

Section 22: Violation of the Covenant by the Jews

Jews Violating the Covenant – Their accusing Jesus and his mother Mary – The truth concerning the Crucifixion of Jesus

Surah An-Nisa', Verse 153

يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَىٰ أَكْبَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالُوا أَرِنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّاعِقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ مِن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَعَفَوْنَا عَنِ ذَلِكَ وَأَتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ سُلْطَانًا مُّبِينًا

153. ***"The People of the Book will ask you to bring down for them a Book from heaven; and indeed they asked Moses for greater than that, for they said: 'Show us Allah vividly'. So the lightning seized them on account of their injustice. Then they took the Calf (for a god) after the clear signs had come to them; yet We pardoned that; and We gave Moses a clear authority."***

The demand of the Jews from the Prophet of Islam (S) was that the Qur'an, like the Torah, should be sent down together, too. But, that demand was nothing save a mere pretext. In Surah Al-'An'am, concerning the matter, Allah says:

"And if We had sent to you a writing on a paper, then they had touched it with their hands, certainly those who disbelieve would have said: 'This is nothing but clear enchantment'." 1

The Qur'an, in the above verse, says:

"The People of the Book will ask you to bring down for them a Book from heaven....."

The Children of Israel were not seeking for the Truth, otherwise, why did they become the worshippers of the Calf after they had got those abundant miracles?

"...Then they took the Calf (for a god) after the clear signs had come to them....."

Therefore, the continuation of this very verse, in order to console the Prophet, tells him (S) not to be worried about the disbelievers when they do not believe, since there had also been some obstinate persons against all former prophets.

"...and indeed they asked Moses for greater than that, for they said: 'Show us Allah vividly' ..."

When we become acquainted with the difficulties that other people are involved in, it can sometimes be a remedy over our own pains.

However, it should be noted that rejection of the Truth and aberration in thought brings forth the Wrath of Allah even in this very world.

"... So the lightning seized them on account of their injustice....."

Yet, the prophets had always been supported by Allah.

"...and We gave Moses a clear authority."

Surah An-Nisa', Verse 154

وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَهُمُ الطُّورَ بِمِيثَاقِهِمْ وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ ادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ لَا تَعْدُوا فِي السَّبْتِ وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا

154. "And We raised the (Sinai) Mount above them at (the taking of) their covenant and We said to them: 'Enter the door prostrating', and We said to them: 'Do not transgress the Sabbath!' and We took from them a firm covenant."

The verse implies that the Children of Israel, the Jews, did not awaken from the sleep of negligence and did not come down from the mount of pride and obstinacy. It was for that reason that Allah raised the Sinai Mount above them, and in the meanwhile, He took covenant from them.

"And We raised the (Sinai) Mount above them at (the taking of) their covenant..."

The holy verse implies that Allah (s.w.t.) told them to enter the door of Jerusalem in the state of prostration and humility as a sign of repentance from their sins.

Allah also decreed emphatically for them not to work on Saturday and not to transgress, (and not to use the sea-fish that the hunting of which was prohibited for them). Allah (s. w.t.) took serious covenant for all of these things from them. But they fulfilled none of those confirmed promises.

"...and We said to .them: 'Enter the door prostrating', and We said to them: 'Do not transgress the Sabbath!' and We took from them a firm covenant."

Surah An-Nisa', Verse 155

فَبِمَا نَقَضْتُمْ مِيثَاقَهُمْ وَكُفِّرْتُمْ بآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَقَتَلْتُمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

155. "So, for their breaking their covenant and their disbelief in the Signs of Allah and their slaying the prophets wrongfully and their saying: 'Our hearts are covered', nay! but Allah sealed them for their disbelief, so they do not believe save a few. "

In this verse, the Qur'an points to some other parts of the wrong doings of the Children of Israel, and also those committing offences and hostilities that the Jews performed against the prophets of Allah.

At first, it refers to the breach of promise and disbelief of a group of them, by whom the slaughter of many prophets occurred. It says:

"So, for their breaking their covenant ..."

Following to this breach of promise, they rejected the Signs of Allah and paved the way of opposition.

"....and their disbelief in the Signs of Allah ..."

They did not suffice only to this wrong-doing, but also they set their hands to another great crime. They killed the leaders and the guides of the way of Truth, viz. the prophets. They slew the prophets without having any reason for their action.

"....and their slaying the prophets wrongfully ..."

They were so insolent in committing offences that they mocked the statements of the prophets and they used to explicitly say to them that their hearts were locked so that they hindered them to hear and accept the invitation of the prophets.

