

(يَا قَوْمِ ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ
لَكُمْ وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا)

(O people! Enter the holy land which Allah has assigned to you and turn not back (in flight).)
(5:21)

However, some scholars said that the holy land is Jericho, (Ariha') and this opinion was mentioned from Ibn `Abbas and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd.

After the years of wandering ended forty years later, in the company of Yuwsha` (Joshua) bin Nun, Allah allowed the Children of Israel to conquer the holy land on the eve of a Friday. On that day, the sun was kept from setting for a little more time, until victory was achieved. When the Children of Israel conquered the holy land, they were commanded to enter its gate while,

(سُجَّدًا)

(prostrating) in appreciation to Allah for making them victorious, triumphant, returning them to their land and saving them from being lost and wandering. Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(وَادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا)

(and enter the gate Sujudan) means, "While bowing". Ibn Jarir reported Ibn `Abbas saying,

(وَادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا)

(and enter the gate in prostration) means, "Through a small door while bowing." Al-Hakim narrated it, and Ibn Abi Hatim added, "And they went through the door backwards!" Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that they were ordered to prostrate on their faces when they entered the city, but Ar-Razi discounted this explanation. It was also said that the Sujud mentioned here means, `submissiveness', for actually entering while prostrating is not possible.

Khasif said that `Ikrimah said that Ibn `Abbas said, "The door mentioned here was facing the Qiblah." Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, As-Suddi, Qatadah and Ad-Dahhak said that the door is the door of Hittah in Ilyya', which is Jerusalem. Ar-Razi also reported that some of them said that it was a door in the direction of the Qiblah". Khasif said that `Ikrimah said that Ibn `Abbas said that the Children of Israel entered the door sideways. As-Suddi said that Abu Sa`id Al-Azdy said that Abu Al-Kanud said that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said that they were commanded to, u

(وَادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا)

(enter the gate in prostration (or bowing with humility)) but instead, they entered while their heads were raised in defiance.

Allah said next,

(وَقُولُوا حِطَّةً)

(and say: `Hittah'). Ibn `Abbas commented, "Seek Allah's forgiveness." Al-Hasan and Qatadah said that it means, "Say, `Relieve us from our errors."

(تَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطِيئَتَكُمْ وَسَنَزِيدُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ)

(and We shall forgive you your sins and shall increase (reward) for the good-doers) Here is the reward for fulfilling Allah's commandment. This Ayah means, "If you implement what We commanded you, We will forgive your sins and multiply your good deeds." In summary, upon achieving victory, the Children of Israel were commanded to submit to Allah in tongue and deed and, to admit to their sins and seek forgiveness for them, to be grateful to Allah for the blessings He gave them, hastening to do the deeds that Allah loves, as He said,

(إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ - وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ
يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا - فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ
وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا)

(When there comes the help of Allah (to you, O Muhammad against your enemies) and the conquest (of Makkah). And you see that the people enter Allah's religion (Islam) in crowds. So glorify the praises of your Lord, and ask His forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts the repentance.) (110).

Allah said,

(فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي قِيلَ لَهُمْ)

(But those who did wrong changed the word from that which had been told to them for another).

Al-Bukhari recorded Abu Hurayrah saying that the Prophet said,

«قِيلَ لِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ ادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُولُوا:
حِطَّةً، فَدَخَلُوا يَزْحَفُونَ عَلَى أَسْتَاهِهِمْ فَبَدَّلُوا
وَقَالُوا، حَبَّةً فِي شَعْرَةٍ»

(The Children of Israel were commanded to enter the door while bowing and to say `Hittah'. Yet, they entered the door on their behinds, distorting the words. They said; `Habbah (seed), in Sha`rah (a hair).')

An-Nasa'i recorded this part of it from Abu Hurayrah only, but he has a chain from the Prophet , explaining Allah's statement,

(حِطَّةً)

(`Hittah'), saying, "So they deviated and said `Habbah." Similar was recorded by `Abdur-Razzaq, and his route was also collected by Al-Bukhari. Muslim and At-Tirmidhi narrated similar versions of this Hadith, At-Tirmidhi said, "Hasan Sahih."

The summary of what the scholars have said about this subject is that the Children of Israel distorted Allah's command to them to submit to Him in tongue and deed. They were commanded to enter the city while bowing down, but they entered while sliding on their rear ends and raising their heads! They were commanded to say, `Hittah' meaning, "Relieve us from our errors and sins." However, they mocked this command and said, "Hintah (grain seed) in Sha` irah (barley)." This demonstrates the worst type of rebellion and disobedience, and it is why Allah released His anger and punishment upon them, all because of their sinning and defying His commands. Allah said,

(فَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا رِجْزًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَا
كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ)

(So We sent upon the wrongdoers Rijz (a punishment) from the heaven because of their rebellion.)

Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said, "Every word in Allah's Book that says Rijz means, `a punishment.'" Mujahid, Abu Malik, As-Suddi, Al-Hasan and Qatadah were reported to have said that Rijz means `Torment.' Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that Sa`d bin Malik, Usamah bin Zayd and Khuzaymah bin Thabit said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«الطَّاعُونَ رَجْزٌ عَذَابٌ عُدِّبَ بِهِ مَنْ كَانَ
قَبْلَكُمْ»

(The plague is a Rijz, a punishment with which Allah punished those before you.)

This is also how An-Nasa'i recorded this Hadith. In addition, the basis of this Hadith was collected in the Two Sahihs,

«إِذَا سَمِعْتُمُ الطَّاعُونَ بِأَرْضٍ فَلَا تَدْخُلُوهَا»

(If you hear of the plague in a land, then do not enter it.)

Ibn Jarir recorded Usamah bin Zayd saying that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ هَذَا الْوَجَعُ وَالسَّقَمَ رَجْزٌ عُدِّبَ بِهِ بَعْضُ
الْأُمَّمِ قَبْلَكُمْ»

(This calamity and sickness (i.e. the plague) is a Rijz, a punishment with which some nations who were before you were punished.)

The basis of this Hadith was also collected in the Two Sahihs.

(وَإِذِ اسْتَسْقَى مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبْ
بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ فَانْفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا
قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَشْرَبَهُمْ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا مِنْ
رِزْقِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْتُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ)

(60. And (remember) when Musa asked for water for his people, We said: "Strike the stone with your stick." Then gushed forth therefrom twelve springs. Each (group of) people knew its own place for water. "Eat and drink of that which Allah has provided and do not act corruptly, making mischief on the earth.")

Twelve Springs gush forth

Allah said, "Remember My favor on you when I answered the supplication of your Prophet, Musa, when he asked Me to provide you with water. I made the water available for you, making it gush out through a stone. Twelve springs burst out of that stone, a designated spring for each of your tribes. You eat from the manna and the quails and drink from the water that I provided for you, without any effort or hardship for you. So worship the One Who did this for you.

(وَلَا تَعْتَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ)

(And do not act corruptly, making mischief on the earth) meaning, "Do not return the favor by committing acts of disobedience that cause favors to disappear."

Ibn `Abbas said that the Children of Israel, "Had a square stone that Musa was commanded to strike with his staff and, as a result, twelve springs burst out of that stone, three on each side. Each tribe was, therefore, designated a certain spring, and they used to drink from their springs. They never had to travel from their area, they would find the same bounty in the same manner they had in the first area." This narration is part of the long Hadith that An-Nasa'i, Ibn Jarir and Ibn Abi Hatim recorded about the trials.

This story is similar to the story in Surat Al-`Araf (Chapter 7) although the latter was revealed in Makkah. In Surat Al-`Araf, Allah used the third person when He mentioned the Children of Israel to the Prophet and narrated what He favored them with. In this Surat Al-Baqarah, which was revealed in Al-Madinah, Allah directed His Speech at the Children of Israel. Further, Allah said in Surat Al-`Araf,

(فَأَنْبَجَسَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا)

(And there gushed forth out of it twelve springs) (7:160), describing what first occurred when the water begins to gush out. In the Ayah in Surat Al-Baqarah, Allah described what happened later on, meaning when the water burst out in full force. Allah knows best.

(وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَىٰ لَنْ نَصْبِرَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامٍ وَحِدٍ
فَادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا تُنْبِتُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْ
بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّائِهَا وَفُومِهَا وَعَدَسِيهَا وَبَصَلِهَا قَالَ
أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ اهْبِطُوا
مِصْرًا فَإِنَّ لَكُمْ مَّا سَأَلْتُمْ)

(61. And (remember) when you said, "O Musa ! We cannot endure one kind of food. So invoke your Lord for us to bring forth for us of what the earth grows, its herbs, its cucumber its Fum, its lentils and its onions." He said, "Would you exchange that which is better for that which is lower Go you down to any town and you shall find what you want!")

The Children of Israel preferred Foods inferior to Manna and Quails

Allah said, "And remember My favor on you when I sent down the manna and quails to you, a good, pure, beneficial, easily acquired food. And remember your ungratefulness for what We granted you. Remember how you asked Musa to exchange this type of food for an inferior type that consists of vegetation, and so forth." Al-Hasan Al-Basri said about the Children of Israel, "They were bored and impatient with the type of food they were provided. They also remembered the life they used to live, when their diet consisted of lentils, onions, garlic and herbs." They said,

يَمُوسَىٰ لَنْ نُّصْبِرَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامٍ وَحِدٍ فَادْعُ لَنَا
رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا تُنْبِتُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْ بَقْلِهَا
وَقَتَائِبِهَا وَفُومِهَا وَعَدْسِهَا وَبَصَلِهَا)

(O Musa ! We cannot endure one kind of food. So invoke your Lord for us to bring forth for us of what the earth grows, its herbs, its cucumbers, its Fum, its lentils and its onions). They said,

(عَلَىٰ طَعَامٍ وَحِدٍ)

(One kind of food) meaning, the manna and quails, because they ate the same food day after day. The Ayah mentioned lentils, onions and herbs, which are all known types of foods. As for the Fum, Ibn Mas`ud read it, Thum (garlic). Also, Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that Al-Hasan said about the Ayah,

(وَفُومِهَا)

(Its Fum), "Ibn `Abbas said that Fum means, garlic."

He also said that the expression, `Fumu-lanna' means, `bake for us', according to the languages of old. Ibn Jarir commented, "If this is true, then `Fum' is one of the words whose pronunciation were altered, the letter `fa' was replaced by the letter `tha', since they are similar in sound." And Allah knows best. Others said that Fum is wheat, the kind used for bread. Al-Bukhari said, "Some of them said that Fum includes all grains or seeds that are eaten."

Allah's statement,

(قَالَ أَتَسْتَبَدُّونَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ)

(He said, "Would you exchange that which is better for that which is lower") criticized the Jews for asking for inferior foods, although they were living an easy life, eating tasty, beneficial and pure food. Allah's statement,

(اهبطوا مِصرًا)

(Go you down to any Misr) means, 'any city', as Ibn `Abbas said. Ibn Jarir also reported that Abu Al-`Aliyah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that the Ayah refers to Misr, the Egypt of Fir`awn. The truth is that the Ayah means any city, as Ibn `Abbas and other scholars stated. Therefore, the meaning of Musa's statement to the Children of Israel becomes, "What you are asking for is easy, for it is available in abundance in any city that you might enter. So since what you asked for is available in all of the villages and cities, I will not ask Allah to provide us with it, especially when it is an inferior type of food." This is why Musa said to them,

(أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ
اهبطوا مِصرًا فَإِنَّ لَكُمْ مَّا سَأَلْتُمْ)

(Would you exchange that which is better for that which is lower Go you down to any town and you shall find what you want!)

Since their request was the result of boredom and arrogance and since fulfilling it was unnecessary, their request was denied. Allah knows best.

(وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الدِّلَّةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبِ
مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللّٰهِ
وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّينَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا
وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ)

(61. And they were covered with humiliation and misery, and they drew on themselves the wrath of Allah. That was because they used to disbelieve in the Ayat (proofs, evidence) of Allah and killed the Prophets wrongfully. That was because they disobeyed and used to transgress the bounds (in their disobedience to Allah, i.e. commit crimes and sins.)) (2:61)

Covering the Jews in Humiliation and Misery

Allah said,

(وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الدِّلَّةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ)

(And they were covered with humiliation and misery). This Ayah indicates that the Children of Israel were plagued with humiliation, and that this will continue, meaning that it will never

cease. They will continue to suffer humiliation at the hands of all who interact with them, along with the disgrace that they feel inwardly. Al-Hasan commented, "Allah humiliated them, and they shall have no protector. Allah put them under the feet of the Muslims, who appeared at a time when the Majus (Zoroastrians) were taking the Jizyah (tax) from the Jews." Also, Abu Al-`Aliyah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and As-Suddi said that `misery' used in the Ayah means, `poverty.' `Atiyah Al-`Awfi said that `misery' means, `paying the tilth (tax).' In addition, Ad-Dahhak commented on Allah's statement,

(وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ)

(and they drew on themselves the wrath of Allah), "They deserved Allah's anger." Also, Ibn Jarir said that,

(وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ)

(and they drew on themselves the wrath of Allah) means, "They went back with the wrath. Similarly, Allah said,

(إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ تَبُوءَ بِإِثْمِي وَإِثْمِكَ)

(Verily, I intend to let you draw my sin on yourself as well as yours) (Al-Ma'idah 5:29) meaning, `You will end up carrying my, and your, mistakes instead of me'. Thus, the meaning of the Ayah becomes, `They went back carrying Allah's anger; Allah's wrath descended on them; they deserved Allah's anger.'"

Allah's statement,

(ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ
النَّبِيِّينَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ)

(That was because they used to disbelieve in the Ayat (proofs, evidences, etc.) of Allah and killed the Prophets wrongfully.) means, "This is what We rewarded the Children of Israel with: humiliation and misery." Allah's anger that descended on the Children of Israel was a part of the humiliation they earned, because of their defiance of the truth, disbelief in Allah's Ayat and belittling the carriers of Allah's Law i.e. the Prophets and their following. The Children of Israel rejected the Messengers and even killed them. Surely, there is no form of disbelief worse than disbelieving in Allah's Ayat and murdering the Prophets of Allah.

Meaning of Kibr

Similarly, in a Hadith recorded in the Two Sahihs the Messenger of Allah said,

«الْكِبْرُ بَطْرُ الْحَقِّ وَغَمَطُ النَّاسِ»

(Kibr, is refusing the truth and degrading (belittling) people.)

Imam Ahmad recorded, `Abdullah bin Mas`ud saying that the Messenger of Allah said,

«أَشَدُّ النَّاسِ عَذَابًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ رَجُلٌ قَتَلَهُ نَبِيٌّ أَوْ
قَتَلَ نَبِيًّا: وَإِمَامٌ ضَلَّالَةٌ وَمُمْتَلٌ مِنَ الْمُمْتَلِينَ»

(The people who will receive the most torment on the Day of Resurrection are: a man who was killed by a Prophet or who killed a Prophet, an unjust ruler and one who mutilates (the dead).) Allah's statement,

ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ

(That was because they disobeyed and used to transgress the bounds) mentions another reason why the Children of Israel were punished in this manner, for they used to disobey and transgress the limits. Disobedience is to do what is prohibited, while transgression entails overstepping the set limits of what is allowed and what is prohibited. Allah knows best.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى
وَالصَّبِيَّةَ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ
صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ)

(62. Verily, those who believe and those who are Jews and Christians, and Sabians (Sabi'in), whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does righteous good deeds shall have their reward with their Lord, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.)

Faith and doing Righteous Deeds equals Salvation in all Times

After Allah described the condition - and punishment - of those who defy His commands, fall into His prohibitions and transgress set limits by committing prohibited acts, He stated that the earlier nations who were righteous and obedient received the rewards for their good deeds. This shall be the case, until the Day of Judgment. Therefore, whoever follows the unlettered

Messenger and Prophet shall acquire eternal happiness and shall neither fear from what will happen in the future nor become sad for what has been lost in the past. Similarly, Allah said,

(أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ)

(No doubt! Verily, the Awliya' of Allah, no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve) (10:62).

The angels will proclaim to the dying believers, as mentioned,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَمُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ)

(Verily, those who say: "Our Lord is Allah (alone)," and then they stand firm, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): "Fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised!"). (41:30)

The Meaning of Mu'min, or Believer

Ali bin Abi Talhah narrated from Ibn ` Abbas, about,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّبِيَّانَ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ)

(Verily, those who believe and those who are Jews and Christians, and Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day) that Allah revealed the following Ayah afterwards,

(وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَسِرِينَ)

(And whoever seeks religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers) (3:85).

This statement by Ibn `Abbas indicates that Allah does not accept any deed or work from anyone, unless it conforms to the Law of Muhammad that is, after Allah sent Muhammad . Before that, every person who followed the guidance of his own Prophet was on the correct path, following the correct guidance and was saved

Why the Jews were called `Yahud

The Jews are the followers of Prophet Musa, who used to refer to the Tawrah for judgment. Yahud is a word that means, `repenting', just as Musa said,

(إِنَّا هُدْنَا إِلَيْكَ)

why the christians were called nasara

("Who will be my helpers in Allah's cause" Al-Hawariyyun said: "We are the helpers of Allah.") (61:14)

It was said that they were called `Nasara', because they inhabited a land called An-Nasirah (Nazareth), as Qatadah, Ibn Jurayj and Ibn `Abbas were reported to have said, Allah knows best. Nasara is certainly plural for Nasran.

When Allah sent Muhammad as the Last and Final Prophet and Messenger to all of the Children of Adam, mankind was required to believe in him, obey him and refrain from what he prohibited them; those who do this are true believers. The Ummah of Muhammad was called `Mu'minin' (believers), because of the depth of their faith and certainty, and because they believe in all of the previous Prophets and matters of the Unseen.

The Sabi'un or Sabians

There is a difference of opinion over the identity of the Sabians. Sufyan Ath-Thawri said that Layth bin Abu Sulaym said that Mujahid said that, "The Sabians are between the Majus, the Jews and the Christians. They do not have a specific religion." Similar is reported from Ibn Abi Najih. Similar statements were attributed to `Ata' and Sa`id bin Jubayr. They (others) say that the Sabians are a sect among the People of the Book who used to read the Zabur (Psalms), others say that they are a people who worshipped the angels or the stars. It appears that the closest opinion to the truth, and Allah knows best, is Mujahid's statement and those who agree with him like Wahb bin Munabbih, that the Sabians are neither Jews nor Christians nor Majus nor polytheists. Rather, they did not have a specific religion that they followed and enforced, because they remained living according to their Fitrah (instinctual nature). This is why the idolators used to call whoever embraced Islam a `Sabi', meaning, that he abandoned all religions that existed on the earth. Some scholars stated that the Sabians are those who never received a message by any Prophet. And Allah knows best.

(وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ خُذُوا
مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ -
ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ قُلُوبًا فَضَلُّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَكُنْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ)

(63. And (O Children of Isra'il, remember) when We took your covenant and We raised above you the Mount (saying): "Hold fast to that which We have given you, and remember that which is therein so that you may acquire Taqwa.) (64. Then after that you turned away. Had it not been for the grace and mercy of Allah upon you, indeed you would have been among the losers.)

Taking the Covenant from the Jews

Allah reminded the Children of Israel of the pledges, covenants and promises that He took from them to believe in Him alone, without a partner, and follow His Messengers. Allah stated that when He took their pledge from them, He raised the mountain above their heads, so that they affirm the pledge that they gave Allah and abide by it with sincerity and seriousness. Hence, Allah's statement,

(وَإِذْ نَتَقْنَا الْجَبَلَ فَوْقَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُ ظِلَّةٌ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُ وَاقِعٌ
بِهِمْ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَتَّقُونَ)

(And (remember) when We raised the mountain over them as if it had been a canopy, and they thought that it was going to fall on them. (We said): "Hold firmly to what We have given you (Tawrah), and remember that which is therein (act on its commandments), so that you may fear Allah and obey Him.") (7:171).

