

(83) “Remember, We took a covenant from the Children of Israel.” Allah reminds the Children of Israel about the commandments He gave them to obey. “You shall worship none but Allah”. The first and the foremost commandment given to them as well as every other Prophet is to Worship Allah alone and not to associate partners with Him.

“Be good to your parents, relatives, orphans and destitutes.” After Allah’s right comes the right of the parents. Allah commanded His servants to be kind and compassionate towards one’s parents and relatives, give the orphans their due right and give charity to the poor, and to one who does not find what he needs to spend on himself or his family. “Speak fair to the people.” This includes commanding good and forbidding evil, as well as say good words and be lenient with them. “Establish Salah, and pay Zakah.” Allah also commands them to establish salah and give the obligatory charity.

“But you broke the covenant, except a few of you, and you paid no heed.”

Allah informs us that the Jews, except a few among them, ignored these orders, i.e. they intentionally contravened them.

(84) “Also remember another covenant which We took from you: That you shall not shed blood among yourselves and you shall not expel your own people from your homes.” Allah reminds the Children of Israel of another covenant. Allah commanded them in Torah, not to kill or fight with each other, nor drive the other out of their homes. When the Jews entered the Holy Land of Jerusalem with Prophet Moses (AS), they divided into groups, each tribe governing its own state, and when they fought each other, they would kill one another; take them as prisoners, and drive them out from their land. So Allah reminds them of their disobedience and transgression. “You confirmed it and you are witness to it”, i.e. you testified that you made the covenant and you were witnesses to it but you still broke it.

(85) Yet there you are, killing your own people, expelling a group amongst you from their homes. When the Jews divided into tribes and fought each other, each tribe would kill Jews from the other tribe and expel them from their homes. This was clearly prohibited by Allah in Torah, but they ignored His

commandments. “*Backing each other with sin and aggression*”, i.e. they would help their enemies against each other. “*And if they come to you as captives, you trade them for ransoms.*” Allah also commanded the Jews to ransom their brethren if they were captured. But instead they would help their enemies against other *Jews*, and kill them and capture them as prisoners and when the war ended they would ransom them, but Allah says: “*whereas their expulsion was unlawful for you to begin with.*” So they did not follow Allah’s commandments in the first place Who prohibited them to fight but later on they would ransom their brethren, and say, that we are fulfilling the rulings of the *Torah*. Therefore, Allah reminded them of this when He said: “*Do you believe in a part of your Holy Book and reject the rest?*”, thus acting on one commandment of *Torah* and rejecting the other parts of it. This commandment is not only for the Jews but also applicable to the Muslims of today. They accept a part of *Deen* and reject the other. Allah prohibits in the *Qur’an* the consumption of *Riba* (interest), gambling, drinking alcohol or committing *Zina* (adultery), but unfortunately, most of the Muslims today indulge in these grievous sins some way or the other. Although they believe in the *Qur’an*, offer salah, pay Zakah, and know that what they are doing is wrong, but still persist in their sins, just like the *Jews* who followed part of the *Torah* and ignored the other. And this is why Allah says: “*So what other punishment do such people among you, who behave like this, deserve, than disgrace in this world and to be driven to severe punishment on the Day of Judgment. Allah is not unaware of what you do.*”

(86) “*Such are the people who trade the life of this world at the expense of the Hereafter.*” i.e. they prefer the life and attractions of this world to the Hereafter. Therefore, Allah says: “*so neither their punishment shall be lightened nor shall they be helped*”, meaning their punishment will never stop and they will not find any helper who will save them from the eternal torment in the Hell.

(87) “*To Moses We gave the Book (Torah) and sent after him other Prophets in succession.*” Allah sent Messengers and Prophets after Moses (AS) ,who followed his Law, then Allah sent the last Prophet among the *Children of Israel*,

Isa (AS) the son of Mary (AS), and the continuous chain of Prophets came to a halt among the *Children of Israel* after nearly fourteen hundred years.

“Then We gave Isa (AS), the son of Maryam (Mary), clear Signs.” Along with Injeel, Allah also gave miracles to Isa (AS). These included bringing back the dead to life, forming the shape of birds from clay and blowing into them after which they would become living birds by Allah’s leave, healing the sick and foretelling the Unseen.<sup>1</sup> “and strengthened him with the Holy Spirit.” The ‘Holy Spirit here signifies the angel Gabriel who brought this revelation.’

