any is forced by [severe] hunger [to eat that which is forbidden], with no intention of sinning, Allah is indeed Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

The day referred to here is the Day of 'Arafah, when Allah perfected His religion, and granted victory to His slave and Messenger (ﷺ), and the polytheists were defeated completely after having been very keen to turn the believers away from their religion and had been hoping to achieve that.

When they saw the victory and triumph of Islam, they despaired utterly of the believers ever returning to their (the polytheists')

religion, and they began to fear them. Hence in the year in which the Prophet (ﷺ) performed Hajj (10 AH), which was his Farewell Pilgrimage, no polytheist performed Hajj and no one circumambulated the Kaaba naked.

Hence Allah said: ﴿So do not fear them, but fear Me﴾ that is, do not be afraid of the polytheists; rather fear Allah, Who has granted you victory over them and defeated them, and caused their plot to backfire.

﴿This day have I perfected your religion for you﴾ by completing the victory and perfecting all laws and teachings that have to do with both outward and inward matters, fundamentals and minor issues. Hence the Qur'an and Sunnah are completely sufficient with regard to the rulings of Islam, both fundamental and minor issues.

Anyone who tries to be smart by claiming that the people have no choice, in learning their beliefs and rulings, but to refer to other branches of knowledge apart from knowledge of the Qur'an and Sunnah, such as "Islamic philosophy" (*'ilm al-kalâm*), is ignorant and his call is false, because it is an implicit claim that Islam cannot be complete without that which he is promoting. This is one of the worst kinds of wrongdoing and is an accusation of ignorance against Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ).

﴿completed My blessing upon you﴾, both visible and invisible ﴿and have chosen for you Islam as your religion﴾ that is, I have chosen it and selected it for you as your religion, and am pleased with it for you. Therefore you should adhere to it out of gratitude to your Lord, and praise the One Who has blessed you with the best, noblest and most perfect of religions.

﴿But if any is forced﴾ that is, if he resorts out of necessity to eating any of the prohibited things mentioned above, at the beginning of the verse, ﴿by [severe] hunger﴾ that is, starvation

﴿with no intention of sinning﴾ that is, without any inclination towards sin, because he would not eat it unless he had no other option, and he does not eat more than is sufficient

﴿Allah is indeed Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful﴾ as He has made it permissible for him to eat in this situation, and He has shown mercy by allowing him to eat enough to keep him going, without that affecting his religious commitment.



﴿سَأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ قُلْ أُحِلَّ لَكُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتُ وَمَا عَلَّمْتُم مِّنَ الْجَوَارِحِ مُكَلِّبِينَ تُعَلِّمُونَهُنَّ مِمَّا عَلَّمَكُمُ اللَّهُ فَكُلُوا مِمَّا أَمْسَكْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَأَقْبُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٤﴾﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٤)

- 5:4. They ask you [O Muhammad] what is lawful to them [as food]. Say: Lawful to you are [all] good things, as well as that which you have taught your hunting animals to catch, training them as Allah has taught you. Eat what they catch for you, but pronounce the name of Allah over it [when releasing the hunting animal]. And fear Allah; for Allah is swift in reckoning.

Here Allah (ﷻ) says to His Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ): ﴿They ask you [O Muhammad] what is lawful to them﴾ of food.

﴿Say: Lawful to you are [all] good things﴾ – this refers to everything that is beneficial or tastes good, without causing physical or mental harm. That includes all kinds of grains and fruits that grow in towns and in the wilderness, as well as all sea animals and all land animals, apart from the exceptions made by the Lawgiver, such as carnivorous animals and impure things.

Hence the verse indicates that impure things are prohibited, as is stated clearly elsewhere:

﴿...he makes good things lawful to them and bad things unlawful...﴾
 (al-A'raf 7: 157)

﴿as well as that which you have taught your hunting animals to catch﴾ that is, He has permitted to you that which you have trained your hunting animals to catch.

This verse indicates several things:

- 1- Allah's kindness and mercy to His slaves, as He has given them many ways of obtaining permissible food, and He has permitted to them what they do not slaughter in the prescribed manner of that which is caught by their hunting animals. What is meant by hunting animals is dogs, falcons and the like, which hunt with fangs or talons.
- 2- Allah stipulated that these hunting animals should be taught or trained, in the manner that is customarily regarded as training, so that the animal will run when released and stop when told to stop, and when it catches the prey it will not eat it. Hence He says: ﴿training them as Allah has taught you. Eat what they catch for you﴾ that is, what they catch of prey for you. Whatever the hunting animal eats, it is not known whether he caught it for his master for himself; he may have caught it for himself.
- 3- It is stipulated that the dog or bird should cause a wound to the prey, because the word used here is *jawâriḥ* (translated as ﴿hunting animals﴾; the root meaning of this word means to wound). Moreover, the previous verse mentions the prohibition on eating animals that have been strangled. Therefore if the dog or other hunting animal were to strangle the prey or kill it by its weight, it would not be permissible. (This is on the basis that the word *jawâriḥ* refers to hunting animals that wound the prey with fangs or talons. However the well-known view is that the word *jawâriḥ* has the meaning of "collectors" and refers to those who collect the prey or catch up with it, in which case this condition is not applicable. And Allah knows best.)

- 4- It is permissible to keep a hunting dog, as is mentioned in the ṣaḥeeḥ hadith, even though keeping dogs is prohibited, because what is implied by the permissibility of hunting with the dog and training it is that it is permissible to keep it.
- 5- The prey that is caught by the dog's mouth is pure (*tāhir*), because Allah permitted it and did not state that it must be washed, which indicates that it is pure.
- 6- This points to the virtue of teaching and training, because prey caught by the hunting animal that has knowledge by virtue of being trained is permissible, whereas that caught by one which is ignorant and untrained is not permissible.
- 7- Spending time in training the dog or bird, or other hunting animal, is not blameworthy and does not come under the heading of idle pursuits; rather it is something that serves the purpose, because it is a means of making the animal's prey permissible and benefiting from it.
- 8- This verse offers evidence for those who regard it as permissible to sell hunting dogs, because they cannot be acquired otherwise.
- 9- It is stipulated to invoke the name of Allah when releasing the hunting animal; if the hunter deliberately omits to invoke the name of Allah, whatever is killed by the hunting animal is not permissible.
- 10- It is permissible to eat what the hunting animal catches, whether the hunting animal kills it or not. If the owner catches up with it and the prey is still alive, it is not permissible to eat it unless it is slaughtered in the prescribed manner.

Then Allah (ﷻ) urges us to fear Him, and He warns us about the coming of the reckoning on the Day of Resurrection, and that this is close at hand, as He says: ﴿And fear Allah; for Allah is swift in reckoning﴾.



﴿الْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتُ وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حِلٌّ لَكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حِلٌّ لَهُمْ
وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَا
ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسْفِحِينَ وَلَا مَتَّخِذِي أَخْدَانٍ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ
بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٥﴾﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٥)

- 5:5. This day all good things are made lawful to you. The food of the People of the Book is lawful to you and your food is lawful to them. [Lawful to you in marriage] are chaste women who are believers and chaste women among those who were given the scripture before you, provided that you give them their dowries, taking them in honest wedlock, not in fornication or illicit relationships. Whoever denies the faith, his deeds will come to nothing and in the hereafter he will be among the losers.

Here Allah repeats the permissibility of good things in order to highlight His favour and call His slaves to give thanks to Him and remember Him a great deal, for He has permitted to them all good things that will meet their needs and will be beneficial to them.

«The food of the People of the Book is lawful to you» that is, meat slaughtered by the Jews and Christians is permissible for you – O Muslims – but not that slaughtered by other disbelievers; their meat is not permissible for the Muslims. That is because the People of the Book claim to follow the Prophets and scriptures, and all the Messengers were agreed that the meat of animals slaughtered for anyone other than Allah is prohibited, because that is associating others with Him (shirk). It is part of the teachings of the Jews and the Christians that the meat of animals slaughtered for anyone other than Allah is prohibited, hence their meat is lawful whilst that slaughtered by others is not.

The evidence that what is meant by the food here is the meat is the fact that with regard to food other than meat, such as grains and fruits, there is nothing special about the People of the Book in this regard; rather these things are permissible even if it is the food of people who follow other religions. Moreover, the food is described as being theirs (﴿the food of the People of the Book﴾), which refers to meat slaughtered by them, not food they own, because the issue of legitimate ownership applies equally to both People of the Book and Muslims.²²

﴿and your food﴾ O Muslims ﴿is lawful to them﴾ that is, it is permissible for you to give it to them.

﴿[Lawful to you in marriage] are chaste women﴾ that is, women who are free (not slaves) and chaste ﴿who are believers﴾ ﴿and chaste women﴾ who are free (not slaves) ﴿among those who were given the scripture before you﴾ that is, Jews and Christians.

This is an exception from what is mentioned elsewhere:

﴿Do not marry the polytheist women until they believe...﴾ (*al-Baqarah* 2: 221)

What this verse means is that it is not permissible for free men to marry believing female slaves, and that is the case.

With regard to unchaste women who do not refrain from illicit sex, it is not permissible to marry them, whether they are Muslims or from the People of the Book, until they repent, because Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿A man who fornicates may only marry a woman who fornicates or who is a polytheist...﴾ (*an-Noor* 24: 3)

﴿provided that you give them their dowries﴾ this indicates that it is made permissible to marry them, provided that you give them their dowries. If anyone intends not to give the woman her dowry, then she is not permissible for him. Allah has enjoined giving her the dowry

²² That is because food acquired by unlawful means is haram regardless of the religious affiliation of the person in whose possession it is.

if she is mature and fit to receive it, otherwise the husband should give it to her guardian.

Attributing the dowry to them (﴿their dowries﴾) indicates that the woman owns all of her dowry; it is hers and no one is entitled to anything of it, unless she willingly gives it to her husband, guardian or anyone else.

﴿taking them in honest wedlock﴾ that is, your intention – O husbands – is to keep your wives chaste by keeping yourselves chaste, by refraining from illicit relationships with any other women.

﴿not in fornication﴾ that is, committing *zinâ* with anyone (numerous partners)

﴿or illicit relationships﴾ that is, *zinâ* with a lover (one partner). During the *jâhiliyah*, some people would commit *zinâ* with anyone, whereas others would do so with a particular lover. Allah (ﷻ) tells us that this is contrary to chastity and that one of the conditions of marriage is that the man should be chaste and refrain from *zinâ*.

﴿Whoever denies the faith﴾ that is, whoever disbelieves in Allah (ﷻ) and what faith requires of also believing in His Books and His Messengers, or any of the teachings of Islam, his deeds will come to nothing, if he dies in a state of disbelief, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿...And if any of you turn back from their faith and die as disbelievers, their deeds will come to nothing in this world and in the hereafter...﴾

(*al-Baqarah* 2: 217)

﴿and in the hereafter he will be among the losers﴾ that is, he will be among those who lose their souls, their wealth and their families on the Day of Resurrection and incur eternal misery.



﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ
إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ ۚ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا

فَأَطْهَرُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَنَسْتُمْ
النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ
مِنْهُ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَٰكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ
وَلِيُنِزِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ رِزْقًا طَيِّبًا فَاسْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِنَّمَا جُعِلَ رِزْقُكُمْ لِيُثَبِّرَكُمْ بِهِ
(سورة المائدة: ٦)

- 5:6. O you who believe, when you prepare for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands [and arms] to the elbows; wipe over your heads [with wet hands]; and [wash] your feet to the ankles. If you are in a state of major impurity [janâbah], then purify yourselves [ghusl]. If you are ill, or on a journey, or have relieved yourselves, or you have touched women, and cannot find water, then find some clean earth, and wipe your faces and hands with it [tayammum]. Allah does not wish to impose any hardship on you, but to purify you, and complete His favour to you, so that you may give thanks.

This verse includes many rulings, of which we will mention those that Allah enables us to:

- 1- What is mentioned here, and complying with it and acting upon it, is among the requirements of faith without which faith is not complete, because the verse begins with the words ﴿O you who believe...﴾. What is meant is: O you who believe, do what your faith requires, and what has been prescribed for you.
- 2- The command to establish prayer, because Allah says: ﴿when you prepare for prayer﴾.
- 3- The command to form the intention to pray, because Allah says: ﴿when you prepare for prayer﴾, that is, with the aim and intention of praying.
- 4- Being in a state of purification is stipulated in order for the prayer to be valid, because Allah enjoins it when preparing to pray, and the basic meaning of enjoining is that something is obligatory.

- 5- Purification does not become obligatory when the time for prayer begins; rather it becomes obligatory when one wants to pray.
- 6- In the case of everything that may be called prayer – whether it is obligatory or supererogatory, a communal obligation, or the funeral prayer – it is stipulated that one should be in a state of purity. This even applies to prostration on its own, according to many scholars, such as the prostration when reading Qur'an and the prostration of gratitude.
- 7- The command to wash the face, from the regular hairline to the jawline and chin lengthwise, and from ear to ear.
That includes rinsing the mouth and nose, as stated in the Sunnah, as well as hair on the face; if the facial hair is light, the water must reach the skin, but if it is thick, it is sufficient to wet the surface of the hair.
- 8- The command to wash the hands (and arms), up to the elbow. According to the majority of commentators, *ilā* (the word translated here as «up to») means “with”, because what is required cannot be completed except by washing the entire elbow.
- 9- The command to wipe the head.
- 10- It is obligatory to wipe the entire head (as is indicated by the grammatical structure of the original Arabic text).
- 11- It is sufficient to wipe the head in any manner, with one or both hands, or with a cloth or a piece of wood and the like, because Allah mentioned wiping in general terms and did not specify what is to be used to do it, which indicates that any manner of doing it is acceptable.
- 12- What is required is to wipe the head. If someone were to wash his head, without wiping the hand over the head, that would not be acceptable, because it would not be doing what Allah had enjoined.

- 13- The command to wash the feet up to the ankles; something similar may be said concerning this as was said concerning the arms.
- 14- This is a refutation of the Râfiḍis, because the majority of scholars read the word *arjulakum* (﴿your feet﴾) in the accusative (that is, the object of the verb ﴿wash﴾); it is not permissible to wipe them so long as they are uncovered.
- 15- This verse may be taken as an indication that it is permissible to wipe over the *khuffayn* (leather slippers), according to a variant recitation (*arjulikum*), which would connect it to the act of wiping over the head. In that case the feet may be wiped over if they are covered with the *khuffayn*. Each recitation may have its own meaning: according to the first recitation (*arjulakum*), the feet are to be washed if they are uncovered; according to the second recitation (*arjulikum*), the feet are to be wiped over if they are covered with the *khuffayn*.
- 16- It is enjoined to follow a particular order when doing wuḍoo', because Allah mentions the actions of wuḍoo' in a particular order, and because He mentioned something that is to be wiped – namely the head – in between two things that are to be washed, and there would be no point in doing so except to emphasise a particular order.
- 17- That particular order has to do with the four main parts of the body mentioned in this verse. With regard to the order of rinsing the mouth and nose and washing the face, or washing the right and left in the case of the arms and feet, doing these things in a particular order is not obligatory. Rather it is *mustaḥabb* to rinse the mouth and nose before washing the face, to start with the right before the left when washing the arms and feet, and to wipe the head before the ears.
- 18- The command to renew wuḍoo' for each prayer, so as to do it exactly as enjoined.

- 19- The command to wash oneself in the case of *janâbah* (impurity following sexual activity).
- 20- It is obligatory to ensure that water reaches all parts of the body when doing *ghusl*, because Allah mentions purifying of the body, without specifying some particular parts to the exclusion of others.
- 21- The command to wash the hair thoroughly when purifying oneself from *janâbah*.
- 22- Purification from minor impurity may be included in purification from major impurity; if both are applicable, it is sufficient to intend to form the intention of purification, then wash the entire body, because Allah only said to purify oneself, and He did not say that one should repeat *wuḍoo'*.
- 23- The word *junub* (one who is in a state of *janâbah*) is applicable to anyone who has emitted *maniy*, whether awake or asleep, or who has had intercourse, whether he ejaculated or not.
- 24- The one who remembers having a wet dream but does not find any wetness does not have to do *ghusl*, because in that case he is not *junub*.
- 25- A reminder of Allah's blessing to His slaves, as He prescribed *tayammum* for them.
- 26- One of the reasons for *tayammum* being permissible is sickness which will be worsened by washing with water; in that case it is permissible to do *tayammum*.
- 27- One of the reasons for *tayammum* being permissible is travelling and having relieved oneself by urinating or defecating, if no water is available. Thus sickness makes *tayammum* permissible even if water is available, because of the harm that would result from using it. The other reasons make *tayammum* permissible when there is no water available, even if one is not travelling.
- 28- Emissions from the front and back passages, of urine and stools respectively, invalidate *wuḍoo'*

- 29- This verse is quoted as evidence by those who say that wuḍoo' is only invalidated by these two things (relieving oneself or touching women), not by touching the private part and so on.
- 30- It is mustahabb to use euphemisms in order to avoid using foul language, because Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿or have relieved yourselves﴾.
- 31- Touching a woman with desire and pleasure invalidates wuḍoo'.
- 32- It is stipulated that no water be available in order for tayammum to be valid.
- 33- When water becomes available, even if that is whilst praying, tayammum becomes invalid, because Allah only permitted it when water is not available.
- 34- If the time for prayer begins and a person does not have water with him, he must look for it where he is staying, and nearby, because it cannot be said that he could not find water if he did not look for it.
- 35- If a person finds water but it is not sufficient for him to purify himself completely, then he must use it up, then do tayammum after that.
- 36- If water is altered by halal, pure substances, using it takes precedence over tayammum, because water that has been changed is still water, so it is included in the words ﴿and cannot find water﴾.
- 37- It is essential to form the intention of tayammum, as may be understood from the original Arabic text, because the Arabic word tayammum means to aim and intend to do something.
- 38- Anything that accumulates on the face of the earth is valid for tayammum, such as dust and the like. Based on that, the words ﴿and wipe your faces and hands with it﴾ either refer to what is usually the case, as one will usually have dust available with which one may wipe, and it will stick to the face and hands, or

this is indicating the better way, and that if it is possible to use earth in which there is dust, this is preferable.