The mount mentioned here is At-Tur, just as it was explained in Surat Al-A`raf, according to the Tafsir of Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Ata', `Ikrimah, Al-Hasan, Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and others. This is more obvious. There is another report from Ibn `Abbas saying; `The Tur is a type of mountain that vegetation grows on, if no vegetation grows on it, it is not called Tur.' And in the Hadith about the trials, Ibn `Abbas said; "When they (the Jews) refused to obey, Allah raised the mountain above their heads so that they would listen."

Al-Hasan said that Allah's statement,

(حُدُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ)

(Hold fast to that which We have given you) means, the Tawrah. Mujahid said that the Ayah commanded, "Strictly adhere to it." Abu Al-`Aliyah and Ar-Rabi` said that,

(وَادْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ)

(and remember that which is therein) means, "Read the Tawrah and implement it." Allah's statement,

(ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ قُلُوبًا فَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ)

(Then after that you turned away. Had it not been for the grace of Allah) means, "Yet, after the firm pledge that you gave, you still deviated and broke your pledge";

(فَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ)

(Had it not been for the grace and mercy of Allah upon you), meaning, by forgiving you and by sending the Prophets and Messengers to you,

(لَكُنْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَسِرِينَ)

(Indeed you would have been among the losers) meaning, in this life and the Hereafter due to their breach of the covenant.

(وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ الَّذِينَ اعْتَدَوْا مِنكُمْ فِي السَّبْتِ فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَسِيبِينَ - فَجَعَلْنَاهَا نَكَالًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا وَمَا خَلْفَهَا وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(65. And indeed you knew those amongst you who transgressed in the matter of the Sabbath (i.e. Saturday). We said to them: "Be you monkeys, despised and rejected.") (66. So We made this punishment an example for those in front of it and those behind it, and a lesson for Al-Muttaqin (the pious.)

The Jews breach the Sanctity of the Sabbath

Allah said,

(وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ)

(And indeed you knew). This Ayah means, O Jews! Remember that Allah sent His torment on the village that disobeyed Him and broke their pledge and their covenant to observe the sanctity of the Sabbath. They began using deceitful means to avoid honoring the Sabbath by placing nets, ropes and artificial pools of water for the purpose of fishing before the Sabbath. When the fish came in abundance on Saturday as usual, they were caught in the ropes and nets for the rest of Saturday. During the night, the Jews collected the fish after the Sabbath ended. When they did that, Allah changed them from humans into monkeys, the animals having the form closest to humans. Their evil deeds and deceit appeared lawful on the surface, but they were in reality wicked. This is why their punishment was compatible with their crime. This story is explained in detail in Surat Al-A`raf, where Allah said (7:163),

وَسَأَلْتَهُمْ عَنِ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ حَاضِرَةَ الْبَحْرِ
إِذْ يَعْدُونَ فِي السَّبْتِ إِذْ تَأْتِيهِمْ حَيْثَانُهُمْ يَوْمَ
سَبْتِهِمْ شُرْعًا وَيَوْمَ لَا يَسْبِتُونَ لَا تَأْتِيهِمْ كَذَلِكَ
نَبَلَوْهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ)

(And ask them (O Muhammad) about the town that was by the sea; when they transgressed in the matter of the Sabbath (i.e. Saturday): when their fish came to them openly on the Sabbath day, and did not come to them on the day they had no Sabbath. Thus We made a trial of them, for they used to rebel (disobey Allah).)(7:163)

In his Tafsir, Al-`Awfi reported from Ibn `Abbas that he said,

(فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِيِينَ)

(We said to them: "Be you monkeys, despised and rejected") means, "Allah changed their bodies into those of monkeys and swines. The young people turned into monkeys while the old people turned into swine." Shayban An-Nahwi reported that Qatadah commented on,

(فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِيِينَ)

(We said to them: "Be you monkeys, despised and rejected"), "These people were turned into howling monkeys with tails, after being men and women."

**The Monkeys and Swine that exist now are not the Descendants of
Those that were transformed**

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Those who violated the sanctity of the Sabbath were turned into monkeys, then they perished without offspring." Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said, "Allah turned them into monkeys because of their sins. They only lived on the earth for three days, for no transformed person ever lives more than three days. They did not eat, drink or have offspring. Allah transformed their shapes into monkeys, and He does what He wills, with whom He wills and He changes the shape of whomever He wills. On the other hand, Allah created the monkeys, swines and the rest of the creation in the six days (of creation) that He mentioned in His Book."

Allah's statement,

(فَجَعَلْنَاهَا نَكَالًا)

(So We made this punishment an example) means, Allah made the people of this village, who violated the sanctity of the Sabbath,

(نَكَالًا)

(an example) via the way they were punished. Similarly, Allah said about Pharaoh,

(فَأَخَذَهُ اللَّهُ نَكَالَ الْآخِرَةِ وَالْأُولَىٰ)

(So Allah, seized him with punishing example for his last and first transgression) (79:25).
Allah's statement,

(لَمَّا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا وَمَا خَلْفَهَا)

(for those in front of it and those behind it) meaning, for the other villages. Ibn `Abbas commented, "Meaning, `We made this village an example for the villages around it by the manner in which We punished its people." Similarly, Allah said,

(وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا مَا حَوْلَكُمْ مِّنَ الْقُرَىٰ وَصَرَّفْنَا
الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ)

(And indeed We have destroyed towns (populations) round about you, and We have (repeatedly) shown (them) the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) in various ways that they might return (to the truth and believe in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism)).(46:27)

Therefore, Allah made them an example for those who lived during their time as well as a reminder for those to come, by preserving their story. This is why Allah said,

(وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ)

(and a lesson for Al-Muttaqin (the pious)), meaning, a reminder. This Ayah means, "The torment and punishment that this village suffered was a result of indulging in Allah's prohibitions and their deceit. Hence, those who have Taqwa should be aware of their evil behavior, so that what occurred to this village does not befall them as well." Also, Imam Abu `Abdullah bin Battah reported that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«لَا تَرْتَكِبُوا مَا ارْتَكَبَتِ الْيَهُودُ فَتَسْتَحِلُّوا مَحَارِمَ
اللَّهِ بِأَدْنَى الْحَيْلِ»

(Do not commit what the Jews committed, breaching what Allah has forbidden, by resorting to the lowest types of deceit.)

This Hadith has a good (Jayid) chain of narration. Allah knows best.

(وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ
تَذَبْحُوا بَقْرَةً قَالُوا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُؤًا قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ
أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ)

(67. And (remember) when Musa said to his people: "Verily, Allah commands you that you slaughter a cow." They said, "Do you make fun of us" He said, "I take Allah's refuge from being among Al-Jahilin (the ignorant or the foolish).")

The Story of the murdered Israeli Man and the Cow

Allah said, `O Children of Israel! Remember how I blessed you with miracle of the cow that was the means for discovering the identity of the murderer, when the murdered man was brought back to life.'

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded `Ubaydah As-Salmani saying, "There was a man from among the Children of Israel who was impotent. He had substantial wealth, and only a nephew who would inherit from him. So his nephew killed him and moved his body at night, placing it at the doorstep of a certain man. The next morning, the nephew cried out for revenge, and the people took up their weapons and almost fought each other. The wise men among them said, `Why would you kill each other, while the Messenger of Allah is still among you' So they went to Musa and mentioned the matter to him and Musa said,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذَبَحُوا بَقْرَةً قَالُوا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا
هُزُؤًا قَالِ أَعُودُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ)

("Verily, Allah commands you that you slaughter a cow." They said, "Do you make fun of us" He said, "I take Allah's refuge from being among Al-Jahilin (the ignorant or the foolish))." "Had they not disputed, it would have been sufficient for them to slaughter any cow. However, they disputed, and the matter was made more difficult for them, until they ended up looking for the specific cow that they were later ordered to slaughter. They found the designated cow with a man, only who owned that cow. He said, `By Allah! I will only sell it for its skin's fill of gold.' So they paid the cow's fill of its skin in gold, slaughtered it and touched the dead man with a part of it. He stood up, and they asked him, `Who killed you' He said, `That man,' and pointed to his nephew. He died again, and his nephew was not allowed to inherit him. Thereafter, whoever committed murder for the purpose of gaining inheritance was not allowed to inherit." Ibn Jarir reported something similar to that. Allah knows best.

(قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ
إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ لَا فَارِضٌ وَلَا بَكْرٌ عَوَانٌ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ
فَافْعَلُوا مَا تُؤْمَرُونَ - قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا
مَا لَوْئِهَا قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ صَفْرَاءٌ فَاقِعٌ
لَوْئِهَا تَسْرُ النَّظِيرِينَ - قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ
لَنَا مَا هِيَ إِنَّ الْبَقْرَ تَشَبَهَ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنَّا إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ
لَمُهْتَدُونَ - قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ لَا ذَلُولٌ تُثِيرُ
الْأَرْضَ وَلَا تَسْقِي الْحَرْثَ مُسَلِّمَةٌ لَا شِيَةَ فِيهَا
قَالُوا الْآنَ حِئْتِ بِالْحَقِّ فَذَبَحُوهَا وَمَا كَادُوا
يَفْعَلُونَ)

(68. They said, "Call upon your Lord for us that He may make plain to us what it is!" He said, "He says, `Verily, it is a cow neither too old nor too young, but (it is) between the two conditions', so do what you are commanded.") (69. They said, "Call upon your Lord for us to make plain to us its colour." He said, "He says, `It is a yellow cow, bright in its colour, pleasing the beholders.' ") (70. They said, "Call upon your Lord for us to make plain to us what it is.

Verily, to us all cows are alike. And surely, if Allah wills, we will be guided.") (71. He (Musa) said, "He says, `It is a cow neither trained to till the soil nor water the fields, sound, having no blemish in it.'" They said, "Now you have brought the truth." So they slaughtered it though they were near to not doing it.)

The Stubbornness of the Jews regarding the Cow; Allah made the Matter difficult for Them

Allah mentioned the stubbornness of the Children of Israel and the many unnecessary questions they asked their Messengers. This is why when they were stubborn, Allah made the decisions difficult for them. Had they slaughtered a cow, any cow, it would have been sufficient for them, as Ibn `Abbas and `Ubaydah have said. Instead, they made the matter difficult, and this is why Allah made it even more difficult for them. They said,

(ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنَ لَنَا مَا هِيَ)

(Call upon your Lord for us that He may make plain to us what it is!), meaning, "What is this cow and what is its description" Musa said,

(إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ لَّا فَارِضٌ وَلَا يَكْرٌ)

(He says, `Verily, it is a cow neither too old nor too young'), meaning, that it is neither old nor below the age of breeding. This is the opinion of Abu Al-`Aliyah, As-Suddi, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, `Atiyah Al-`Awfi, `Ata', Al-Khurasani, Wahb bin Munabbih, Ad-Dahhak, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and Ibn `Abbas. Ad-Dahhak reported that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(عَوَانٌ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ)

(But (it is) between the two conditions) means, "Neither old nor young. Rather, she was at the age when the cow is strongest and fittest." In his Tafsir Al-`Awfi reported from Ibn `Abbas that,

(فَاقِعٌ لَوْنُهَا)

(bright in its colour) "A deep yellowish white."

As-Suddi said,

(تَسْرُّ النَّظْرَيْنِ)

(pleasing the beholder) meaning, that it pleases those who see it. This is also the opinion of Abu Al-`Aliyah, Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas. Furthermore, Wahb bin Munabbih said, "If you look at the cow's skin, you will think that the sun's rays radiate through its skin." The modern version of the Tawrah mentions that the cow in the Ayah was red, but this is an error. Or, it might be that the cow was so yellow that it appeared blackish or reddish in color. Allah's knows best.

(إِنَّ الْبَقَرَ تَشَبَهَ عَلَيْنَا)

(Verily, to us all cows are alike) this means, that since cows are plentiful, then describe this cow for us further,

(وَإِنَّا إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ)

(And surely, if Allah wills) and if you further describe it to us,

(لْمُهْتَدُونَ)

(we will be guided.)

(قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ لَا ذَلُولٌ تُثِيرُ الْأَرْضَ
وَلَا تَسْقِي الْحَرْثَ)

(He says, `It is a cow neither trained to till the soil nor water the fields') meaning, it is not used in farming, or for watering purposes. Rather, it is honorable and fair looking. `Abdur-Razzaq said that Ma`mar said that Qatadah said that,

(مُسَلَّمَةٌ)

(sound) means, "The cow does not suffer from any defects." This is also the opinion of Abu Al-`Aliyah and Ar-Rabi`. Mujahid also said that the Ayah means the cow is free from defects. Further, `Ata' Al-Khurasani said that the Ayah means that its legs and body are free of physical defects.

Also, Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah,

(فَدَبَّحُوهَا وَمَا كَادُوا يَفْعَلُونَ)

(So they slaughtered it though they were near to not doing it) means, "They did not want to slaughter it."

This means that even after all the questions and answers about the cow's description, the Jews were still reluctant to slaughter the cow. This part of the Qur'an criticized the Jews for their behavior, because their only goal was to be stubborn, and this is why they nearly did not slaughter the cow. Also, `Ubaydah, Mujahid, Wahb bin Munabbih, Abu Al-`Aliyah and `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said, "The Jews bought the cow with a large amount of money." There is a difference of opinion over this.

وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا فَادَرَأْتُمْ فِيهَا وَاللَّهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَّا كُنْتُمْ
تَكْتُمُونَ - فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبُوهُ بِبَعْضِهَا كَذَلِكَ يُحْيِي اللَّهُ
الْمَوْتَى وَيُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ)

(72. And (remember) when you killed a man and disagreed among yourselves as to the crime. But Allah brought forth that which you were Taktumun.) (73. So We said: "Strike him (the dead man) with a piece of it (the cow)." Thus Allah brings the dead to life and shows you His Ayat (proofs, evidences, etc.) so that you may understand.)

Bringing the murdered Man back to Life

Al-Bukhari said that,

(فَادَرَأْتُمْ فِيهَا)

(And disagreed among yourselves as to the crime) means, "Disputed."

This is also the Tafsir of Mujahid. `Ata' Al-Khurasani and Ad-Dahhak said, "Disputed about this matter." Also, Ibn Jurayj said that,

(وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا فَادَرَأْتُمْ فِيهَا)

(And (remember) when you killed a man and disagreed among yourselves as to the crime) means, some of them said, "You killed him," while the others said, "No you killed him." This is also the Tafsir of `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam. Mujahid said that,

(وَاللَّهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَّا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ)

(But Allah brought forth that which you were Taktumun) means, "what you were hiding."

Allah said,

(فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبُوهُ بِبَعْضِهَا)

(So We said: "Strike him (the dead man) with a piece of it (the cow)" meaning, "any part of the cow will produce the miracle (if they struck the dead man with it)." We were not told which part of the cow they used, as this matter does not benefit us either in matters of life or religion. Otherwise, Allah would have made it clear for us. Instead, Allah made this matter vague, so this is why we should leave it vague. Allah's statement,

(كَذَلِكَ يُحْيِي اللَّهُ الْمَوْتَى)

(Thus Allah brings the dead to life) means, "They struck him with it, and he came back to life." This Ayah demonstrates Allah's ability in bringing the dead back to life. Allah made this incident proof against the Jews that the Resurrection shall occur, and ended their disputing and stubbornness over the dead person.

Allah mentioned His bringing the dead back to life in five instances in Surat Al-Baqarah. First Allah said,

(ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاكَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوْتِكَ)

(Then We raised you up after your death). He then mentioned the story about the cow. Allah also mentioned the story of those who escaped death in their land, while they were numbering in the thousands. He also mentioned the story of the Prophet who passed by a village that was destroyed, the story of Abraham and the four birds, and the land that comes back to life after it has died. All these incidents and stories alert us to the fact that bodies shall again become whole, after they were rotten. The proof of Resurrection is also reiterated in Allah's statement,

(وَأَيُّةٌ لَهُمُ الْأَرْضُ الْمَيْتَةُ أَحْيَيْنَاهَا وَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهَا حَبًّا فَمِنْهُ يَأْكُلُونَ - وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا جَنَّاتٍ مِّنْ نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ وَقَفَّارًا فِيهَا مِنَ الْعُيُونِ - لِيَأْكُلُوا مِنْ ثَمَرِهِ وَمَا عَمِلَتْهُ أَيْدِيهِمْ أَفَلَا يَشْكُرُونَ)

(And a sign for them is the dead land. We give it life, and We bring forth from it grains, so that they eat thereof. And We have made therein gardens of date palms and grapes, and We have caused springs of water to gush forth therein. So that they may eat of the fruit thereof and their hands made it not. Will they not then give thanks) (36:33-35).

ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ
أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ
الْأَنْهَارُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشَقَّقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ
وَإِنْ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَفِلٍ
عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ)

(74. Then after that your hearts were hardened and became as stones or even worse in hardness. And indeed, there are stones out of which rivers gush forth, and indeed, there are of them (stones) which split asunder so that water flows from them, and indeed, there are of them (stones) which fall down for fear of Allah. And Allah is not unaware of what you do.)

The Harshness of the Jews

Allah criticized the Children of Israel because they witnessed the tremendous signs and the Ayat of Allah, including bringing the dead back to life, yet,

ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ)

(Then after that your hearts were hardened).

So their hearts were like stones that never become soft. This is why Allah forbade the believers from imitating the Jews when He said,

(أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ
وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا
الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ
وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ)

(Has not the time come for the hearts of those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism) to be affected by Allah's Reminder (this Qur'an), and that which has been revealed of the truth, lest they become as those who received the Scripture (the Tawrah) and the Injil

(Gospel)) before (i.e. Jews and Christians), and the term was prolonged for them and so their hearts were hardened And many of them were Fasiqun (the rebellious, the disobedient to Allah) (57:16). v In his Tafsir, Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said, "When the dead man was struck with a part of the cow, he stood up and became more alive than he ever was. He was asked, `Who killed you' He said, `My nephews killed me.' He then died again. His nephews said, after Allah took his life away, `By Allah! We did not kill him' and denied the truth while they knew it. Allah said,

(فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً)

(And became as stones or even worse in hardness). "

And by the passage of time, the hearts of the Children of Israel were unlikely to accept any admonishment, even after the miracles and signs they witnessed. Their hearts became harder than stones, with no hope of ever softening. Sometimes, springs and rivers burst out of stones, some stones split and water comes out of them, even if there are no springs or rivers around them, sometimes stones fall down from mountaintops out of their fear of Allah. Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهَارُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشَقَّقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ)

(And indeed, there are stones out of which rivers gush forth, and indeed, there are of them (stones) which split asunder so that water flows from them, and indeed, there are of them (stones) which fall down for fear of Allah), means, "Some stones are softer than your hearts, they acknowledge the truth that you are being called to,

(وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَفْلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ)

(And Allah is not unaware of what you do)."