“Why is it that whenever there came to you a Prophet with a message which did not suit your desires, you became so arrogant that some you called impostors and others you killed!”

Prophets were sent to the *Children of Israel* with clear signs and miracles, but instead of believing in them, they became more defiant and treated them in the worst manner, rejecting some of them and killing the others, like Yahya (John the Baptist) and Zakariyah (AS). They did all this because the Prophets commanded them to follow what was against their own desires; so they became arrogant, rejected them and even killed some of them.

(88) “They say: ‘Our hearts are in secure wrappers’.” That is to say, they say, “our hearts are covered and sealed. We have every type of knowledge, so we don’t need the knowledge you claim to receive from Allah and your preaching is not going to affect our hearts.”

“But the fact of the matter is that Allah has cursed them for their disbelief.” i.e. Allah says that it is not they who do not believe, rather it is Allah who has sealed their hearts because of their arrogance and deviance. “So little is that which they believe.” i.e. they do not believe in the real sense.

(89) “And when there has come to them a Book from Allah confirming the Holy Books of Torah and Gospel which they already have.” This means that the *Qur’an* which Allah sent down to Muhammad (SAW) came confirming what is with them, i.e. the previous Books viz. *Torah* and *Injeel* (Gospel). Further Allah says, “Even though before this they used to pray for victory against the unbelievers.” The Children of Israel were foretold in their Scriptures the coming of the Last Prophet, Muhammad (SAW). They used to invoke Allah to aid them

by his arrival, so that he could end the dominance of the unbelievers. They used to say to the unbelievers, "A Prophet shall be sent before the end of this world and we, with his help, will defeat you." *"When there came to them that which they very well recognize, they knowingly rejected it."* But when Allah sent Prophet Muhammad (SAW), they rejected him and denied what they used to say about him, and lied that this is not the Prophet we told you about because he did not bring anything that we recognize. That is why Allah says, *"Allah's curse is on such disbelievers."*

(90) *"Miserable is the price for which they have sold their souls."* i.e. the Jews knew that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is the prophet they have been waiting for, but they hid the truth about him in their books. And so Allah says that they have bartered the truth for falsehood, which indeed is a poor and nasty deal. *"They deny Allah's revelation merely because of their grudge"*. The Jews thought that because they are the best of all human races, and most of the previous Prophets have been sent to them, therefore, Allah would send the Last Prophet (SAW) also from within them, but when Allah sent a Prophet from different people (Arabs), whom they despised, then they decided to reject him because of their envy and grudge *"that Allah should send His grace on whom He pleases from His servants"*. Further Allah says, *"They have drawn on themselves wrath upon wrath"*, meaning they acquired Allah's anger when they denied Isa (AS), and multiplied it when they have rejected Muhammad (SAW). *"and for such disbelievers there is a disgraceful punishment."* i.e. there will be disgrace and humiliation for them in this world and the Hereafter.

(91) *When they are asked to believe in what Allah has revealed, they reply: "we only believe in what Allah has sent to us (i.e. Torah), and we reject what is beside that,"* meaning, when the Jews and People of the Book are asked to believe in what has been revealed to Muhammad (SAW), and follow him, they say that we will only follow our own books, and that is enough for us to believe, and this is the path we choose for ourselves. Allah says, *"while it is the truth confirming their own scriptures!"* i.e. they knew that it is the truth, and what has been revealed to Muhammad (SAW) confirms the scriptures given to them. Further Allah says, *"Ask them, 'if you sincerely believe in what was sent to you ,*

*why did you kill the Prophets of Allah who were sent to you from amongst yourselves before?"*. If you say that you will only believe in the Prophet of your own race and that which was revealed to you, then what about the Prophets We sent you, they were all from among yourselves, who brought scriptures from your Lord, but still you disbelieved them, and killed them.

(92) *"Moses came to you with clear Signs, no sooner was he away from you, then you committed evil by worshipping the calf."* i.e. Moses (AS), came with clear signs and miracles and with the message that no deity is worthy of worship except Allah, but as soon as Moses (AS), left for Mount Sinai, the *Children of Israel* started worshipping the Calf, which they made with their own hands, and thus became *Zalimun* (Unjust).

