

Section 7

Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 62

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

62. "Verily those who believed (in the Prophet of Islam), and those of Jews and Christians and Sabians, whoever believed (truly) in Allah and the Last Day, and worked righteousness -for them is their reward with their Lord, and no fear shall be upon them, nor shall they grieve. "

A General Principle for Salvation

The Qur'an, here, points to a general and common principle when it proclaims that that which is worthy is 'truth' and 'reality'. With *Allah*, only 'true Faith' and 'good deeds' are accepted.

"Verily, those who believed (in the Prophet of Islam), and those of Jews and Christians and Sabians, whoever believed (truly) in Allah and the Last Day, and worked righteousness -for them is their reward with their Lord..."

Therefore, they will have no fear in the future or any grief for their past:

"...and no fear shall be upon them, nor shall they grieve."

This verse, with nearly the same form, has occurred in **Surah Al-Maidah No. 5. Verse 69:** and with a further variation on the same subject in **Surah AL-Hajj, No. 22. Verse 17.**

A careful study over the verses cited after this verse in Surah Al-Ma'idah, makes it clear that the Jews and Christians boasted that their religions were better than other religions. They imagined that all of

Heaven would be for them alone, exclusively.

That very pride, perhaps, was seen in the manner of some Muslims, too. The current verse denotes that superficial faith, especially with the lack of doing good deeds, whether it proceeds from Muslims or Jews, Christians and Sabians, or the followers of any other religion, is worthless.

Faith in *Allah* and the Last Day of Judgment is noted worthy by *Allah* when it is true, pure, and sincere, and accompanied with righteous deeds. Only this agendum deserves rewards and causes peace, security, and salvation for a believer.

Who are the Sabians?

There are a variety of opinions as to who the Sabians are. Here you are introduced to a few of them which are usually referred to. For example, the description cited in: 'An Arabic –English Lexicon, Part 4,' p. 1640, by Edward William Lane is, in brief, as follows:

The term / Sabi'un / in the Kur'an is said to mean: 'Those who depart from one religion to another (The Sabians,) said to worship the stars secretly, and openly to profess themselves to belong to the Christians: They are called / as-sabi'ah / and / as-sabi'un/: and they assert that they are of the religion of Sabi the son of Sheyth (or Sheth) the son of Adam: their appellation may also be pronounced / as-sabiyun / or the Sabi'un are a certain class of the people who possess revealed scripture: or a people whose religion resembles that of the Christians, except that their Qiblah is towards the place where blows the (south, or southerly, wind called) Jannb... or according to some, their Qiblah is the Ka'bah: and they assert that they are of the religion of Noah.

It is said that they are thus called in relation to Sabi the son of Lamak (or Lamech), the brother of Noah. It is said that they are worshippers of angels: and it said that they are the worshippers of the stars: and that their appellation is Arabic; from / saba / he departed from a religion¹; or from / saba / he inclined because of their inclining from Truth to falsehood.

Another idea about 'Sabians', the appellation mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, is what the known scholar, Raqib, cites in his book, 'Mufradat'.

He says:

"They are a group of followers of Noah (as), and their name mentioned along with the names of Believers, Jews and Christians, is also an evidence that they have been a religious group of people, believing in one of the heavenly religions who believed in God and the Hereafter, too."

Some other commentators have said that the idea that some have called them pagans and star worshippers, or some others have considered them Zoroastrians, does not seem right, because Sabians believed that: first, the heavenly Holy Books were revealed to Adam (as) and then to Noah (as) and after

him to Sam (as), then to Ram (as) and thereafter to Abraham (as), then to Moses (as) and after him to John (as) the son of Zachariah, all of which were sent rightfully and Divinely.

Who are the 'People of the Book'?

The Qur'anic phrase / 'ahlul kitab / ' the People of the Book' has occurred in more than 30 different verses of the Qur'an where it mostly means both the Jews and the Christians or either of them.

The above mentioned Arabic-English Lexicon, part one, page 121 explains the phrase / 'ahlul-kitab / thus: '(the people of the Scripture, or Bible; and) the readers, or reciters, of the Mosaic Law, and of the Gospel.'