- 39- It is not valid to do tayammum with impure earth, because it is not pure and clean; rather it is impure.
- 40- What is to be wiped in the case of tayammum is the face and hands only, and not other parts of the body.
- 41- The words «your faces», include the entire face, and indicate that all of it is to be wiped, but one is excused from having to insert dust into the mouth and nose, or make it reach the skin that is beneath facial hair, even if said hair is thin.
- 42- The hands are to be wiped up to the wrists only, because when the word *yadayn* (hands) is used in a general sense, what is meant is the hands.

If it were required that the wiping reach up to the forearms, Allah would have specified that as He did in the case of wuḍoo'.

- 43- The verse is general in meaning and indicates that tayammum is permissible for all types of impurity, both major and minor; in fact it is also permissible in the case of impurities on the body, because Allah has made it an alternative to purification with water and has mentioned it in general terms in this verse, and has not restricted it. (It may be said that impurities on the body are not included in the ruling on tayammum, because the context speaks of impurity [in the sense of minor or major impurity]. This is the view of the majority of scholars.)
- 44- The places of tayammum are the same in the case of both minor and major impurity, namely the face and hands.
- 45- If a person intends to do tayammum to purify himself from both types of impurity, this is acceptable, based on the general meaning of the verse.
- 46- It is sufficient to wipe with anything, with the hand or otherwise, because Allah said «and wipe», but He did not say what is to

- be used for wiping. This indicates that it may be done with anything.
- 47- It is stipulated that things be done in a certain order when purifying oneself with tayammum, as is also stipulated in the case of wuḍoo'; moreover, Allah started with mention of wiping the face, before wiping the hands.
- 48- In the rulings that He has prescribed for us, Allah (ﷻ) has not caused us any hardship or difficulty. Rather it is mercy from Him towards His slaves, to purify them and complete His favour upon them.
- 49- Outward purification with water or dust is meant to be complementary to inward purification which is attained by affirming the oneness of Allah (*tawḥeed*) and repenting sincerely.
- 50- Even though there is no visible sign of purification in the case of tayammum, it is still an intangible, spiritual purification that comes about as a result of complying with the command of Allah (ﷻ).
- 51- One should reflect upon the wisdom behind the laws that Allah has ordained with regard to purification and other matters, so as to increase in knowledge and in gratitude and love for Allah, for what He has prescribed of rulings that enable one to reach a high status.



﴿وَأذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمِيثَاقَهُ الَّذِي وَاثَقْتُمْ بِهِ إِذْ قُلْتُمْ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَأَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٧)

- 5:7. And remember the favour that Allah bestowed upon you, and His covenant that He made with you, when you said: We hear and we obey. And fear Allah, for Allah knows well what is in [your] hearts.

Here Allah (ﷻ) instructs His slaves to remember His spiritual and worldly blessings, in their hearts and verbally, because always remembering will motivate one to give thanks to Allah (ﷻ) and to love Him, and one's heart will be filled with gratitude to Him.

This dispels self-admiration with regard to acquiring spiritual blessings, and leads one to attribute everything to the bounty and generosity of Allah.

﴿and His covenant﴾ that is, and remember His covenant ﴿that He made with you﴾.

This does not mean that they spoke words and uttered the covenant verbally; rather what is meant is that by believing in Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), they committed themselves to obeying both of them. Hence Allah says ﴿when you said: We hear and we obey﴾ that is, we hear what You have called us to of Your Qur'anic revelations and universal signs, hearing in the sense of understanding, complying and following, and we obey by complying with what You have enjoined us to do and by avoiding what You have forbidden us to do. This includes all the laws of Islam, both outwardly and inwardly.

The believers remember thereby the covenant of Allah that He made with them, and they bear it in mind and are eager to carry out what they have been instructed to do in full, not falling short.

﴿And fear Allah﴾ in all circumstances
 ﴿for Allah knows well what is in [your] hearts﴾ that is, what the hearts contain of ideas, secrets and passing thoughts; so beware lest He see in your heart that which is not pleasing to Him, or there come out of you that which He dislikes. Build your hearts with knowledge of Him, love for Him and sincerity towards His slaves, for – if you do that – He will forgive your bad deeds and multiply the reward for your good deeds, because He knows the sound condition of your hearts.



﴿يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلّٰهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ
شَتَانُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ ءَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ءَعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ
خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٨)

5:8. O you who believe! Be steadfast in your devotion to Allah, bearing true witness impartially. Do not let your hatred of some people lead you away from justice. Be just; that is nearer to true piety. And fear Allah, for Allah is well aware of what you do.

«O you who believe» in what you are enjoined to believe in, carry out the requirements of your faith, by «bearing true witness impartially», and strive to be impartial and fair, both inwardly and outwardly. This effort should be for the sake of Allah alone, and not for any worldly purpose. You should aim for justice, which is equity, neither going to extremes nor falling short in your words or deeds; and you should do that with regard to relatives and strangers, friends and enemies.

«Do not let your hatred of some people lead you away from justice» That is, do not let your hatred make you fail to be just, as is done by those who are not just and fair. Rather, just as you would testify in your friend's favour, you should also testify against him, and just as you would testify against your enemy, you should also testify in his favour, even if he is a disbeliever or an innovator. You must treat him fairly and accept what he has of truth, because it is true, not because he says it. And you should not reject the truth because of what he said, because this is unfair towards the truth.

«Be just; that is nearer to true piety» that is, the more keen you are to be just and the more you strive to act accordingly, the closer that will be to true piety in your hearts, because perfect justice leads to perfect piety.

﴿for Allah is well aware of what you do﴾ and He will requite you for your deeds, both good and bad, small and great, in this world and in the hereafter.



﴿وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٩﴾
وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿١٠﴾﴾ (سورة

المائدة: ٩-١٠)

- 5:9. Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds forgiveness and an immense reward.
- 5:10. As for those who disbelieve and deny Our revelations, they will be inhabitants of the blazing fire.

That is, Allah, Who does not break His promise and is the most truthful in word, has promised to those who believe in Him and in His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day, ﴿and do righteous deeds﴾, both obligatory and encouraged, forgiveness of their sins, by pardoning them and protecting them from the consequences thereof, and He has promised a great reward, the greatness of which no one knows but Allah.

﴿No soul knows what is kept hidden in store for them of delight as a reward for what they used to do.﴾ (as-Sajdah 32: 17)

﴿As for those who disbelieve and deny Our revelations﴾ which point to the clear truth, and they disbelieve in them after the facts has become clear
﴿they will be inhabitants of the blazing fire﴾ to abide therein forever.



﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ أَن يَبْسُطُوا
إِلَيْكُمْ أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۗ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ١١)

- 5:11. O you who believe, remember the favour that Allah bestowed upon you when certain people decided to raise their hands against you and He held back their hands from you. So fear Allah, and in Allah let the believers put their trust.

Here Allah reminds His believing slaves of His great favour, and urges them to remember those blessings in their hearts and verbally. Just as they regard their killing of their enemies and seizing their wealth, land and captives as a blessing, they should also remember His other blessings, whereby He restrained the disbelievers and prevented them from harming them, and caused their plot to fail – this was also a blessing, because the enemy planned something and thought that they would be able to do it, but when they were not able to do what they wanted to the believers, that was by the help of Allah to His believing slaves. So they should give thanks to Allah for that, and worship Him and remember Him. This includes everyone who intended harm to the believers, whether he was a disbeliever, a hypocrite or a transgressor whose evil Allah warded off from the Muslims. All of that is included in this verse.

Then Allah instructs them to do that which will help them to prevail over their enemies and help them in all their affairs, as He says: ﴿and in Allah let the believers put their trust﴾ that is, let them depend on Him to achieve their interests, both spiritual and worldly; let them declare that they have no power or strength in themselves; and let them trust Allah to help them achieve what they want, according to

each person's level of faith and degree of reliance. This is one of the obligations of the heart on which there is consensus.



﴿ وَلَقَدْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ نَقِيبًا وَقَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ لَئِنْ أَقَمْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَيْتُمُ الزَّكَاةَ وَآمَنْتُمْ بِرُسُلِي وَعَزَّرْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَقْرَضْتُمُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ فَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ ﴿١٢﴾ فِيمَا نَقَضْتُمْ مِيثَاقَهُمْ لَعَنَّاهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ قَلْبًا عُصِيًّا يُخَفِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنِ مَوَاضِعِهَا وَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ وَلَا تَزَالُ تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى خَائِنَةٍ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاصْفَحْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ١٢-١٣)

- 5:12. Allah took a covenant from the Children of Israel, and We appointed twelve leaders from among them. And Allah said: I am with you; if you establish prayer, give zakâh, believe in My Messengers and support them, and lend to Allah a goodly loan, I will surely expiate your bad deeds for you, and admit you to gardens through which rivers flow. But if any of you, after this, disbelieves, he will indeed have strayed from the right path.
- 5:13. But because of their breaking of their covenant, We cursed them, and made their hearts grow hard. They distort the meaning of [revealed] words and have forgotten a portion of what was enjoined upon them. You will not cease to discover treachery from all save a few of them. So pardon them, and overlook [their misdeeds], for Allah loves those who do good.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He took a solemn and binding oath from the Children of Israel, and He mentions the nature of that oath,

their reward if they fulfil it, and their punishment if they fail to do so. Then He tells us that they did not fulfil it, and He describes how He punished them for that.

﴿Allah took a covenant from the Children of Israel﴾ that is, a solemn and binding pledge from them

﴿and We appointed twelve leaders from among them﴾ that is, chiefs who were leaders of those under them, whose role was to be in charge of them and urge them to do what they were instructed to do.

﴿And Allah said﴾ to the twelve leaders who took on the burdens of leadership

﴿I am with you﴾ that is, by My help and support, for help is commensurate with the size of the burden.

Then Allah tells us the terms of their covenant with them:

﴿if you establish prayer﴾ both outwardly and inwardly, by performing the prayer correctly with proper focus of mind, doing what is required in the manner in which it should be done, and persisting in that

﴿give zakâh﴾ to those who are entitled to it

﴿believe in My Messengers﴾ – all of them, the best and most perfect of whom is Muhammad (ﷺ)

﴿and support them﴾ and respect them, and do your duty towards them by honouring and obeying them

﴿and lend to Allah a goodly loan﴾ which is charity and kindness that stem from sincerity, given from permissible earnings.

If you do that, ﴿I will surely expiate your bad deeds for you, and admit you to gardens through which rivers flow﴾. Thus He will combine for them attaining that which they want of paradise with all the delights it contains and warding off that which they dislike by expiating bad deeds and warding off what results from them of punishments.

﴿But if any of you, after this﴾ covenant that is confirmed by oaths and pledges, accompanied by encouragement by way of mentioning the reward

﴿disbelieves, he will indeed have strayed from the right path﴾ that is, deliberately and knowingly, so he will deserve what those who go astray deserve of being deprived of the reward and being punished. It is as if one may ask, at the end of the verse: I wonder what they did (after all these warnings); did they fulfil the covenant that they made with Allah, or did they break it?

Thus in the following verse, Allah explains that they broke the covenant, as He says:

﴿But because of their breaking of their covenant﴾ that is, because of that, they received a number of punishments:

- 1- ﴿We cursed them﴾ that is, We expelled them and cast them far away from Our mercy, as they closed the gates of mercy to themselves, and did not fulfil the covenant that was taken from them, which is the main reason for the curse.
- 2- ﴿and made their hearts grow hard﴾ that is, harsh and tough, so that no exhortation had any impact on them, and they did not benefit from the signs and warnings; they were not encouraged by mention of rewards and they were not deterred by warnings of the consequences. This is one of the greatest punishments a person may receive, for his heart to become like this, with the result that reminders of guidance and goodness only make him persist in evil.
- 3- ﴿They distort the meaning of [revealed] words﴾ that is, they indulged in the sin of changing and altering the scriptures, so they changed the meanings of words to something other than what was intended by Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ).
- 4- ﴿and have forgotten a portion of what was enjoined upon them﴾. They were enjoined to follow the Torah and what Allah revealed to Moosâ, but they forgot a portion of it. This includes forgetting the knowledge, for they forgot it and it was lost to them, and much of what Allah caused them to forget no longer exists, as a punishment to them. It also includes forgetting to act upon it,

which means failing to do it. They were not enabled to do that which they had been instructed to do. This is an argument that may be used against the People of the Book, when they deny some of that which was mentioned in their Books or that took place during their time; it is part of what they have forgotten (as indicated in the verse).

- 5- Ongoing treachery: ﴿You will not cease to discover treachery from all save a few of them﴾ that is, treachery towards Allah and towards His believing slaves.

One of the greatest betrayals on their part is their concealing the truth from those to whom they give religious teaching and those who think positively of them, thus causing them to remain disbelievers. This is a serious betrayal and blameworthy characteristic which is applicable to everyone who is like them. Anyone who does not do what Allah has enjoined and taken a pledge from him to do has a share in the curse and hardness of heart, and is indulging in the sin of distorting (revealed) words. He is not going to be guided to the correct path, he will forget a portion of that which was enjoined upon him, and it is inevitable that he will commit acts of betrayal. We ask Allah to keep us safe and sound.

﴿all save a few of them﴾ that is, who did fulfil what they pledged to do in their covenant with Allah, so He helped them and guided them to the straight path.

﴿So pardon them﴾ that is, do not take them to task for what they have done of harm, which implies that they should be pardoned and forgiven, for that is part of doing good, and ﴿Allah loves those who do good﴾. Iḥsân (translated here as doing good) means that you worship Allah as if you can see Him, for even though you cannot see Him, He sees you. Iḥsân with regard to people means trying to benefit them in spiritual and worldly terms.



﴿وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصْرِيءُ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَهُمْ فَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِمَّا
ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَأَغْرَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَسَوْفَ
يُنَبِّئُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ١٤)

5:14. From those who call themselves Christians, We also took a covenant, but they too forgot a portion of what was enjoined upon them. So We have stirred up enmity and hatred among them until the Day of Resurrection. And soon Allah will inform them of what they used to do.

That is, just as We took a covenant from the Jews, We also took a covenant from «those who call themselves Christians» that is, followers of ‘Eesâ ibn Maryam, and they purified themselves by believing in Allah and His Messengers and what they brought. But then they broke the covenant and «forgot a portion of what was enjoined upon them»; they forgot knowledge of it and they forgot how to act upon it.

«So We have stirred up enmity and hatred among them until the Day of Resurrection» that is, We turned them against one another, and troubles and conflicts arose among them which generated hatred and enmity towards one another, which will last until the Day of Resurrection. This is something that we see, for the Christians are still, and will continue to be, in a state of mutual hatred, enmity and division.

«And soon Allah will inform them of what they used to do» and punish them for it.



﴿ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيرًا مِمَّا كُنْتُمْ تُخْفُونَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾ يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَهُ سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ وَيُخْرِجُهُم مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿١٦﴾ ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ١٥-١٦)

- 5:15. O People of the Book, there has come to you our Messenger, disclosing to you much of what you have been concealing of the scripture, and overlooking much. There has come to you from Allah a light and a clear Book,
- 5:16. with which Allah guides all who seek His good pleasure to ways of peace and safety, and leads them out of the depths of darkness to the light, by His leave, and guides them to a straight path.

Having mentioned the covenant that He took from the People of the Book, namely the Jews and Christians, and having stated that they broke that covenant, all save a few of them, Allah commands them all to believe in Muhammad (ﷺ), and presents them with definitive proof of the truthfulness of his prophethood, which is: He discloses to them much of that which they were concealing from the people, even from the common folk among their co-religionists, as they were the ones who were known to have knowledge, and no one had knowledge at that time except what they had. Therefore the one who was eager to acquire knowledge had no means of doing so except from them. The fact that the Messenger (ﷺ) brought this great Qur'an which disclosed that which they had been concealing amongst themselves – when he was unlettered and could neither read nor write – is one of the clearest proofs of the truthfulness of his message. (The matters that they were concealing include) the description of Muhammad

(ﷺ) in their Books, the foretelling of his coming in their Books, the verse on stoning, and so on.

﴿and overlooking much﴾ that is, He did not disclose that which there was no reason to disclose.

﴿There has come to you from Allah a light﴾ which is the Qur'an, which illuminates the darkness of ignorance and the blindness of misguidance.

﴿and a clear Book﴾ which explains everything that people need to know of religious and worldly matters, such as knowledge of Allah, His names, His attributes and His actions, as well as knowledge of the rulings of Sharia.

Then Allah mentions the one who is guided by this Qur'an, and the reason why he attains that, as He says: ﴿with which Allah guides all who seek His good pleasure to ways of peace and safety﴾ that is, He guides thereby the one who strives and is keen to attain the pleasure of Allah, and whose intention is good, to ways of peace and safety that will save him from punishment and enable him to reach paradise. This refers to knowledge of the truth and acting upon it, in general and in detail.