(93) *Remember that when We took a Covenant from you and We lifted the Mount Sinai over your heads saying: "Take firmly what We have given you and listen to Our Commandments," Allah reminds the Jews of breaking their covenant and transgression they made when Allah brought Mount Sinai over their heads and commanded them to obey and follow the Torah which was revealed to Moses (AS). But Allah says, "you replied: 'we have heard but we will not obey.'* " They should have said that we have heard and we submit ourselves to your commandment, but instead they changed the words and said, we have heard but we will not obey. This is because, *"So much was the love of that calf in their hearts due to their unbelief."* i.e. due to their disbelief, they imbibed the love of the calf deep into their hearts. Then Allah says, *O' Muhammad (SAW), tell them: "If you are real believers, then why does your faith prompt you to do such evil things?"* meaning how can you claim that you believe, while you have committed the evil of breaking the covenant, disbelieving in Allah's *ayat*, killing and rejecting the Messengers and worshipping the calf instead of Allah.

(94) *Say O' Muhammad (SAW): "If the Home of the Hereafter is exclusively for you and not for the rest of mankind, then wish for death if you are true in your claim!"* The *Jews* had an illusion that the Paradise is reserved for the *Children of Israel* alone and not for the rest of the Mankind. This same belief reflect the Muslims today. They think that if they are born as Muslims, they will by

default enter the Paradise but it is what the *Jews* had, nothing but an illusion. Allah says to the *Jews* that if you really think that you are the chosen one and Paradise is your abode then long for death, if you really are truthful in your claim. Those who really care for the Hereafter, neither set their hearts on worldly life nor are they afraid of death. The condition of the *Jews* was the opposite of this.

(95) *"But they will never wish for death."* Allah asked the *Jews* to invoke death if they are truthful, but they did not accept the challenge, as they knew that what they claim are all lies, and if they were sure that they are true, they would have accepted the challenge. *"Because they are fully aware of the consequences of what they have sent before them for the Hereafter."* i.e. they know what they have earned and forwarded for the Hereafter, so they wish they could delay it, as much as possible. *"Allah is well acquainted with the wrong-doers."* i.e. Allah certainly knows who are the evil-doers.

(96) *"You will find them the greediest of men for life, even greedier than the idolaters and pagans. Each one of them wishes that he could be given a life of a thousand years."* The *Jews* know what evil they have done and what reward they are going to get from their Lord. Therefore, they are so keen to remain alive, that they do not care whether they live honorably or with humiliation, and they wish they could delay the Hereafter, even more eager than the infidels and pagans who do not have a divine Book. Allah says, *"But the grant of such a life will not save them from the punishment."* i.e. a long life will not save them from the torment they are going to face, even if they could live for thousand years. And in the end everyone has to die and will get his reward, and the *Jews* know that the only reward they will have with Allah is total loss and severest punishment. Because *"Allah is watching whatever they do."*

(97) *"Say O Muhammad: "Whoever is the enemy of Gabriel, should know that he revealed this Qur'an to your heart by Allah's command."* The *Jews* believed that the Last Prophet, prophesized in their scriptures will be among the *Jews*, but when Allah sent Muhammad (SAW) as Messenger from among the Arabs, they denounced angel Gabriel as their enemy, because they believed that instead of

bringing the revelation to one of the *Jews*, Gabriel brought it to Muhammad (SAW). But Allah says that Gabriel is only His Messenger, and he brought the *Qur'an* to Muhammad's (SAW) heart, only by Allah's command. And Allah states, "*Which confirms previous scriptures, and is a guidance and good news for the believers.*" Here it suggests that the actual enmity of the Jews was not directed towards Gabriel but against the revelation he brought which confirmed their scriptures, and if they would have believed in it would have been guidance and good tidings for them.

(98) "*Let them know that whoever is an enemy to Allah, His angels, His Messengers, Gabriel and Michael*" meaning, whoever believes in Allah, is required to believe in all His Messengers. But whoever rejects any of His Messenger, then indeed he has rejected Allah and all His Messengers. "*Allah is an enemy to such unbelievers.*" i.e. whoever takes His Messengers as enemies, then he has taken Allah as his enemy.

(99) "*We have sent down to you clear revelations: no one can deny them except the transgressors.*" i.e. clear signs have been sent to Muhammad (SAW) which confirm his prophethood, but the *Jews* reject it because of their envy and transgression.