"....and their saying 'Our hearts are covered'; ..."

Here, the Qur'an adds a sense that their hearts are sealed totally and no truth penetrates into them, but

the reason of that situation is their own infidelity and disbelief. That is why they do not believe in truth, except a small group of them who avoid these kinds of obstinacies and that they pave the path of truth. It says:

"... nay! but Allah sealed them for their disbelief, So they do not believe save a few. "

Surah An-Nisa', Verse 156

وَيُكْفِّرُهُمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَانًا عَظِيمًا

156. "And because of their disbelief and their speaking against Mary a grievous calumny."

The question of calumny against Mary is also referred to in **Surah Maryam No. 19, verse 27**.

The calumny of fornication unto Mary was not only a sin but it was also a calumny of bastardy to Jesus (as) and his incompetence for guidance and leadership. This very sin was the reason of their disbelief unto Jesus (as).

Therefore, calumny is counted in the same row with infidelity, and, consequently, a grievous calumny deserves a grievous chastisement.

"And because of their disbelief and their speaking against Mary a grievous calumny"

However, in an immoral society, there may sometimes happen that the most disgraceful calumnies be attributed to the most immaculate persons.

Surah An-Nisa', Verses 157 - 158

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِن شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا

بَل رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

157. "And because of their saying (in boast): 'Verily we slew Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, Allah's

Messenger; but they did not slay him nor did they crucify him, but it appeared to them (a likeness of that); and indeed those who differ therein are only in doubt about it, they have no knowledge respecting it, but only follow a conjecture, and, certainly, they did not slay him."

158. "But Allah took him up unto Himself; and Allah is the Mighty, the Wise."

They (the Children of Israel) were even proud of slaying Jesus, and they said that they themselves slew Jesus, son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah. The verse says:

"And because of their saying (in boast): 'Verily we slew Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, Allah's Messenger.....'"

Perhaps, the sense of 'Allah's Messenger' that they said about Jesus (as) was said mockingly in order to scorn him, while they were not true in their claim. The verse continues saying:

"... but they did not slay him nor did they crucify him, but it appeared to them (a likeness of that)..."

Then, the Qur'an, as an emphasis on the matter, says:

"...and, certainly, they did not slay him."

Then, the Qur'an, as a separate verse, continues saying:

"But Allah took him up unto Himself ..."

The reason that the Qur'an has emphasized particularly on the subject that Jesus (as) has not been crucified, is for the purpose of perfectly nullifying the superstitious belief of ransom and making ummah (community) free from sin by payment, so that the Christians find rescue in the pledge of their own good deeds not in seeking refuge to the Cross.

We are absolutely certain that both the birth and departure of Jesus from this world occurred abnormally. He (as) was taken up to be a provision for future.

"... and Allah is the Mighty, the Wise."

Surah An-Nisa', Verse 159

وَإِنْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لِيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا

159. "And there is not anyone of the People of the Book but surely believes in him (Jesus) before

his death, and on the Day of Resurrection, he will be a witness over them."

There are two probabilities in commenting on this verse, each of which is considerable for, some views.

1. The verse says:

"And there is not anyone of the People of the Book but surely believes in him (Jesus) before his death....."

The above-mentioned time is when a person is going to die and his connection with the world becomes weak while it becomes more serious with the world after death. The curtains will be removed from before his eyes and he will see many things of the reality.

It is at this time that his inward eye of seeing the truth will see Jesus (as) and he will surrender before him (as). Those who denied him will believe in him, and those who considered him God, will recognize their error. But it is too late and this belief is of no avail for them. Then, it is better for them to believe just now, when belief is useful for them.

2. The purpose of the verse is that all the People of the Book will believe in Jesus (as) before death. The Jews will accept him for his messenger ship, and the Christians will leave out the god ship of Jesus.

This circumstance will happen, according to the Islamic literature, when Jesus (as) comes down from heaven at the time of the reappearance of Hadrat Mahdi (may *Allah* hasten his glad advent) and establishes prayer at the back of him.

The Jews and Christians will see him and will believe both in him (as) and Imam Mahdi (May *Allah* hasten his glad advent). So, it is clear that, at this time, Jesus, whose religion relate to the former times has to follow the present creed, i.e. Islam, the executor of which is Mahdi (May *Allah* hasten his glad advent).

