

Fast 8: Religious principles taught to Israelites also applicable to Muslims (2)

- The next verse in this section, addressing the Israelites, is as follows:

“And believe in what I have revealed, verifying what is (already) with you, and do not be the first to deny it; nor take a small price for My messages; and keep your duty to Me, Me alone.” — ch. 2, v. 41

وَأٰمِنُوا بِمَا أَنزَلْتُ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ وَلَا تَكُونُوا
أَوَّلَ كٰفِرٍ بِهِ ۗ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۗ
إِنِّي فَاتَتَّقُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

In the beginning of this chapter, the Holy Prophet was told that Muslims must “believe in what has been revealed to you (O Prophet) and what was revealed before you” (2:4). So Muslims accept the earlier revelations of the Israelite prophets. The Quran verifies it. For those reasons, the followers of the earlier revelation are called upon to accept the revelation which came to the Holy Prophet. We may also note here that the prophets whose stories are related in the Bible are presented in the Quran in a way which greatly enhances their reputation and standing from how those prophets are presented in the Bible. This is another reason why followers of the earlier revelation should accept the Quran as being from God.

- “...verifying what is (already) with you” also has a more specific reference. It refers to the prophecies contained in the Bible about the prophet to come who would rescue the Israelites from their misfortunes and restore their glory. The Quran verified those prophecies by proclaiming the Holy Prophet Muhammad as that promised Prophet. It describes him as:

“the Messenger-Prophet, the unlettered, whom they find mentioned in the Torah and the Gospel.” — ch. 7, v. 157

الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ
فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ

- “do not be the first to deny it”: Do not take the lead in denying this revelation. If you take the lead in rejecting it, you will be responsible not only for your own denial of it, but also for other people who may follow your lead. Instead of rushing to deny, to be the first in the race, they should at least wait to see whether future events prove or disprove the Holy Prophet’s truth.

This plea can be extended to the case of a *mujaddid*. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad writes: “If a person doesn’t understand some pronouncement of a *mujaddid* of the age, there is nothing wrong if he debates that issue with fear of God, good intention and a sincere heart. But he should not take this matter to the stage of malice and verbal

abuse, the consequence of which is that he loses his faith and earns the title *Abu Lahab*.”

- “nor take a small price for My messages”: This refers to rejecting the message of God for some material, worldly gain. The Jewish priests feared losing their position and authority in their community if they or their people were to accept Islam. They would cease to be the custodians and interpreters of God’s Word.

There are examples in Muslim history of “taking a small price for God’s Messages”. Islamic scholars employed by the rulers of their times used to issue religious verdicts or interpretations to justify the actions of the rulers. This is how slavery and concubinage (use of female slaves for sexual relations) were perpetuated among Muslims. Islamic scholars justified these institutions from the teachings of Islam on the orders of the rulers who wanted this for their own desires and interests.

In our own times, we see examples of Islamic leaders who know that certain prevailing beliefs and customs among Muslims cannot be justified from the Quran or Hadith, but they don’t tell the people this. On the contrary, they teach and perpetuate these wrong beliefs and interpretations as if they were Islamic in order to remain popular among the people and respected by them. Some of these practices, such as those at weddings and at death, are a source of their income when people present them with gifts and money.

Many religious and community leaders among Muslims know that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a Muslim and a servant of Islam. They believe many of his interpretations of Islam to be right, in which he differed from the general *Ulama*. But before the public they denounce him as a heretic and an enemy of Islam.

Not only in the religious field, but in other aspects of human life also, it has happened in history that a person, knowing something to be true, has rejected it for the sake of either retaining or acquiring some material benefit, such as popularity or position of honour among people. That is, they took a small price for the truth.

- This is why the above verse goes on to say: “and keep your duty *to Me, Me alone*.” Notice also that in verse 2:40 discussed in Study 7, the closing words were: *wa iyyaya farhaboon* — “and Me, Me alone, should you fear”. In 2:41 the closing words are: *wa iyyaya fataqoon* — “and keep your duty to Me, Me alone.” They are expressing the same idea and they rhyme as well. It shows that by *fearing God* in verse 40 is meant the *keeping of duty*, and not that God is terrifying and frightful.