

DARUL ULOOM TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO A CONCISE COMMENTARY COURSE OF THE HOLY QURAN (2001-2020)

He also blessed them with ‘Al Hukm’, the law and its understanding and the ability to judge among people. He favoured them with prophethood by choosing prophets from among them from the time of Yusuf (A.S) until Isa (A.S). As a blessing, He granted them an abundance of pure, wholesome and halaal things from foods, drinks and other provisions which they consumed. Along with all these bounties, He raised them to a high rank among all people at their time and made them the best of all others. These are a few of the many favours He bestowed upon them.

While commenting on the above verse, the great commentator of the Holy Quran, Allama As Saawi (A.R) states, ‘The objective of this verse is to comfort the Prophet (ﷺ). It sends a message to him that he should not grieve or be worried about the disbelief which his people have chosen upon belief in Allah. The verse informs him that the Children of Isra’il were granted many great favours, yet they became ungrateful and persisted in sins and disobedience. In a similar manner, his people would behave’. (Hashiya As Saawi Ala Tafseer Al Jalaalain vol.4 pg. 69 Dar Al Fikr Beirut).

Verse 17 further mentions more favours which were granted to them and states:

17. And gave them clear proofs in matters. And they differed not until after the knowledge came to them, through envy among themselves. Verily, Your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection about that wherein they used to differ.

In this verse, Allah mentions that He gave the Children of Isra’il clear proofs in ‘matters’ or ‘in the matter’. It means that Allah granted them strong evidences and proofs concerning their religion and clearly explained their Shariah and matters of Halaal and Haraam. Among these were the miracles which were given to Moosa (A.S) also. Some commentators of the Holy Quran including Abdullah bin Abbas (R.A) have also explained that the verse means that Allah gave them clear signs and evidences regarding the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). They were informed in their books that he will migrate from Tihama to Yathrib and would be helped by the people of Yathrib. (Tafseer Al Qurtubi vol.16 pg. 141 Maktaba Rasheediya Queta; Tafseer Al Baghwi vol.4 pg. 158 IdaraTaleefaat Ashrafiya Multan Pakistan).

The verse states, ‘**And they differed not until after the knowledge came to them, through envy among themselves**’. It means that even after Allah had explained everything to them in their scripture and their Shariah through evidences and proofs, (based on that which is the truth), yet they disputed among themselves in matters of religion.

While explaining this verse, the great scholar Qadhi Thana’ullah (A.R) writes, ‘The verse makes it clear that their disputes (among themselves) occurred after knowledge was granted to them by Allah, and that their quarrels and arguments with each other occurred because of their mutual enmity, envy and ill feelings. This did not come about due to lack of knowledge or proofs or sufficient guidelines in their religion. This verse therefore shows that the different sects of the Jews and Christians did not come about on account of the lack of knowledge of evidences in religion, but instead, it came about due to their personal differences, hatred, enmity and envy they had for each other. In a similar manner, the different sects among the Muslims did not come about due to the absence of knowledge and proofs regarding the truth, but instead it came about on account of delusion, erroneous impression, misgivings, doubts and self-deception. It is this conjecture people followed and they regarded it as the proper understanding of Islam, whereas it was nothing but misgivings. Sometimes, it was on account of enmity, envy and hatred that people left the path of truth and created parties and sects.(Tafseer Mazhari vol. 10 pg. 280 Darul Ishaat Karachi)

The verse explains that Allah Had given the Children of Isra’il clear proofs regarding their religion and scripture, however, even after gaining knowledge and understanding, they disputed among themselves and became divided into sects and parties.

While commenting on this verse, the great exegete, Imam Fakhrudeen Ar Razi writes, ‘The objective of the verse is to highlight the strange conduct of the Bani Israil. Their behaviour was very strange since the acquisition of knowledge/understanding would normally bring about an end to disputes and differences, but here, their knowledge actually became the cause for disputes and differences. The

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reason for this is that their purpose of gaining knowledge was not to benefit from knowledge itself. Instead, their objective through it was to seek leadership positions and be higher than others. It was for this reason, they acquired knowledge, but became stubborn and obstinate'. (Tafseer Al Kabeer vol.27 pg. 265 - Safwah At Tafaseer vol.3 pg. 171MaktabaTawfiqiyah Dar As Sabooni 2009)

Some commentators of the Holy Quran have stated that the statement, 'And they differed not until after the knowledge came to them, through envy among themselves' means that the Bani Isra'il disputed among themselves regarding the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) although knowledge came to them about him. Many of them were jealous that the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was from among the Arabs and not from among them, the Israelites. Although they were eager to receive him initially, they later refused to acknowledge his apostleship because they expected him to be from among them. (Anwarul Bayaan vol.4 pg. 549 Darul Ishaat Karachi 2005)

The verse further states, '**Verily your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Judgement about that wherein they used to differ**'. In this verse, the Prophet (ﷺ) is told that his Lord will judge and decide between the Bani Isra'il on the Day of Judgement regarding the disputes they had among themselves in the world. Those who followed the path of truth and remained steadfast on it will be rewarded by Allah, and those who turned away from it shall be punished by Allah.

While explaining this verse, Hafiz Ibn Katheer writes, 'In this verse, a warning is given to this Ummah (the Muslims) that they must not follow the way of the Bani Isra'il and should not adopt their path'. (Tafseer Ibn Katheer vol.5 pg. 500 Dar Al Kitab Al Arabi, Beirut 2013)

Surah Al Jathiyah states in verse 18:

18. Then We have put you (O Muhammad) on a plain way of (Our) commandment. So follow that, and follow not the desires of those who know not.

Here, the Prophet (ﷺ) was informed by Allah that He has placed him upon a clear path and a method which is upon guidance in the matters of religion. Therefore, he must follow what has been revealed to him from his Lord in the matters of religion. This command is also given to the Ummah of the Prophet (ﷺ). They must know that Allah Has established them on a perfect way of life and Has given them a 'Shariah', a path and a code of law. Therefore, they must follow it.

The verse further states, '**And do not follow the desires of those who know not**'. Here, the Prophet (ﷺ) was instructed by Allah that he must not follow the desires of those who have no knowledge. He must not follow that which the ignorant people call him towards, since they do not even know the difference between truth and falsehood. He must also not follow the misguided ways of the Mushrikeen (polytheists) and must not pay heed to the statement of the ignorant leaders of the Quraish who were telling people to return to the religion of their forefathers'. (Safwah At Tafaseer vol.3 pg. 171MaktabaTawfiqiyah Dar As Sabooni 2009)

As mentioned by commentators of the Holy Quran, although the address was given to the Prophet (ﷺ) in the above verse, the command is intended for the Ummah (followers) of the Prophet (ﷺ) since the Prophet (ﷺ) would never follow the desires and the dictates of the ignorant and misguided people. It therefore means that the believers are strictly prohibited from following those people who are ignorant of the teachings of Islam and follow their desires in all their actions. (Adhwa Al Bayaan vol.6 pg. 2866 Dar Ibn Hazm Beirut 2013; Tafseer Mazhari vol. 10 pg. 265 Darul Ishaat Karachi)

Muslims have been given the book of guidance in the form of the Holy Quran, and also the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) as an explanation and a teaching of the Book of guidance. They must therefore hold fast to this guidance which Allah has sent, and must not follow the personal desires, thoughts and ideologies of those who possess no knowledge of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet (ﷺ).

Verse 19 of Surah Al Jathiyah further states:

19. Verily, they can avail you nothing against Allah (if He wants to punish you). Verily, the Zâlimûn (polytheists, wrong-doers, etc.) are Auliya' (protectors,