Basing on the recorded Islamic traditions, at the time of Mahdi's rightful government, the security will be so much so that wolf and sheep, lion and cow, and other savage animals will graze in the same pasture. The security of life, wealth and honour will be found in the world thoroughly. There will be no cruelty and transgression anywhere, and justice will cover the whole world of existence.

However, at the end of the verse, it says:

".. and on the Day of Resurrection, he will be a witness over them."

The objective meaning of the 'witness of Jesus against them' is that he (as) will bear witness that he has preached the messenger ship but he has never invited them to his own divinity and god ship. On the contrary, he has invited them to the Divinity of *Allah*. 2

Surah An-Nisa', Verse 160

فَبِظُلْمٍ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ طَيِّبَاتٍ أُحِلَّتْ لَهُمْ وَبِصَدِّهِمْ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
كَثِيرًا

160. "And for the injustice from those of the Jews We did forbid them those good things which had been made lawful for them (before), and for their much hindering (people) from the path of Allah."

Perhaps, the objective meaning of the good things that became forbidden for them is the same things which are mentioned in **Surah Al-'An'am. No.5. verse 146**. It says:

"And to those who were Jews We made unlawful every animal having claws, and of oxen and sheep "...."

This very prohibition is also found in the present Torah. (Leviticus, Chapter 11)

Explanations

Injustice is the preparation for deprivation from bounties.

Sometimes, some economical deprivations and material straitened circumstances are signs for the wrath and retribution of *Allah*.

"And for the injustice from those of the Jews We did forbid them those good things which had been made lawful for them (before)..."

Hindering people from the path of *Allah*, in any form it may be, (including: distortion, concealment, innovation, corruption, and deviation), is the cause of deprivation.

"...and for their much hindering (people) from the path of Allah"

In fact, the main punishments will be given in Hereafter, yet the worldly retributions are for awareness. They are as penalty for the evil doers and as trial for the good doers.

Surah An-Nisa', Verse 161

وَأَخَذِهِمُ الرِّبَا وَقَدْ نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَأَكْلِهِمْ أَمْوَالَ النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ

عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

161. "And (for) their taking usury when indeed they were forbidden from it, and (for) their devouring the property of people unrightfully, and We prepared for the disbelievers from among them a painful chastisement."

The prohibition of usury is also mentioned in the present Torah (Deuteronomy, Chapter 23, and No. 19 & 20):

19. Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury:

20. Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou set test thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

Usury seems to be the source of profit and the factor of happiness, but it is the cause of deprivations and punishments.

All heavenly religions are sensitive, and have words, due to the material and financial connections between human-beings and also due to their gains and expenditures.

As long as injustice, usury, and living on unlawful money have not set a person in the course of infidelity, it is easy for him to return to the right path, otherwise the sins may become the cause of infidelity, and infidels are involved in punishment.

"And (for) their taking usury when indeed they were forbidden from it, and (for) their devouring the property of people unrightfully, and We prepared for the disbelievers from among them a painful chastisement."

Surah An-Nisa', Verse 162

لَكِنِ الرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ
قَبْلِكَ وَالْمُقِيمِينَ الصَّلَاةَ وَالْمُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أُولَئِكَ
سَنُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

162. "But those firmly rooted in knowledge among them and the believers believe in what has been revealed to you and what has been revealed (to the messengers) before you, and the

establishers of prayer and the givers of poor-rate, and the believers in Allah and the Last Day. Upon these We shall give a great reward."

In this verse, a great fact is referred to, on which the Holy Qur'an has repeatedly emphasized. This fact is that the reproach and reprimanding of the Qur'an upon the Jews has never had an aspect of racial or tribal combat.

Islam reproaches no race as a 'race', but it blames and reprimands the filthy and deluded persons. That is why this verse separates the believers and virtuous ones from among the Jews as an exception and admires them when it gives them the glad tidings of a great reward. The Qur'an says:

"But those firmly rooted in knowledge among them and the believers believe in what has been revealed to you and what has been revealed (to the messengers) before you, and the establishers of prayer and the givers of poor-rate, and the believers in Allah and the Last Day. Upon these We shall give a great reward."

The proof for this meaning is the fact that at the time of the advent of the Prophet of Islam (S), when some of the prominent people of the Jews saw the reasons of his rightfulness, embraced Islam and defended it heartily. These persons were respected by the Prophet of Islam (S) and other Muslim members.

1. Surah, Al- 'An'am, No.6, verse 7

2. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 1, p. 572

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/enlightening-commentary-light-holy-quran-vol-4/section-22-violation-covenant-jews>