

### Fast 17: Islam rejects doctrine of salvation of any group — 3

- We continue with the verse from the last Study:

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| <p>“No, whoever submits himself entirely to Allah and he is the doer of good (to others), he has his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for such nor shall they grieve.” — ch. 2, v. 112</p> | <p>بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ<br/>عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾</p> |
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If this had only said “whoever submits himself to Allah”, it could have been argued that the Quran, responding to the claims of the Jews and the Christians that only they will receive salvation, is saying: “No, it is those who are Muslims”. The argument would be that, because the word ‘Muslim’ means one who submits to Allah, therefore a Muslim is meant. However, the verse says: “whoever submits *himself entirely* to Allah”. Literally, it says “whoever submits his *wajh* to Allah”, and *wajh* refers to the entire self of a person. Secondly, the verse of course adds: “and he is the doer of good (to others)”. So it cannot possibly mean anyone who is merely called a Muslim.

- One reason why the Quran says this to Jews and Christians is that this is what the Israelite prophets as well as Jesus taught. According to the Gospels, when Jesus was asked by someone, “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law”, he replied:
  - “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself’.” (see Matthew, 22:36–39)

It appears that Jesus was quoting from the books of Moses, because we read there:

- “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.” (Deuteronomy, 6:5)
- “Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbour as yourself. I am the Lord.” (Leviticus, 19:18)

Comparing this with the verse 2:112 quoted above, submitting one’s self to Allah “entirely” is the same as loving God “with all your heart” etc., and being a “doer of good to others” is the same as loving your neighbour as yourself. Therefore the Quran reminds the Jews and the Christians of what their prophets and founders had taught as the core and crux of religion, and this goes to show that their claims to be entitled to salvation, merely because of being Jews and Christians, were made up later on.

- Another passage of the Quran in this connection is the following:

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| <p>“It will not be in accordance with your vain desires nor the vain desires of the People of the Book. Whoever does evil, will be recompensed for it and will not find for himself besides Allah a friend or a helper.<br/> <sup>124</sup>And whoever does good deeds, whether male or female, and is a believer — these will enter the Garden, and they will not be dealt with unjustly in the least.” — ch. 4, v. 123–124</p> | <p>لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِي أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ<br/> يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَ<br/> لَا نَصِيرًا ﴿١٢٣﴾ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ<br/> أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا<br/> يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا ﴿١٢٤﴾</p> |
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Salvation is not attained according to anyone’s wishful, idle thinking, whether it is “you” (Muslims) or the followers of earlier scriptures. Whoever in practice does evil will meet his recompense, which none but God can avert. Salvation, or “entering the garden” of peace, is attained by anyone who does good and “is a believer”. A comparison with the earlier verse 2:112 shows that being “a believer” doesn’t mean holding a belief in the heart but submitting oneself to God. It may be noted that being a believer is a matter of degree, and it is not the case that a person is either a believer or is not a believer. A person benefits in accordance with the degree of his or her belief and the extent of his or her good deeds.

Verse 124 adds categorically that no distinction is made between the male and the female in the granting of reward. This may be because the “People of the Book” mentioned here, i.e., Jews and Christians, have often considered the female as a greater sinner than the male, because of the story of Adam and Eve in the Bible. Eve is represented in the Bible as leading Adam to the commission of sin, and they are considered symbolic of woman and man. It may also be because this verse occurs in a chapter the title of which is ‘Women’, and which establishes the right of women in Islam.

- Anyhow, these two verses of chapter 4 state that merely belonging to the Jewish or Christian religions, or even merely being a Muslim, can neither save a person from being held accountable for wrong-doing, nor bring him reward from God and salvation. Moreover, being male or female also has no bearing on this. Only true belief and good deeds can bring reward from God.
- In the last Study, verse 2:111 had been quoted which says that the claims by Jews and Christians, that salvation is solely and only for them, are “their vain desires”. The word for “vain desires” was *amāniy*. In the verse above the same word *amāniy* is used. We discuss this further in the next Study.