﴿and leads them out of the depths of darkness﴾ that is, the darkness of disbelief, innovation, sin, ignorance and heedlessness, to the light of faith, the Sunnah, obedience, knowledge and remembrance of Allah.

All of this guidance is by Allah's leave; whatever He wills happens and whatever He does not will does not happen. ﴿and guides them to a straight path﴾



﴿لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ۗ قُلْ فَمَنْ يَمْلِكُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ.

وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ۗ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۗ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٧﴾ وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ نَحْنُ أَبْنَاءُ اللَّهِ وَأَحِبُّونَاهُ ۗ قُلْ فَلِمَ يُعَذِّبُكُمْ بِذُنُوبِكُمْ ۗ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ بَشَرٌ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقَ ۗ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ ۗ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ ۗ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۗ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٨﴾ (سورة المائدة: ١٧-١٨)

- 5:17. They indeed have disbelieved who say that Allah is the Messiah, the son of Maryam. Say: Who could prevent Allah, if He so willed, from destroying the Messiah, the son of Maryam, his mother, and all the people of the earth? To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them. He creates whatever He wills, and Allah has power over all things.
- 5:18. The Jews and the Christians say: We are children of Allah, and His beloved ones. Say: Why then does He punish you for your sins? Nay, you are but human beings among those He has created. He forgives whomever He wills, and He punishes whomever He wills. To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, and unto Him is the return [of all].

Having mentioned His covenant with the people of the two Books, and that they did not adhere to it – rather they broke it – Allah (ﷻ) then tells us of their abhorrent beliefs.

He tells us of the Christian belief, which no one but they believed in, namely the belief that God is the Messiah, the son of Maryam. The basis for their specious argument is the fact that he was born without a father, so they devised this false belief concerning him, despite the fact that he had a counterpart in Ḥawwā', who was created without a mother; and Adam is an even stronger example, as he was created without a father or a mother. So why did they not claim that

they (Adam and Ḥawwâ') were divine, as they claimed with regard to the Messiah?

This indicates that their belief was the result of following whims and desires, without any proof and without any reason to do so. But Allah refuted them with clear, rational evidence, as He said: ﴿Say: Who could prevent Allah, if He so willed, from destroying the Messiah, the son of Maryam, his mother, and all the people of the earth?﴾ If those mentioned above have no power to save themselves, if it were Allah's will to destroy them, and they have no ability to prevent that, this is indicative of the falseness of the claim of divinity for one who cannot protect himself from being destroyed and has no power to escape from divine control. Furthermore, ﴿To Allah﴾ alone ﴿belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth﴾; He controls them and everything is subject to His control in every way. So is it appropriate to suggest that a poor, dependent slave could be a deity who is independent of means in all ways? This is utterly impossible.

There is no reason for their finding it amazing that the Messiah 'Eesâ ibn Maryam was created without a father, for Allah ﴿creates whatever He wills﴾ – if He wills, (He creates a human) from a mother and father, like all the sons of Adam; or if He wills, He creates a human from a father, without a mother, like Ḥawwâ', or from a mother without a father, like 'Eesâ, or without a father or a mother, like Adam. Allah (ﷻ) varies His creation according to His will, which is always done, and nothing is too difficult for Him. Hence He says: ﴿and Allah has power over all things﴾.

Another thing that the Jews and Christians say is that both of them make false claims and praise themselves, as each group says: ﴿We are children of Allah, and His beloved ones﴾.

In their language, the word "son" means "beloved"; they do not mean sons in a literal sense, because this is not their belief; rather that is what the Christians believe about the Messiah.

Allah says, refuting them and the claim they made without proof: ﴿Say: Why then does He punish you for your sins?﴾ If you were His beloved ones, He would not have punished you, because Allah does not love anyone except the one who does deeds that are pleasing to Him.

﴿Nay, you are but human beings among those He has created﴾, and you are subject to the rulings of justice and grace.

﴿He forgives whomever He wills, and He punishes whomever He wills﴾ if they take the steps that lead to forgiveness or to punishment.

﴿To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, and unto Him is the return [of all]﴾ that is, how is it that you acquired this virtue (of being the “children of God”) when you are among that dominion and are among those who will be returned to Allah in the hereafter, and He will requite you for your deeds?



﴿يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ عَلَى فَتْرَةٍ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا جَاءَنَا مِنْ بَشِيرٍ وَلَا نَذِيرٍ فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَشِيرٌ وَنَذِيرٌ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾﴾

(سورة المائدة: ١٩)

5:19. O People of the Book, there has come to you our Messenger, making things clear to you, after an interval in which there were no Messengers, lest you should say: No bearer of glad tidings and no warner ever came to us. But now there has come to you a bearer of glad tidings and a warner. And Allah has power over all things.

Here Allah (ﷻ) calls the People of the Book – because of what He blessed them with of His scripture – to believe in His Messenger

Muhammad (ﷺ) and to give thanks to Allah (ﷻ) Who sent him to them ﴿after an interval in which there were no Messengers﴾, at a time when there was a great need for him.

This (their need for him and the long interval since the coming of any Messenger) is what should prompt them to believe in him, for he explains to them everything that Allah requires of them and the rulings of Sharia. By doing this, Allah left them with no excuses, so they cannot say: ﴿No bearer of glad tidings and no warner ever came to us. But now there has come to you a bearer of glad tidings and a warner﴾ giving glad tidings of reward in this world and in the hereafter, describing the deeds that will lead to that and the characteristics of the people who do those deeds, and warning of punishment in this world and in the hereafter, describing the deeds that will lead to that and the characteristics of the people who do those deeds.

﴿And Allah has power over all things﴾ – all things submit willingly to His power, so nothing can go beyond His power and control. Among the signs of His power is the fact that He sends the Messengers and reveals the Books, and He rewards those who obey Him and punishes those who disobey Him.



﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ ۖ يَقَوْمِ ۖ أَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَعَلَ فِيكُمْ أَنْبِيَاءَ
وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مَّلُوكًا ۖ وَأَنْتُمْ كُنْتُمْ مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ يَقَوْمِ ۖ ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ
الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَرْجِعُوا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿٢١﴾ قَالُوا
يَمْوَسَىٰ ۖ إِنَّ فِيهَا قَوْمًا جَبَّارِينَ وَإِنَّا لَنَنْدُخُلُهَا حَتَّىٰ يُخْرِجُوا مِنهَا فَإِنَّا دَاخِلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾

(سورة المائدة: ٢٠-٢٢)

5:20. And [remember] when Moosâ said to his people: O my people, remember the favour that Allah bestowed upon you, when He

appointed Prophets among you, made you kings, and granted you what He had not granted to any other nation in the world.

5:21. O my people, enter the holy land which Allah has assigned to you, and do not turn back, lest you return as losers.

5:22. They said: O Moosâ, in this land are a ferocious people; we will never enter it until they leave it, then if they leave, we will enter it.

When Allah blessed Moosâ and his people by saving them from Pharaoh and his people, and from captivity and enslavement to them, they left and headed towards their homeland, which was Jerusalem and its environs. Allah had enjoined them to strive in jihad against the enemy in order to expel them from their lands. So when they approached Jerusalem, Moosâ (ﷺ) exhorted them and reminded them to go forward for jihad, and said to them: ﴿remember the favour that Allah bestowed upon you﴾ that is, remember it in your hearts and verbally, for remembering it will increase you in love for Allah (ﷻ) and motivate you to worship Him

﴿when He appointed Prophets among you﴾ who called you to true guidance, warned you against following the path of doom, urged you to strive for your eternal happiness and taught you that which you do not know

﴿made you kings﴾, in charge of your own affairs, as He liberated you from enslavement to your enemies, so that you became in charge of your own affairs and were able to practise your religion.

﴿and granted you﴾ spiritual and worldly blessings that ﴿He had not granted to any other nation in the world﴾ – for at that time they were the best of humanity and the dearest of them to Allah, and He had bestowed upon them blessings that had not been given to anyone else.

Moosâ reminded them of spiritual and worldly blessings that should have increased them in steadfastness of faith and steadfastness in jihad and willingness to engage therein. Hence he said: ﴿O my people, enter

the holy» that is, purified «land which Allah has assigned to you». Thus he told them something that would put their minds at rest, if they truly believed, by telling them that Allah had decreed that they would enter this land and would prevail over their enemies.

«and do not turn back» that is, retreat «lest you return as losers», as you would have lost out in this world by missing out on victory over your enemies and regaining your land; you would also lose out in the hereafter because of what you would miss out on of reward and because of what you would bring upon yourselves of punishment because of your sin.

But they said something that was indicative of their lack of resolve and their lack of due respect towards Allah and His Messenger. «They said: O Moosâ, in this land are a ferocious people» that is, powerful and courageous, and this is an impediment which prevents us from entering the land.

«we will never enter it until they leave it, then if they leave, we will enter it» this stems from cowardice and lack of certain faith; otherwise, if they were mature, they would have realised that they were all descendants of Adam and that the strong one is the one whom Allah helps with strength from Him, for there is no power and no strength except with Allah. They would also have realised that they would be granted victory over them, because Allah had given them a special promise to that effect.



﴿ قَالَ رَجُلَانِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمَا ادْخُلُوا عَلَيْهِمُ الْبَابَ فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُمُوهُ فَإِنَّكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ قَالُوا يَمْوَسَىٰ إِنَّآ لَن نَدْخُلُهَآ أَبَدًا مَا دَامُوا فِيهَا فَآذَهَبَ أَنتَ وَرَبُّكَ فَقَتَلَا إِنَّا هَاهُنَا قَاعِدُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ إِلَّا نَفْسِي وَأَخِي فَافَرَّقَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ الْقَوْمِ

الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾ قَالَ فَإِنَّهَا مُحَرَّمَةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً يَذِيهُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٢٣-٢٦)

- 5:23. Two men among those who feared Allah, and whom Allah had blessed, said: Enter upon them through the gate! Once you enter it, you will surely be victorious. And in Allah put your trust, if you are [truly] believers.
- 5:24. They said: O Moosâ, we will never enter it so long as they are there. Go, you and your Lord, and fight, and we will stay here.
- 5:25. He said: O my Lord, I have control only over myself and my brother, so distinguish us from these rebellious people!
- 5:26. [Allah said:] Then, verily, this [land] will be forbidden to them for forty years, while they wander on earth, bewildered, to and fro. So do not grieve over these rebellious people.

﴿Two men among those who feared Allah﴾ spoke up to encourage their people and motivate them to find their enemy and occupy their land

﴿and whom Allah had blessed﴾ with divine help and the ability to speak the truth in this situation which required such words, and He blessed them with patience and certain faith.

﴿said: Enter upon them through the gate! Once you enter it, you will surely be victorious﴾ that is, there is nothing standing between you and victory over them except your moving to attack them and enter upon them through the gate; when you do so, they will be defeated.

Then they instructed them to equip themselves with the strongest of weapons, as they said: ﴿And in Allah put your trust, if you are [truly] believers﴾, for by putting one's trust in Allah, especially in this situation, things will be made easier and you will be helped to prevail over your enemies. This indicates that putting one's trust in Allah is obligatory, and a person's level of trust will be commensurate with his level of faith.

But these words did not meet with success and blaming them was of no benefit, for they said, like people who have no pride or dignity: «O Moosâ, we will never enter it so long as they are there. Go, you and your Lord, and fight, and we will stay here.» How abhorrent are the words they spoke and their attitude towards their Prophet in this difficult and critical situation, which required them to support their Prophet and maintain their dignity.

This and similar stories highlight the difference between all other nations and the Ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ), as the Şahâbah said to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) – when he consulted them about fighting on the day of Badr, even though he did not make it a must that they should fight: O Messenger of Allah, if you were to go through this sea, we would go through it with you, and if you were to lead us to Bark al-Ghamâd, no one would stay behind. We will not say as the people of Moosâ said to him, «Go, you and your Lord, and fight, and we will stay here». Rather go, you and your Lord, and fight, and we will fight with you, in front of you and behind you, on your right and on your left.

When Moosâ saw how stubborn they were towards him, «He said: O my Lord, I have control only over myself and my brother» that is, we have no power to fight them, and I do not have any control over these people.

«so distinguish us from these rebellious people» that is, judge between us and them, by sending upon them punishment as Your wisdom dictates. This indicates that what they said and did constituted major sins that were tantamount to evildoing.

Allah said in response to Moosâ's prayer: «Then, verily, this [land] will be forbidden to them for forty years, while they wander on earth, bewildered, to and fro» that is, as part of their punishment, We will forbid them to enter this town which Allah had decreed should be theirs, for a period of forty years. During that period, they would also wander to and fro on earth, and would not find their way or be

settled and at peace. This was a worldly punishment, by means of which Allah (ﷻ) may have expiated their sin and warded off a greater punishment. This indicates that punishment for sin may take the form of the removal of a blessing. Perhaps the wisdom behind making the punishment last for this length of time was that most of those would die who had said these things and had not been patient and steadfast; rather they had become accustomed to enslavement to their enemies, and had no aspirations that would motivate them to do that which would lead to acquiring a high status. Thus a new generation would appear that would develop aspirations of defeating their enemy and not being enslaved, and would be far removed from accepting humiliation that poses an impediment to happiness.

When Allah (ﷻ) saw that His slave Moosâ was very compassionate towards people, especially his own people, and that he might feel sorry for them, and his compassion would cause him to feel sorry for them because of this punishment or pray for it to be removed, even though Allah had decreed that it should happen, He said: «So do not grieve over these rebellious people» that is, do not feel sorry for them or feel sad, because they have rebelled and their rebellion dictates that what befell them should befall them; it does not stem from injustice on Our part.



﴿ وَأَتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ آدَمَ بِالْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا فَتُقْبِلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا وَلَمْ يُنْقَبَلْ مِنَ الْآخَرِ قَالَ لَأَقْتُلَنَّكَ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ لَئِن بَطَلْتَ إِلَيَّ يَدَكَ لِتَقْتُلَنِي مَا أَنَا بِبَاسِطِ يَدِيَ إِلَيْكَ لِأَقْتُلَكَ إِنَّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾ إِنَّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ تَبُوءَ بِإِثْمِي وَإِثْمِكَ فَتَكُونَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَطَوَّعَتْ لَهُ نَفْسُهُ قَتْلَ أَخِيهِ فَقَتَلَهُ فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴾

فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ غُرَابًا يَبْحَثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُرِيَهُ كَيْفَ يُورِي سَوْءَةَ أَخِيهِ قَالَ يُوتِلَقُ
 أَعْجَزْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِثْلَ هَذَا الْغُرَابِ فَأُوْرِي سَوْءَةَ أَخِي فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ النَّادِمِينَ
 ﴿سورة المائدة: ٢٧-٣١﴾

- 5:27. Recount to them the story of the two sons of Adam in truth, when each offered a sacrifice [to Allah]. It was accepted from one, but not from the other. [The latter] said: I will surely kill you. [The former] said: Verily, Allah only accepts from those who fear Him.
- 5:28. Even if you raise your hand against me to kill me, I will not raise my hand against you to kill you, for I fear Allah, the Lord of the worlds,
- 5:29. and I would rather you were burdened with your sin against me as well as your own sins and thus became one of the inhabitants of the fire; such is the recompense of the wrongdoers.
- 5:30. But he was prompted by his evil inclinations to kill his brother. So he killed him, and thus became one of the losers.
- 5:31. Then Allah sent a crow which scratched at the earth to show him how to conceal his brother's corpse. He said: Woe is me! Could I not have been like this crow, and covered up my brother's corpse? And he became one of the remorseful.

That is: tell the people about what happened between the two sons of Adam in truth, so that people will reflect and learn from it, because it is true and is not a lie; it is serious and is not a joke. What appears to be the case is that the two sons of Adam were his own sons, as is indicated by the apparent meaning and context of the verse. This is the view of the majority of commentators. In other words: tell them the story of what happened when they offered a sacrifice, which led to the situation described here.

﴿when each offered a sacrifice [to Allah]﴾ that is, each of them set aside some part of his wealth in order to draw closer to Allah

«It was accepted from one, but not from the other» – this was known either through revelation from heaven or through the custom that prevailed among earlier nations: the sign of Allah's acceptance of a sacrifice was that fire would come down from heaven and consume it.

«[The latter] said» that is, the son whose sacrifice was not accepted said to the other, out of envy and resentment:

«I will surely kill you». His brother said to him, trying to speak gently to him: «Verily, Allah only accepts from those who fear Him»; what sin or offence have I committed that would dictate that you should kill me, apart from the fact that I feared Allah (ﷻ), and fearing Him is obligatory for both you and me, and for everyone? The more correct view concerning the meaning of fearing Allah here is that what is referred to is those who show the quality of fearing Allah in doing that action (of sacrifice), in the sense that their action is done sincerely for the sake of Allah, following the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).

Then he told him that he did not want to kill him, either on his own initiative or in self-defence, as he said: «Even if you raise your hand against me to kill me, I will not raise my hand against you to kill you» and this is not cowardice or incapability on my part; rather it is because «I fear Allah, the Lord of the worlds», and the one who fears Allah does not commit sins, especially major sins.

This is aimed at warding off one who wants to kill, telling him: You should fear Allah.

«and I would rather you were burdened with» that is, that you should end up carrying «your sin against me as well as your own sins» that is, if there is a choice between being killing you or being killed by you, then I would prefer that you should kill me and thus be burdened with the sins of us both «and thus became one of the inhabitants of the fire; such is the recompense of the wrongdoers». This indicates that murder is a major sin and that the one who commits it deserves to enter hell.