(100) "*Has it not been the case that every time they made a covenant, a group of them threw it aside?.*" Allah reminds the *Children of Israel* about the covenants they broke, especially about Muhammad (SAW), about which they were informed beforehand in their scriptures, but they hid the facts and thus Allah says, "*But the fact is that most of them are faithless.*" i.e. there is not a single covenant that they make, but they break it and cast it aside.

(101) "*Whenever there came to them a Messenger from Allah confirming their own Holy Book, a group from those to whom the Holy book were given cast off the Book of Allah behind their backs as if they knew nothing about it.*" When Prophet Muhammad (SAW) came, the Jews disputed and questioned his prophethood and tried to prove it from *Torah*, but the fact was that the *Qur'an* revealed to Muhammad (SAW) and their scriptures confirmed each other.

Although Allah says they recognize Prophet Muhammad (SAW), as they recognize their own sons, yet they abandoned the Holy Books and hid the facts because of their enmity and jealousy.

The Jews tried to deny the Prophethood of Muhammad (SAW) supposedly with the help of Torah, but it also confirmed the coming of the Last Prophet and Last of the divine Books, the *Qur'an*. Therefore they indeed abandoned their own Books and took to the Book of Magic and Sorcery which indeed did not conform to the *Qur'an*. That is why Allah revealed the following *ayah*.

(102) *“And accepted what the devils falsely attributed to the kingdom of Solomon.”* The devils at the time of Solomon (AS) used to ascend to the heaven and eavesdrop on the news regarding the Unseen matters, then they would convey it to the soothsayers, adding a lot of lies in it. The soothsayers then recorded these words in books which were later on hid by Prophet Solomon (AS). After his death the devils tempted the people to dug out those books, buried under Prophet Solomon’s (AS) throne. Then these devils made the *Children of Israel* believe that Solomon (AS) was a sorcerer and he ruled and controlled the kingdom with this magic (*May Allah curse the Jews for what they say*). When Allah revealed the *Qur'an*, the *Jews* disputed in these matters, and did not believe Solomon (AS) to be a Prophet of Allah. That is why Allah says, *“Not that Solomon was an unbeliever, it was the devils who were unbelievers.”* That it was not Solomon (AS) who ruled with magic and sorcery, but it was the devils who taught them as Allah states, *“They taught witchcraft to the people and that which was revealed to the two angels, Harut and Marut in the city of Babylon.”* This means that the devils taught the *Children of Israel* sorcery and magic, and Allah sent two angels *Harut* and *Marut* to Babylon<sup>2</sup>, as a test for them who would teach the people magic, but as Allah says, *“Yet these two angels never taught magic to anyone without saying: “We have been sent to tempt you; do not renounce your faith.”* i.e. they did not teach them anything without saying that it is a test from your Lord. When someone came to them to learn magic, they would discourage him and warn him that he would become a disbeliever, but Allah says, *“Those people kept on learning, from the angels, the magic which could cause discord between husband and wife.”* i.e. in spite of the

warnings from the angels, the people continued to learn magic and indulge in evil acts that included the separation of spouses. *“Although they could harm none with it except with Allah's permission”* meaning, the sorcerers' magic never brings harm to anyone except by Allah's leave. *“They learned, indeed, what harmed them and did not profit them.”* This in effect meant that it harmed their religion even more, and did not benefit them at all. *“Even though they knew fully well that the buyers of magic would have no share in the happiness of the Hereafter.”* i.e. they knew that it was prohibited in *Torah*, but still they persisted in learning the magic. Thus Allah says, *“Surely, they sold their souls for a bad price, if they could understand it!”* That what they preferred i.e. magic and sorcery, instead of faith and belief in the Messenger of Allah (SAW), is indeed a loss in this world and in the Hereafter; but they did not comprehend and understand.

(103) *“If they would have believed and kept themselves away from evil, there would have been a better reward from Allah, if they could understand it!”* i.e. had they followed the Messenger and the Book of Allah, instead of the devils and their sorcery, then Allah says they would have got a better reward than this in the Hereafter, but they had become so stubborn in their arrogance and deviance, that they did not understand.

#### **Foot Notes**

[1] Ibid, narrated by Ibn Abbas.

[2] After the Jews were ousted from Jerusalem , during the reign of Nabu Kad Nazar, they settled in Babylon, and that is when Allah sent these angels to them.