

Suratul Baqarah: Verses 40-44

(٤٠) يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي أُوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ فَارْهَبُونِ

(٤١) وَآمِنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتُ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَكُمْ وَلَا تَكُونُوا أُولَٰ كَافِرٍ بِهِ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا وَإِيَّايَ فَاتَّقُونِ

(٤٢) وَلَا تَلْبَسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

(٤٣) وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ

(٤٤) أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ

O children of Israel! Remember My bounties which I bestowed on you, and be faithful to (your) covenant with Me, I will fulfil (My) covenant with you; and of Me, Me alone, should you be afraid (40).

And believe in what I have sent down verifying that which is with you, and be not the first to deny it, neither take a mean price in exchange for My signs; and Me, Me alone, should you fear (41).

And do not mix up the truth with the falsehood, nor hide the truth while you know (it) (42).

And keep up prayer and pay the zakat and bow down with those who bow down (43).

What! do you enjoin men to be good and forget your own selves while you read the Book? Have you then no sense? (44)

General Comment

Now begins the rebuking of the Jews that continues for more than a hundred verses. Allah reminds them of the bounties bestowed, of the honours given; contrasting it with their ingratitude and disobedience; showing how at every juncture they paid the favours of Allah with disregard of their covenant, open rebellion against divine commands and even with polytheism.

The series reminds them of twelve events of their history – like rescuing them from Pharaoh and his people by parting the river, drowning of Pharaoh and his army, the appointed rendezvous at the mount Sina'i, the Jews' starting calf-worship in Mūsa's absence, and Mūsa's order to them to kill themselves, their demand from Mūsa to show their Lord to them face to face, their death by lightning and then their arising from dead etc. – all of which shows how they were chosen to receive the especial favours of Allah.

But their ingratitude runs parallel to it. They repeatedly broke the covenants made with Allah, committed capital sins, hideous crimes and shameful deeds; more despicable. Was their spiritual poverty and moral bankruptcy – in open defiance to their book and total disregard to the reason? It was all because their hearts were hardened, their souls lost and their endeavours worthless.

Commentary

Qur'an: . . . and be faithful to (your) covenant with Me: (العهد = covenant) literally means guarding and "al-'Ahd" maintenance. By association it has come to mean covenant, oath, testament, will, encounter, house, etc.

Qur'an: . . . and of Me, . . . should you be afraid: "ar-Rah-bah" (الرَّهْبَةُ = fear) is opposite of ar-rahbah (الرَّهْبَةُ = desire).

Qur'an: . . . and be not the first to deny it: That is, first among the people of the book, or first among your own people. This firstness is not all-inclusive, because the disbelievers of Mecca had rejected the Message before the Jews.

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