But the offender was not deterred by that, and he was still determined to go ahead with his action. So he responded to his evil inclinations and killed his brother, whom he should have respected according to the laws of Allah and of nature.

«So he killed him, and thus became one of the losers» who lose out in this world and in the hereafter, and thus he set a precedent for every killer.

«Whoever sets a bad precedent will have the burden of that sin and a burden like that of everyone who does likewise until the Day of Resurrection.» (Recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarâni)

Hence it is stated in the ṣaḥeeḥ hadith that:

«No one kills another person but the first son of Adam will have a share of the guilt, because he was the first one to set the precedent of killing.» (Bukhari and Muslim)

When he killed his brother, he did not know what to do with him, because he was the first of the sons of Adam to die.

«Then Allah sent a crow which scratched at the earth» that is, it dug a hole to bury another crow that had died

«to show him» thereby «how to conceal his brother's corpse» that is, his body, because the body of the deceased is something that is to be covered ('awrah).

«And he became one of the remorseful». Such is the consequence of sin: regret and loss.



﴿مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَن قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ بَعْدَ

ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لَمُتْرِفُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٣٢)

5:32. Because of that We ordained for the Children of Israel that if anyone killed a person – unless it be [in punishment] for murder or for spreading mischief in the land – it would be as if he killed all humankind, and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all humankind. Our Messengers came to them with clear signs, yet even after that, many of them continued to exceed the limits in the land.

«Because of that» that is, what is mentioned above of the story of the two sons of Adam and how one of them killed the other, thus setting a precedent of murder for those who came after him, and in order to show that the punishment for murder is serious and leads to loss in this world and the hereafter

«We ordained for the Children of Israel» that is, the people of the divinely revealed Books

«that if anyone killed a person – unless it be [in punishment] for murder or for spreading mischief in the land» that is, if anyone killed a person unlawfully

«it would be as if he killed all humankind», because he had no legitimate reason to do so, and no one should kill another person unless he has a legitimate reason to do so. If a person has the audacity to kill someone who did not deserve to be killed, it means that he does not differentiate between the one whom he killed and anyone else; rather he would do that every time his soul that is inclined towards evil prompts him to do so. Therefore his audacity in killing is as if he killed all of humankind.

By the same token if a person saves a life – that is, he lets him live and does not kill him even though his evil inclinations prompt him to do so, because his fear of Allah (ﷻ) prevents him from doing that, this is as if he saved the life of all of humankind, because the fear of Allah that he has prevents him from killing anyone who does not deserve to be killed. This verse indicates that execution is permissible in two

cases: when someone has killed a person unlawfully and deliberately, in which case it is permissible to execute him, if the murderer is accountable; or if he is spreading mischief in the land, trying to make the people doubt their religion or causing them physical harm or posing a danger to their property, such as apostate disbelievers, enemy combatants and promoters of innovation whose evil cannot be warded off except by executing them. The same applies to bandits and the like who attack people, killing them or taking their wealth.

﴿Our Messengers came to them with clear signs﴾ after which no one can have any argument

﴿yet even after that﴾ that is, even after that clear, definitive proof that would show the way in which people should conduct themselves on earth

﴿many of them continued to exceed the limits﴾ by committing sins and opposing the Messengers who brought clear signs and proof.



﴿ إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا أَنْ يُقَتَّلُوا
أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِنْ خَلْفٍ أَوْ يُنْفَوْا مِنَ
الْأَرْضِ ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ حِزْبِي فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٣٣﴾ إِلَّا
الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

(سورة المائدة: ٣٣-٣٤)

- 5:33. The recompense of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger, and strive to spread mischief in the land, is that they should be executed, or crucified, or their hands and feet cut off from opposite sides, or banished from the land. That is their disgrace in this world, and in the hereafter, theirs will be a grievous punishment.

5:34. Except for those who repent before you overpower them; in that case, know that Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) are those who have declared their enmity and spread mischief in the land, by disbelieving, murdering, taking people's wealth and terrorising people on the road (banditry).

It is well known that this verse speaks of the rulings on bandits, those who attack people in the cities and the desert, seizing their wealth, killing them and scaring them, so that people refrain from taking the route where they are.

Allah tells us that the recompense and punishment – when the ḥadd punishment is carried out on them – is for one of these things to be done to them.

The commentators differed as to whether that is the matter of choice, and whether the ruler or his deputy may do to each bandit whatever he sees fit of the things mentioned, which is the apparent meaning of the wording, or whether the punishment should be according to the level of the crime, so that for each crime there is a fitting punishment, as is indicated by the meaning of the verse, which is in accordance with the wisdom of Allah (ﷻ). (According to this view), if the bandits kill people and take their wealth, then they must be killed and crucified, so that everyone will know about that and will be deterred. If they kill but do not take wealth, then they must be executed only. If they take wealth but do not kill, then their hands and feet on opposite sides – the right hand and the left foot – are to be cut off. If they terrorise people but do not kill or take wealth, then they are to be banished from the land, and they should not be left to find refuge in any city, unless they repent openly. This is the view of Ibn 'Abbâs and many leading scholars, with some differences concerning some of the details.

«That» namely this punishment «is their disgrace» that is, scandal and shame «in this world, and in the hereafter, theirs will be a grievous punishment». This indicates that banditry is one of the major sins that incur disgrace in this world and punishment in the hereafter, and that the one who engages in it is waging war against Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). As this is the extent of the seriousness of this crime, it is known that purifying the land of evildoers and making the roads safe from killing, seizing wealth and scaring people, is one of the greatest of good deeds, and that it comes under the heading of spreading peace in the land, the opposite of which is spreading mischief in the land.

«Except for those who repent before you overpower them» that is, they repent from committing these crimes against the public.

«in that case, know that Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful» that is, the punishment for the sin that he committed against Allah will be waived, with regard to having to be killed or crucified, or to have his hand and foot cut off, or be banished from the land; the sin he committed against other people will also be waived, if the aggressor (bandit) was a disbeliever then became Muslim. But if the aggressor (bandit) is a Muslim, then the rights that he owes to other people are not waived, if he murdered and took wealth. The verse indicates that the repentance of an aggressor (bandit) – after he has been overpowered – does not waive any of the obligations he has. The wisdom behind that is quite clear.

But if his repentance comes before he is overpowered, then the ḥadd punishment for waging war against Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), or other ḥadd punishment, is waived – if he repents from his deed before being overpowered.



﴿يَتَّيِبَهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٣٥)

5:35. O you who believe, fear Allah, seek the means of drawing closer to Him, and strive hard in His cause, so that you may prosper.

This is a command from Allah to His believing slaves to do what faith requires of fearing Allah and being cautious to avoid incurring His wrath and anger, by striving hard in doing one's utmost to avoid sins of the heart, tongue and physical faculties, both outward and inward, and seeking Allah's help to avoid these things, in order to save oneself from the wrath and punishment of Allah.

﴿seek the means of drawing closer to Him﴾ that is, the means of nearness to Him and endearing yourselves to him, by doing obligatory spiritual deeds, such as loving Him and loving for His sake, fear and hope, turning to Him and putting one's trust in Him, as well as physical deeds such as zakâh and Hajj. That also includes actions that are both spiritual and physical, such as prayer, reading Qur'an and remembering Allah (dhikr), as well as showing kindness to people by financial means, sharing knowledge, using one's position or status to help, and being sincere towards the slaves of Allah.

All of these deeds bring one closer to Allah, and a person will continue drawing closer to Allah by means of them, until Allah loves him, and when He loves him, He will be his hearing with which he hears, his vision with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes and his foot with which he walks, and Allah will answer his supplications.

Then Allah (ﷻ) singles out from among acts of worship that bring one closer to Him: jihad in His cause, which means striving to fight the disbelievers with one's wealth and life, by planning, speaking

and striving to support the religion of Allah with all means at one's disposal, because this is one of the best acts of worship that bring one closer to Allah. That is because the one who does that is more likely to do other things too.

﴿so that you may prosper﴾ – if you fear Allah by avoiding sin, seek means of nearness to Allah by doing acts of worship, and strive in His cause, seeking His pleasure.

Prosperity means triumph, attaining all that one seeks and hopes for, and being saved from all that one fears. What it really means is eternal happiness and everlasting joy.



﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ أَنَّهُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لَيَفْتَدُوا بِهِ مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَا نَقُولُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾ يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُخْرَجُوا مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُخْرَجِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾﴾ (سورة المائدة:

(٣٧-٣٦)

5:36. As for those who disbelieve, even if they had everything on earth, and as much again with it, to offer as their ransom from the punishment of the Day of Resurrection, it would not be accepted from them, and theirs will be a painful punishment.

5:37. They will wish to get out of the fire, but never will they get out of it. Theirs will be an everlasting punishment.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the terrible condition of the disbelievers before Allah on the Day of Resurrection, and their awful fate, and that even if they were to offer an earthful of gold and as much again as ransom from the punishment of Allah, it will not be accepted from them and it will not benefit them, because the time for ransom will be over and there will be nothing left but the painful punishment and

eternal suffering from which they will never escape; rather they will abide therein for ever.



﴿ وَالسَّارِقِ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوا أَيْدِيَهُمَا جِزَاءً بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٣٨﴾ فَمَن تَابَ مِن بَعْدِ ظُلْمِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٣٨-٤٠)

- 5:38. As for the thief, male or female, cut off their hands as a recompense for what they have done, and as an exemplary punishment ordained by Allah. Allah is Almighty, Most Wise.
- 5:39. But whoever repents after having thus done wrong and mends his ways, Allah will accept his repentance, for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.
- 5:40. Do you not know that to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth? He punishes whomever He will, and He forgives whomever He will, and Allah has power over all things.

The thief is the one who takes another person's property that is protected by Sharia, in a surreptitious manner, without the owner's consent. It is one of the major sins that dictate a severe punishment, which is amputation of the right hand, as is specified in the recitation of some of the *Ṣaḥābah*.

The *ḥadd* punishment entails cutting off their hands from the wrist. If a person steals, his hand is to be cut off from the wrist, then the bleeding is to be stopped by cauterising it with hot oil. This is the punishment mentioned in general terms in the Qur'an, but the *Sunnah* restricts the general meaning of this verse in a number of ways:

- That the stolen item should have been taken from the place where such items are usually kept safe; if it is stolen from some place other than that, then the thief's hand is not to be cut off.
- That there should be a minimum value for the stolen property, which is one quarter of a dinar or three dirhams, or whatever is equivalent to either of them. If the stolen property is of less value than that, then the thief's hand is not to be cut off.

This may be understood from the word *as-sariqah* (theft) and its meanings. This word refers to taking an item in such a way that it is not possible to protect against. This applies if it is stored properly; if it is not stored properly and is taken, this is not theft per se according to Sharia.

Wisdom also dictates that the hand should not be cut off for theft of a trivial item. As there must be a set definition of what is valuable, the shar'i texts make clear the minimum value.

The wisdom behind cutting off the hand as a punishment for theft is so that this will protect people's property, as people will be cautious lest the limb that committed the crime be cut off. If the thief steals again, his left foot is to be cut off. If he does it again, it was suggested that his left hand be cut off, then his right foot, or that he be detained until he dies.

﴿as a recompense for what they have done﴾ that is, this cutting off of their hands is the recompense to the thief for what he stole of people's property

﴿and as an exemplary punishment ordained by Allah﴾ that is, to make an example of him and to deter the thief and others, if they know that their hands will be cut off if they steal.

﴿Allah is Almighty, Most Wise﴾ – because He is Almighty, Most Wise, He ordained that the hand of the thief is to be cut off.

﴿But whoever repents after having thus done wrong and mends his ways, Allah will accept his repentance, for Allah is Oft-Forgiving,

Most Merciful» so He will forgive the one who repents and gives up sin, and mends his ways and reforms himself. That is because Allah is the Sovereign of the heavens and the earth, and He decrees concerning them however He wills; He decrees what will happen and He ordains laws, and He decrees forgiveness or punishment according to His wisdom and vast mercy.



﴿يَأْتِيهَا الرَّسُولُ لَا يَحْزَنكَ الَّذِينَ يُسْكِرُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَلَمْ تُؤْمِن قُلُوبُهُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا سَمَّعُوا لِلْكَذِبِ سَمْعًا لِقَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ لَمْ يَأْتُوكَ يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهِ يَقُولُونَ إِنْ أُوتِيتُمْ هَذَا فَخُذُوهُ وَإِنْ لَمْ تُؤْتَوْهُ فَاحْذَرُوا وَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتَهُ فَلَنْ تَمْلِكَ لَهُ مِنْ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُطَهِّر قُلُوبَهُمْ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٤١﴾ سَمَّعُوا لِلْكَذِبِ أَكَلُوا لِلسُّحْتِ فَإِنْ جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَإِنْ تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ فَلَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْقِسْطِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَكَيْفَ يُحْكِمُوكَ وَعِنْدَهُ التَّورَةُ فِيهَا حُكْمُ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَمَا أُولَئِكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾ إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّورَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ يُحْكَمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ فَلَا تَخْشَوُا النَّاسَ وَآخِشُوا وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِإِيتِي تَمَنَّا قَلِيلًا وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٤١-٤٤)

5:41. O Messenger, do not be saddened by those who rush into disbelief, those who say with their mouths: We believe, but have no faith in their hearts, or those among the Jews who eagerly

listen to lies and to those who have not even come to you. They distort the meaning of [revealed] words and say: If you are given this [ruling], accept it, but if you are not, then beware! Whoever Allah wills should be misguided, you cannot help him against Allah in any way. Those are the ones for whom it is not Allah's will to purify their hearts. For them there is disgrace in this world, and in the hereafter theirs will be a grievous punishment.

- 5:42. They eagerly listen to lies and devour what is unlawful. If they do come to you [O Muhammad], either judge between them or turn away from them. If you turn away from them, not the least harm will they do to you, and if you judge, then judge with justice between them, for Allah loves those who are just.
- 5:43. But how is it that they ask you for judgement when they have the Torah which contains Allah's judgement, and they still turn away? Such people are not [truly] believers.
- 5:44. Verily We revealed the Torah, in which was guidance and light. By it the Prophets who submitted [to Allah] judged the Jews, as did the rabbis and scholars, for to them was entrusted the protection of the scripture of Allah, and they were witnesses thereto. So do not fear people, but fear Me, and do not sell My revelations for a small price. And whoever does not judge according to what Allah has revealed, such are disbelievers.

Because the Messenger (ﷺ) was so concerned for people, he would feel very sad when someone made an outward display of faith, then returned to disbelief. Therefore Allah (ﷻ) instructed him not to feel sad or grieved for such people, because such people were not worth it; if they are present they contribute nothing and if they are absent, no one misses them.

Therefore Allah said, explaining the reason why he should not grieve for them: ﴿those who say with their mouths: We believe, but have no faith in their hearts﴾. Rather those for whom one should feel concerned are those who were counted as believers and were

indeed believers both outwardly and inwardly. It is very unlikely that these people would recant their religion and apostatise, for when faith becomes entrenched in the heart, the individual would not regard anything else as equal to it, nor would he want to replace it with anything else.

﴿or those among the Jews who eagerly listen to lies and to those who have not even come to you﴾ that is, they follow in the footsteps of their leaders whose affair is based on lies, misguidance and wrongdoing. Those leaders ﴿have not even come to you﴾; rather they turned away from you and rejoiced in what they had of falsehood, which is based on distorting the meaning of (revealed) words, that is, explaining the meanings in a way that Allah did not intend in order to misguide people and ward off the truth. These are the ones who are following the callers of misguidance, who fabricate all kinds of lies, and are lacking in reason and aspirations. So do not worry about them if they do not follow you, because they are seriously flawed, and no attention should be paid to one who is flawed.

﴿and say: If you are given this [ruling], accept it, but if you are not, then beware!﴾ That is, this is what they say when they refer to you for judgement, and their only aim is to follow their whims and desires. They say to one another: If Muhammad (ﷺ) rules in your favour and it is in accordance with your whims and desires, then accept his ruling, but if he does not rule in your favour, then beware of following him in that. This is giving into temptation and following the whims and desires of the nafs.

﴿Whoever Allah wills should be misguided, you cannot help him against Allah in any way﴾. This is akin to the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Verily, you [O Muhammad] cannot guide whomever you like, but Allah guides whomever He wills...﴾ (*al-Qasas* 28: 56)

«Those are the ones for whom it is not Allah's will to purify their hearts» that is, therefore they did what they did. This indicates that in the case of one whose intention in referring for judgement to Sharia is to follow his whims and desires, and if the verdict is in his favour he will accept it, but if it is not then he will resent it, that is because his heart is not purified. By the same token, if a person refers his opponent to Sharia, and he accepts the verdict whether it suits him or not, then this is a sign of purity of the heart. This indicates that purity of heart is a means of attaining all that is good, and it is the main reason for all good words and righteous deeds.

«For them there is disgrace in this world» that is, shame and scandal

«and in the hereafter theirs will be a grievous punishment» namely hell and divine wrath.

«They eagerly listen to lies» – listening here means accepting and taking to heart, which is due to their lack of religious commitment and reason; hence they respond to the one who calls them to falsehood.

«and devour what is unlawful» that is, haram wealth, because of what they take unlawfully from their common folk of set fees and charges. Thus they combine following falsehood and consuming that which is prohibited.

«If they do come to you [O Muhammad], either judge between them or turn away from them» – it is your choice. This was not abrogated; rather if this type of people referred to him for judgement, he had the choice between judging between them or refraining from doing so, because they had no intention of adhering to the rule of Sharia, unless it was in accordance with their whims and desires.

Based on that, if it is known that the one who is asking a scholar for an Islamic verdict or for a judgement between him and his opponent will not accept it if the verdict is against him, then the scholar is not obliged to give a ruling or verdict, but if he does judge between them,

then he is obliged to judge fairly. Hence Allah says: ﴿If you turn away from them, not the least harm will they do to you, and if you judge, then judge with justice between them, for Allah loves those who are just﴾. Even if they are wrongdoers or enemies, that should not prevent you from being fair when judging between them.

This highlights the virtue of justice and fairness when judging between people, which Allah (ﷻ) loves. Then Allah says, expressing astonishment at their attitude: ﴿But how is it that they ask you for judgement when they have the Torah which contains Allah's judgement, and they still turn away? Such people are not [truly] believers﴾ – the reason being that if they were truly believers acting upon what faith requires, they would not have turned away from the judgement of Allah which is mentioned in the Torah that they have before them, in hope of finding a ruling that was in accordance with their whims and desires.

When you (O Prophet [ﷺ]) judged between them according to the ruling of Allah, which is also in accordance with what they have in their scriptures, they did not like it; rather they turned away from it and did not accept it.

﴿Such people﴾ that is, the ones who did this ﴿are not [truly] believers﴾ that is, this is not the way of the believers, and they do not deserve to be called believers, because they take as their gods their own desires (*cf.* 25: 43), and they regard the rulings of faith as being subject to their whims and desires.

﴿Verily We revealed the Torah﴾ to Moosâ ibn 'Imrân (ﷺ) ﴿in which was guidance﴾ as it guided people to faith and truth, and protected against misguidance ﴿and light﴾ to illuminate the darkness of ignorance, confusion, doubt, specious arguments, and whims and desires, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿Verily, We gave to Moosâ and Hâroon the criterion [between right and wrong – the Torah], and a light, and admonition for the pious.﴾

(*al-Anbiyâ' 21: 48*)

﴿By it the Prophets who submitted [to Allah]﴾ and complied with His commands, whose submission to Him was greater than that of others, and they were the elite chosen by Allah from among His slaves ﴿judged the Jews﴾ concerning cases of dispute and questions about religious rulings. If this is the case with regard to these noble Prophets and leaders of humankind, that they followed the teachings and guidance of the Torah, then what is preventing these ignoble people among the Jews from following it? What made them cast aside the noblest idea in it, namely believing in Muhammad (ﷺ), without belief in whom no deed, visible or hidden, is accepted? Did they have a leader in that (path of misguidance)? Yes, they had leaders whose main focus was to distort the text of the Torah and establish themselves as leaders among people, and to earn a living by concealing the truth and making falsehood manifest. These are the leaders of misguidance who called people to the fire.

﴿as did the rabbis and scholars﴾ that is, the religious leaders of the Jews ruled on the basis of the Torah. The word translated here as ﴿rabbis﴾ refers to knowledgeable people who act upon their knowledge and teach others in the best way, and they follow the path of the compassionate Prophets in their dealings with the people.

The word translated here as ﴿scholars﴾ refers to the senior scholars whose teachings people emulate and follow, and among their people they are known for devotion and sincerity.

This ruling on their part, which is in accordance with the truth, is because ﴿to them was entrusted the protection of the scripture of Allah, and they were witnesses thereto﴾ that is, because Allah entrusted the protection of His Book to them, and made them trustees in whose keeping it was placed, and He enjoined them to protect it

from additions, subtractions and concealment, and to teach it to those who do not know it.

Therefore they are witnesses over it, as they became the reference point regarding it and matters that were not clear in people's minds. Allah (ﷻ) gives responsibility to the people of knowledge that He does not give to those who are ignorant. Therefore they were required to shoulder that burden of responsibility and not to follow the example of the ignorant by resorting to idleness and laziness. Therefore they should not limit themselves to individual acts of worship, such as various kinds of dhikr, prayer, zakâh, Hajj, fasting and other matters by which, if those who have no knowledge do them, they will be fine and will be saved.

But in the case of those who have knowledge, just as they are required to fulfil their individual duties, they are also required to teach the people and point out to them that which they need to know of religious matters, especially the fundamental matters and issues that often arise. They should not fear people; rather they should fear their Lord. Hence He says: ﴿So do not fear people, but fear Me, and do not sell My revelations for a small price﴾, for then you would be concealing the truth and making falsehood manifest for the sake of insignificant worldly gain. If the scholar is free of these faults, then that is by the help and guidance of Allah and His blessing, because He has caused his focus to be on acquiring knowledge and teaching people, and he knows that Allah has entrusted to his keeping what he has of knowledge and is a witness thereto. So he should fear his Lord, and not let fear of people prevent him from doing what is required of him or give precedence to worldly matters over religious matters.

By the same token, the sign of a scholar being doomed is that he is content to be idle and not do anything, and he does not care about what he has been entrusted with. He neglects it for he has sold his religious commitment for worldly gain and taken bribes for his verdicts; thus he took money for his fatwas and did not teach the slaves of Allah anything unless it was in return for a fee.

Allah has blessed such a person immensely, but he was ungrateful for it and he rejected that great good fortune of which others are deprived. We ask Allah for beneficial knowledge and accepted deeds; may He bless us with pardon and protection from all calamities.

﴿And whoever does not judge according to what Allah has revealed﴾ of clear truth, and he knowingly rules according to falsehood for some invalid purpose, ﴿such are disbelievers﴾. Judging or ruling according to something other than that which Allah has revealed is the action of the disbelievers, and it may put one beyond the pale of Islam, if he believes that doing so is permissible, or it may be a major sin and an act of disbelief, for which the one who does it deserves a severe punishment.



﴿وَكَيْفَا عَلَيْنَا فِيهَا أَنْ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ وَالْأَنْفَ بِالْأَنْفِ
وَالْأُذُنَ بِالْأُذُنِ وَالسِّنَّ بِالسِّنِّ وَالْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصٌ فَمَنْ تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ
فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَهُ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾﴾

(سورة المائدة: ٤٥)

- 5:45. We ordained therein for them: A life for a life, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth, and wounds equal for equal. But if anyone remits the retaliation by way of charity, it will be an expiation for him. And whoever does not judge according to what Allah has revealed, such are wrongdoers.

These rulings are among the rulings mentioned in the Torah, the rulings by which the Prophets who submitted (to Allah) judged the Jews, as did the rabbis and scholars. Allah enjoined upon them that a person – if he killed someone – was to be executed for that act of

murder – on condition that the act was deliberate. An eye was to be put out in retaliation for an eye, an ear was to be removed in retaliation for an ear, and a tooth for a tooth, and so on with regard to physical faculties for which retribution is possible without going to extremes.

﴿and wounds equal for equal﴾ – retribution means that the same is done to the perpetrator as he did to the victim. If a person wounds another deliberately, then retribution is exacted by inflicting a similar wound upon him, in the same location and of similar dimensions, as a hadd punishment. It should be noted that laws prescribed for the nations that came before us are also prescribed for us, unless Islamic Sharia ordains otherwise.

﴿But if anyone remits the retaliation﴾ in cases of murder or lesser offences causing loss of physical faculties or wounds, by forgiving the one who committed the offence

﴿it will be an expiation for him﴾ that is, expiation for the offender, because the human has waived his rights, and it is more befitting that Allah should waive what is due to Him. It is also expiation for the one who remits it; just as he pardoned a transgression against him or against his next of kin, Allah will pardon his mistakes and offences.

﴿And whoever does not judge according to what Allah has revealed, such are wrongdoers﴾. Ibn 'Abbās said:

[That is,] a lesser form of disbelief, a lesser form of wrongdoing and a lesser form of evildoing. The wrongdoing is greater if the perpetrator regards it as permissible, and it is a major sin if he does it without thinking that it is permissible.



﴿وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِمْ بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ ۗ وَإِنِّي نَسِيتُ الْإِنجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى وَنُورٌ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ ۗ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

﴿٤٦﴾ وَلَيَحْكُرْ أَهْلَ الْإِنجِيلِ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ ۖ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٤٦-٤٧)

- 5:46. And in their footsteps We sent 'Eesâ son of Maryam, confirming what came before him of the Torah, and We gave him the Gospel, in which was guidance and light, and confirmation of what came before it of the Torah; a guidance and admonition for those who fear Allah.
- 5:47. Let the people of the Gospel judge according to what Allah revealed therein. And whoever does not judge according to what Allah has revealed, such are evildoers.

That is, We followed the sending of these Prophets and Messengers, who judged in accordance with the Torah, by sending Our slave and Messenger 'Eesâ ibn Maryam, a soul created by Allah and His word that He bestowed upon Maryam. Allah sent him to confirm what came before him of the Torah. So he was a witness who testified in favour of Moosâ and what he brought of the Torah, in truth. He supported his call and judged in accordance with his laws, agreeing and concurring with him in most legal matters.

'Eesâ (ﷺ) may have been more lenient with regard to some rulings, as Allah (ﷻ) tells us that he said to the Children of Israel: ﴿[I have come] to confirm that which came before me of the Torah, and to make lawful to you some of the things which had been forbidden to you...﴾ (Al 'Imrân 3: 50)

﴿and We gave him the Gospel﴾, the great Book which complemented the Torah
 ﴿in which was guidance and light﴾, to guide people to the straight path and distinguish truth from falsehood
 ﴿and confirmation of what came before it of the Torah﴾ by confirming it, testifying for it and agreeing with it

﴿a guidance and admonition for those who fear Allah﴾ for they are the ones who benefit from guidance, pay heed to admonition and are deterred from that which is not appropriate.

﴿Let the people of the Gospel judge according to what Allah revealed therein﴾ that is, it is obligatory for them to adhere to their scripture, and it is not permissible for them to turn away from it
 ﴿And whoever does not judge according to what Allah has revealed, such are evildoers﴾.



﴿ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ ۖ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ ۚ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ ۚ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ ۚ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَأِنْ أَحْكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَأَحْذَرْتُمْ أَنْ يَفْتَسِحُوا عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ يَرِيدُ أَنْ يُصِيبَهُمْ بِبَعْضِ ذُنُوبِهِمْ ۗ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنَ النَّاسِ لَفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ ۚ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٤٨-٥٠)

- 5:48. And We have sent down to you [O Muhammad] the Book in truth, confirming the scripture that came before it and superseding it. So judge between them according to what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their desires by turning away from the truth that has come to you. To each [community] among you, We have prescribed a law and a clear way. If Allah had so willed, He would have made you a single community, but [He willed it otherwise] in order to test you in what He has given you. So hasten to do good deeds. To Allah you will all return, then

He will inform you about the matters concerning which you differed.

- 5:49. So judge [O Muhammad] between them according to what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their desires; but beware lest they lure you away from any part of that which Allah has sent down to you. And if they turn away, then know that it is Allah's will to punish them for some of their sins. And verily many people are indeed rebellious.
- 5:50. Is it then the judgement of [the times of] ignorance²³ that they seek? But who could be better in judgement than Allah, for a people who are certain in faith?

«And We have sent down to you [O Muhammad] the Book» namely the Holy Qur'an, the best and greatest of scriptures «in truth» that is, revealed in truth and containing truth in its stories, commands and prohibitions «confirming the scripture that came before it» because it testifies for it and is in harmony with it; its stories match and its major laws are the same. The previous scriptures foretold it, so the existence of the Qur'an is a confirmation of the previous scriptures

«and superseding it» that is, it includes what the previous scriptures contained, and with regard to additional divine instructions and promotion of good morals and attitudes, it is the Book which contains everything true that was mentioned and enjoined in previous scriptures; it approached the same issues from different angles.

It is the Book which contains news of the earlier and later generations. It is the Book which contains judgement, wisdom and rulings; the Book by which all previous scriptures are judged. Whatever it testifies is true is to be accepted, and whatever it testifies is false is to be rejected, as it has been affected by distortion and alteration,

²³ Jâhiliyah (the times of ignorance): this refers to the period before Islam.

otherwise if it were really from Allah, it would not contradict what is in the Qur'an.

﴿So judge between them according to what Allah has revealed﴾ that is, the rules of Sharia that Allah has revealed to you.

﴿and do not follow their desires by turning away from the truth that has come to you﴾ that is, do not follow their corrupt whims and desires that are contrary to the truth, instead of the truth that has come to you, thus exchanging what is better for what is inferior

﴿To each [community] among you﴾, O nations, ﴿We have prescribed a law and a clear way﴾ or path. This refers to sets of laws that differ from one nation to another, according to changes in times and circumstances, but all of them were based on fairness at the time when they were ordained. As for the basic principles which are in people's best interests and based on wisdom at all times, they do not change; thus you find them prescribed in all sets of laws.

﴿If Allah had so willed, He would have made you a single community﴾, following one set of laws, and the laws that came later would not differ from those that came earlier.

﴿but [He willed it otherwise] in order to test you in what He has given you﴾. So He tests you to see what you will do, and He tests each nation according to what His wisdom dictates, giving each one whatever is appropriate for it. He also tests them so as to bring about competition between the nations, for each nation will be keen to compete with others and surpass them. Hence Allah says: ﴿So hasten to do good deeds﴾ that is, hasten to do them properly. ﴿good deeds﴾ include every deed that is obligatory or recommended, whether it pertains to the rights of Allah or those of His slaves. The one who does them is not regarded as being ahead of others unless he does two things: hastening to do the good deed, making the most of the opportunity when the time for it comes and it is due, and striving hard to do it properly as enjoined. This verse indicates that the individual should hasten to offer the prayer and do other deeds when the time for

them begins, and that he should not limit himself only to that which makes the deed acceptable in the case of prayer and other obligatory acts of worship; rather he should strive to do whatever he is able to of all actions that are recommended, so as to complete and perfect his deeds and attain the position of being ahead of others.

﴿To Allah you will all return﴾ – the earlier and later nations; Allah will gather them together on a day concerning which there is no doubt ﴿then He will inform you about the matters concerning which you differed﴾ of laws and deeds. Then He will reward those who followed the truth and did righteous deeds, and He will punish those who followed falsehood and did evil deeds.

﴿So judge [O Muhammad] between them according to what Allah has revealed﴾. It was said that this verse abrogates the verse in which Allah says: ﴿either judge between them or turn away from them﴾ (5: 42).

However the correct view is that it does not abrogate it, and that this verse indicates that the Prophet (ﷺ) did have the choice between judging between them and not doing so; that was because their intention was not to seek a fair and truth-based judgement.

This verse indicates that if he did judge between them, then he was to judge between them in accordance with what Allah had sent down of the Book and the Sunnah. This is the justice that Allah previously referred to: ﴿and if you judge, then judge with justice between them﴾ (5: 42). This indicates that what is meant by justice, and the basis thereof, is that which Allah has ordained of rulings. This includes the utmost justice and fairness, and anything contrary to that is unjust and unfair.

﴿and do not follow their desires﴾. This prohibition on following their whims and desires is repeated so as to emphasise the warning against doing so. The first time this phrase appears is in the context of giving a ruling and verdict, which is broader in scope; here it appears

in the context of giving rulings only. In either case it is essential to avoid following their whims and desires that are contrary to the truth. Hence Allah says: ﴿but beware lest they lure you away from any part of that which Allah has sent down to you﴾ that is, beware of being deceived by them, lest they confuse you and make you turn away from some of that which Allah has sent down to you, in which case following their whims and desires would be a cause that led to your abandoning the truth that must be followed.

﴿And if they turn away﴾ from following you and following the truth

﴿then know﴾ that this is a punishment to them, and that it is Allah's will ﴿to punish them for some of their sins﴾. There are punishments for sin in this world and in the hereafter; one of the harshest of punishments is when it becomes fair-seeming to stop following the Messenger (ﷺ). This is because of the individual's sin, ﴿And verily many people are indeed rebellious﴾ that is, their nature is to rebel and to refuse to obey Allah or follow His Messenger (ﷺ).

﴿Is it then the judgement of [the times of] ignorance²⁴ that they seek?﴾ That is, by turning away and objecting to you, are they seeking the judgement of the times of ignorance, which refers to any ruling that is contrary to that which Allah sent down to His Messenger (ﷺ). There is nothing but either the ruling of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) or the ruling of the times of ignorance. Whoever turns away from the former will fall into the latter, which is based on ignorance, injustice and transgression. Hence Allah described it as ignorance. As for the ruling of Allah (ﷻ), it is based on knowledge, justice, fairness, light and guidance.

﴿But who could be better in judgement than Allah, for a people who are certain in faith?﴾ The one who is certain in faith is the one who knows the difference between the two types of judgement and

²⁴ Jāhiliyah (the times of ignorance) this refers to the period before Islam.

recognises – on the basis of his certain faith – the beauty and brilliance of Allah's judgement, and he knows that it is obligatory – on the basis of reason and Islamic teachings – to follow it. Certainty of faith is based on perfect knowledge that prompts one to act upon it.



﴿يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَرَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ ۚ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِنكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنَّهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥١﴾ فَتَرَى الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ يُسْرِعُونَ فِيهِمْ يَقُولُونَ نَخْشَىٰ أَن تُصِيبَنَا دَآئِرَةٌ ۚ فَعَسَىٰ اللَّهُ أَن يَأْتِيَ بِالْفَتْحِ أَوْ أَمْرٍ مِّنْ عِندِهِ ۖ فَيُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا أَسْرُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ تَدْمِينًا ﴿٥٢﴾ وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ لَمَعَكُمْ حَبِطَتِ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَأَصْبَحُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٥١-٥٣)

- 5:51. O you who believe, do not take the Jews and Christians as allies;²⁵ for they are allies of one another. Whoever among you takes them as allies is indeed one of them. Verily Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people.
- 5:52. You see those in whose hearts is a disease hastening towards them, saying: We are afraid lest fortune turn against us. It may be that Allah will bring about victory or some other event by His decree. Then they will regret what they had kept hidden in their hearts.
- 5:53. And those who believe say: Are these the men who swore their most solemn oaths by Allah, that they were with you? Their deeds have come to nothing and they find themselves losers.