Solid Inanimate Objects possess a certain Degree of Awareness

Some claimed that the Ayat mentioned the stones being humble as a metaphor. However, Ar-Razi, Al-Qurtubi and other Imams said that there is no need for this explanation, because Allah creates this characteristic - humbleness - in stones. For instance, Allah said,

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَالجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا)

(Truly, We did offer Al-Amanah (the trust) to the heavens and the earth, and the mountains, but they declined to bear it and were afraid of it (i.e. afraid of Allah's torment)) (33:72),

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ

(The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein, glorify Him) (17:44),

(وَالنَّجْمُ وَالشَّجَرُ يَسْجُدَانِ)

(And the stars and the trees both prostrate themselves (to Allah)) (55:6),

أَوْ لَمِيرَوْا إِلَى خَلْقِ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ يَتَّقِيَنَّ

(Have they not observed things that Allah has created: (how) their shadows incline) (16:48),

قَالَتَا أَتَيْنَا طَائِعِينَ

(They both said: "We come willingly.") (41:11),

لَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى جَبَلٍ

(Had We sent down this Qur'an on a mountain) (59:21), and,

وَقَالُوا لَجُلُودِهِمْ لِمَ شَهِدْتُمْ عَلَيْنَا قَالُوا أَنْطَقَنَا
اللَّهُ

(And they will say to their skins, "Why do you testify against us" They will say: "Allah has caused us to speak.") (41:21).

It is recorded in the Sahih that the Prophet said,

«هَذَا جَبَلٌ يُحِبُّنَا وَنُحِبُّهُ»

(This (Mount Uhud) is a mount that loves us and that we love.)

Similarly, the compassion of the stump of the palm tree for the Prophet as confirmed in authentic narrations. In Sahih Muslim it is recorded that the Prophet said,

«إِنِّي لَأَعْرِفُ حَجْرًا بِمَكَّةَ كَانَ يُسَلِّمُ عَلَيَّ قَبْلَ أَنْ أُبْعَثَ إِنِّي لَأَعْرِفُهُ الْآنَ»

(I know a stone in Makkah that used to greet me with the Salam before I was sent. I recognize this stone now.)

He said about the Black Stone that,

«إِنَّهُ يَشْهَدُ لِمَنْ اسْتَلَمَ بِحَقِّ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ»

(On the Day of Resurrection it will testify for those who kiss it.)

There are several other texts with this meaning. The scholars of the Arabic language disagreed over the meaning of Allah's statement,

(فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً)

(And became as stones or even worse in hardness) after agreeing that `or' here is not being used to reflect doubt. Some scholars said that `or' here means, `and'. So the meaning becomes, "As hard as stones, and harder." For instance, Allah said,

(وَلَا تُطِعْ مِنْهُمْ ءَاثِمًا أَوْ كَفُورًا)

(And obey not a sinner or a disbeliever among them) (76:24), and,

(عُذْرًا أَوْ نُذْرًا)

(To cut off all excuses or to warn) (77:6).

Some other scholars said that `or' here means, `rather'. Hence, the meaning becomes, `As hard as stones. Rather, harder.' For instance, Allah said,

إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً

(A section of them fear men as they fear Allah or even more) (4:77),

وَأَرْسَلْنَاهُ إِلَى مِائَةِ أَلْفٍ أَوْ يَزِيدُونَ)

(And We sent him to a hundred thousand (people) or even more) (37:147), and,

فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَى)

(And was at a distance of two bows' length or (even) nearer) (53:9).

Some other scholars said that this Ayah means their hearts are only of two types, as hard as stone or harder than stone. Further, Ibn Jarir commented that this Tafsir means that some of their hearts are as hard as stone and some hearts are harder than stone. Ibn Jarir said that he favored this last Tafsir, although the others are plausible. I - Ibn Kathir - say that the last Tafsir is similar to Allah's statement,

مِثْلَهُمْ كَمِثْلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا)

(Their likeness is as the likeness of one who kindled a fire) (2:17), and then His statement,

أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ)

(Or like a rainstorm from the sky) (2:19).

It is also similar to Allah's statement,

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَعْمَلُهُمْ كَسَرَابٍ بِقِيَعَةٍ)

(As for those who disbelieved, their deeds are like a mirage in a desert) (24:39), and then His statement,

أَوْ كَظُلُمَاتٍ فِي بَحْرٍ لُّجِّيٍّ)

(Or (the state of a disbeliever) is like the darkness in a vast deep sea) (24:40).

This then means that some of them are like the first example, and some others are like the second example. Allah knows best.

(أَفْتَطْمَعُونَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ
يَسْمَعُونَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرَّفُونَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ
وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ - وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا
وَإِذَا خَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ قَالُوا أَتُحَدِّثُونَهُمْ بِمَا
فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَاجُّوكُمْ بِهِ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ أَفَلَا
تَعْقِلُونَ - أَوَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ
وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ)

(75. Do you (faithful believers) covet that they will believe in your religion inspite of the fact that a party of them (Jewish rabbis) used to hear the Word of Allah (the Tawrah), then they used to change it knowingly after they understood it) (76. And when they (Jews) meet those who believe (Muslims), they say, "We believe," but when they meet one another in private, they say, "Shall you (Jews) tell them (Muslims) what Allah has revealed to you that they (Muslims) may argue with you (Jews) about it before your Lord" Have you (Jews) then no understanding) (77. Know they (Jews) not that Allah knows what they conceal and what they reveal)

**There was little Hope that the Jews Who lived during the Time of
the Prophet could have believed**

Allah said,

(أَفْتَطْمَعُونَ)

(Do you covet) O believers,

(أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ)

(That they will believe in your religion) meaning, that these people would obey you They are the deviant sect of Jews whose fathers witnessed the clear signs but their hearts became hard afterwards. Allah said next,

وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ

(In spite of the fact that a party of them (Jewish rabbis) used to hear the Word of Allah (the Tawrah), then they used to change it) meaning, distort its meaning,

(مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ)

(after they understood it). They understood well, yet they used to defy the truth,

(وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(knowingly), being fully aware of their erroneous interpretations and corruption. This statement is similar to Allah's statement,

(فَبِمَا نَقَضْتُمْ مِيثَاقَهُمْ لَعَنَّاهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ قَاسِيَةً يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهَا)

(So, because of their violation of their covenant, We cursed them and made their hearts grow hard. They change the words from their (right) places) (5:13).

Qatadah commented that Allah's statement ;

(ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(Then they used to change it knowingly after they understood it) "They are the Jews who used to hear Allah's Words and then alter them after they understood and comprehended them." Also, Mujahid said, "Those who used to alter it and conceal its truths; they were their scholars." Also, Ibn Wahb said that Ibn Zayd commented,

(يَسْمَعُونَ كَلِمَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ)

(used to hear the Word of Allah (the Tawrah), then they used to change it) "They altered the Tawrah that Allah revealed to them, making it say that the lawful is unlawful and the prohibited is allowed, and that what is right is false and that what is false is right. So when a person seeking the truth comes to them with a bribe, they judge his case by the Book of Allah, but when a person comes to them seeking to do evil with a bribe, they take out the other (distorted) book, in which it is stated that he is in the right. When someone comes to them who is not seeking what is right, nor offering them bribe, then they enjoin righteousness on him. This is why Allah said to them,

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

(Enjoin you Al-Birr (piety and righteousness and every act of obedience to Allah) on the people and you forget (to practise it) yourselves, while you recite the Scripture (the Tawrah)! Have you then no sense) (2:44)"

The Jews knew the Truth of the Prophet , but disbelieved in Him

Allah said next,

(وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا قَالُوا ءَامِنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَا
بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ)

(And when they (Jews) meet those who believe (Muslims), they say, "We believe", but when they meet one another in private..). Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas commented,

(وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا قَالُوا ءَامِنَّا)

(And when they (Jews) meet those who believe (Muslims), they say, "We believe") "They believe that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, `But he was only sent for you (Arabs)" However, when they meet each other they say, "Do not convey the news about this Prophet to the Arabs, because you used to ask Allah to grant you victory over them when he came, but he was sent to them (not to you)." Allah then revealed,

وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا قَالُوا ءَامِنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَا
بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ قَالُوا أَنُحَدِّثُوكُمْ بِمَا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَاجَّوَكُم بِهِ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ)

(And when they (Jews) meet those who believe (Muslims), they say, "We believe," but when they meet one another in private, they say, "Shall you (Jews) tell them (Muslims) what Allah has revealed to you, that they (Muslims) may argue with you (Jews) about it before your Lord") meaning, "If you admit to them that he is a Prophet, knowing that Allah took the covenant from you to follow him, they will know that Muhammad is the Prophet that we were waiting for and whose coming we find foretold of in our Book. Therefore, do not believe in him and deny him." Allah said,

أَوَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا
يُعْلِنُونَ)

(Know they (Jews) not that Allah knows what they conceal and what they reveal).

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, "When the Jews met the believers they used to say, 'We believe.' When they met each other, some of them would say, 'Do not talk to the companions of Muhammad about what Allah has foretold in your Book, so that the news (that Muhammad is the Final Messenger) does not become a proof for them against you with your Lord, and, thus, you will win the dispute.'" Further, Abu Al-`Aliyah said about Allah's statement,

أَوَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا
يُعْلِنُونَ)

(Know they (Jews) not that Allah knows what they conceal and what they reveal), "Meaning their secret denial and rejection of Muhammad, although they find his coming recorded in their Book." This is also the Tafsir of Qatadah. Al-Hasan commented on,

أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ)

(That Allah knows what they conceal), "What they concealed refers to when they were alone with each other away from the Companions of Muhammad . Then they would forbid each other from conveying the news that Allah revealed to them in their Book to the Companions of Muhammad , fearing that the Companions would use this news (about the truth of Muhammad) against them before their Lord."

(وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ)

(And what they reveal) meaning, when they said to the Companions of Muhammad ,

(ءَامِنًا)

(We believe), as Abu Al-`Aliyah, Ar-Rabi` and Qatadah stated.

(وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا أَمَانِيَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ)

(فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيَشْتَرُوا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا فَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ)

(78. And there are among them (Jews) `Ummyyun (unlettered) people, who know not the Book, but they trust upon Amani (false desires) and they but guess.) (79. Then woe to those who write the book with their own hands and then say, "This is from Allah," to purchase with it a little price! Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for that they earn thereby.)

The Meaning of `Ummi

Allah said,

(وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُونَ)

(And there are among them Ummyyun people) meaning, among the People of the Book, as Mujahid stated. Ummyyun, is plural for Ummi, that is, a person who does not write, as Abu Al-`Aliyah, Ar-Rabi`, Qatadah, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i and others said. This meaning is clarified by Allah's statement,

(لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ)

(Who know not the Book) meaning, are they not aware of what is in it.

Umami was one of the descriptions of the Prophet because he was unlettered. For instance, Allah said,

(وَمَا كُنْتَ تَتْلُو مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَلَا تَخُطُّهُ
بِيَمِينِكَ إِذًا لِأَرْتَبَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ)

(Neither did you (O Muhammad) read any book before it (this Qur'an) nor did you write any book (whatsoever) with your right hand. In that case, indeed, the followers of falsehood might have doubted) (29:48).

Also, the Prophet said,

«إِنَّا أُمَّةٌ أُمِّيَّةٌ لَا نَكْتُبُ وَلَا نَحْسِبُ، الشَّهْرُ هَكَذَا
وَهَكَذَا وَهَكَذَا»

(We are an Umami nation, neither writing nor calculating. The (lunar) month is like this, this and this (i.e. thirty or twenty-nine days.)

This Hadith stated that Muslims do not need to rely on books, or calculations to decide the timings of their acts of worship. Allah also said,

(هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ)

(He it is Who sent among the Umamiyyin ones a Messenger (Muhammad) from among themselves) (62:2).

The Explanation of Amani

Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn ` Abbas said that Allah's statement,

(إِلَّا أَمَانِيَّ)

(But they trust upon Amani) means, "It is just a false statement that they utter with their tongues." It was also said that Amani means `wishes and hopes'. Mujahid commented, "Allah described the Umamiyyin as not understanding any of the Book that Allah sent down to Musa, yet they create lies and falsehood." Therefore, the word Amani mentioned here refers to lying and falsehood. Mujahid said that Allah's statement,

(وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ)

(And they but guess) means, "They lie." Qatadah, Abu Al-`Aliyah and Ar-Rabi` said that it means, "They have evil false ideas about Allah."

Woe unto Those Criminals among the Jews

Allah said,

(فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ
هَذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيَشْتَرُوا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا)

(Then Wailun (woe) to those who write the book with their own hands and then say, "This is from Allah," to purchase with it a little price!).

This is another category of people among the Jews who called to misguidance with falsehood and lies about Allah, thriving on unjustly amassing people's property. `Wailun (woe)' carries meanings of destruction and perishing, and it is a well-known word in the Arabic language. Az-Zuhri said that `Ubadyullah bin `Abdullah narrated that Ibn `Abbas said, "O Muslims! How could you ask the People of the Book about anything, while the Book of Allah (Qur'an) that He revealed to His Prophet is the most recent Book from Him and you still read it fresh and young Allah told you that the People of the Book altered the Book of Allah, changed it and wrote another book with their own hands. They then said, `This book is from Allah,' so that they acquired a small profit by it. Hasn't the knowledge that came to you prohibited you from asking them By Allah! We have not seen any of them asking you about what was revealed to you." This Hadith was also collected by Al-Bukhari. Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, "The little amount here means this life and all that it contains."

Allah's statement,

(فَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا
يَكْسِبُونَ)

(Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for that they earn thereby) means, "Woe to them because of what they have written with their own hands, the lies, falsehood and alterations. Woe to them because of the property that they unjustly acquired." Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas commented,

(فَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ)

(Woe to them), "Means the torment will be theirs because of the lies that they wrote with their own hands,

(وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِّمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ)

(And woe to them for that they earn thereby), which they unjustly acquired from people, be they commoners or otherwise."

(وَقَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَةً قُلْ
أَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ أَمْ
تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(80. And they (Jews) say, "The Fire shall not touch us but for a few numbered days." Say (O Muhammad to them): "Have you taken a covenant from Allah, so that Allah will not break His covenant Or is it that you say of Allah what you know not")

The Jews hope They will only remain in the Fire for a Few Days

Allah mentioned the claim of the Jews, that the Fire will only touch them for a few days, and then they will be saved from it. Allah refuted this claim by saying,

(قُلْ أَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا)

(Say (O Muhammad to them): "Have you taken a covenant from Allah'). Hence, the Ayah proclaims, `if you had a promise from Allah for that, then Allah will never break His promise. However, such promise never existed. Rather, what you say, about Allah, you have no knowledge of and you thus utter a lie about Him.' Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said about the Ayah,

(وَقَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَةً)

(And they (Jews) say, "The Fire shall not touch us but for a few numbered days."). "The Jews said, `The Fire will only touch us for forty days.'" Others added that this was the period during which the Jews worshipped the calf.

Also, Al-Hafiz Abu Bakr bin Marduwyah reported Abu Hurayrah saying,

«اجْمَعُوا لِي مَنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْيَهُودِ هُنَا»

«مَنْ أَبُوكُمْ»

«كَذَّبْتُمْ بَلْ أَبُوكُمْ فُلَانٌ»

«هَلْ أَنْتُمْ صَادِقِيٌّ عَنْ شَيْءٍ إِنْ سَأَلْتُكُمْ عَنْهُ»

«مَنْ أَهْلُ النَّارِ»

«اخْسَئُوا وَاللَّهِ لَا نَخْلُقُكُمْ فِيهَا أَبَدًا»

«هَلْ أَنْتُمْ صَادِقِيٌّ عَنْ شَيْءٍ إِنْ سَأَلْتُكُمْ عَنْهُ؟»

«هَلْ جَعَلْتُمْ فِي هَذِهِ الشَّاةِ سُمًَّا؟»

«فَمَا حَمَلَكُمْ عَلَى ذَلِكَ؟»

(When Khaybar was conquered, a roasted poisoned sheep was presented to the Prophet as a gift (by the Jews). The Messenger of Allah ordered, 'Assemble before me all the Jews who were here.' The Jews were summoned and the Prophet said (to them), 'Who is your father?' They replied, 'So-and-so.' He said, 'You have lied; your father is so-and-so.' They said, 'You have uttered the truth.' He said, 'Will you now tell me the truth, if I ask you about something?' They replied, 'Yes, O Abul-Qasim; and if we should tell a lie, you will know our lie as you have about our fathers.' On that he asked, 'Who are the people of the (Hell) Fire?' They said, 'We shall remain in the (Hell) Fire for a short period, and after that you will replace us in it.' The Prophet said, 'May you be cursed and humiliated in it! By Allah, we shall never replace you in it.' Then he asked, 'Will you tell me the truth if I ask you a question?' They said, 'Yes, O Abul-Qasim.' He asked, 'Have you poisoned this sheep?' They said, 'Yes.' He asked, 'What made you do so?' They said, 'We wanted to know if you were a liar, in which case we would get rid of you, and if you were a Prophet then the poison would not harm you.') Imam Ahmad, Al-Bukhari and An-Nasa'i recorded similarly.

(بَلَىٰ مَنْ كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَأَحَاطَتْ بِهِ خَطِيئَتُهُ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ - وَالَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ
الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ)

(81. Yes! Whosoever earns evil and his sin has surrounded him, they are dwellers of the Fire (i.e. Hell); they will dwell therein forever). (82. And those who believe and do righteous good deeds, they are dwellers of Paradise, they will dwell therein forever.)

Allah says, the matter is not as you have wished and hoped it to be. Rather, whoever does an evil deed and abides purposefully in his error, coming on the Day of Resurrection with no good deeds, only evil deeds, then he will be among the people of the Fire.

(وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ)

(And those who believe and do righteous good deeds) meaning, "They believe in Allah and His Messenger and perform the good deeds that conform with the Islamic Law. They shall be among the people of Paradise." Allah said in a similar statement,

(لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِيَّ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا - وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أَنْتَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا)

(It will not be in accordance with your desires (Muslims), nor those of the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), whosoever works evil, will have the recompense thereof, and he will not find any protector or helper besides Allah. And whoever does righteous good deeds, male or female, and is a (true) believer in the Oneness of Allah (Muslim) , such will enter Paradise and not the least injustice, even the size of a Naqira (speck on the back of a date stone), will be done to them) (4: 123-124).

Also, Abu Hurayrah, Abu Wa'il, `Ata', and Al-Hasan said that,

(وَأَحَطَّتْ بِهِ خَطِيئَتُهُ)

(And his sin has surrounded him) means, "His Shirk (polytheism) has surrounded him." Also, Al-A`mash reported from Abu Razin that Ar-Rabi` bin Khuthaym said,

(وَأَحَطَّتْ بِهِ خَطِيئَتُهُ)

(And his sin has surrounded him), "Whoever dies before repenting from his wrongs." As-Suddi and Abu Razin said similarly. Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that,

(وَأَحَطَّتْ بِهِ خَطِيئَتُهُ)

(And his sin has surrounded him) refers to major sins. All of these statements carry similar meanings, and Allah knows best.

When Small Sins gather, They bring about Destruction

Here we should mention the Hadith that Imam Ahmad recorded, in which `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِيَّاكُمْ وَمُحَقَّرَاتِ الدُّنُوبِ فَإِنَّهُنَّ يَجْتَمِعْنَ عَلَى
الرَّجُلِ حَتَّى يُهْلِكَنَّهُ»

(Beware of the belittled sins, because they gather on a person until they destroy him.)

He then said that the Messenger of Allah gave them an example,

«كَمَثَلِ قَوْمٍ نَزَلُوا بِأَرْضٍ فَلَائِهَ، فَحَضَرَ صَنِيعُ
الْقَوْمِ فَجَعَلَ الرَّجُلُ يَنْطَلِقُ فَيَجِيءُ بِالْعُودِ
وَالرَّجُلُ يَجِيءُ بِالْعُودِ، حَتَّى جَمَعُوا سَوَادًا
وَأَجَّجُوا نَارًا فَأَنْضَجُوا مَا قَدَّفُوا فِيهَا»

(This is the example of people who set up camp on a flat land, and then their servants came. One of them collected some wood and another man collected some wood until they collected a great deal. They then started a fire and cooked what they put on it.)

Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn ` Abbas said that,

(وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ
أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ)

(And those who believe and do righteous good deeds, they are dwellers of Paradise, they will dwell therein forever) "Whoever believes in what you (Jews) did not believe in and implements what you refrained from implementing of Muhammad's religion, shall acquire Paradise for eternity. Allah stated that the recompense for good or evil works shall remain with its people for eternity. "

(وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ لَا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا
اللَّهَ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ
وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ

وَعَاءُتُوا الزَّكَّوَّةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ
مُّعْرِضُونَ)

(83. And (remember) when We took a covenant from the Children of Israel, (saying): Worship none but Allah (alone) and be dutiful and good to parents, and to kindred, and to orphans and (the poor), and speak good to people and perform As-Salah and give Zakah. Then you slid back, except a few of you, while you are backsliders.)

The Covenant that Allah took from the Children of Israel

Allah reminded the Children of Israel of the commandments that He gave them, and the covenants that He took from them to abide by those commands, and how they intentionally and knowingly turned away from all of that. Allah commanded them to worship Him and to associate none with Him in worship, just as He has commanded all of His creatures, for this is why Allah created them. Allah said,

(وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ
أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ)

(And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad) but We revealed to him (saying): La ilaha illa Ana none has the right to be worshipped but I (Allah) , so worship Me (alone and none else)) (21:25), and,

(وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ
وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّغُوتَ)

(And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allah (alone), and avoid the Taghut (all false deities,)) (16:36).

This is the highest and most important right, that is, Allah's right that He be worshipped alone without partners.

After that comes the right of the creatures, foremost, the right of the parents. Allah usually mentions the rights of the parents along with His rights. For instance, Allah said,

(أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَى الْمَصِيرِ)

(Give thanks to Me and to your parents. Unto Me is the final destination) (31:14). Also, Allah said,

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَيَالِوَالِدَيْنِ
إِحْسَانًا)

(And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents) (17:23), until,

وَعَاتِ ذَا الْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُ وَالْمِسْكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ)

(And give to the kinsman his due and to the Miskin (poor) and to the wayfarer) (17:26). The Two Sahihs record that Ibn Mas'ud said,

قُلْتُ:

«يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَيُّ الْعَمَلِ أَفْضَلُ؟ قَالَ:

«الصَّلَاةُ عَلَى وَقْتِهَا»

قُلْتُ: ثُمَّ أَيُّ؟ قَالَ:

«بِرُّ الْوَالِدَيْنِ»

قُلْتُ: ثُمَّ أَيُّ؟ قَالَ:

«الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ»

(I said, `O Messenger of Allah! What is the best deed' He said, `Performing the prayer on time.' I said, 'Then what' He said, `Being kind to one's parents.' I said, `Then what' He said, `Jihad in the cause of Allah.')

Allah then said,

(وَالْيَتَامَىٰ)

(and to orphans) meaning, the young who have no fathers to fend for them.

(وَالْمَسْكِينُ)

(and Al-Masakin (the poor)), plural for Miskin, the one who does not find what he needs to spend on himself and his family. We will discuss these categories when we explain the Ayah of Surat An-Nisa` where Allah said,

(وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا)

(Worship Allah and join none with Him (in worship); and do good to parents) (4:36).

Allah's statement,

(وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا)

(and speak good to people) meaning, say good words to them and be lenient with them, this includes commanding good and forbidding evil. Al-Hasan Al-Basri commented on Allah's statement,

(وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا)

(and speak good to people), ".` The good saying' means commanding good and forbidding evil, and being patient and forgiving. The `good words to people', as Allah commanded, also includes every good type of behavior that Allah is pleased with." Imam Ahmad narrated that Abu Dharr said that the Prophet said,

«لَا تَحْقِرَنَّ مِنَ الْمَعْرُوفِ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ لَمْ تَجِدْ فَاَلِقْ أَخَاكَ بِوَجْهِهِ مُنْطَلِقًا»

(Do not belittle any form of righteousness, and even if you did not find any good deed except meeting your brother with a smiling face, then do so.)

This Hadith was also collected by Muslim in his Sahih and At-Tirmidhi, who graded it Sahih.

Allah commands the servants to say good words to people, after He commanded them to be kind to them, thereby mentioning two categories of manners: good speech and good actions. He then emphasized the command to worship Him and the command to do good, ordaining the prayer and the Zakah,

(وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ)

(and perform As-Salah and give Zakah). Allah informed us that the People of the Book, except for a few among them, ignored these orders, that is, they knowingly and intentionally abandoned them. Allah ordered this Ummah similarly in Surat An-Nisa' when He said,

(وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَيَالِ الَّذِينَ
إِحْسَانًا وَيَذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ
وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ
بِالْجُنُبِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا)

(Worship Allah and join none with Him (in worship); and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, Al-Masakin (the poor), the neighbor who is near of kin, the neighbor who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and those (servants) whom your right hands possess. Verily, Allah does not like such as are proud and boastful) (4:36).

Of these orders, this Ummah has practiced what no other nation before it has, and all praise is due to Allah.

(وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُونَ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَلَا
تُخْرِجُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ
تَشْهَدُونَ - ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ تَقُولُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ
وَتُخْرِجُونَ فَرِيقًا مِّنْكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِهِمْ تَظْهَرُونَ
عَلَيْهِمْ بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَإِن يَأْتُوكُمْ أُسْرَىٰ

يُفْدُوهُمْ وَهُوَ مُحَرَّمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِخْرَاجُهُمْ أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ
 بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ
 يَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ
 الْقِيَامَةِ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَفِلٍ
 عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ - أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا
 بِالْآخِرَةِ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ
 يُنصَرُونَ)

(84. And (remember) when We took your covenant (saying): Shed not the blood of your (people), nor turn out your own people from their dwellings. Then, (this) you ratified and (to this) you bore witness.) (85. After this, it is you who kill one another and drive out a party of you from their homes, assist (their enemies) against them, in sin and transgression. And if they come to you as captives, you ransom them, although their expulsion was forbidden to you. Then do you believe in a part of the Book and reject the rest Then what is the recompense of those who do so among you, except disgrace in the life of this world, and on the Day of Resurrection they shall be consigned to the most grievous torment. And Allah is not unaware of what you do.) (86. Those are they who have bought the life of this world at the price of the Hereafter. Their torment shall not be lightened nor shall they be helped.)

The Terms of the Covenant and their Breach of It

Allah criticized the Jews who lived in Al-Madinah during the time of the Messenger of Allah . They used to suffer, because of the armed conflicts between the tribes of Al-Madinah, Aws and Khazraj. Before Islam, the Aws and Khazraj worshipped idols, and many battles took place between them. There were three Jewish tribes in Al-Madinah at that time, Banu Qaynuqa` and Banu An-Nadir, the allies of the Khazraj, and Banu Qurayzah, who used to be the allies of the Aws. When war erupted between Aws and Khazraj, their Jewish allies would assist them. The Jew would kill his Arab enemy, and sometimes they also killed Jews who were the allies of the other Arab tribe, although the Jews were prohibited from killing each other according to clear religious texts in their Books. They would also drive each other from their homes and loot whatever furniture and money they could. When the war ended, the victorious Jews would release the prisoners from the defeated party, according to the rulings of the Tawrah. This is why Allah said,

(أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ)

(Then do you believe in a part of the Scripture and reject the rest) Allah said,

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُونَ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَلَا
تُخْرِجُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ مِّن دِيَارِكُمْ)

(And (remember) when We took your covenant (saying): Shed not the blood of your (people), nor turn out your own people from their dwellings.) meaning, "Do not kill each other, nor expel one another from their homes, nor participate in fighting against them." Allah mentioned the word `your own' here, just as He said in another Ayah.

فَتُوبُوا إِلَىٰ بَارِئِكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ
عِندَ بَارِئِكُمْ)

(So turn in repentance to your Creator and kill yourselves, that will be better for you with your Creator) (2:54) because the followers of one religion are just like one soul. Also, the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي تَوَادُّهِمْ وَتَرَاحُمِهِمْ
وَتَوَاصُلِهِمْ بِمَنْزِلَةِ الْجَسَدِ الْوَاحِدِ إِذَا اشْتَكَى مِنْهُ
عُضْوٌ تَدَاعَىٰ لَهُ سَائِرُ الْجَسَدِ بِالْحَمَىٰ وَالسَّهَرِ»

(The example of the believers in their kindness, mercy and sympathy to each other is the example of one body, when an organ of it falls ill, the rest of the body rushes to its aid in fever and sleeplessness.) Allah's statement,

ثُمَّ أَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ)

(Then, (this) you ratified and (to this) you bore witness.) means, "You testified that you know of the covenant and that you were witnesses to it."

ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ هَٰؤُلَاءِ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتُخْرِجُونَ فَرِيقًا
مِّنْكُمْ مِّن دِيَارِهِمْ)

(After this, it is you who kill one another and drive out a party of you from their homes). Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar reported that Ibn `Abbas commented on the Ayah,

(ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتُخْرِجُونَ فَرِيقًا
مِّنْكُمْ مِّن دِيَارِهِمْ)

(After this, it is you who kill one another and drive out a party of you from their homes) "Allah mentioned what they were doing, and that in the Tawrah He had prohibited them from shedding each other's blood, and required them to free their prisoners. Now they were divided into two camps in Al-Madinah, Banu Qaynuqa`, who were the allies of the Khazraj, and An-Nadir and Qurayzah, who were the allies of the Aws. When fighting erupted between Aws and Khazraj, Banu Qaynuqa` would fight along with the Khazraj, while Banu An-Nadir and Qurayzah would fight along with the Aws. Each Jewish camp would fight against their Jewish brethren from the other camp. They would shed each other's blood, although they had the Tawrah with them, and they knew their rights and dues. Meanwhile, the Aws and Khazraj were polytheists who worshipped idols. They did not know about Paradise, the Fire, Resurrection, Divine Books the lawful and prohibited. When the war would end, the Jews would ransom their prisoners and implement the Tawrah. Consequently, Banu Qaynuqa` would ransom their prisoners who were captured by the Aws, while Banu An-Nadir and Qurayzah would ransom their prisoners who were captured by the Khazraj. They would also ask for blood money. During these wars, they would kill whomever (Jews or Arabs) they could, while helping the polytheists against their brethren. Therefore, Allah reminded them of this when He said,

(أَفْتُمُونَنَّا بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ)

(Then do you believe in a part of the Scripture and reject the rest) This Ayah means, `Do you ransom them according to the rulings of the Tawrah, yet kill them while the Tawrah forbade you from killing them and from expelling them from their homes The Tawrah also commanded that you should not aid the polytheists and those who associate with Allah in the worship against your brethren. You do all this to acquire the life of this world.' I was informed that the behavior of the Jews regarding the Aws and Khazraj was the reason behind revealing these Ayat."

These noble Ayat criticized the Jews for implementing the Tawrah sometimes and defying it at other times, although they believed in the Tawrah and knew what they were doing was wrong. This is why they should not be trusted to preserve or convey the Tawrah. Further, they should not be believed when it comes to the description of the Messenger of Allah, his coming, his expulsion from his land, and his Hijrah, and the rest of the information that the previous Prophets informed them about him, all of which they hid. The Jews, may they suffer the curse of Allah, hid all of these facts among themselves, and this is why Allah said,

(فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي
الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا)

(Then what is the recompense of those who do so among you, except disgrace in the life of this world), because they defied Allah's Law and commandments,

(وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ)

(And on the Day of Resurrection they shall be consigned to the most grievous torment) as punishment for defying the Book of Allah that they had.

(وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَفْلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوْا
الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ)

(And Allah is not unaware of what you do. Those are they who have bought the life of this world at the price of the Hereafter) meaning, they prefer this life to the Hereafter. Therefore,

(فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابُ)

(Their torment shall not be lightened) not even for an hour,

(وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ)

(Nor shall they be helped), and they shall find no helper who will save them from the eternal torment they will suffer, nor shall they find any to grant them refuge from it.

(وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ الْكِتَابَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ
بِالرُّسُلِ وءَاتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ
بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ أَفَكُلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى
أَنْفُسُكُمْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِيقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ وَقَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ)

(87. And indeed, We gave Musa the Book and followed him up with a succession of Messengers. And We gave `Isa, the son of Maryam, clear signs and supported him with Ruh-il-Qudus. Is it that whenever there came to you a Messenger with what you yourselves desired not, you grew arrogant Some you disbelieved and some you killed.)

The Arrogance of the Jews who denied and killed Their Prophets

and desires. Allah mentioned that He gave Musa the Book, the Tawrah, and that the Jews changed, distorted, and defied its commands, as well as altered its meanings.

Allah sent Messengers and Prophets after Musa who followed his law, as Allah stated,

(إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ)

(الَّذِينَ اسْلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ
بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ
شُهَدَاءَ)

(Verily, We did reveal the Tawrah (to Musa), therein was guidance and light, by which the Prophets, who submitted themselves to Allah's will, judged for the Jews. And the rabbis and the priests (too judged for the Jews by the Tawrah after those Prophets), for to them was entrusted the protection of Allah's Book, and they were witnesses thereto) (5:44). This is why Allah said here,

(وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ بِالرُّسُلِ)

(And Qaffayna him with Messengers).

As-Suddi said that Abu Malik said that Qaffayna means, "Succeeded", while others said, "Followed". Both meanings are plausible, since Allah said,

(ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا تَتْرَىٰ)

(Then We sent Our Messengers in succession) (23:44).

Thereafter, Allah sent the last Prophet among the Children of Israel, `Isa the son of Mary, who was sent with some laws that differed with some in the Tawrah. This is why Allah also sent miracles to support `Isa. These included bringing the dead back to life, forming the shape of birds from clay and blowing into them, after which they became living birds by Allah's leave, healing the sick and foretelling the Unseen, as Ibn `Abbas stated. Allah also aided him with Ruh Al-Qudus, and that refers to Jibril. All of these signs testified to the truthfulness of `Isa and what he was sent with. Yet, the Children of Israel became more defiant and envious of him and did not want to differ with even one part of the Tawrah, as Allah said about `Isa,

(وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ لِيَكُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَاللَّعْنَةُ كَمَا كُنتُمْ كَافِرِينَ)
(بِأَيَّةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ)

(And to make lawful to you part of what was forbidden to you, and I have come to you with a proof from your Lord) (3:50).

Hence, the Children of Israel treated the Prophets in the worst manner, rejecting some of them and killing some of them. All of this occurred because the Prophets used to command the Jews with what differed from their desires and opinions. The Prophets also upheld the rulings of the Tawrah that the Jews had changed, and this is why it was difficult for them to believe in these Prophets. Therefore, they rejected the Prophets and killed some of them. Allah said,

(أَفَلَمَّا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَىٰ أَنفُسُكُمْ
اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِقْنَا كَذَّبْتُمْ وَقَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ)

(Is it that whenever there came to you a Messenger with what you yourselves desired not, you grew arrogant Some you disbelieved and some you kill).

Jibril is Ruh Al-Qudus

The proof that Jibril is the Ruh Al-Qudus is the statement of Ibn Mas`ud in explanation of this Ayah. This is also the view of Ibn `Abbas, Muhammad bin Ka`b, Isma`il bin Khalid, As-Suddi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, `Atiyah Al-`Awfi and Qatadah. Additionally, Allah said,

(نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ - عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ
الْمُنذِرِينَ)

(Which the trustworthy Ruh (Jibril) has brought down. Upon your heart (O Muhammad) that you may be (one) of the warners) (26:193-194).

Al-Bukhari recorded `A'ishah saying that the Messenger of Allah erected a Minbar in the Masjid on which Hassan bin Thabit (the renowned poet) used to defend the Messenger of Allah (with his poems). The Messenger of Allah said,

«اللَّهُمَّ أَيُّدِ حَسَّانِ بَرُوحِ الْفُؤَسِ كَمَا نَافَحَ عَنْ
نَبِيِّكَ»

(O Allah! Aid Hassan with Ruh Al-Qudus, for he defended Your Prophet.)

Abu Dawud recorded this Hadith in his Sunan as did At-Tirmidhi who graded it Hasan Sahih. Further, Ibn Hibban recorded in his Sahih that Ibn Mas'ud said that the Prophet said,

«إِنَّ رُوحَ الْفُدُسِ نَفَثَ فِي رُوعِي أَنَّهُ لَنْ تَمُوتَ
نَفْسٌ حَتَّى تَسْتَكْمِلَ رِزْقَهَا وَأَجَلَهَا، فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَأَجْمِلُوا فِي الطَّلَبِ»

(Ruh Al-Qudus informed me that no soul shall die until it finishes its set provisions and term limit. Therefore, have Taqwa of Allah and seek your sustenance in the most suitable way.)

The Jews tried to kill the Prophet

Az-Zamakhshari commented on Allah's statement,

(فَفَرِيقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ وَفَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ)

(Some you disbelieved and some you kill), "Allah did not say `killed' here, because the Jews would still try to kill the Prophet in the future, using poison and magic." During the illness that preceded his death, the Prophet said,

«مَا زَالَتْ أَكَلَةُ خَيْبَرَ تُعَاوِدُنِي، فَهَذَا أَوَانُ
انْقِطَاعِ أَبْهَرِي»

(I kept feeling the effect of what I ate (from the poisoned sheep) during the day of Khaybar, until now, when it is the time that the aorta will be cut off (meaning when death is near).)

This Hadith was collected by Al-Bukhari and others

(وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيلًا
مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(88. And they say, "Our hearts are Ghulf." Nay, Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, so little is that which they believe.)

Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn ` Abbas said that,

(وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ)

(And they say, "Our hearts are Ghulf."), means, "Our hearts are screened." Mujahid also said that,

(وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ)

(And they say, "Our hearts are Ghulf."), means, "They are covered." Ikrimah said, "There is a stamp on them." Abu Al-` Aliyah said, "They do not comprehend." Mujahid and Qatadah said that Ibn ` Abbas read the Ayah in a way that means, "Our hearts contain every type of knowledge and do not need the knowledge that you (O Muhammad) have." This is the opinion of ` Ata' and Ibn ` Abbas.

(بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ)

(Nay, Allah has cursed them for their disbelief) meaning, "Allah expelled them and deprived them of every type of righteousness." Qatadah said that the Ayah,

(فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(So little is that which they believe.) means, "Only a few of them believe." Allah's statement,

(وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ)

(And they say, "Our hearts are Ghulf.") is similar to His statement,

(وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا فِي أَكْتَةٍ مِمَّا تَدْعُونَا إِلَيْهِ)

(And they say: "Our hearts are under coverings (screened) from that to which you invite us) (41:5).

This is why Allah said here,

(بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(Nay, Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, so little is that which they believe.) meaning, "It is not as they claim. Rather, their hearts are cursed and stamped," just as Allah said in Surat An-Nisa' (4:155),

وَقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ
فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا)

(And of their saying: "Our hearts are wrapped (with coverings, i.e. we do not understand what the Messengers say) nay, Allah has set a seal upon their hearts because of their disbelief, so they believe not but a little.)

There is a difference of opinion regarding the meaning of Allah's statement,

(فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(So little is that which they believe.) and His statement,

(فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا)

(So they believe not except a few). Some scholars said that the Ayat indicate that a few of them would believe, or that their faith is minute, because they believe in Resurrection and in Allah's reward and punishment that Musa foretold. Yet, this faith will not benefit them since it is overshadowed by their disbelief in what Muhammad brought them. Some scholars said that the Jews did not actually believe in anything and that Allah said,

(فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(So little is that which they believe), meaning, they do not believe. This meaning is similar to the Arabic expression, "Hardly have I seen anything like this," meaning, "I have never seen anything like this."

وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا
مَعَهُمْ وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ فَلَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ
عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ)

(89. And when there came to them (the Jews), a Book (this Qur'an) from Allah confirming what is with them (the Tawrah) and the Injil (Gospel), although aforetime they had invoked Allah (for the coming of Muhammad) in order to gain victory over those who disbelieved, then when there came to them that which they had recognised, they disbelieved in it. So let the curse of Allah be on the disbelievers.)

The Jews were awaiting the Prophet's coming, but They disbelieved in Him when He was sent

Allah said,

(وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ)

(And when there came to them) meaning, the Jews,

(كُتِبَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ)

(a Book from Allah) meaning, the Qur'an that Allah sent down to Muhammad,

(مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ)

(confirming what is with them) meaning, the Tawrah. Further, Allah said,

(وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا)

(although aforetime they had invoked Allah (for coming of Muhammad) in order to gain victory over those who disbelieved) meaning, before this Messenger came to them, they used to ask Allah to aid them by his arrival, against their polytheistic enemies in war. They used to say to the polytheists, "A Prophet shall be sent just before the end of this world and we, along with him, shall exterminate you, just as the nations of `Ad and Iram were exterminated." Also, Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated that Ibn `Abbas said, "The Jews used to invoke Allah (for the coming of Muhammad) in order to gain victory over the Aws and Khazraj, before the Prophet was sent. When Allah sent him to the Arabs, they rejected him and denied what they used to say about him. Hence, Mu`adh bin Jabal and Bishr bin Al-Bara' bin Ma`rur, from Bani Salamah, said to them, `O Jews! Fear Allah and embrace Islam. You used to invoke Allah for the coming of Muhammad when we were still disbelievers and you used to tell us that he would come and describe him to us,' Salam bin Mushkim from Bani An-Nadir replied, `He did not bring anything that we recognize. He is not the Prophet we told you about.' Allah then revealed this Ayah about their statement,

وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا
مَعَهُمْ

(And when there came to them (the Jews), a Book (this Qur'an) from Allah confirming what is with them (the Tawrah) and the Injil (Gospel))."

Abu Al-`Aliyah said, "The Jews used to ask Allah to send Muhammad so that they would gain victory over the Arab disbelievers. They used to say, `O Allah! Send the Prophet that we read about - in the Tawrah - so that we can torment and kill the disbelievers alongside him.' When Allah sent Muhammad and they saw that he was not one of them, they rejected him and envied the Arabs, even though they knew that he was the Messenger of Allah. Hence, Allah said,

فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ فَلَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى
الْكَافِرِينَ

(Then when there came to them that which they had recognized, they disbelieved in it. So let the curse of Allah be on the disbelievers). "

بِئْسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ
اللَّهُ بَعِيًّا أَنْ يُنَزِّلُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ
مِنْ عِبَادِهِ قِبَاءً وَبِغَضَبٍ عَلَى غَضَبٍ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ
عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ

(90. How bad is that for which they have sold their own selves, that they should disbelieve in that which Allah has revealed (the Qur'an), grudging that Allah should reveal of His grace unto whom He wills of His servants. So they have drawn on themselves wrath upon wrath. And for the disbelievers, there is disgracing torment.)

Mujahid said,

بِئْسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ

(How bad is that for which they have sold their own selves), "The Jews sold the truth for falsehood and hid the truth about Muhammad ." As-Suddi said that the Ayah,

(بِئْسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ)

(How bad is that for which they have sold their own selves) means, "The Jews sold themselves." meaning, what is worse is what they chose for themselves by disbelieving in what Allah revealed to Muhammad instead of believing, aiding and supporting him. This behavior of theirs is the result of their injustice, envy and hatred,

(أَنْ يُنَزَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ)

(grudging that Allah should reveal of His grace unto whom He wills of His servants). " There is no envy worse than this. Therefore,

(فَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ عَلَى غَضَبٍ)

(So they have drawn on themselves wrath upon wrath). Ibn ` Abbas commented on this Ayah, "Allah became angry with them because they ignored some of the Tawrah and disbelieved in the Prophet that He sent to them." I (Ibn Kathir) say that the meaning of,

(بَاءُوا)

(And they drew on themselves) is that they deserved and acquired multiplied anger. Also, Abu Al-` Aliyah said, "Allah became angry with them, because of their disbelief in the Injil and ` Isa and He became angry with them again, because they disbelieved in Muhammad and the Qur'an." Similar was said by ` Ikrimah and Qatadah. Allah said,

(وَاللَّكَفِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ)

(And for the disbelievers, there is disgracing torment). Since their disbelief was a result of their transgression and envy, which was caused by arrogance, they were punished with disgrace and humiliation in this world and the Hereafter. Similarly, Allah said,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَخَرِينَ)

(Verily, those who scorn My worship (i.e. do not invoke Me, and do not believe in My Oneness) they will surely enter Hell in humiliation!) (40:60) meaning, "Disgraced, degraded and

humiliated." Imam Ahmad narrated that `Amr bin Shu`ayb said that his father said that his grandfather said that the Prophet said,

«يُحْشَرُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أُمَّتَالِ الدَّرِّ فِي
صُورِ النَّاسِ، يَعْلوهُمُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ مِنَ الصَّغَارِ
حَتَّى يَدْخُلُوا سِجْنًا فِي جَهَنَّمَ يُقَالُ لَهُ. بَوَلْسُ
تَعْلوهُمُ نَارُ الْأَنْيَارِ يُسْقُونَ مِنْ طِينَةِ الْخَبَالِ
عُصَارَةَ أَهْلِ النَّارِ»

(The arrogant people will be gathered on the Day of Resurrection in the size of ants, but in the shape of men. Everything shall be above them, because of the humiliation placed on them, until they enter a prison in Jahannam called `Bawlas' where the fire will surround them from above. They shall drink from the puss of the people of the Fire.)

(وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ ءَامِنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا نُوْمِنُ
بِمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْنَا وَيَكْفُرُونَ بِمَا وَرَاءَهُ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ
مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَهُمْ قُلْ فَلِمَ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْبِيَاءَ اللَّهِ مِنْ
قَبْلُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ - وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مُوسَى
بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ
ظَالِمُونَ)

(91. And when it is said to them (the Jews), "Believe in what Allah has sent down," they say, "We believe in what was sent down to us." And they disbelieve in that which came after it, while it is the truth confirming what is with them. Say (O Muhammad to them): "Why then have you killed the Prophets of Allah aforetime, if you indeed have been believers") (92. And indeed Musa came to you with clear proofs, yet you worshipped the calf after he left, and you were Zalimun.)

Although The Jews denied the Truth, They claimed to be Believers!

Allah said,

(وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ)

(And when it is said to them), meaning, the Jews and the People of the Book,

(ءَامِنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ)

(Believe in what Allah has sent down) to Muhammad , believe in and follow him,

(قَالُوا نُوْمِنُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْنَا)

(They say, "We believe in what was sent down to us.") meaning, it is enough for us to believe in what was revealed to us in the Tawrah and the Injil, and this is the path that we choose,

(وَيَكْفُرُونَ بِمَا وَرَاءَهُ)

(And they disbelieve in that which came after it).

(وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ)

(while it is the truth confirming what is with them) meaning, while knowing that what was revealed to Muhammad ,

(الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ)

(it is the truth confirming what is with them). This means that since what was sent to Muhammad conforms to what was revealed to the People of the Book, then this fact constitutes a proof against them. Similarly, Allah said,

(الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ
أَبْنَاءَهُمْ)

(Those to whom We gave the Scripture (Jews and Christians) recognize him (Muhammad) as they recognize their sons) (2:146). Allah said next,

(قَلِمَ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْبِيَاءَ اللَّهِ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ)

("Why then have you killed the Prophets of Allah aforetime, if you indeed have been believers").

This means, "If your claim that you believe in what was revealed to you is true, then why did you kill the Prophets who came to you affirming the Tawrah's Law, although you knew they were true Prophets You killed them simply out of transgression, stubbornness and injustice with Allah's Messengers. Therefore, you only follow your lusts, opinions and desires." Similarly, Allah said,

(أَفَكُلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى أَنْفُسُكُمْ
اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِيقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ وَفَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ)

(Is it that whenever there came to you a Messenger with what you yourselves desired not, you grew arrogant Some you disbelieved and some you killed.)

Also, As-Suddi said, "In this Ayah, Allah chastised the People of the Book,

(قُلْ قَلِمَ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْبِيَاءَ اللَّهِ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
مُؤْمِنِينَ)

(Say (O Muhammad to them): "Why then have you killed the Prophets of Allah aforetime, if you indeed have been believers")."

(وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مُوسَىٰ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ)

(And indeed Musa came to you with clear proofs) meaning, with clear signs and clear proofs that he was the Messenger of Allah and that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah. The clear signs -or miracles- mentioned here are the flood, the locusts, the lice, the frogs, the blood, the staff and the hand. Musa's miracles also include parting the sea, shading the Jews with clouds, the manna and quails, the gushing stone, etc.

(ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ)

(yet you worshipped the calf) meaning, as a deity instead of Allah, during the time of Musa. Allah's statement,

(مِن بَعْدِهِ)

(after he left) after Musa went to Mount Tur to speak to Allah. Similarly, Allah said,

وَاتَّخَذَ قَوْمُ مُوسَىٰ مِن بَعْدِهِ مِن حُلِيِّهِمْ عِجْلًا
جَسَدًا لَهُ خُورٌ

(And the people of Musa made in his absence, out of their ornaments, the image of a calf (for worship). It had a sound (as if it was mooing)) (7:148).

(وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ)

(and you were Zalimun) meaning, you were unjust in this behavior of worshipping the calf, although you knew that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah. Similarly, Allah said,

وَلَمَّا سَقَطَ فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ وَرَأَوْا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ ضَلُّوا قَالُوا
لَئِن لَّمْ يَرْحَمْنَا رَبُّنَا وَيَغْفِرْ لَنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ
الْخَاسِرِينَ

(And when they regretted and saw that they had gone astray, they (repented and) said: "If our Lord have not mercy upon us and forgive us, we shall certainly be of the losers") (7:149).

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ خُذُوا
مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَأَسْمَعُوا قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا
وَأَشْرَبُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ قُلْ بِئْسَمَا
يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِهِ إِيمَانُكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

(93. And (remember) when We took your covenant and We raised above you the Mount (saying), "Hold firmly to what We have given you and hear (Our Word)." They said, "We have heard and disobeyed." And their hearts absorbed (the worship of) the calf because of their disbelief. Say: "Worst indeed is that which your faith enjoins on you if you are believers.")

The Jews rebel after Allah took Their Covenant and raised the Mountain above Their Heads

Allah reminded the Jews of their errors, breaking His covenant, transgression and defiance, when He raised Mount Tur above them so that they would believe and agree to the terms of the covenant. Yet, they broke it soon afterwards,

(قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا)

(They said, "We have heard and disobeyed.") We have mentioned the Tafsir of this subject before. `Abdur-Razzaq said that Ma` mar narrated that Qatadah said that,

(وَأَشْرَبُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ)

(And their hearts absorbed (the worship of) the calf) means, "They absorbed its love, until its love resided in their hearts." This is also the opinion of Abu Al-`Aliyah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas. Allah's statement,

(قُلْ بِئْسَمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِهِ إِيمَانُكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ)

(Say: "Worst indeed is that which your faith enjoins on you if you are believers.") means, "Worse yet is the manner in which you behaved in the past and even now, disbelieving in Allah's Ayat and defying the Prophets. You also disbelieved in Muhammad, which is the worst of your deeds and the harshest sin that you committed. You disbelieved in the Final Messenger and the master of all Prophets and Messengers, the one who was sent to all mankind. How can you then claim that you believe, while committing the evil of breaking Allah's covenant, disbelieving in Allah's Ayat and worshipping the calf instead of Allah"

(قُلْ إِنْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَالِصَةً
مِّنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوْا الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ -
وَلَنْ يَتَمَنَّوَهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
بِالظَّالِمِينَ - وَلَتَجِدَنَّهٗمْ أَحْرَصَ النَّاسِ عَلَى حَيَوٰةٍ
وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا يَوَدُّ أَحَدُهُمْ لَوْ يُعَمَّرُ أَلْفًا

سَنَةً وَمَا هُوَ بِمُزَحَّزِحِهِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ أَنْ يُعَمَّرَ
وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ)

(94. Say to (them): "If the abode of the Hereafter with Allah is indeed for you especially and not for others of mankind, then long for death if you are truthful.") (95. But they will never long for it because of what their hands have sent before them (i.e. what they have done). And Allah is Aware of the Zalimin .) (96. And verily, you will find them (the Jews) the greediest of mankind for life and (even greedier) than those who ascribe partners to Allah. One of them wishes that he could be given a life of a thousand years. But the grant of such life will not save him even a little from (due) punishment. And Allah is Seer of what they do.)

Calling the Jews to invoke Allah to destroy the Unjust Party

Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated that Ibn ` Abbas said, "Allah said to His Prophet ,

(قُلْ إِنْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَالِصَةً
مِّنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَتُّواْ الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ)

(Say to (them): "If the home of the Hereafter with Allah is indeed for you especially and not for others, of mankind, then long for death if you are truthful.") meaning, ` Invoke Allah to bring death to the lying camp among the two (Muslims and Jews).' The Jews declined this offer by the Messenger of Allah ."

(وَلَنْ يَتَمَتُّوهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمْتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
بِالظَّالِمِينَ)

(But they will never long for it because of what their hands have sent before them (i.e. what they have done). And Allah is Aware of the Zalimin (polytheists and wrongdoers).) meaning, "Since they know that they recognize you, and yet disbelieve in you." Had they wished death that day, no Jew would have remained alive on the face of the earth. Moreover, Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn ` Abbas said that,

(فَتَمَتُّواْ الْمَوْتَ)

(Then long for death), means, "Invoke (Allah) for death." Also, ` Abdur-Razzaq narrated that ` Ikrimah said that Ibn ` Abbas commented,

(فَتَمَتُّوا الْمَوْتَ)

(Then long for death if you are truthful), "Had the Jews invoked Allah for death, they would have perished." Also, Ibn Abi Hatim recorded Sa`id bin Jubayr saying that Ibn `Abbas said, "Had the Jews asked for death, one of them would have choked on his own saliva." These statements have authentic chains of narration up to Ibn `Abbas. Further, Ibn Jarir said in his Tafsir, "We were told that the Prophet said,

«لَوْ أَنَّ الْيَهُودَ تَمَتُّوا الْمَوْتَ لَمَاتُوا وَلَرَأَوْا
مَقَاعِدَهُمْ مِنَ النَّارِ، وَلَوْ خَرَجَ الَّذِينَ يُبَاهِلُونَ
رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَرَجَعُوا لِمَا
يَجِدُونَ أَهْلًا وَلَا مَالًا»

(Had the Jews wished for death, they would have died and seen their seats in the Fire. And, those who invoked such curse against Allah's Messenger would have found no families or property had they returned to their homes)."

Smilar to this Ayah is Allah's statement in Surat Al-Jumu`ah,

(قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ هَادُوا إِن زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ لِلَّهِ
مِن دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَتُّوا الْمَوْتَ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ -
وَلَا يَتَمَنَّوْنَهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمْت أَيْدِيَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
بِالظَّالِمِينَ - قُلْ إِن الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ
مُلْقِيكُمْ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ
فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ)

((Say (O Muhammad): "O you Jews! If you pretend that you are friends of Allah, to the exclusion of (all) other mankind, then long for death if you are truthful. "But they will never long for it (death), because of what (deeds) their hands have sent before them! And Allah knows well the Zalimin. Say (to them): "Verily, the death from which you flee will surely meet you, then you will be sent back to (Allah) the Knower of the unseen and the seen, and He will tell you what you used to do.") (62:6-8).

So they claimed that they are Allah's sons and loved ones and said, "Only those who are Christian or Jews shall enter Paradise." Therefore, they were called to invoke Allah to destroy the lying group, be it them or the Muslims. When the Jews declined, every one was sure of their wrong, for had they been sure of their claims, then they would have accepted the proposal. Their lies were thus exposed after they declined the offer to invoke the curse.

Similarly, the Messenger of Allah called a delegation of Najran's Christians to curse after he refuted them in a debate in which they demonstrated stubbornness and defiance. Allah said,

فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ
تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ
وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ لَعْنَتُ اللَّهِ عَلَى
الْكَذِبِينَ)

(Then whoever disputes with you concerning him (`Isa) after (all this) knowledge that has come to you (i.e. `Isa) being a servant of Allah, and having no share in divinity), say (O Muhammad): "Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves then we pray and invoke (sincerely) the curse of Allah upon those who lie." (3:61).

When the Christians heard this challenge, some of them said to each other, "By Allah! If you do such with this Prophet, none of you will have an eye that blinks." This is when they resorted to peace and gave the Jizyah (tax) in disgrace. The Prophet accepted the Jizyah from them and sent Abu `Ubaydah bin Al-Jarrah with them as a trustee. Similar to this meaning is Allah's command to His Prophet to proclaim to the polytheists:

قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ
مَدًّا)

(Say (O Muhammad) whoever is in error, the Most Gracious (Allah) will prolong him (in it).) (19:75) meaning, "Whoever among us has deviated, may Allah increase and prolong his deviation." We will mention this subject later, Allah willing.

The Mubalahah (invocation to Allah to destroy the liars) was called a `wish' here, because every just person wishes that Allah destroy the unjust opponent who is debating with him, especially when the just person has a clear, apparent proof for the truth he is calling to. Also, the Mubalahah involves invoking Allah for death of the unjust group, because to disbelievers, life is the biggest prize, especially when they know the evil destination they will meet after death.

Disbelievers wish They could live longer

This is why Allah said next,

وَلَنْ يَتَمَنَّوهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
بِالظَّالِمِينَ وَلَتَجِدَنَّهُمْ أَحْرَصَ النَّاسِ عَلَى حَيَاةٍ

(But they will never long for it because of what their hands have sent before them (i.e. what they have done). And Allah is Aware of the Zalimin. And verily, you will find them (the Jews) the greediest of mankind for life.) meaning, greedy to live longer, because they know their evil end, and the only reward they will have with Allah is total loss. This life is a prison for the believer and Paradise for the disbeliever. Therefore, the People of the Book wish they could delay the Hereafter, as much as possible. However, they shall certainly meet what they are trying to avoid, even if they are more eager to delay the Hereafter than the polytheists who do not have a divine book.

Muhammad bin Ishaq narrated that Ibn `Abbas commented on,

وَمَا هُوَ بِمُزَحْزِحِهِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ أَنْ يُعَمَّرَ

(But the grant of such life will not save him even a little from (due) punishment.) "Long life shall not save them from torment. Certainly, the polytheists do not believe in resurrection after death, and they would love to enjoy a long life. The Jews know the humiliation they will suffer in the Hereafter for knowingly ignoring the truth." Also, `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said, "The Jews are most eager for this life. They wish they could live for a thousand years. However, living for a thousand years will not save them from torment, just as Iblis' - Satan - long life did not benefit him, due to being a disbeliever." t

وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ

(And Allah is Seer of what they do.) meaning, "Allah knows what His servants are doing, whether good or evil, and will compensate each of them accordingly."

قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ
بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَى
لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ - مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِلَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ
وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَلَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ

(97. Say (O Muhammad): "Whoever is an enemy to Jibril (Gabriel) (let him die in his fury), for indeed he has brought it (this Qur'an) down to your heart by Allah's permission, confirming what

came before it (i.e. the Tawrah and the Injil) and guidance and glad tidings for the believers). (98. "Whoever is an enemy to Allah, His Angels, His Messengers, Jibril and Mikail, then verily, Allah is an enemy to the disbelievers.")

The Jews are the Enemies of Jibril

Imam Abu Ja`far bin Jarir At-Tabari said, "The scholars of Tafsir agree that this Ayah (2: 97-98) was revealed in response to the Jews who claimed that Jibril (Gabriel) is an enemy of the Jews and that Mikail (Michael) is their friend." Al-Bukhari said, "Allah said,

(مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجِبْرِيلَ)

(Whoever is an enemy of Jibril (let him die in his fury)). `Ikrimah said, "Jibr, Mik and Israfil all mean, worshipper, while il means, Allah". Anas bin Malik said, "When `Abdullah bin Salam heard of the arrival of the Prophet in Al-Madinah, he was working on his land. He came to the Prophet and said, `I am going to ask you about three things which nobody knows except a Prophet. What will be the first portent of the Hour What will be the first meal taken by the people of Paradise Why does a child resemble its father, and why does it resemble its maternal uncle' Allah's Messenger said, (Jibril has just told me the answers.) `Abdullah said, `He (i.e. Jibril), among all the angels, is the enemy of the Jews.' Allah's Messenger recited the Ayah,

(مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ)

(Whoever is an enemy to Jibril (Gabriel) (let him die in his fury), for indeed he has brought it (this Qur'an) down to your heart). Allah's Messenger then said, (The first portent of the Hour will be a fire that will bring together the people from the east to the west; the first meal of the people of Paradise will be the caudate lobe of the liver of fish. As for the child resembling his parents: If a man has sexual intercourse with his wife and his discharge is first, the child will resemble the father. If the woman has a discharge first, the child will resemble her side of the family.) On that `Abdullah bin Salam said, `I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and you are the Messenger of Allah.' `Abdullah bin Salam further said, `O Allah's Messenger! The Jews are liars, and if they should come to know about my conversion to Islam before you ask them (about me), they will tell a lie about me.' The Jews came to Allah's Messenger, and `Abdullah went inside the house. Allah's Messenger asked (the Jews), (`What kind of man is `Abdullah bin Salam') They replied, `He is the best among us, the son of the best among us, our master and the son of our master.' Allah's Messenger said, (What do you think if he would embrace Islam) The Jews said, `May Allah save him from it.' Then `Abdullah bin Salam came out in front of them saying, `I testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.' Thereupon they said, `He is the vilest among us, and the son of the vilest among us.' And they continued talking badly about him. Ibn Salam said, `This is what I feared, O Messenger of Allah!'" Only Al-Bukhari recorded this Hadith with this chain of narration. Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded this Hadith from Anas using another chain of narration.

Some people say that `il' means worshipper while whatever word that is added to it becomes Allah's Name, because `il' is a constant in such conjunction. This is similar to the names `Abdullah, `Abdur-Rahman, `Abdul-Malik, `Abdul-Quddus, `Abdus-Salam, `Abdul-Kafi, `Abdul-

Jalil, and so forth. Hence, `Abd' is constant in these compound names, while the remainder differs from name to name. This is the same case with Jibril, Mika'il, `Azra'il, Israfil, and so forth. Allah knows best.

Choosing Some Angels to believe in over Others is Disbelief like choosing Some Prophets over Others

Allah said,

(مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ)

(Whoever is an enemy to Jibril (Gabriel) (let him die in his fury), for indeed he has brought it (this Qur'an) down to your heart by Allah's permission,) meaning, whoever becomes an enemy of Jibril, let him know that he is Ruh Al-Qudus who brought down the Glorious Dhikr (Qur'an) to your heart from Allah by His leave. Hence, he is a messenger from Allah. Whoever takes a messenger as an enemy, will have taken all the messengers as enemies. Further, whoever believes in one messenger, is required to believe in all of the messengers. Whoever rejects one messenger, he has rejected all of the messengers. Similarly, Allah said,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ)

(Verily, those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers and wish to make distinction between Allah and His Messengers (by believing in Allah and disbelieving in His Messengers) saying, "We believe in some but reject others.") (4:150)

Allah decreed that they are disbelievers, because they believe in some Prophets and reject others. This is the same with those who take Jibril as an enemy, because Jibril did not choose missions on his own, but by the command of his Lord,

(وَمَا نُنزِّلُ إِلَّا بِأَمْرِ رَبِّكَ)

(And we (angels) descend not except by the command of your Lord) (19: 64), and,

(وَإِنَّهُ لَتَنْزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ - نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ
الْأَمِينُ - عَلَى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ)

(And truly, this (the Qur'an) is a revelation from the Lord of all that exists. Which the trustworthy Ruh (Jibril) has brought down. Upon your heart (O Muhammad) that you may be (one) of the warners) (26:192-194).

Al-Bukhari reported that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ عَادَى لِي وَلِيًّا فَقَدْ بَارَزَنِي بِالْحَرْبِ»

(Allah said, `Whoever takes a friend of Mine as an enemy, will have started a war with Me.)

Therefore, Allah became angry with those who took Jibril as an enemy. Allah said,

(مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ
بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ)

(Whoever is an enemy to Jibril (Gabriel) (let him die in his fury), for indeed he has brought it (this Qur'an) down to your heart by Allah's permission, confirming what came before it) meaning, the previous Books,

(وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(and guidance and glad tidings for the believers) meaning, as guidance to their hearts and bringer of the good news of Paradise, which is exclusively for the believers. Similarly, Allah said,

(قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هُدًى وَشِفَاءً)

(Say: "It is for those who believe, a guide and a healing.") (41:44), and,

(وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ
لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(And We send down of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe) (17:82).

Allah then said,

(مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِلَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَجِبْرِيلَ
وَمِيكَالَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ)

(Whoever is an enemy to Allah, His Angels, His Messengers, Jibril and Mika'il (Michael), then verily, Allah is an enemy to the disbelievers.)

Allah stated that whoever takes Him, His angels and messengers as enemies, then...Allah's messengers include angels and men, for Allah said,

(اللَّهُ يَصْطَفِي مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا وَمِنَ النَّاسِ)

(Allah chooses Messengers from angels and from men) (22:75). Allah said,

(وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَالَ)

(Jibril (Gabriel) and Mika'il (Michael)). Allah mentioned Jibril and Mika'il specifically - although they are included among the angels who were messengers - only because this Ayah was meant to support Jibril the emissary between Allah and His Prophets. Allah also mentioned Mika'il here, because the Jews claimed that Jibril was their enemy and Mika'il was their friend. Allah informed them that whoever is an enemy of either of them, then he is also an enemy of the other as well as Allah. We should state here that Mika'il sometimes descended to some of Allah's Prophets, although to a lesser extent than Jibril, because this was primarily Jibril's task, and Israfil is entrusted with the job of blowing the Trumpet for the commencement of Resurrection on the Day of Judgment. It is recorded in the Sahih that whenever the Messenger of Allah would wake up at night, he would supplicate,

«اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ جِبْرَائِيلَ وَمِيكَائِيلَ وَإِسْرَافِيلَ فَاطِرَ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ، أَنْتَ
تَحْكُمُ بَيْنَ عِبَادِكَ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ، اهْدِنِي
لِمَا اخْتُلِفَ فِيهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِكَ إِنَّكَ تَهْدِي مَنْ
تَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ»

(O Allah, Lord of Jibril, Mikail and Israfil, Creator of the heavens and earth and Knower of the seen and the unseen! You judge between Your servants regarding what they differ in, so direct me to the truth which they differ on, by Your leave. Verily, You guide whom You will to the straight path.)

Allah's statement,

(فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ)

(then verily, Allah is an enemy to the disbelievers) informed the disbelievers that whoever takes a friend of Allah as an enemy, then he has taken Allah as an enemy, and whoever treats Allah as an enemy, then he shall be Allah's enemy. Indeed, whoever is an enemy of Allah then he will lose in this life and the Hereafter, as stated earlier;

«مَنْ عَادَى لِي وَلِيًّا فَقَدْ آذَنَّهُ بِالْمُحَارَبَةِ»

(Whoever takes a friend of Mine as an enemy, I shall wage war on him.)

(وَلَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهَا إِلَّا
الْفَاسِقُونَ - أَوْ كَلَّمَا عَاهَدُوا عَهْدًا نَبَذَهُ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ
بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ - وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ
عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ نَبَذَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ
أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لَا
يَعْلَمُونَ - وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ
سُلَيْمَانَ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا
يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السَّحْرَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ
بِبَابِلَ هَرُوتَ وَمَرُوتَ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ
حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ

مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ وَمَا هُمْ
 بِضَارِّينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا
 يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا
 لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلْقٍ وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهِ
 أَنْفُسَهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ - وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ ءَامَنُوا
 وَاتَّقَوْا لَمَثُوبَةٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَّوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ
 (

(99. And indeed We have sent down to you manifest Ayat and none disbelieve in them but Fasiqun (those who rebel against Allah's command).) (100. Is it not (the case) that every time they make a covenant, some party among them throw it aside Nay! (the truth is:) most of them believe not.) (101. And when there came to them a Messenger from Allah (i.e. Muhammad) confirming what was with them, a party of those who were given the Scripture threw away the Book of Allah behind their backs as if they did not know!) (102. They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulayman (Solomon). Sulayman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Harut and Marut, but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)." And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife, but they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's leave. And they learn that which harms them and profits them not. And indeed they knew that the buyers of it (magic) would have no share in the Hereafter. And how bad indeed was that for which they sold their own selves, if they but knew.) (103. And if they had believed and guarded themselves from evil and kept their duty to Allah, far better would have been the reward from their Lord, if they but knew!)

Proofs of Muhammad's Prophethood

Imam Abu Ja`far bin Jarir said that Allah's statement,

(وَلَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ ءَايَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ)

(And indeed We have sent down to you manifest Ayat) means, "We have sent to you, O Muhammad, clear signs that testify to your prophethood." These Ayat are contained in the Book of Allah (Qur'an) which narrates the secrets of the knowledge that the Jews possess, which they hid, and the stories of their earlier generations. The Book of Allah also mentions the texts in the Books of the Jews that are known to only the rabbis and scholars, and the sections where they altered and distorted the rulings of the Tawrah. Since Allah mentioned all of this in His

Book revealed to His Prophet Muhammad , then this fact alone should be enough evidence for those who are truthful with themselves and who wish to avoid bringing themselves to destruction due to envy and transgression. Further human instinct testifies to the truth that Muhammad was sent with and the clear signs that he brought which he did not learn or acquire from mankind. Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn ` Abbas said that,

(وَلَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ)

(And indeed We have sent down to you manifest Ayat) means, "You recite and convey this Book to them day and night, although you are an Ummi (unlettered) who never read a book. Yet, you inform them of what they have (in their own Books). Allah stated that this fact should serve as an example, a clear sign and a proof against them, if they but knew."

The Jews break Their Covenants

When the Messenger of Allah was sent and Allah reminded the Jews of the covenant that they had with Him, especially concerning Muhammad , Malik bin As-Sayf said, "By Allah! Allah never made a covenant with us about Muhammad, nor did He take a pledge from us at all." Allah then revealed,

(أَوْكَلَمَا عَاهَدُوا عَهْدًا نَبَذَهُ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ)

(Is it not (the case) that every time they make a covenant, some party among them throw it aside) Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that Allah's statement,

(بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ)

(Nay! (the truth is:) most of them believe not) means, "There is not a promise that they make, but they break it and abandon it. They make a promise today and break it tomorrow."

The Jews abandoned the Book of Allah and practiced Magic

As-Suddi commented on,

(وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ)

(And when there came to them a Messenger from Allah (i.e. Muhammad) confirming what was with them), "When Muhammad came to them, they wanted to contradict and dispute with him using the Tawrah. However, the Tawrah and the Qur'an affirmed each other. So the Jews gave

up on using the Torah, and took to the Book of Asaf, and the magic of Harut and Marut, which indeed did not conform to the Qur'an. Hence Allah's statement,

(كَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ)

(As if they did not know!)."

Also, Qatadah said that Allah's statement,

(كَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ)

(As if they did not know!) means, "They knew the truth but abandoned it, hid it and denied the fact that they even had it."

Magic existed before Sulayman (Solomon)

As-Suddi said that Allah's statement,

(وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ)

(They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely of the magic) in the lifetime of Sulayman) means, "During the time of Prophet Solomon.' Beforehand, the devils used to ascend to heaven and eavesdrop on the conversations of the angels about what will occur on the earth regarding death, other incidents or unseen matters. They would convey this news to the soothsayers, and the soothsayers would in turn convey the news to the people. The people would believe what the soothsayers told them as being true. When the soothsayers trusted the devils, the devils started to lie to them and added other words to the true news that they heard, to the extent of adding seventy false words to each true word. The people recorded these words in some books. Soon after, the Children of Israel said that the Jinns know matters of the Unseen. When Solomon was sent as a Prophet, he collected these books in a box and buried it under his throne; any devil that dared get near the box was burned. Solomon said, 'I will not hear of anyone who says that the devils know the Unseen, but I will cut off his head.' When Solomon died and the scholars who knew the truth about Solomon perished, there came another generation. To them, the devil materialized in the shape of a human and said to some of the Children of Israel, 'Should I lead you to a treasure that you will never be able to use up?' They said, 'Yes.' He said, 'Dig under this throne,' and he went with them and showed them Solomon's throne. They said to him, 'Come closer.' He said, 'No. I will wait for you here, and if you do not find the treasure then kill me.' They dug and found the buried books, and Satan said to them, 'Solomon only controlled the humans, devils and birds with this magic.' Thereafter, the news that Solomon was a sorcerer spread among the people, and the Children of Israel adopted these books. When Muhammad came, they disputed with him relying on these books. Hence Allah's statement,

(وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَنُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا)

(Sulayman did not disbelieve, but the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved).

The Story of Harut and Marut, and the Explanation that They were Angels

Allah said,

(وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكِينَ بَيِّنَاتٍ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ
وَمَا يَعْلمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّى يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ
فَلَا تَكْفُرْ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ
المرءِ وزَوْجِهِ)

(And such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels, Harut and Marut, but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us)." And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife).

There is a difference of opinion regarding this story. It was said that this Ayah denies that anything was sent down to the two angels, as Al-Qurtubi stated and then referred to the Ayah,

(وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَنُ)

(Sulayman did not disbelieve) saying, "The negation applies in both cases. Allah then said,

(وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ
وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكِينَ)

(But the Shayatin (devils) disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels).

The Jews claimed that Gabriel and Michael brought magic down to the two angels, but Allah refuted this false claim."

Also, Ibn Jarir reported, that Al-`Awfi said that Ibn `Abbas said about Allah's statement,

(وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ بَابِلَ)

(And such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels)

"Allah did not send magic down."

Also, Ibn Jarir narrated that Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said about,

(وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ)

(And such things that came down to the two angels), "Allah did not send magic down to the them." Ibn Jarir commented, "This is the correct explanation for this Ayah.

(وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ)

(They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely) in the lifetime of Sulayman.) meaning, magic. However, neither did Solomon disbelieve nor did Allah send magic with the two angels. The devils, on the other hand, disbelieved and taught magic to the people of the Babylon of Harut and Marut."

Ibn Jarir continued; "If someone asks about explaining this Ayah in this manner, we say that,

(وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ)

(They followed what the Shayatin (devils) gave out (falsely) in the lifetime of Sulayman.) means, magic. Solomon neither disbelieved nor did Allah send magic with the two angels. However, the devils disbelieved and taught magic to the people in the Babylon of Harut and Marut, meaning Gabriel and Michael, for Jewish sorcerers claimed that Allah sent magic by the words of Gabriel and Michael to Solomon, son of David. Allah denied this false claim and stated to His Prophet Muhammad that Gabriel and Michael were not sent with magic. Allah also exonerated Solomon from practicing magic, which the devils taught to the people of Babylon by the hands of two men, Harut and Marut. Hence, Harut and Marut were two ordinary men (not angels or Gabriel or Michael)." These were the words of At-Tabari, and this explanation is not plausible.

Many among the Salaf, said that Harut and Marut were angels who came down from heaven to earth and did what they did as the Ayah stated. To conform this opinion with the fact that the angels are immune from error, we say that Allah had eternal knowledge what these angels would do, just as He had eternal knowledge that Iblis would do as he did, while Allah referred to him being among the angels,

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا
إِبْلِيسَ أَبَى)

(And (remember) when We said to the angels: "Prostrate yourselves before Adam." And they prostrated except Iblis (Satan), he refused) (20:116) and so forth. However, what Harut and Marut did was less evil than what Iblis, may Allah curse him, did. Al-Qurtubi reported this opinion from `Ali, Ibn Mas`ud, Ibn `Abbas, Ibn `Umar, Ka`b Al-Ahbar, As-Suddi and Al-Kalbi.

Learning Magic is Kufr

Allah said,

وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّى يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ
فَلَا تَكْفُرْ)

(But neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us).")

Abu Ja`far Ar-Razi said that Ar-Rabi' bin Anas said that Qays bin `Abbad said that Ibn `Abbas said, "When someone came to the angels to learn magic, they would discourage him and say to him, 'We are only a test, so do not fall into disbelief.' They had knowledge of what is good and evil and what constitutes belief or disbelief, and they thus knew that magic is a form of disbelief. When the person who came to learn magic still insisted on learning it, they commanded him to go to such and such place, where if he went, Satan would meet him and teach him magic. When this man would learn magic, the light (of faith) would depart him, and he would see it shining (and flying away) in the sky. He would then proclaim, 'O my sorrow! Woe unto me! What should I do.'" Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that this Ayah means, "The angels were sent with magic, so that the people whom Allah willed would be tried and tested. Allah made them promise that they would not teach anyone until first proclaiming, 'We are a test for you, do not fall into disbelief.'" It was recorded by Ibn Abi Hatim. Also, Qatadah said, "Allah took their covenant to not teach anyone magic until they said, 'We are a test. Therefore, do not fall in disbelief.'"

Also, As-Suddi said, "When a man would come to the two angels they would advise him, 'Do not fall into disbelief. We are a test.' When the man would ignore their advice, they would say, 'Go to that pile of ashes and urinate on it.' When he would urinate on the ashes, a light, meaning the light of faith, would depart from him and would shine until it entered heaven. Then something black that appeared to be smoke would descend and enter his ears and the rest of his body, and this is Allah's anger. When he told the angels what happened, they would teach him magic. So Allah's statement,

(وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّى يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ
فَلَا تَكْفُرْ)

(But neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) till they had said, "We are for trial, so disbelieve not (by learning this magic from us).")

Sunayd said that Hajjaj said that Ibn Jurayj commented on this Ayah (2:102), "No one dares practice magic except a disbeliever. As for the Fitnah, it involves trials and freedom of choice." The scholars who stated that learning magic is disbelief relied on this Ayah for evidence. They also mentioned the Hadith that Abu Bakr Al-Bazzar recorded from `Abdullah, which states,

«مَنْ أَتَى كَاهِنًا أَوْ سَاحِرًا فَصَدَّقَهُ بِمَا يَقُولُ فَقَدْ
كَفَرَ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ»

(Whoever came to a soothsayer or a sorcerer and believed in what he said, will have disbelieved in what Allah revealed to Muhammad .)

This Hadith has an authentic chain of narration and there are other Hadiths which support it.