Apparently, all the adherents of the prophets who had revealed Books, the clearest example of whom are Jews and Christians, may be called 'the People of the Book'. If so, we can also consider the Prophet's tradition when he was asked about the number of the Books *Allah* revealed and he (S) replied:

"One hundred and four books were revealed: ten books to Adam (as), fifty books to Shith, thirty books to Ukhnukh (Enoch) and he is the first one who wrote by pen, ten books to Abraham, the Turah to Moses, the Ingeel to Jesus, Zabur to David, and the Qur'an to Muhammad (the Prophet of Islam)." 1

Surah Al-Baqarah, Verses 63-64

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَكُنْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

63, *"And (remember) when We made a covenant with you, and raised the Tur (Mountain) above you; (saying): 'Hold you fast that which We have given you with the strength, and remember all that is therein (to do accordingly); haply you shall guard yourselves (against evil)!',"*

64. *"Thereafter, you turned back, and had it not been for the Grace and Mercy of Allah on you, you had certainly been among the losers,"*

Hold the Signs of Allah Firmly!

In these verses, the subject of taking a covenant from the Children of Israel for the practicing of the contents of the Turah and, then, breaching that covenant, is pointed out, At first it says:

***"And (remember) when We made a covenant with you, and raised the Tur (Mountain) above you;
"
"...(saying): 'Hold you fast that which We have given you with the strength, "
",and remember all that is therein (to do accordingly); haply you shall guard yourselves (against
evil)',"***

But you people neglected your covenant.

***"Thereafter, you turned back,"
"..and had it not been for the Grace and Mercy of Allah on you, you had certainly been among the
losers,"***

The objective of the covenant, here, is the same that has been mentioned in verse 40 of the current Surah and what is in verse 83 and 84, which will be discussed later.

The items of that covenant are: worshipping only *Allah*; treating parents, relations, orphans, and those in need with kindness; speaking to and treating people fairly; attending and being steadfast in ritual prayers, paying alms, avoiding shedding blood, the like of which had been mentioned in the Torah, too.

Surah Al-Ma'idah, No.5, verse 12, also denotes that *Allah* had taken a covenant from the Children of Israel to believe in all of the Divine prophets and help them, and practice regular charity in the way of *Allah*. Then, at the end of the same verse, *Allah* promises that if they keep this covenant and actually do it, they will be allowed to abide in Paradise.

How was the Mountain Raised over the Israelites' Heads?

The leading famous commentator, the Late Tabors, has narrated from 'Abuzeyd ' that when Moses (as) returned from Mount Sinai and brought the Torah with him, he told his people that he had brought a Divine Book consisting of some religious instructions and rules about lawful and unlawful things.

He told them to take the instructions that *Allah* had ordained and practically observe them in their lives. 2

But the Jews, with the excuse that he (as) had brought them difficult duties to perform, disobeyed and exceeded the limits. The Lord commanded the angels to raise a great big rock from Tor Mountain above them.

At that moment Moses (as) announced that if they promised to perform the orders of *Allah* and repented for their disobedience, that punishment would be removed from over them, else they would be destroyed.

The Jews, who expected that the Mountain would fall on them at any moment, submitted and accepted the Turah and prostrated for *Allah*.

Then, finally, that chastisement was warded off because of their repentance. This very occurrence, with a little difference, is mentioned in verse 93 of the current Surah; and in **Surah An-'Nisa. No. 4. Verse 104:** and in **Surah AL-'Araf. No.7 Verse 171.**

It is necessary to note, here, that as for the suspending mountain and as to how it could stand high above as a covering overhead for the Israelites, some commentators believe that it was by the command of *Allah* that Tor Mount was shaken and taken up from its place and, then, suspended above them as a canopy. 3

A more detailed explanation will be referred to when commenting on Surah Al-'Araf, No.7, verse 171.

The above mentioned event as described in the *Qur'an* was quite known by the Jews, who had these original statements in the Turah about it with them. Besides that, this event is also recorded in Talmud Aboda Sara. 1: 2 which says: 'I will cover you with the mountain like a roof'. Talmud.

1. Majma'-ul-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 476

2. Majma'-ul-Bayan, vol. 1, p. 128

3. Majma'-ul-Bayan, vol. 1, p. 128

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