²⁵ The word *awliyā'*, translated here as "allies", may also mean protectors, supporters, close friends, and so on.

Here Allah (ﷻ) instructs His believing slaves, when He describes to them the situation of the Jews and the Christians, and their displeasing attributes, that they should not take them as allies, for they are allies of one another, who support one another and are united against others. You should not take them as allies, for in fact they are enemies who do not care what befalls you. Rather they would not spare any effort to mislead you. Hence no one takes them as allies except one who is like them. For this reason, Allah says: «Whoever among you takes them as allies is indeed one of them», because taking them as allies, in a complete sense, dictates joining them in their religion, and taking them as allies on a small scale could lead to taking them as allies on a large scale, then the individual would get closer to them, step-by-step, until he becomes one of them.

«Verily Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people» that is, those who have the quality of wrongdoing, for whom it is second nature. Even if you brought all signs to them, they would not follow you.

When Allah instructed the believers not to take them as allies, He stated that among some of those who claim to be believers there is a group that takes the enemy as allies. Allah says:

«You see those in whose hearts is a disease» such as doubt, hypocrisy and weakness of faith. They say: We take them as allies now because we may have need of them

«We are afraid lest fortune turn against us» that is, in case things go in favour of the Jews and Christians, for if they have the upper hand, and we are already on good terms with them, they will reward us for that. This is negative thinking of Islam on their part. Allah says in response to their negative thinking:

«It may be that Allah will bring about victory» that is, Allah may cause Islam to prevail over the Jews and Christians, so that the Muslims will defeat them

«or some other event by His decree» that would lead to the hypocrites despairing of the disbelievers – be they Jews or others – ever prevailing

﴿Then they will regret what they had kept hidden﴾ that is, concealed ﴿in their hearts﴾; they will regret what they did and the harm they caused, but it will be to no benefit. The victory that Allah granted to Islam and the Muslims came to pass and disbelief and the disbelievers were brought low; as a result they were filled with regret and sorrow to an extent that only Allah knows.

﴿And those who believe say﴾ in astonishment at the state of these people in whose hearts there is sickness: ﴿Are these the men who swore their most solemn oaths by Allah, that they were with you?﴾ That is: they swore solemnly and went to extremes in trying to give assurances that they were your fellow believers with all that that implies of support, love and friendship.

But what they were concealing was made manifest and their plot and what they intended to do to Islam and its followers came to nothing; thus their plot was foiled and ﴿their deeds﴾ were rendered invalid in this world and ﴿they find themselves losers﴾ as they failed to attain their goal and will have no escape from misery and punishment.



﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْ رِبِّكَ مِنْكُمْ عَنِ دِينِهِمْ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُمْ أَذِلَّةً عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةً عَلَى الْكٰفِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَآئِمٍ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٥٤)

- 5:54. O you who believe, whoever among you renounces his faith, Allah will bring forth [in their stead] people whom He loves and who love Him, humble towards the believers and stern towards the disbelievers, striving in the cause of Allah, and not fearing the reproach of any reproacher. That is the grace of Allah, which He bestows upon whomever He will. And Allah is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He has no need of His creation, and that whoever apostatises from His religion will never harm Him at all; rather he only harms himself. Allah has sincere slaves whom the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful has guaranteed to guide and has promised that He will bring forth, and that they will be the most perfect of humanity in characteristics, the strongest at heart and the best in attitude. The greatest of their characteristics is that Allah loves them and they love Him. Allah's love for a person is the greatest blessing that He may bestow upon him, and the greatest virtue with which Allah may favour him. If Allah loves a person, He makes things easy for him and enables him to do good deeds and refrain from evil deeds; He also causes His slaves to love that person.

One of the requirements of a person's love for his Lord is that he has no choice but to follow the Messenger (ﷺ) both outwardly and inwardly, in word and deed, in all circumstances, as Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴿Say: If you love Allah then follow me; Allah will love you...﴾ (*Āl 'Imrān 3: 31*)

One of the prerequisites of Allah loving a person is that he does a lot of deeds to draw near to Allah, both obligatory and supererogatory actions, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said in the ṣaḥeeḥ hadith which tells us that Allah says:

«My slave does not draw near to Me with anything more beloved to Me than what which I have enjoined upon him (of obligatory duties), and My slave continues to draw near to Me with supererogatory deeds so that I will love him. When I love him I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes and his foot with which he walks. Were he to ask (something) of Me, I would surely give it to him, and were he to ask Me for refuge, I would surely grant him it.» (Bukhari)

Another of the prerequisites of Allah loving a person is knowing Him and remembering Him a great deal, for love without knowing

Allah is sorely lacking; indeed it is non-existent, even if one claims that it is there. The one who loves Allah remembers Him a great deal, and when Allah loves a person, He will accept a little of good deeds from him and will forgive a great deal of mistakes on his part.

Another of their characteristics is that they are ﴿humble towards the believers and stern towards the disbelievers﴾. With the believers, they are humble out of love, sincerity, gentleness, kindness, compassion and mercy towards them, and they are easy going with them. But with those who disbelieve in Allah, stubbornly reject His revelations and disbelieve in His Messengers, they are stern and resolved to oppose them and to do their utmost by all available means to prevail over them. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿Make ready against them all that you can of [military] power and steeds of war, to strike fear into the hearts of the enemies of Allah and your enemies...﴾ (*al-Anfāl* 8: 60)

– and:

﴿...firm and unyielding towards the disbelievers, compassionate towards one another...﴾ (*al-Fath* 48: 29)

Being forceful and stern against the enemies of Allah is something that brings one nearer to Allah and is a means by which the person is in harmony with his Lord in His wrath towards them. The idea of being stern towards them does not mean that we cannot call them to Islam in the manner that is best, thus combining sternness towards them with gentleness in calling them to Islam. Both are in their best interests and will benefit them.

﴿striving in the cause of Allah﴾, offering their wealth and their lives, striving in word and deed

﴿and not fearing the reproach of any reproacher﴾; rather they give precedence to pleasing their Lord and fearing His disapproval over fearing the reproach of other people. This is indicative of the strength of their aspirations and resolve, for weakness of heart and lack of resolve when faced with reproach weaken one's resolve further

and lead to him losing strength when he is told off; that is a kind of servitude to something other than Allah, the degree of which is commensurate with the extent to which they pay attention to other people and give precedence to pleasing them and avoiding their reproach over complying with the command of Allah. A person's heart is not free of servitude to anyone other than Allah until he reaches a point where he does not fear the reproach of any reproacher for the sake of Allah.

Having praised them for that which He blessed them with of noble and sublime characteristics, which are indicative of righteous deeds not mentioned, Allah then tells us that this is by His grace and kindness towards them, lest they be filled with self-admiration and so that they will give thanks to the One Who blessed them with that. Furthermore, He will bestow more of His grace upon them and others will understand that there is no barrier to the grace of Allah (ﷻ):

﴿That is the grace of Allah, which He bestows upon whomever He will. And Allah is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing﴾ that is, He is abundant in grace and kindness, and bestows immense blessings. His mercy encompasses all things and He gives abundantly to His close friends in a way that He does not give to others. He knows best who is deserving of grace, and He gives it to him.

﴿Allah knows best where to place His message﴾ (al-An'âm 6: 124)

– in terms of the Messengers and those who convey the message from them.



﴿إِنهَا وَلِيُّكُمْ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٥٥)

- 5:55. Your only allies are Allah, His Messenger, and the believers, those who establish prayer and give zakāh, with humble submission.
- 5:56. Whoever takes Allah, His Messenger, and the believers as allies, it is the party of Allah that will certainly be triumphant.

Having forbidden us to take the disbelievers – Jews, Christians and others – as allies and stated that the ultimate fate of those who take them as allies is clear loss, Allah (ﷻ) then tells us who the believers should take as allies, and He mentions the benefits and interests served by doing so:

﴿Your only allies are Allah, His Messenger﴾ – taking Allah as an ally means believing in Him and fearing Him. Everyone who believes and fears Allah is an ally of His, and whoever is an ally of Allah is also an ally of His Messenger (ﷺ). A result of that is taking as an ally everyone who takes Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) as allies, namely the believers who establish faith both outwardly and inwardly, and show sincere devotion to Allah by establishing prayer, fulfilling all its conditions and doing all obligatory and optional parts thereof, treating people kindly and giving zakāh from their wealth to those among them who are entitled to it.

﴿with humble submission﴾ that is, they are humble towards Allah

The word ﴿only﴾ in the phrase ﴿Your only allies are Allah, His Messenger, and the believers﴾ indicates that being an ally only to those mentioned, and disavowing any alliance to anyone else, is obligatory.

Then Allah mentions the benefit of this alliance: ﴿Whoever takes Allah, His Messenger, and the believers as allies, it is the party of Allah that will certainly be triumphant﴾ that is, he belongs to the party that is described as belonging to Allah by way of servitude and alliance, and His party is the one which will prevail, and for whom

there will be a good end in this world and in the hereafter, as Allah (ﷻ) says elsewhere:

﴿And it is surely Our troops who will be the victors.﴾ (as-Saffat 37: 173)

These are glad tidings for anyone who follows the command of Allah and becomes one of His party and those who support His cause: that he will prevail, even if he is defeated sometimes for a reason that Allah (ﷻ) wills. Ultimately he will prevail and be victorious, for who could be truer in his promise than Allah?



﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا نَتَّخِذُوا الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَكُمْ هُزُوءًا وَلَعِبًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَالْكَافِرَ ءَأَوْلِيَاءَ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ كُفْرَكُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَإِذَا نَادَيْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ اتَّخَذُوهَا هُزُوءًا وَلَعِبًا ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٥٧-٥٨)

5:57. O you who believe, do not take as allies²⁶ those who ridicule your religion and make fun of it, whether they are among those who were given the scripture before you or the disbelievers. Fear Allah, if you are [truly] believers.

5:58. When you give the call to prayer, they ridicule it and make fun of it; that is because they are a people who do not understand.

Here Allah forbids His believing slaves to take as allies the People of the Book, namely the Jews and Christians, and all other disbelievers, loving them, regarding them as friends, disclosing the secrets of the believers to them and helping them in some of their affairs that will adversely affect Islam and the Muslims. The faith that the believers

²⁶ The word *awliyâ'*, translated here as "allies", may also mean protectors, supporters, close friends, and so on.

have dictates that they should not take them as allies and it encourages them to regard them as enemies.

Similarly, their duty to fear Allah, which means complying with His commands and avoiding that which He prohibits, requires them to regard them as enemies.

There were also other polytheists and disbelievers who opposed the Muslims, attacking their religion, making fun of it, belittling it and looking down on it, especially the prayer which is the most prominent characteristic of the Muslims and the noblest of their acts of worship. When the Muslims gave the call to prayer, they mocked it because of their immaturity and great ignorance. Otherwise, if they were possessed of any reason, they would have submitted to it and would have realised that it is better than all righteous deeds that a person could do.

If you – O believers – realise how the disbelievers really are and the extent of their hostility towards you and your religion, then anyone who does not resent and oppose them does not truly appreciate Islam.

How can you claim that you have a good religion, and that it is the religion of truth and all others are false, yet you accept to take as allies those foolish and ignorant people who make fun of Islam and mock it and its people? This comes under the heading of inciting enmity towards their enemies, which is very clear to anyone who has the slightest understanding.



﴿ قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ هَلْ تَنصِفُونَ مِنَّا إِلَّا أَنَّا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلُ وَإِنَّا أَكْثَرُكُمْ فَسِيقُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾ قُلْ هَلْ أُنبِئُكُمْ بِشَرِّ مِّنْ ذَلِكَ مُشْرِبَةٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ لَعْنَةِ اللَّهِ وَغَضَبِ عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهُمْ الْفِرْدَةَ وَالْخَنَازِيرَ وَعَبَدَ الطَّاغُوتِ أُولَئِكَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَأَضَلُّ عَن سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ ﴿٦٠﴾ وَإِذَا جَاءُوكُمْ قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَقَدْ دَخَلُوا بِالْكَفْرِ وَهُمْ قَدْ خَرَجُوا بِهِ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا

كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٦١﴾ وَتَرَىٰ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَأَكْبَاهِمُ الْسُّخْتَةَ لَيْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ لَوْلَا يَنْهَاهُمُ الرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ عَن قَوْلِهِمُ الْإِثْمَ وَأَكْبَاهِمُ الْسُّخْتَةَ لَيْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٥٩-٦٣)

- 5:59. Say: O People of the Book, do you resent us for any reason other than that we believe in Allah, and in [the revelation] that has been sent down to us, and in that which was sent down before, and that most of you are evildoers?
- 5:60. Say: Shall I tell you who deserves a worse recompense from Allah [than that which you think we will receive]? Those whom Allah cursed and was angry with, some of whom He turned into apes and swine, and worshippers of false gods. They are in a worse position and are further astray from the right path.
- 5:61. And when they come to you, they say: We believe, but in fact they come with disbelief [in their hearts] and they depart with disbelief, and Allah knows all that they conceal [in their hearts].
- 5:62. You see many of them rushing into sin and transgression, and devouring unlawful earnings. Wretched indeed is what they have been doing.
- 5:63. Why do the rabbis and scholars not forbid them to utter sinful words and devour unlawful earnings? Wretched indeed is what they have been failing to do.²⁷

That is: ﴿Say﴾ O Messenger (ﷺ): ﴿O People of the Book﴾ affirming to them that Islam is the true religion and that their criticism of it is criticising something that should be praised.

﴿do you resent us for any reason other than that we believe in Allah, and in [the revelation] that has been sent down to us, and in that which was sent down before, and that most of you are evildoers?﴾ That is, do you have anything against us except the fact that we believe in

²⁷ That is, by not forbidding them to do those things.

Allah and in His earlier and later Books, and His earlier and later Prophets, and that we are certain that whoever does not believe in this manner is a disbeliever and an evildoer? Do you resent us for any reason other than that we believe in this which is the most obligatory duty of all who are accountable?

Most of them are evildoers; that is, they fail to obey Allah and they blatantly disobey Him.

Because their criticism of the believers implies that they think that they are following an evil path, Allah (ﷻ) says: «Say» to them, informing them of the abhorrent nature of what they follow:

«Shall I tell you who deserves a worse recompense from Allah [than that which you think we will receive]?» that is, worse than that for which you resent us – this is said for argument's sake.

«Those whom Allah cursed» that is, cast far away from His mercy «and was angry with» and punished them in this world and the hereafter

«some of whom He turned into apes and swine, and worshippers of false gods» – the word *ṭāghoot*, translated here as «false gods», refers to the *Shayṭān*. Everything that is worshipped instead of Allah is *ṭāghoot*.

«They» that is, those who are mentioned as having these reprehensible characteristics

«are in a worse position» than the believers to whom the mercy of Allah is near, and Allah is pleased with them and rewards them in this world and in the hereafter, because they are sincere in their devotion to Him. This is a kind of comparison, without inferring that both are bad.

«and are further astray from the right path» that is, they are far away from the straight path.

«And when they come to you, they say: We believe» by way of hypocrisy and trickery

«but in fact they come with disbelief [in their hearts] and they depart with disbelief» that is, they come and go with disbelief in their hearts

even though they claim to be believers; can there be anyone worse than these people or in a more appalling state?

﴿and Allah knows all that they conceal [in their hearts]﴾ and He will requite them for their deeds, both good and evil.

Then Allah (ﷻ) carries on listing their faults, in retaliation for their criticism of His believing slaves: ﴿You see many of them﴾ that is, the Jews ﴿rushing into sin and transgression﴾ that is, they are eager and hasten to commit sins that have to do with the rights of the Creator and transgression against other people.

﴿and devouring unlawful earnings﴾ that is, what is haram. Allah did not stop at telling us that they do this; rather He tells us that they rush into it, which is indicative of their evil, and shows us that it is second nature to them to love sin and wrongdoing, yet they claim for themselves a high status.

﴿Wretched indeed is what they have been doing﴾ – this is the utmost criticism and condemnation of them.

﴿Why do the rabbis and scholars not forbid them to utter sinful words and devour unlawful earnings?﴾ That is, why do the scholars – who take it upon themselves to benefit the people and whom Allah has blessed with knowledge and wisdom – not forbid them to do those sins that come from them, so that the people will rid themselves of ignorance and proof will be established against them?

The scholars are obliged to enjoin upon people what is right and to forbid what is wrong, to show the people the right path, encourage them to do all that is good and warn them against all that is evil.

﴿Wretched indeed is what they have been failing to do﴾.



﴿وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ يَدُ اللَّهِ مَغْلُولَةٌ غُلَّتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَلِعِنَّا لَمَّا قَالُوا لَئِن يَدَاهُ مُبْسُوطَتَانِ يُنْفِقُ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ وَلِيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا وَالْقَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ﴾

وَالْبَعْضَاءُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْيَقِينَةِ كَلَّمَا أَوْقَدُوا نَارًا لِلْحَرْبِ أَطْفَأَهَا اللَّهُ وَسَعُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا
 وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾ وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ ءَامَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَكَفَّرْنَا
 عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ التَّيْمِيمِ ﴿٦٥﴾ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ
 وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ مِنَ رَبِّهِمْ لَأَكَلُوا مِن فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ مِّنْهُمْ أُمَّةٌ مُّقْتَصِدَةٌ
 وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ سَاءَ مَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٦٤-٦٦)

- 5:64. The Jews say: Allah's Hand is tied up. May their hands be tied up and may they be cursed for what they say. Rather His two Hands are outstretched; He bestows [His bounty] as He wills. The [revelation] that has come down to you from your Lord will surely increase many of them in obstinate rebellion and disbelief, and We have cast among them enmity and hatred until the Day of Resurrection. Every time they kindle the fire of war, Allah extinguishes it. They strive to spread mischief in the land, and Allah does not love those who spread mischief.
- 5:65. If the People of the Book had believed and feared Allah, We would surely have expiated their sins from them, and admitted them to gardens of delight.
- 5:66. If they had been steadfast [in adhering to] the Torah and the Gospel, and that which was revealed to them from their Lord, they would surely have been given provision from above them and from beneath their feet. Among them are some who are fair-minded, but many of them do evil deeds.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the abhorrent words of the Jews and their dreadful belief:

«The Jews say: Allah's Hand is tied up» that is, unable to do good and bestow kindness.

«May their hands be tied up and may they be cursed for what they say». This is a supplication against them of similar nature to what they said, because their words implicitly describe Allah, the Most

Generous, as being miserly and not kind. Hence He requited them by making this description suit them.

They were the most miserly of people and the least generous and kind, and they thought of Allah in the most negative terms. Therefore He cast them far away from His mercy which encompasses all things and reaches all regions of the upper and lower realms. Hence He said: ﴿Rather His two Hands are outstretched; He bestows [His bounty] as He wills﴾, with no restrictions on Him and no impediment to prevent Him doing what He wills. His generosity is far reaching and His kindness encompasses the spiritual and the physical. He enjoins His slaves to make the most of the seasons when He bestows His grace abundantly and not to close to themselves the gates of His kindness by committing sin.

His Hands are giving by night and by day, and His bounty pours forth abundantly at all times, relieving distress, removing hardship, enriching the poor, ransoming the captive, consoling the afflicted, giving to those who are in need, answering the cry of the desperate, responding to those who ask, bestowing blessings even upon those who do not ask, granting well-being to those who seek it and never depriving any sinner of His bounty. Indeed His bounty is enjoyed by righteous and evildoers alike, but He shows further kindness to His close friends by helping them to do righteous deeds. Then He praises them and attributes their righteous deeds to them, by His grace, and He rewards them for those deeds in this world and in the hereafter, a reward that cannot be described and has not crossed the mind of man. He takes care of them in all their affairs, bestows His blessings upon them and wards off harm from them, much of which they are unaware of. Glory be to the One from Whom all blessings come and to Whom they turn to ward off harm. Blessed be the One Whom no one can praise as He deserves; rather He is as He has praised Himself. Exalted be the One of Whose generosity people are never deprived,

not even for the blink of an eye; rather they cannot exist or survive except by His grace.

May Allah doom the one who in his ignorance thinks that he can do without his Lord and who ascribes to Him that which is not befitting to His Majesty. Rather if Allah were to take to task the Jews who said that or others of their ilk, for some of what they say, they would have been destroyed and doomed in this world. But they say these things, and Allah (ﷻ) shows forbearance, overlooks and gives respite, but He never forgets about them.

﴿The [revelation] that has come down to you from your Lord will surely increase many of them in obstinate rebellion and disbelief﴾. This is the worst punishment that may befall a person, whereby the message that Allah has sent down to His Messenger (ﷺ), which brings life to the heart and soul, and brings happiness in this world and the hereafter, and success in both realms, which is the greatest blessing that Allah has bestowed upon His slaves, that they should hasten to accept and submit to Allah by doing so, and give thanks to Allah for it – that such a thing could increase them in transgression, obstinate rebellion and disbelief. That is because of their turning away from it, rejecting it, stubbornly opposing it and producing false arguments to undermine it.

﴿and We have cast among them enmity and hatred until the Day of Resurrection﴾ so there will be no harmony among them, they will not support one another, and they will not agree on any issue that serves any of their interests; rather they will bear mutual grudges in their hearts and oppose one another until the Day of Resurrection.

﴿Every time they kindle the fire of war﴾ to attack Islam and its people, or they start something or try to repeat it, and they amass their military power, ﴿Allah extinguishes it﴾ by causing them to fail, causing their troops to scatter and granting the Muslims victory over them.

«They strive to spread mischief in the land» that is, they try hard and do their utmost, but by spreading mischief in the land they are committing sin and promoting their false religion, and preventing people from entering Islam.

«and Allah does not love those who spread mischief»; rather He hates them intensely and will requite them for that.

«If the People of the Book had believed and feared Allah, We would surely have expiated their sins from them, and admitted them to gardens of delight». This is by His grace and bounty; having mentioned the evil deeds, faults and false arguments of the People of the Book, He calls them to repent, and tells them that if they believe in Allah, His angels, all of His Books and all of His Messengers, and avoid sin, their bad deeds will be expiated, no matter what they are, and He would admit them to gardens of delight, where there will be all that their souls could desire, all that their eyes could delight in (*cf. 43: 71*).

«If they had been steadfast [in adhering to] the Torah and the Gospel, and that which was revealed to them from their Lord» that is, if they had adhered to the commands and prohibitions contained therein, as Allah instructed them and urged them to do, part of which is believing in Muhammad (ﷺ) and the Qur'an – if they had been steadfast in adhering to this great blessing which their Lord had revealed to them for their sakes and for their own benefit,

«they would surely have been given provision from above them and from beneath their feet» that is, Allah would have sent abundant provision to them; He would have sent down rain upon them and brought forth vegetation for them from the earth, as He says elsewhere:

«If only the people of the cities had believed and feared Allah, We would indeed have opened up for them blessings from heaven and earth...» (*al-A'râf 7: 96*)

«Among them» that is, among the People of the Book

﴿are some who are fair-minded﴾ that is, they act in accordance with the Torah and Gospel

﴿but many of them do evil deeds﴾ that is, the evildoers among them are many; as for those who strive to adhere to the teachings, how few they are.



﴿يَأْتِيهَا الرُّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ مَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٦٧)

5:67. O Messenger, convey all that has been sent down to you from your Lord. If you do not do that, you will not have conveyed it [at all]. Allah will protect you from humankind. Verily Allah does not guide the disbelieving people.

This is a command from Allah to His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ), the greatest and most significant of His commands, which is to convey that which Allah sent down to him. That includes everything that the Ummah learned from him of beliefs, deeds, words, shar'î rulings and other divine injunctions. He conveyed it in the most perfect manner; he called people, warned them, give them glad tidings, made things easy and taught the ignorant and unlettered, until they became learned scholars. He conveyed the message through his words, deeds, letters and envoys. He did not omit anything good but he told his Ummah about it, and he did not leave anything evil but he warned them against it. The most prominent figures among his Ummah testified to his having conveyed the message, among his Companions and, after them, from among the leading scholars of the faith, and the Muslims in general.

﴿If you do not do that﴾ that is, if you do not convey what has been sent down to you from your Lord,

﴿you will not have conveyed it [at all]﴾ that is, you will not have complied with His command.

﴿Allah will protect you from humankind﴾ – this is protection against people granted by Allah to His Messenger (ﷺ), so you should be keen to teach and convey the message, and you should not be deterred by fear of some people, for their forelocks are in the Hand of Allah (that is, He has full control over them) and He has guaranteed to protect you. So all you have to do is convey the message clearly, then whoever is guided, it is for his own benefit. As for the disbelievers whose only aim is to follow their whims and desires, Allah will not guide them or help them to do good, because of their disbelief.



﴿قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ تُقِيمُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٦٨)

5:68. Say: O People of the Book, you have naught [of guidance] unless you are steadfast [in adhering to] the Torah and the Gospel and that which was revealed to you from your Lord. The [revelation] that has come down to you [O Muhammad] from your Lord will surely increase many of them in obstinate rebellion and disbelief. So do not grieve over these disbelieving people.

That is, say to the People of the Book, declaring their misguidance and highlighting their falsehood: ﴿you have naught [of guidance]﴾ that is, you have nothing of religious teachings, for you do not believe in the Qur'an or Muhammad (ﷺ), and you do not adhere to any truth, and you have no foundation on which to base your arguments

﴿unless you are steadfast [in adhering to] the Torah and the Gospel﴾ that is, unless you adhere to them by believing in them and following them, and following everything to which they call you ﴿and﴾ in adhering to ﴿that which was revealed to you from your Lord﴾ Who is taking care of you and has blessed you, and has made the greatest blessing the sending down of scriptures to you. So what you should do is give thanks to Allah, adhere to the rulings of Allah and fulfil the trust and covenant that Allah has given you.

﴿The [revelation] that has come down to you [O Muhammad] from your Lord will surely increase many of them in obstinate rebellion and disbelief. So do not grieve over these disbelieving people.﴾



﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِقُونَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٦٩)

5:69. Those who believe [in the Prophet (ﷺ)], and those who are Jews, and the Sabians and the Christians, whoever [among them] believed in Allah and the Last Day, and did righteous deeds, will have no fear, nor will they grieve.

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us about the People of the Book, the followers of the Qur'an, Torah and Gospel, that their happiness and salvation is by following one path and one principle, which is to believe in Allah and the Last Day, and to do righteous deeds. Whoever among them believes in Allah and the Last Day, and does righteous deeds, will be saved and will have no fear of what they will face in the future of frightening matters, nor will they grieve for what they have left behind. This ruling is applicable to all times.



﴿لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَآرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ رَسُولًا كُلَّمَا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ
بِمَا لَا تَهْوَىٰ أَنفُسُهُمْ فَرِيقًا كَذَّبُوا وَفَرِيقًا يَقْتُلُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾ وَحَسِبُوا أَنَّا لَنَكُونَ
فِتْنَةً فَعَمُوا وَصَمُوا ثُمَّ تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ عَمُوا وَصَمُوا كَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ وَاللَّهُ
بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧١﴾﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٧٠-٧١)

5:70. We took the covenant of the Children of Israel, and sent Messengers to them. But whenever there came to them a Messenger with something that was not in accordance with their desires, some they disbelieved, and others they killed.

5:71. They thought there would be no punishment, so they became blind and deaf [to the truth]. Then Allah turned to them in mercy, but then again many of them became blind and deaf. And Allah sees well all that they do.

﴿We took the covenant of the Children of Israel﴾ that is, their solemn pledge to believe in Allah and carry out their duties to Him, as mentioned above (in 5: 12 onwards): ﴿Allah took a covenant from the Children of Israel, and We appointed twelve leaders from among them...﴾.

﴿and sent Messengers to them﴾ coming one after another with the call of truth, to lead them in the way of guidance. But that was to no avail and was of no benefit, because ﴿whenever there came to them a Messenger with something﴾ of the truth ﴿that was not in accordance with their desires﴾, they disbelieved him and stubbornly rejected it, and they treated the Messenger (ﷺ) in the worst manner.

﴿some they disbelieved, and others they killed. They thought there would be no punishment﴾ that is, they thought that their sin and rejection would not incur any punishment or consequences, and they persisted in their falsehood

﴿so they became blind and deaf [to the truth]. Then﴾ Allah showed them grace and ﴿turned to them in mercy﴾ when they repented to Him ﴿but then﴾ they did not continue in that path; rather most of them turned back to their reprehensible ways, when ﴿again many of them became blind and deaf﴾, and few of them persisted in their repentance and faith.

﴿And Allah sees well all that they do﴾ and He will requite each person for his deeds; if they were good then he will be rewarded and if they were evil then he will be punished.



﴿لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَقَالَ الْمَسِيحُ يَبْنِي
إِسْرَائِيلَ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ مَن يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَهُ النَّارُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِن أَنْصَارٍ ﴿٧٢﴾ لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ
قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلَاثَةٍ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ وَإِن لَّمْ يَنْتَهُوا عَمَّا
يَقُولُونَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾ أَفَلَا يَتُوبُونَ إِلَى
اللَّهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لَهُ وَاللَّهُ عَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٧٤﴾ مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ
إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُ صِدِّيقَةٌ كَأَنَّا بِكُلَّانِ
الْطَّعَامِ أَنْظَرَ كَيْفَ نَبِّئُ لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ ثُمَّ أَنْظَرَ أَنِّي يُؤْفَكُونَ

﴿سورة المائدة: ٧٢-٧٥﴾ ﴿٧٥﴾

- 5:72. They indeed have disbelieved who say that Allah is the Messiah, the son of Maryam. But the Messiah said: O Children of Israel, worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. Whoever ascribes partners to Allah, then Allah has forbidden paradise for him, and the fire will be his abode. For the wrongdoers there will be no helpers.

- 5:73. They indeed have disbelieved who say that Allah is one of three, for there is no god except One God. If they do not desist from what they say, a painful punishment will certainly befall those of them who disbelieve.
- 5:74. Will they not then turn to Allah in repentance and seek His forgiveness? For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.
- 5:75. The Messiah son of Maryam was no more than a Messenger, and [other] Messengers passed away before him. His mother was a woman strong and true in faith, and they both ate food. See how We make Our signs clear to them, then see how they are turned away [from the truth]!

Here Allah (ﷻ) tells us of the disbelief of the Christians when they said ﴿that Allah is the Messiah, the son of Maryam﴾ on the basis of the specious argument that he came from a mother without a father, and thus was born in a manner different from the regular ordained manner decreed by Allah.

In fact 'Eesâ (ﷺ) rejected this claim when he said to them: ﴿O Children of Israel, worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord﴾. Thus he affirmed his own total servitude and confirmed that his Lord is the Lord of all created beings.

﴿Whoever ascribes partners to Allah﴾ that is, associated any created being, 'Eesâ or anyone else, with Allah, ﴿then Allah has forbidden paradise for him, and the fire will be his abode﴾. That is because he has regarded the creation as being equal with the Creator and he has diverted the purpose for which Allah created him – which is worship of Allah alone – to one who is not deserving of it, and thus he deserves to abide in hell for eternity.

﴿For the wrongdoers there will be no helpers﴾ to save them from the punishment of Allah or to ward off from them some of that which will befall them.

﴿They indeed have disbelieved who say that Allah is one of three﴾ this is the view of the Manşoor Christian group, who said that God was one of three: God, Jesus and Mary. Exalted be Allah far above what they say.

This is the greatest evidence of the Christians' lack of reason. How could they accept this abhorrent belief? How could they confuse the Creator with His creation? How could it not be clear to them who is the Lord of the worlds?

Allah (ﷻ) says, refuting them and their ilk: ﴿for there is no god except One God﴾ Who possesses all the attributes of perfection and is far above any shortcomings; He alone possesses the power of creation and control, for people have no blessing except from Him. So how can it be believed that there is another god besides Him? Exalted be Allah far above what the wrongdoers say.

Then He warns them: ﴿If they do not desist from what they say, a painful punishment will certainly befall those of them who disbelieve﴾; then He calls them to repent from what they have said, and He states clearly that He accepts repentance from His slaves: ﴿Will they not then turn to Allah﴾ that is, will they not turn back to that which He loves and is pleased with, namely affirming the oneness of Allah and affirming that 'Eesâ is the slave and Messenger of Allah, and turn away from what they say?

﴿and seek His forgiveness﴾ from what they have done ﴿For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful﴾ that is, He forgives the sins of the penitent, even if they were to reach the clouds of the sky, and He bestows mercy upon them by accepting their repentance and replacing their bad deeds with good deeds.

The call to repentance begins with a very gentle approach, as Allah says: ﴿Will they not then turn to Allah in repentance...?﴾

Then He mentions the reality of the Messiah and his mother, which is the truth, as He says: ﴿The Messiah son of Maryam was no more

than a Messenger, and [other] Messengers passed away before him» that is, this is the most that may be said concerning him, that He was one of the slaves of Allah, one of those who were sent as Messengers, who had no power to introduce commands or laws, except those with which Allah sent them. He is just like the Messengers who came before him, with no advantage over them that would put him beyond the human level and make him divine.

«His mother» Maryam «was a woman strong and true in faith» that is, this too is the most that may be said concerning her, that she was one of those who are strong and true in faith (şiddeeq), those who are the highest of humanity in status after the Prophets. The status of şiddeeq is one of beneficial knowledge that leads to certainty of faith and righteous deeds. This is proof that Maryam was not a prophetess; rather the most that may be said of her is that she attained the level of being a *şiddeeqah*, and that is sufficient virtue and honour.

Similarly, there was no prophetess among women, because Allah (ﷻ) has ordained that prophethood should be bestowed only upon the more perfect of the two genders, namely men, as He says:

«We did not send before you any but men to whom We gave revelation...» (Yoosuf 12: 109)

As 'Eesâ (ﷺ) was like the Prophets and Messengers who came before him, and his mother was a şiddeeqah, why did the Christians take them as two gods besides Allah?

«and they both ate food» – this clearly indicates that they were weak slaves who needed the same as all other children of Adam, namely food and drink. If they had been gods, they would have had no need of food and drink, or anything else, because the true God is the One Who is independent of means, praiseworthy.

Having established this proof, Allah (ﷻ) says: «See how We make Our signs clear to them», signs which highlight the truth and establish certainty. Yet despite that it is of no use to them; rather they persist

in their sin, lies and fabrications. This is stubborn wrongdoing on their part.