Causing a Separation between the Spouses is One of the Effects of Magic

Allah said,

(فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ
وَزَوْجِهِ)

(And from these (angels) people learn that by which they cause separation between man and his wife.) This means, "The people learned magic from Harut and Marut and indulged in evil acts that included separating spouses, even though spouses are close to, and intimately associate with each other. This is the devil's work." Muslim recorded that Jabir bin `Abdullah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لِيَضَعُ عَرْشَهُ عَلَى الْمَاءِ ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُ
سَرَآيَاهُ فِي النَّاسِ فَأَقْرَبُهُمْ عِنْدَهُ مَنْزِلَةً أَكْبَرَهُمْ

عِنْدَهُ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَجِيءُ أَحَدَهُمْ فَيَقُولُ: مَا زِلْتُ بِفُلَانٍ
 حَتَّى تَرَكَتُهُ وَهُوَ يَقُولُ كَذَا وَكَذَا، فَيَقُولُ إِبْلِيسُ:
 لَا وَاللَّهِ مَا صَنَعْتَ شَيْئًا، وَيَجِيءُ أَحَدَهُمْ فَيَقُولُ:
 مَا تَرَكَتُهُ حَتَّى فَرَّقْتُ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ أَهْلِهِ، قَالَ:
 فَيُقْرَبُهُ وَيُدْنِيهِ وَيَلْتَزِمُهُ وَيَقُولُ: نِعَمَ أَنْتَ»

(Satan erects his throne on water and sends his emissaries among the people. The closest person to him is the person who causes the most Fitnah. One of them (a devil) would come to him and would say, 'I kept inciting so-and-so, until he said such and such words.' Iblis says, 'No, by Allah, you have not done much.' Another devil would come to him and would say, 'I kept inciting so-and-so, until I separated between him and his wife.' Satan would draw him closer and embrace him, saying, 'Yes, you did well.')

Separation between a man and his wife occurs here because each spouse imagines that the other spouse is ugly or ill-mannered, etc.

Allah's Appointed Term supercedes Everything

Allah said,

(وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِّينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ)

(But they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's leave). Sufyan Ath-Thawri commented, "Except by Allah's appointed term." Further, Al-Hasan Al-Basri said that,

(وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِّينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ)

(But they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's leave) means, "Allah allows magicians to adversely affect whomever He wills and saves whomever He wills from them. Sorcerers never bring harm to anyone except by Allah's leave." Allah's statement,

(وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ)

(And they learn that which harms them and profits them not.) means, it harms their religion and does not have a benefit compared to its harm.

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ
(خَلْقٍ)

(And indeed they knew that the buyers of it (magic) would have no (Khalaq) share in the Hereafter.) meaning, "The Jews who preferred magic over following the Messenger of Allah knew that those who commit the same error shall have no Khalaq in the Hereafter." Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid and As-Suddi stated that `no Khalaq' means, `no share.'

Allah then said,

(وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيْطَانُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ
وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ
النَّاسَ السَّحْرَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ
هَرُوتَ وَمَرْوَتَ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّىٰ
يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا
يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِّينَ
بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ
وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي
الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلْقٍ وَلَيْسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهِ أَنفُسَهُمْ لَوْ
كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ - وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ ءَامَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَمَثُوبَةٌ
مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَّوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ)

(And how bad indeed was that for which they sold their own selves, if they but knew. And if they had believed and guarded themselves from evil and kept their duty to Allah, far better would have been the reward from their Lord, if they but knew!). Allah stated, o

(وَلَيْسَ)

(And how bad) meaning, what they preferred, magic, instead of faith and following the Messenger, if they but comprehend the advice.

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ ءَامَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَمَثُوبَةٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ
خَيْرٌ

(And if they had believed and guarded themselves from evil and kept their duty to Allah, far better would have been the reward from their Lord,) meaning, "Had they believed in Allah and His Messenger and avoided the prohibitions, then Allah's reward for these good deeds would have been better for them than what they chose and preferred for themselves." Similarly, Allah said,

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيَلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ
لِّمَن ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَلَا يُلَاقَاهَا إِلَّا
الصَّابِرُونَ

(But those who had been given (religious) knowledge said: "Woe to you! The reward of Allah (in the Hereafter) is better for those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and this none shall attain except As-Sabirun (the patient in following the truth).") (28:80).

يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقُولُوا رَعْنَا وَقُولُوا
انظُرْنَا وَاسْمَعُوا وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ - مَا يَوَدُّ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ
يُنزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّنْ خَيْرٍ مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ
بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

(104. O you who believe! Say not (to the Messenger) Fa`ina but say Unzurna (make us understand) and hear. And for the disbelievers there is a painful torment.) (105. Neither those who disbelieve among the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) nor Al-Mushrikin (the idolaters) like that there should be sent down unto you any good from your Lord. But Allah chooses for His mercy whom He wills. And Allah is the Owner of great bounty.)

Manners in Speech

Allah forbade His believing servants from imitating the behavior and deeds of the disbelievers. The Jews used to use devious words that hide what they really meant. May Allah's curse be upon them. When they wanted to say, 'hear us,' they would use the word Ra`ina, which is an insult (in Hebrew, but means 'hear us' in Arabic). Allah said,

(مِّنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِ
وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَأَسْمَعُ غَيْرَ مُسْمَعٍ
وَرَعَيْنَا لِيَّا بِالسِّنِّتِهِمْ وَطَعْنَا فِي الدِّينِ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ
قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَأَسْمَعُ وَأَنْظُرْنَا لَكَانَ خَيْرًا
لَّهُمْ وَأَقْوَمَ وَلَكِن لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
إِلَّا قَلِيلًا)

(Among those who are Jews, there are some who displace words from (their) right places and say: "We hear your word (O Muhammad) and disobey," and "Hear and let you (O Muhammad) hear nothing." And Ra`ina with a twist of their tongues and as a mockery of the religion (Islam). And if only they had said: "We hear and obey," and "Do make us understand," it would have been better for them, and more proper; but Allah cursed them for their disbelief, so they believe not except a few) (4:46).

Also, the Hadiths stated that when they would greet Muslims, they would say, 'As-Samu `alaykum,' meaning, 'death be to you'. This is why we were commanded to answer them by saying, 'Wa `alaykum,' meaning, 'and to you too', then our supplication against them shall be answered, rather than theirs against us.

Allah forbade the believers from imitating the disbelievers in tongue or deed. Allah said,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقُولُوا رَعَيْنَا وَقُولُوا
انظُرْنَا وَاسْمَعُوا وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ)

(O you who believe! Say not (to the Messenger) Ra`ina but say Unzurna (make us understand) and hear. And for the disbelievers there is a painful torment) (2:104).

Also, Imam Ahmad narrated that Ibn `Umar said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«بُعِثْتُ بَيْنَ يَدَيِ السَّاعَةِ بِالسَّيْفِ حَتَّى يُعْبَدَ اللَّهُ
وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَجُعِلَ رِزْقِي تَحْتَ ظِلِّ
رُمْحِي، وَجُعِلَتِ الدَّلَّةُ وَالصَّغَارُ عَلَى مَنْ خَالَفَ
أَمْرِي، وَمَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ»

(I was sent with the sword just before the Last Hour, so that Allah is worshipped alone without partners. My sustenance was provided for me from under the shadow of my spear. Those who oppose my command were humiliated and made inferior, and whoever imitates a people, he is one of them.)

Abu Dawud narrated that the Prophet said,

«مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ»

(Whoever imitates a people is one of them.)

These Hadiths indicate, along with their threats and warnings, that we are not allowed to imitate the disbelievers in their statements, deeds, clothes, feasts, acts of worship, etc., whatever actions of the disbelievers that were not legislated for us.

Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn ` Abbas commented on the Ayah,

(لَا تَقُولُوا رَعِنَا)

(Say not (to the Messenger) Ra` ina) "They used to say to the Prophet , Ar` ina samak (which is an insult)." Ibn Abu Hatim said that it was reported that Abu Al-` Aliyah, Abu Malik, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, `Atiyah Al-` Awfi and Qatadah said similarly. Further, Mujahid said, " Do not say Ra` ina' means, ` Do not dispute'." Mujahid said in another narration, "Do not say, ` We hear from you, and you hear from us.'" Also, ` Ata' said, "Do not say,

(رَعِنَا)

(Ra` ina), which was a dialect that the Ansar used and which was forbidden from use by Allah."

Also, As-Suddi said, "Rifa` ah bin Zayd, a Jewish man from the tribe of Qaynuqa` , used to come to the Prophet and say to him, ` Hear, Ghayr Musma'in (let you hear nothing).' The Muslims used to think that the Prophets are greeted and honored with this type of speech, and this is why some of them used to say, ` Hear, let you hear nothing,' and so on, as mentioned in Surat An-

Nisa." Thereafter, Allah forbade the believers from uttering the word Ra` ina." ` Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam also said similarly.

The extreme Enmity that the Disbelievers and the People of the Book have against Muslims

Allah said next (2:105),

(مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا
الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ)

(Neither those who disbelieve among the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) nor Al-Mushrikin (the idolaters), like that there should be sent down unto you any good from your Lord).

Allah described the deep enmity that the disbelieving polytheists and People of the Scripture, whom Allah warned against imitating, have against the believers, so that Muslims should sever all friendship with them. Also, Allah mentioned what He granted the believers of the perfect Law that He legislated for their Prophet Muhammad . Allah said,

(وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ دُو
الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ)

(But Allah chooses for His mercy whom He wills. And Allah is the Owner of great bounty) (2:105).

(مَا نَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا أَوْ
مِثْلَهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ - أَلَمْ
تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَكُمْ
مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ)

(106. Whatever a verse (revelation) do Nansakh (We abrogate) or Nunsiha (cause to be forgotten), We bring a better one or similar to it. Know you not that Allah is Able to do all things) (107. Know you not that it is Allah to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth And besides Allah you have neither any Wali (protector or guardian) nor any helper.)

The Meaning of Naskh

Ibn Abi Talhah said that Ibn ` Abbas said that,

(مَا نَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ)

(Whatever a verse (revelation) do Nansakh) means, "Whatever an Ayah We abrogate." Also, Ibn Jurayj said that Mujahid said that,

(مَا نَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ)

(Whatever a verse (revelation) do Nansakh) means, "Whatever an Ayah We erase." Also, Ibn Abi Najih said that Mujahid said that,

(مَا نَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ)

(Whatever a verse (revelation) do Nansakh) means, "We keep the words, but change the meaning." He related these words to the companions of ` Abdullah bin Mas` ud. Ibn Abi Hatim said that similar statements were mentioned by Abu Al-` Aliyah and Muhammad bin Ka` b Al-Qurazi. Also As-Suddi said that,

(مَا نَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ)

(Whatever a verse (revelation) do Nansakh) means, "We erase it." Further, Ibn Abi Hatim said that it means, "Erase and raise it, such as erasing the following wordings (from the Qur'an), `The married adulterer and the married adulteress: stone them to death,' and, `If the son of Adam had two valleys of gold, he would seek a third.'"

Ibn Jarir stated that,

(مَا نَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ)

(Whatever a verse (revelation) do Nansakh) means, "Whatever ruling we repeal in an Ayah by making the allowed unlawful and the unlawful allowed." The Nasakh only occurs with commandments, prohibitions, permissions, and so forth. As for stories, they do not undergo Nasakh. The word, `Nasakh' literally means, `to copy a book'. The meaning of Nasakh in the case of commandments is removing the commandment and replacing it by another. And whether the Nasakh involves the wordings, the ruling or both, it is still called Nasakh.

Allah said next,

(أَوْ تُنْسِيهَا)

(or Nunsuha (cause it to be forgotten)). `Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas said that,

(مَا نَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنْسِيهَا)

(Whatever a verse (revelation) do Nansakh or Nunsuha) means, "Whatever Ayah We repeal or uphold without change." Also, Mujahid said that the companions of Ibn Mas`ud (who read this word Nansa'ha) said that it means, "We uphold its wording and change its ruling." Further, `Ubayd bin `Umayr, Mujahid and `Ata' said, `Nansa'ha' means, "We delay it (i.e., do not abrogate it)." Further, `Atiyah Al-`Awfi said that the Ayah means, "We delay repealing it." This is the same Tafsir provided by As-Suddi and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas. `Abdur-Razzaq said that Ma`mar said that Qatadah said about Allah's statement,

(مَا نَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنْسِيهَا)

(Whatever a verse (revelation) do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten) "Allah made His Prophet forget what He willed and He abrogated what He will."

Allah's said,

(نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلِهَا)

(We bring a better one or similar to it), better, relates to the benefit provided for the one it addresses, as reported from `Ali bin Abi Talhah that Ibn `Abbas said,

(نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا)

(We bring a better one) means, "We bring forth a more beneficial ruling, that is also easier for you." Also, As-Suddi said that,

(نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلِهَا)

(We bring a better one or similar to it) means, "We bring forth a better Ayah, or similar to that which was repealed." Qatadah also said that,

(نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلِهَا)

(We bring a better one or similar to it) means, "We replace it by an Ayah more facilitating, permitting, commanding, or prohibiting."

Naskh occurs even though the Jews deny it

Allah said,

(مَا نَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ - أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ)

(Know you not that Allah is Able to do all things Know you not that it is Allah to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth And besides Allah you have neither any Wali (protector or guardian) nor any helper).

Allah directed His servants to the fact that He alone is the Owner of His creatures and that He does with them as He wills. Indeed, His is the supreme authority and all creation is His, and just as He created them as He wills, He brings happiness to whom He wills, misery to whom He wills, health to whom He wills and ailment to whom He wills. He also brings success to whom He wills and failure to whom He wills. He judges between His servants as He wills, allows what He wills and disallows what He wills. He decides what He wills, there is no opponent for His judgment, and no one can question Him about what He does, while they shall be questioned. He tests His servants and their obedience to His Messengers by the Naskh. He commands a matter containing a benefit which He knows of, and then He out of His wisdom, prohibits it. Hence, perfect obedience is realized by adhering to His commands, following His Messengers, believing in what ever they convey, implementing their commands and avoiding what they prohibit.

The statements of Allah here contain tremendous benefit, prove that the Jews are disbelievers and refute their claim that Naskh does not occur, may Allah curse the Jews. In ignorance and arrogance they claimed that the sound mind stipulates that Naskh does not occur. Some of them falsely claimed that there are divine texts that dismiss the possibility that Naskh occurred.

Imam Abu Ja`far bin Jarir said, "The Ayah means, `Do you not know, O Muhammad, that I alone own the heavens and the earth and that I decide whatever I will in them I forbid whatever I will, change and repeal whatever I will of My previous rulings, whenever I will. I also uphold whatever I will."

Ibn Jarir then said, "Although Allah directed His statement indicating His greatness towards His Prophet , He also rejected the lies of the Jews who denied that the rulings of the Torah could undergo Naskh. The Jews also denied the prophethood of Jesus and Muhammad, because of their dislike for what they brought from Allah, such as changing some rulings of the Torah, as Allah commanded. Allah thus proclaimed to the Jews that He owns the heavens and earth and

also all authority in them. Further, the subjects in Allah's kingdom are His creation, and they are required to hear and obey His commands and prohibitions. Allah has full authority to command the creation as He wills, forbidding them from what He wills, abrogate what He wills, uphold what He wills, and decide whatever commandments and prohibitions He wills."

I (Ibn Kathir) say that the Jews' dismissal of the occurrence of the Naskh is only a case of their disbelief and rebellion. The sound mind does not deny that there could be a Naskh in Allah's commandments, for He decides what He wills, just as He does what He wills. Further, Naskh occurred in previous Books and Law. For instance, Allah allowed Adam to marry his daughters to his sons and then later forbade this practice. Allah also allowed Nuh to eat from all kinds of animals after they left the ark, then prohibited eating some types of foods. Further, marrying two sisters to one man was allowed for Israel and his children, but Allah prohibited this practice later in the Torah. Allah commanded Abraham to slaughter his son, then repealed that command before it was implemented. Also, Allah commanded the Children of Israel to kill those who worshipped the calf and then repealed that command, so that the Children of Israel were not all exterminated. There are many other instances that the Jews admit have occurred, yet they ignore them. Also, it is a well-known fact that their Books foretold about Muhammad and contained the command to follow him. These texts, in their Books, indicate that the Jews were required to follow the Prophet Muhammad and that no good deed would be accepted from them, unless it conformed to Muhammad's Law. The Prophet brought another Book, - the Qur'an -, which is the last revelation from Allah.

(أَمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَسْأَلُوا رَسُولَكُمْ كَمَا سُئِلَ مُوسَى
مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ
سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ)

(108. Or do you want to ask your Messenger (Muhammad) as Musa (Moses) was asked before (i.e. show us openly our Lord) And he who changes faith for disbelief, verily, he has gone astray from the right way.)

The Prohibition of Unnecessary Questions

In this Ayah, Allah forbade the believers from asking the Prophet numerous questions about matters that did not occur yet. Similarly, Allah said,

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ إِنْ تُبَدَّ
لَكُمْ تَسْؤُكُمْ وَإِنْ تَسْأَلُوا عَنْهَا حِينَ يُنَزَّلُ الْقُرْءَانُ
تُبَدَّ لَكُمْ)

(O you who believe! Ask not about things which, if made plain to you, may cause you trouble. But if you ask about them while the Qur'an is being revealed, they will be made plain to you) (5:101).

This Ayah means, "If you ask about a matter after it is revealed, it shall be duly explained to you. Therefore, do not ask about matters that have not occurred yet, for they might become prohibited, due to your questions." This is why the Sahih narrated,

«إِنَّ أَعْظَمَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ جُرْمًا مَنْ سَأَلَ عَنْ شَيْءٍ
لَمْ يُحْرَمْ، فَحُرِّمَ مِنْ أَجْلِ مَسْأَلَتِهِ»

(The greatest criminal among the Muslims is the one who asks if a thing is prohibited, which is not prohibited, and it becomes prohibited because of his asking about it.)

This is why when the Messenger of Allah was asked about a husband who finds another man with his wife; if he exposes the adultery, he will be exposing a major incident; if he is quiet about it, he will be quiet about a major matter. The Messenger of Allah did not like such questions. Later on, Allah revealed the ruling of Mula`anah Refer to Nur 24:6-9 in the Qur'an . The Two Sahih recorded that Al-Mughirah bin Shu`bah said that the Messenger of Allah "Forbade saying, `It was said' and `He said,' and wasting money and asking many questions." Muslim recorded that the Prophet said,

«ذَرُونِي مَا تَرَكَتُكُمْ، فَإِنَّمَا هَلَكَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ
بِكثْرَةِ سُؤَالِهِمْ وَاخْتِلَافِهِمْ عَلَى أَنْبِيَائِهِمْ، فَإِذَا
أَمَرْتُكُمْ بِأَمْرٍ فَأَتُوا مِنْهُ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ وَإِنْ نَهَيْتُكُمْ
عَنْ شَيْءٍ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ»

(Leave me as I leave you; those before you were only destroyed because of their excessive questioning and disputing with their Prophets. Therefore, when I command you with a matter, adhere to it as much as you can, and when I forbid from something, avoid it.)

The Prophet only said this after he told the Companions that Allah has ordered them to perform Hajj. A man asked, "Every year, O Messenger of Allah" The Prophet did not answer him, but he repeated his question three times. Then the Prophet said,

«لَا، وَلَوْ قُلْتُ: نَعَمْ، لَوْجِبَتْ وَلَوْ وَجِبَتْ لَمَا
اسْتَطَعْتُمْ»

(No. Had I said yes, it would have been ordained, and you would not have been able to implement it.)

