

Fast 10: Religious principles taught to Israelites — (4): Mixing truth with falsehood

- We continue here with the verse:

“And do not mix up truth with falsehood,
nor hide the truth while you know.” — ch. 2,
v. 42

وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ

تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

- Another way in which truth is mixed with falsehood is to quote something out of context. This is done by those critics of Islam who purposely misrepresent Islam. In their attacks on Islam, they present quotations from the Quran. Those quotations are undoubtedly true. But they are plucked out of their context in the Quran and the detractors add to them their own interpretations. That is a type of mixing truth with falsehood and hiding the truth. The words from the Quran, “kill them wherever you find them”, are quoted. Around these words the critics add their own interpretation of what is meant by the words “them” and “wherever”. They present these quotations as if “them” means all non-Muslims and “wherever” is any place on earth. Yet the context of these words, and also the general teachings of the Quran, show that “them” refers to the people who had started a war against the Muslims and “wherever” refers to the places wherever they are attacking the Muslims.

Regrettably, the same tactics are employed against the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement by those Muslim opponents who want to smear him in the eyes of other Muslims and present him as a gross deviant from Islam.

- A similar verse about “hiding” the truth — the truth revealed by God — is as follows:

“And when Allah took a covenant from those who were given the Book: You shall explain it to people and shall not hide it. But they threw it behind their backs and took a small price for it. And evil is what they buy.” — ch. 3, v. 187

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ
لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُونَهُ فَنَبَذُوهُ وَرَاءَ

ظُهُورِهِمْ وَاشْتَرَوْا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا فَبِئْسَ مَا

يَشْتَرُونَ ﴿١٨٧﴾

Here, over and above the disapproval of hiding the truth, the positive and proactive duty of explaining it to people is added. To do so was, it says here, a promise taken by God from the nations to whom He sent His revelation. “Those who were given the Book” are not only those who were given the book before the Quran but include also those who were given the Quran, i.e., the Muslims. Thus from Muslims also a promise was taken by Allah about the Quran, that they would “explain it to people”.

- That promise was, unfortunately, breached by the Muslims who came after the early

period of Islam. One way in which they “hid” it was by coming to believe that the Quran no longer needed to be studied directly but that all its knowledge was to be found in the commentaries of the Quran written by the earlier generations of Muslims. All that was needed to study the Quran was to read these commentaries. All that was needed to learn about Islam was found in the books of Islamic jurisprudence.

- It was also believed that no translation of the Quran from Arabic into another language should be done. This was regarded as prohibited. So non-Arab Muslims, such as those in the Indian subcontinent, learnt only to recite the Quran without knowing the meaning of the text. This weakness of the Muslims has been mentioned in a history of Islam in India by a noted Pakistani historian, Dr Shaikh M. Ikram. Speaking of the time up to the 1700s, he writes (which I translate below from Urdu):
 - “The general population of the educated Muslims remained unfamiliar with the Quran. The *ulama* and the scholarly people had only learnt to recite the Quran without knowing the meaning of the words nor having benefitted from its spirit and its teachings. In the court of the Mughal emperor Akbar there were debates between Muslim *Ulama* and Portuguese Christian missionaries. Due to a Latin translation of the Quran [by a Christian], the missionaries were well familiar with the contents of the Quran. When they raised objections to various statements in the Quran, it became apparent that even those Muslims who had read the Quran in Arabic were not fully familiar with its contents. It sometimes happened that when a missionary objected to a statement in the Quran, Muslims replied that it was not in the Quran. But on opening the Holy Book those references were found in it.” (*Rood-i Kausar*, p. 552)
 - Our historian then adds that, seeing this state of affairs, Shah Waliullah of Delhi (d. 1763) translated the Quran into Persian. This was the language of government and the language of education of Muslims in India. He writes: “When the *Ulama* discovered this, they came to him with swords drawn, as they considered it an act of great sacrilege of the Holy Word. Some biographers say that because of this opposition he had to leave Delhi for a time.”
- Even in modern times, in 1929–1930, when Marmaduke Pickthall, famous British Muslim, was translating the Quran into English, he went to Egypt to discuss some points of his translation with the scholars there. He found that some of them regarded translating the Quran as prohibited. Pickthall has written about his experience and says that one of the *Ulama* wrote in a newspaper that “the translator and all who read his translation, or abetted it, or showed approval of it, were condemned to everlasting perdition”. (You can read Pickthall’s account in full [at this link](#).)