﴿ قُلْ أَعْبُدُوا مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا وَاللَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٧٦)

5:76. Say: Do you worship, besides Allah, that which has no power either to harm or benefit you, when it is Allah [alone] Who is the All-Hearing, All-Knowing?

﴿Say﴾ to them, O Messenger

﴿Do you worship, besides Allah﴾, among created beings who are dependent and needy

﴿that which has no power either to harm or benefit you﴾, and you ignore the only One Who has the power to harm or benefit, to give or withhold?

﴿when it is Allah [alone] Who is the All-Hearing﴾, who hears all voices

﴿All-Knowing﴾ who knows all things, outward and inward, unseen and seen, past and future. The Perfect One (ﷻ) Who possesses these attributes is the only One Who is deserving of all kinds of worship and devotion.



﴿ قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّوا مِن قَبْلُ وَأَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا وَضَلُّوا عَن سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ ﴾ (٧٦) لُعِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَى لِسَانِ دَاوُدَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ذَلِكَ بِمَا

عَصُوا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ
لَيْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾ تَرَى كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا لَيْسَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لَهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ أَنْ سَخِطَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَفِي الْعَذَابِ
هُمُ خَالِدُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَلَوْ كَانُوا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالنَّبِيِّ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مَا
اتَّخَذُوهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ وَلَٰكِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ فَسِقُونَ ﴿٨١﴾ (سورة المائدة: ٧٧-٨١)

- 5:77. Say: O People of the Book, do not exceed the bounds of truth in your religion, nor follow the desires of people who went astray before, led many others astray and [themselves] strayed from the straight path.
- 5:78. Those who disbelieved among the Children of Israel were cursed on the lips of Dâwood and 'Eesâ ibn Maryam; that was because of their disobedience and persistence in transgression.
- 5:79. They would not forbid one another to do any of the evil deeds they did. Wretched indeed were their deeds.
- 5:80. You see many of them taking those who disbelieve as allies.²⁸ Wretched indeed is that which they themselves have sent on before them, for they have incurred the wrath of Allah and in torment they will abide forever.
- 5:81. If they had believed in Allah, in the Prophet and in what has been sent down to him, they would never have taken them as allies, but most of them are rebellious evildoers.

Here Allah (ﷻ) says to His Prophet (ﷺ): ﴿Say: O People of the Book, do not exceed the bounds of truth in your religion﴾ that is, do not overstep the mark and go beyond the bounds of truth to falsehood, such as their views concerning the Messiah that are mentioned above,

²⁸ The word awliyâ', translated here as "allies", may also mean protectors, supporters, close friends, and so on.

or their exaggeration about some of their religious leaders, following ﴿the desires of people who went astray before﴾ and ﴿led many others astray﴾ by calling them to the religion that they were following ﴿and [themselves] strayed from the straight path﴾ that is, the path of truth. Thus they combined going astray themselves with leading other people astray. This refers to the leaders of misguidance; Allah warns against them and against following their whims and desires that lead to doom, or their misleading views.

Then Allah says: ﴿Those who disbelieved among the Children of Israel were cursed﴾ that is, they were expelled and cast far away from the mercy of Allah ﴿on the lips of Dâwood and 'Eesâ ibn Maryam﴾ that is, by means of their testimony and affirmation that proof was established but they (the disbelievers) stubbornly rejected it ﴿that﴾ namely that disbelief and curse ﴿was because of their disobedience and persistence in transgression﴾ that is, they disobeyed Allah and they transgressed against the slaves of Allah, and that became the cause of their disbelief and being far from the mercy of Allah, because sins and wrongdoing have consequences.

Among the sins that brought upon them exemplary punishments was the fact that ﴿They would not forbid one another to do any of the evil deeds they did﴾. In other words, they used to do evil deeds, and they did not tell one another not to do that. Thus those who directly committed the evil actions and others, who kept quiet and did not speak out against evil when they were able to do so, became partners in sin.

That was indicative of their carelessness with regard to the command of Allah, and that the matter of disobedience to Allah was something insignificant to them. If they had had any respect for their Lord, they would have been careful lest His sacred limits be transgressed and they would have become angry at that which incurs

His anger. Keeping quiet when one is able to speak out against evil results in punishment, because it has grave consequences, such as the following:

- Merely keeping quiet is an act of sin in itself, even if one is not directly involved in the sin. Just as it is essential to avoid sin, it is also essential to denounce the one who does sinful acts.
- As mentioned above, it is indicative of carelessness with regard to sin and of a lack of concern about committing sin.
- It makes sinners audacious and leads to an increase in sinful actions, if people are not deterred from sin. Thus evil increases, leading to greater trouble in both religious and worldly affairs, as the evildoers gain the upper hand, after which good people become too weak to resist evil people, to the extent that they become unable to do what they used to do before.
- When evil is not denounced, knowledge diminishes and ignorance prevails, because when sin is committed repeatedly by many people, and is not denounced by people of religious commitment and knowledge, some people may no longer see it as sin and it may be regarded by the ignorant as a good act of worship. What evil can be greater than regarding as permissible that which Allah has forbidden, turning facts upside-down in people's minds and seeing falsehood as truth?
- Keeping quiet about sin may lead to sin becoming fair-seeming in people's minds, thus they will follow one another's examples, because man is prone to following the example of his peers.

Because keeping quiet about evil is such a serious matter, Allah (ﷻ) tells us that He cursed the disbelievers among the Israelites for their sin and transgression, among which He singled out a particularly grave offence: ﴿Wretched indeed were their deeds. You see many of them taking those who disbelieve as allies﴾, loving them, taking them as friends and giving them help and support.

«Wretched indeed is that which they themselves have sent on before them». This is a losing deal, because of which they incur the wrath of Allah, and thus the wrath of all things, and eternal punishment. They have wronged themselves, for they have brought this bad fate upon themselves, which causes them to miss out on eternal bliss.

«If they had believed in Allah, in the Prophet and in what has been sent down to him, they would never have taken them as allies». Faith in Allah and belief in the Prophet (ﷺ) and that which has been sent down to him requires the individual to take as allies his Lord and His allies, and to oppose those who disbelieve in Him, oppose Him and disobey Him. Taking Allah as one's ally and believing in Him dictates that one must not take the enemies of Allah as one's allies. These people failed to meet this condition.

«but most of them are rebellious evildoers» that is, they do not obey Allah or believe in Him or His Prophet (ﷺ). Part of their rebellious evildoing is that they take as allies the enemies of Allah.



Glossary of Islamic Terms*



<i>abu</i> (or <i>abi</i>)	أبو، أبي	father (of)
<i>ahl adh-dhimmah</i>	أهل الذمّة	non-Muslim citizens of an Islamic state
<i>ahl as-Sunnah wal-jamâ'ah</i>	أهل السنّة والجماعة	'people of the Sunnah and the community'
<i>Ameer al-Mu'mineen</i>	أمير المؤمنين	'Leader of the Believers'
angel	ملاك	A being made of light who is totally obedient to Allah and has no free will. Allah has assigned some angels specific tasks, like those who record our good and bad deeds, the Angel of Death, the guardians of hell, etc.
' <i>Arafah</i> (pl. ' <i>Arafât</i>)	عرّفة، عرّفات	the plain outside of Makkah where pilgrims gather at the climax of the Hajj; it is actually made up of a chain of hills, so the plural form is sometimes used

* The Arabic words are transliterated according to the conventions of the Transliteration Chart found in this book. If a word has become part of the English language (that is, is found in a dictionary of Standard English), that spelling is used in this book and appears first in this Glossary, with the transliterated form in brackets after it.

'awrah	عَوْرَة	the part of a person's body that must be screened from public view; for males it is the area between the navel and the knees, and for females it is everything except the hands and the face
banu (or bani)	بَنُو، بَنِي	<i>lit.</i> 'children (of)'; <i>usu.</i> referring to a tribe that claims a common ancestor
barzakh	بَرْزَخ	an intermediate state between death and the Day of Resurrection; it is also said to be a 'place' where the souls of the deceased will remain until the blowing of the trumpet
Dajjâl	الدَّجَّال	the antichrist (anti-Christ); in Islamic teachings, he is a false messiah who will deceive the people and cause harm to humankind until he is killed by Jesus (ﷺ)
<u>dhihâr</u>	ظِهَار	<u>Dh</u> ihâr is the unlawful act of saying to one's spouse: "You are as impermissible for me [to enjoy intimately] as my mother" – and similar statements.
dhikr Allâh	ذِكْرُ اللَّهِ	remembrance of Allah; specifically, remembering Allah through praising and supplicating to Him
dinar (<i>deenâr</i>)	دِينَار	originally, a gold coin; a unit of currency
dirham	دِرْهَم	originally, a silver coin; a unit of currency
du'â'	دُعَاء	supplication; invocation

Eid ('eed)	عيد	<i>lit.</i> 'festival': one of the two annual Islamic celebrations, one at the end of Ramadan and the other at the culmination of the Hajj
<i>fajr</i>	الفجر	dawn; the obligatory prayer at that time
fatwa (<i>fatwah</i>)	فتوى	religious decision or decree
<i>fay'</i>	الغنيء	spoils of war that are gained by the Muslims without fighting the disbelievers
<i>fiqh</i>	فقه	Islamic jurisprudence; understanding or interpreting Islamic law
<i>fiṭrah</i>	فطرة	the natural inclination (of humans) instilled by Allah
<i>fuqahā'</i>	فقهاء	<i>sing. faqeeh</i> ; jurists
<i>ghusl</i>	غُسل	ritual shower necessary after a major impurity, e.g., after sexual intercourse or at the end of the menstrual period
hadith (<i>ḥadeeth</i>)	حديث	a statement or action of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that was remembered and recorded by his Companions and followers
<i>ḥaneef</i>	حنيف	one who believes as Prophet Ibrâheem believed, i.e., a monotheist, although he or she may not yet have heard of or accepted Islam
Haram	حَرَم	the sacred area surrounding and including the Kaaba in Makkah; any inviolable or holy area

<i>haram (ḥarām)</i>	حرام	forbidden according to Islamic law
<i>ḥadd (pl. ḥudūd)</i>	حدّ	specific punishments prescribed in Sharia for specific offences such as theft and fornication
Iblees	إبليس	another name for Satan in Arabic
'iddah	عِدَّة	the waiting period after a woman is widowed or divorced, during which she is not allowed to remarry, in order to ascertain whether or not she is pregnant with the child of her late or ex-husband
<i>iḥrām</i>	إِحْرَام	the state of consecration for Hajj or 'umrah; the special clothing worn by the pilgrim in such a state
<i>iḥsān</i>	إِحْسَان	goodness, perfection, excellence; to worship Allah as if you see Him knowing that even if you do not see Him, He sees you
<i>in shā' Allāh</i>	إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ	God willing
<i>isnād</i>	إِسْنَاد	the chain of narration through which a hadith can be traced back to the Prophet (ﷺ)
<i>istikhārah</i>	اسْتِخَارَة	a prayer by which one seeks guidance from Allah before making a decision
<i>jāhili</i>	جَاهِلِيّ	<i>lit.</i> 'ignorant'; belonging to the period of ignorance that preceded Islam

<i>jāhiliyah</i>	جَاهِلِيَّة	<i>lit.</i> 'ignorance'; the age of spiritual darkness before Islam
<i>jamrah</i> (pl. <i>jamarāt</i>)	جَمْرَة	<i>lit.</i> 'stones'; one of the stone structures at which pilgrims throw pebbles during the Hajj, emulating the Prophet Abraham (ﷺ) when he threw stones at the devil
Jibreel	جِبْرِيْل	the Arabic name for Gabriel (ﷺ), the archangel who transmitted the verses of the Qur'an and other communications from Allah (ﷻ) to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)
<i>jihad</i> (<i>jihād</i>)	جِهَاد	struggle or striving (in Allah's cause)
<i>jinn</i> (plural of <i>jinni</i>)	جِنّ	non-human, rational beings created by Allah from fire, often referred to as 'demons' or 'devils'. They have free will like humans: some are Muslims, others disbelievers; some are obedient to Allah, others disobedient. Satan is a jinni. Some disobedient jinn mislead people into thinking that they can foretell the future, near or distant, or provide people with riches or some sort of power.
<i>jizyah</i>	جِزْيَة	a tax levied on the People of the Scriptures when they are under the protection of a Muslim government; it is in lieu of the alms tax paid by Muslims

Jumu'ah	جُمُعَة	Friday; <i>also</i> , the midday congregational prayer on that day
juz' (pl. <i>ajzâ'</i>)	جُزْء	a section of the Qur'an equal to one-thirtieth of the text
Kaaba (<i>Ka'bah</i>)	الكعبة	the House of Allah in Makkah, originally built by Prophets Ibrâheem and Ismâ'eel, which Muslims face when they pray
<i>khul'</i>	خُلْع	divorce initiated by the wife
<i>khushoo'</i>	خُشُوع	humility, devotion, and sincerity
<i>khutbah</i>	خُطْبَة	sermon or speech; specifically, the sermon given during the Friday congregational prayer
<i>al-Lawh</i> <i>al-Mahfoodh</i>	اللَّوْح المحفوظ	the Preserved Tablet in heaven on which Allah's words and decrees are written
<i>madhy</i>	مَذْي	the prostatic secretion excreted by one when thinking of sex or during foreplay
<i>maghrib</i>	مَغْرِب	sunset; the obligatory prayer at that time
<i>maḥram</i>	مَحْرَم	a degree of consanguinity precluding marriage; a man whom a woman may not marry due to the close blood or marriage relationship, e.g., her father, brother, son, uncle, or father-in-law
<i>maniy</i>	مَنِي	semen
<i>Maqâm Ibrâheem</i>	مَقَام إِبْرَاهِيم	the Station of Abraham (Ibrâheem) next to the Kaaba

<i>Muhājiroon</i> (or <i>Muhājireen</i>)	مهاجرون	<i>lit.</i> ‘emigrants’ of any kind; used in Islamic discourse to refer to people who emigrate to safeguard their religion, specifically the Muslims who migrated with Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) from Makkah to Madinah
<i>mustahabb</i>	مُسْتَحَب	<i>lit.</i> ‘encouraged’; righteous deeds that are not obligatory but encouraged in the religious texts; the one who does them will be rewarded, but the one who does not do them does not incur sin and will not be punished.
<i>mutawātir</i>	مُتَوَاتِر	a category of hadith: a narration that is related by so many upright and trustworthy narrators at each level that it would have been impossible for them to have agreed on a lie
<i>nafs</i>	نَفْس	inner soul or self
Quraysh	قُرَيْش	the dominant tribe in Makkah at the time of the Prophet’s mission; their society was based on polytheism
<i>rak’ah</i> (pl. <i>raka’āt</i>)	رَكْعَة	a unit of the formal prayer (<i>ṣalâh</i>)
Ramadan (<i>Ramaḍân</i>)	رَمَضَان	the ninth month in the Islamic calendar; the month of obligatory fasting and the month in which the first verses of the Qur’an were revealed
<i>ribâ</i>	رِبَا	usury; charging interest on debt

Ṣahābah	صحابه	Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)
ṣaḥeeḥ	صحيح	a grade of hadith: sound or authentic
sa'iy	سعي	one of the rites of Hajj; the pilgrim walks seven times between the hills of Ṣafā and Marwah, re-enacting Hajar's search for water for her baby Ismā'eel
salām	السلام	<i>lit.</i> 'peace'; the Islamic greeting of peace
seerah	سيرة	biography, <i>esp.</i> of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)
shar'i	شرعي	of or pertaining to Sharia; Islamic
Sharia (sharee'ah)	شريعة	Islamic law derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah
Shayṭān	شيطان	Satan
soorah or soorat	سورة	chapter of the Qur'an
Sunnah	سنة	the practice and collected sayings of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that together with the Qur'an forms the basis of Islamic law
tafseer	تفسير	exegesis: commentary, or explanation of the meanings (<i>usu.</i> of Qur'anic verses)
tahajjud	تهجد	voluntary night prayer offered between 'ishā' and fajr

<i>tahleel</i>	تَهْلِيل	the act of saying <i>lâ ilâha illâ Allâh</i> (there is none worthy of worship other than Allah)
<i>tahmeed</i>	تَحْمِيد	the act of saying <i>Alḥamdulillâh</i> (all praises and thanks are for Allah)
<i>takbeer</i>	تَكْبِير	the act of saying <i>Allâhu akbar</i> (Allah is the Greatest)
<i>talâq</i>	طَلَّاق	divorce
<i>taqwâ</i>	التَّقْوَى	fearful awareness of Allah; being mindful of Allah; pious dedication; being careful not to transgress the bounds set by Allah
<i>tasbeeh</i>	تَسْبِيح	the recitation of phrases glorifying Allah; saying <i>subḥân Allâh</i> (glory be to Allah)
<i>tawḥeed</i>	التَّوْحِيد	the oneness of Allah: the knowledge that He alone deserves to be worshipped and that He has no partners
Ummah	أُمَّة	community or nation: <i>usu.</i> used to refer to the entire global community of Muslims
' <i>umrah</i>	عُمْرَة	a minor, non-obligatory pilgrimage to Makkah
unseen	خَفِي	a term used to denote phenomena or aspects that cannot be known using ordinary human faculties
<i>wali</i>	وَلِي	friend and helper (of Allah)

<i>zakât</i> (or <i>zakâh</i>)	زكاة	obligatory charity: an ‘alms tax’ on wealth that is paid by Muslims and to be distributed to others who qualify as recipients
<i>zinâ</i>	زنا	fornication or adultery; unlawful sexual intercourse



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