This is why Anas bin Malik said, "We were forbidden from asking the Messenger of Allah about things. So we were delighted when a bedouin man would come and ask him while we listened."

Muhammad bin Ishaq said that Muhammad bin Abi Muhammad told him that `Ikrimah or Sa`id said that Ibn `Abbas said that Rafi` bin Huraymilah or Wahb bin Zayd said, "O Muhammad! Bring us a Book sent down from heaven and which we could read, and make some rivers flow for us, then we will follow you and believe in you." Allah sent down the answer to this challenge,

أَمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَسْأَلُوا رَسُولَكُمْ كَمَا سُئِلَ مُوسَى
مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ
سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ)

(Or do you want to ask your Messenger (Muhammad) as Musa was asked before (i.e. show us openly our Lord) And he who changes faith for disbelief, verily, he has gone astray from the right way).

Allah criticized those who ask the Messenger of Allah about a certain matter just for the purpose of being difficult, just as the Children of Israel asked Musa out of stubbornness, rejection and rebellion. Allah said,

وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ)

(And he who changes faith for disbelief) meaning, whoever prefers disbelief to faith,

فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ)

(verily, he has gone astray from the right way) meaning, he has strayed from the straight path, to the path of ignorance and misguidance. This is the case of those who deviated from accepting the Prophets and obeying them and those who kept asking their Prophets unnecessary questions in defiance and disbelief, just as Allah said,

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ بَدَّلُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ كُفْرًا وَأَحَلُّوا
قَوْمَهُمْ دَارَ الْبَوَارِ - جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَوْنَهَا وَيُسَّ
الْقَرَارُ)

(Have you not seen those who have changed the blessings of Allah into disbelief (by denying Prophet Muhammad and his Message of Islam), and caused their people to dwell in the house of destruction Hell, in which they will burn and what an evil place to settle in!) (14:28-29).

Abu Al-`Aliyah commented, "They exchanged comfort for hardship."

(وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يَرُدُّونَكُمْ مِن بَعْدِ
إِيمَانِكُمْ كُقَارًا حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ أَنفُسِهِمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا
تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهَ
بِأَمْرِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ - وَأَقِيمُوا
الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ مِّنْ
خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ)

(109. Many of the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) wish that they could turn you away as disbelievers after you have believed, out of envy from their own selves, even after the truth (that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger) has become manifest unto them. But forgive and overlook, till Allah brings His command. Verily, Allah is able to do all things.) (110. And perform the Salah and give the Zakah, and whatever of good you send forth for yourselves before you, you shall find it with Allah. Certainly, Allah is the Seer of what you do.)

The Prohibition of following the Ways of the People of the Book

Allah warned His believing servants against following the ways of the People of Book, who publicly and secretly harbor enmity and hatred for the believers, and who envy the believers, while they recognize the virtue of the believers and their Prophet . Allah also commanded His believing servants to forgive them and to be patient with them, until Allah delivers His aid and victory to them. Allah commanded the believers to perform the prayer perfectly, to pay the Zakah and He encouraged them to preserve the practice of these righteous deeds.

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that `Abdullah bin Ka`b bin Malik said that Ka`b bin Al-Ashraf, who was a Jew and a poet, used to criticize the Prophet in his poems, so Allah revealed,

(وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يَرُدُّونَكُمْ)

(Many of the People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) wish that they could turn you away..) regarding his matter.

Also, Ad-Dahhak said that Ibn `Abbas said, "An unlettered Messenger came to the People of the Scriptures confirming what they have in their own Books about the Messengers and the Ayat of

Allah. He also believes in all of this, just as they believe in it. Yet, they rejected the Prophet out of disbelief, envy and transgression. This is why Allah said,

(كُفَّارًا حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ)

(out of envy from their own selves, even after the truth (that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger) has become manifest unto them).

Allah said that after He illuminated the truth for them, such that they were not ignorant of any of it, yet their envy made them deny the Prophet . Thus Allah criticized, chastised and denounced them." Allah legislated the characteristics that His Prophet and the believers should adhere to: belief, faith and accepting what Allah revealed to them and to those before them out of His generosity and tremendous kindness.

Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that,

(مِّنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ)

(from their own selves) means, "of their making." Also, Abu Al-` Aliyah said that,

(مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ)

(even after the truth (that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger) has become manifest unto them) means, "After it became clear that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah whom they find written of in the Torah and the Injil. They denied him in disbelief and transgression because he was not one of them." Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said similarly. Allah said,

(فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ)

(But forgive and overlook, till Allah brings His command.) this is similar to His saying;

(وَلَتَسْمَعَنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آوَتْوَا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ
وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَذًى كَثِيرًا)

(And you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the Scripture before you (Jews and Christians) and from those who ascribe partners to Allah) (3: 186).

`Ali bin Abi Talhah said that Ibn `Abbas said that Allah's statement,

(فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ)

(But forgive and overlook, till Allah brings His command.) was abrogated by the Ayah,

(فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ)

(Then kill the Mushrikin wherever you find them) (9:5), and,

(قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ)

(Fight against those who believe not in Allah, nor in the Last Day) (9:29) until,

(وَهُمْ صَغُرُونَ)

(And feel themselves subdued) (9:29).

Allah's pardon for the disbelievers was repealed." Abu Al-`Aliyah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Qatadah and As-Suddi said similarly: It was abrogated by the Ayah of the sword." (Mentioned above). The Ayah,

(حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ)

(till Allah brings His command.) gives further support for this view.

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded Usamah bin Zayd saying that the Messenger of Allah and his Companions used to forgive the disbelievers and the People of the Book, just as Allah commanded in His statement,

(فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)

(But forgive and overlook, till Allah brings His command. Verily, Allah is able to do all things).

The Messenger of Allah used to forgive them and was patient with them as Allah ordered him, until Allah allowed fighting them. Then Allah destroyed those who He decreed to be killed among the strong men of Quraysh, by the Prophet's forces. The chain of narration for this text is Sahih, but I did not see its wordings in the six collections of Hadith, although the basis of it is in the Two Sahih, narrated from Usamah bin Zayd.

The Encouragement to perform Good Deeds

Allah said,

(وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا
لَأَنْفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ)

(And perform the Salah and give the Zakah, and whatever of good you send forth for yourselves before you, you shall find it with Allah).

Allah encouraged the believers to busy themselves in performing deeds that would bring them benefit and reward on the Day of Resurrection, such as prayer and paying Zakah. This way, they will gain Allah's aid in this life and on a Day when the witnesses testify,

(يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ الظَّالِمِينَ مَعَذِرَتُهُمْ وَلَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ
سُوءُ الدَّارِ)

(The Day when their excuses will be of no profit to the Zalimin (wrongdoers). Theirs will be the curse, and theirs will be the evil abode (i.e. painful torment in Hell-fire)) (40:52).

This is why Allah said,

(إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ)

(Certainly, Allah sees what you do), meaning, that He is never unaware of the deeds of any person, nor will these deeds be lost by Him. Whether deeds are righteous or evil, Allah will award each according to what he or she deserves based on their deeds.

(وَقَالُوا لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ
نَصْرِي تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
صَادِقِينَ - بَلَى مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ
فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يَحْزَنُونَ - وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتِ النَّصْرِي عَلَى

شَيْءٍ وَقَالَتِ النَّصْرَى لَيْسَتْ بِالْيَهُودِ عَلَى شَيْءٍ
وَهُمْ يَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا
كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ)

(111. And they say, "None shall enter Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian." These are their own desires. Say (O Muhammad), "Produce your Burhan if you are truthful.") (112. Yes! But whoever submits his face (himself) to Allah (i.e. follows Allah's religion of Islamic Monotheism) and he is a Muhsin then his reward is with his Lord (Allah), on such shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.) (113. The Jews said that the Christians follow nothing (i.e. are not on the right religion); and the Christians said that the Jews follow nothing (i.e. are not on the right religion); though they both recite the Scripture. Like unto their word, said those (the pagans) who know not. Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection about that wherein they have been differing.)

The Hopes of the People of the Book

Allah made the confusion of the Jews and the Christians clear, since they claim that no one will enter Paradise, unless he is a Jew or a Christian. Similarly, Allah mentioned their claims in Surat Al-Ma'idah:

(نَحْنُ أَوْلَادُ اللَّهِ وَأَحِبَّاءُهُ)

(We are the children of Allah and His loved ones) (5:18).

Allah refuted this false claim and informed them that they will be punished because of their sins. Previously we mentioned their claim that the Fire would not touch them for more than a few days, after which they would be put in Paradise. Allah rebuked this claim, and He said about this baseless claim, m

(تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ)

(These are their own desires). Abu Al-`Aliyah commented, "These are wishes that they wished Allah would answer, without basis." Similar was stated by Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas. Allah then said,

(قُلْ)

(Say) meaning, "Say O Muhammad:"

(هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ)

("Produce your Burhan...") meaning, "Your proof", as Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, As-Suddi and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas stated. Qatadah said that the Ayah means, "Bring the evidence that supports your statement,

(إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ)

(if you are truthful) in your claim. "

Allah then said,

(بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ)

(Yes! But whoever submits his face (himself) to Allah (i.e. follows Allah's religion of Islamic Monotheism) and he is a Muhsin) meaning, "Whoever performs deeds in sincerity, for Allah alone without partners." In a similar statement, Allah said,

(فَإِنْ حَاجُّوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ
اتَّبَعَنِ)

(So if they dispute with you (Muhammad) say: "I have submitted myself to Allah (in Islam), and (so have) those who follow me.") (3:20)

Abu Al-`Aliyah and Ar-Rabi` said that,

(بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ)

(Yes! But whoever submits his face (himself) to Allah) means, "Whoever is sincere with Allah."

Also, Sa`id bin Jubayr said that,

(بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ)

(Yes! But whoever submits) means, he is sincere,

(وَجْهَهُ)

(his face (himself)) meaning, in his religion.

(وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ)

(and he is a Muhsin) following the Messenger . For there are two conditions for deeds to be accepted; the deed must be performed for Allah's sake alone and conform to the Shari` ah. When the deed is sincere, but does not conform to the Shari` ah, then it will not be accepted. The Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ عَمِلَ عَمَلًا لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُنَا فَهُوَ رَدٌّ»

(Whoever performs a deed that does not conform with our matter (religion), then it will be rejected.)

This Hadith was recorded by Muslim. Therefore, the good deeds of the priests and rabbis will not be accepted, even if they are sincerely for Allah alone, because these deeds do not conform with the method of the Messenger , who was sent for all mankind. Allah said regarding such cases,

(وَقَدِمْنَا إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَاءً
مَّنْثُورًا)

(And We shall turn to whatever deeds they (disbelievers, polytheists, sinners) did, and We shall make such deeds as scattered floating particles of dust.) (25:23)

(وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَعْمَلُهُمْ كَسَرَابٍ بِقِيعَةٍ يَحْسَبُهُ
الظَّمَانُ مَاءً حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَهُ لَمْ يَجِدْهُ شَيْئًا)

(As for those who disbelieved, their deeds are like a mirage in a desert. The thirsty one thinks it to be water, until he comes up to it, he finds it to be nothing.) (24:39) and,

(وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَشِيعَةٌ - عَامِلَةٌ نَّاصِبَةٌ - تَصَلَّى
نَارًا حَامِيَةً - تُسْقَىٰ مِنْ عَيْنٍ عَائِيَةٍ)

(Some faces, that Day will be humiliated. Laboring, weary. They will enter in the hot blazing Fire. They will be given to drink from a boiling spring) (88:2-5).

When the deed conforms to the Shari` ah outwardly, but the person did not perform it sincerely for Allah alone, the deed will also be rejected, as in the case of the hypocrites and those who do their deeds to show off. Similarly, Allah said,

(إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَى يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا)

(Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but it is He Who deceives them. And when they stand up for As-Salah (the prayer), they stand with laziness to be seen by people, and they do not remember Allah but little.) (4:142) and,

(قَوْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ - الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ - الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُونَ - وَيَمْنَعُونَ الْمَاعُونَ)

(So woe unto those performers of Salah (prayers) (hypocrites). Those who delay their Salah (from their stated fixed times). Those who do good deeds only to be seen (of men). And withhold Al-Ma` un (small kindnesses)) (107:4-7).

This is why Allah said,

(فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا)

(So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord) (18: 110).

He also said in this Ayah,

(بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ)

(Yes, but whoever submits his face (himself) to Allah (follows Allah's religion of Islamic Monotheism) and he is a Muhsin).

Allah's statement,

(قَلْبُهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ
يَحْزَنُونَ)

(Shall have their reward with their Lord, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve) guaranteed them the rewards and safety from what they fear and should avoid.

(فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ)

(There shall be no fear on them) in the future,

(وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ)

(nor shall they grieve) about what they abandoned in the past. Moreover, Sa`id bin Jubayr said,

(فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ)

"(There shall be no fear on them) in the Hereafter, and

(وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ)

(nor shall they grieve) about their imminent death."

The Jews and Christians dispute among Themselves out of Disbelief and Stubbornness

Allah said,

(وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتِ النَّصْرَىٰ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ
وَقَالَتِ النَّصْرَىٰ لَيْسَتِ الْيَهُودُ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ وَهُمْ
يَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ)

(The Jews said that the Christians follow nothing (i.e. are not on the right religion); and the Christians said that the Jews follow nothing (i.e. are not on the right religion); though they both recite the Scripture.)

Allah explained the disputes, hatred and stubbornness that the People of the Book have towards each other. Muhammad bin Ishaq reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "When a delegation of Christians from Najran came to the Messenger of Allah , the Jewish rabbis came and began arguing with them before the Messenger of Allah . Rafi` bin Huraymilah said, `You do not follow anything,' and he reiterated his disbelief in Jesus and the Injil. Then a Christian man from Najran's delegation said to the Jews, `Rather, you do not follow anything,' and he reiterated his rejection of Musa's prophethood and his disbelief in the Torah. So Allah revealed the Ayah,

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتْ النَّصْرَىٰ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ
وَقَالَتِ النَّصْرَىٰ لَيْسَتْ الْيَهُودُ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ وَهُمْ
يَلْبُؤْنَ الْكِتَابَ

(The Jews said that the Christians follow nothing (i.e. are not on the right religion); and the Christians said that the Jews follow nothing (i.e. are not on the right religion); though they both recite the Scripture.)"

Allah made it clear that each party read the affirmation of what they claimed to reject in their Book. Consequently, the Jews disbelieve in Jesus, even though they have the Torah in which Allah took their Covenant by the tongue of Moses to believe in Jesus. Also, the Gospel contains Jesus' assertion that Moses' prophethood and the Torah came from Allah. Yet, each party disbelieved in what the other party had.

Allah said,

كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ

(Like unto their word, said those who know not) thus exposing the ignorance displayed by the Jews and the Christians concerning their statements that we mentioned. There is a difference of opinion regarding the meaning of Allah's statement,

(الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ)

(who know not)

For instance, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Qatadah said that,

(كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ)

(Like unto their word, said those said those who know not) means, "The Christians said similar statements to the Jews." Ibn Jurayj asked `Ata' "Who are those `who know not'" `Ata' said, "Nations that existed before the Jews and the Christians and before the Torah and the Gospel." Also, As-Suddi said that,

(قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ)

(said those who know not) is in reference to the Arabs who said that Muhammad was not following anything (i. e. did not follow a true or existing religion). Abu Ja`far bin Jarir chose the view that this Ayah is general and that there is no evidence that specifically supports any of these explanations. So interpreting the Ayah in a general way is better. Allah knows best.

Allah said,

(قَالَ اللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ)

(Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection about that wherein they have been differing.) meaning, that Allah will gather them all on the Day of Return. On that Day, Allah will justly judge between them, for He is never unjust with anyone, even as little as the weight of an atom. This Ayah is similar to Allah's statement in Surat Al-Hajj (22:17),

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِّينَ وَالنَّصْرَى وَالْمَجُوسَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ)

(Verily, those who believe (in Allah and in His Messenger Muhammad), and those who are Jews, and the Sabians, and the Christians, and the Majus, and those who associate partners with Allah; truly, Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection. Verily, Allah is over all things a Witness).

Allah said,

(قُلْ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا رَبُّنَا ثُمَّ يَقْتَحُ بَيْنَنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَهُوَ
الْفَتَّاحُ الْعَلِيمُ)

(Say: "Our Lord will assemble us all together (on the Day of Resurrection), then He will judge between us with truth. And He is the Just Judge, the Knower of the true state of affairs.") (34:26).

(وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن مَّنَعَ مَسْجِدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُذْكَرَ فِيهَا
اسْمُهُ وَسَعَى فِي خَرَابِهَا أُولَئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَنْ
يَدْخُلُوهَا إِلَّا خَائِفِينَ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَلَهُمْ فِي
الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ)

(114. And who are more unjust than those who forbid that Allah's Name be mentioned (i.e. prayers and invocations) in Allah's Masjids and strive for their ruin It was not fitting that such should themselves enter them (Allah's Masjids) except in fear. For them there is disgrace in this world, and they will have a great torment in the Hereafter.)

Of the Most Unjust are Those Who prevent People from the Masjids and strive for their Ruin

The Quraysh idolators are those who hindered the people from the Masjids of Allah and wanted to destroy them. Ibn Jarir reported that Ibn Zayd said that Allah's statement,

(وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن مَّنَعَ مَسْجِدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُذْكَرَ فِيهَا
اسْمُهُ وَسَعَى فِي خَرَابِهَا)

(And who are more unjust than those who forbid that Allah's Name be mentioned (i.e. prayers and invocations) in Allah's Masjids and strive for their ruin) is about the Quraysh idolators who prevented the Prophet from entering Makkah from Al-Hudaybiyyah, until he slaughtered the Hadi (animal for sacrifice) at Dhi-Tuwa. He then agreed to a peace treaty with the idolators and said to them, (No one before has ever prevented people from entering the House. One would even see the killer of his father and brother, but would not prevent him (from entering the House of Allah).) They said, "Whoever killed our fathers at Badr, shall never enter it while there is one of us alive." Allah's statement,

(وَسَعَى فِي خَرَابِهَا)

(and strive for their ruin) means those who prevent whoever maintain the Masjids with Allah's remembrance and who visit Allah's House to perform Hajj and `Umrah. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn `Abbas said that the Quraysh prevented the Prophet from praying at the Ka`bah in Al-Masjid Al-Haram, so Allah revealed,

(وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن مَّنَعَ مَسْجِدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُذْكَرَ فِيهَا
اسْمُهُ)

(And who are more unjust than those who forbid that Allah's Name be mentioned (i.e. prayers and invocations) in Allah's Masjids)"

After Allah chastised the Jews and Christians, He also criticized the idolators who expelled the Messenger of Allah and his Companions from Makkah, preventing them from praying in Al-Masjid Al-Haram, which they kept exclusively for their idols and polytheism. Allah said,

(وَمَا لَهُمْ آلَا يُعَذِّبَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُمْ يَصُدُّونَ عَنِ
الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَمَا كَانُوا أَوْلِيَاءَهُ إِنْ أَوْلِيَآؤُهُ إِلَّا
الْمُتَّقُونَ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ)

(And why should not Allah punish them while they hinder (men) from Al-Masjid Al-Haram, and they are not its guardians None can be its guardians except Al-Muttaqun (the pious), but most of them know not.) (8:34)

(مَا كَانَ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يَعْمُرُوا مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ
شَاهِدِينَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِم بِالْكُفْرِ أُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ
أَعْمَلُهُمْ وَفِي النَّارِ هُمْ خَالِدُونَ - إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ
مَسْجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَقَامَ