

(31) "Say: "If you do love Allah (SWT) follow me: Allah (SWT) will love you and forgive you your sins" This *ayah* indicates that love of Allah (SWT), the basis and essence of Islam, is attained by following His Messenger (SAW) sincerely in every aspect of life. Thus Allah (SWT) loves the true followers of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and forgives their sins. "For Allah (SWT) is Oft-Forgiving Most Merciful." i.e. Allah (SWT) will not let those who follow His prophet despair of His mercy.

(32) "Say: "Obey Allah and His Messenger"" Our foremost relationship with the Holy Prophet (SAW) is to have true faith and belief in his Prophethood. Secondly as the *ayah* indicates the second relationship with the last Prophet (SAW) is that of obedience. It is incumbent on every Muslim to obey him without question i.e. this obedience must be unconditional as is commanded by Allah (SWT). "but if they turn back then Allah (SWT) does not love those who reject Faith" This *ayah* proves that defying or rejecting Prophet Muhammad (SAW) constitutes disbelief in Islam.

From here we begin the second section of this surah. It was revealed in 9A.H when a deputation from the Christian state of *Najran*, a city between *Hijaz* and *Yaman*, visited the Prophet (SAW). *Najran* was a Christian city and it was governed by three Christian chiefs who came to visit the Prophet (SAW) accompanied by 60 men. Allah (SWT) sent down the following *ayat* during this period to invite the members of the Christian deputation.

(33) "Allah did choose Adam and Noah the family of Abraham and the family of Imran above all people." In this *ayah* Allah (SWT) states that He chose these Prophets and their households above all mankind. He chose Adam (AS) and commanded all the angels to prostrate before him and He chose Noah (AS) and saved him from his people. He also chose the household of Abraham (AS) and that of Imran¹ (AS) over others.

(34) "Offspring one of the other" i.e. They were all on one line of descent. Imran was amongst Abraham's (AS) offspring and Jesus (AS) and John the Baptist (AS) were in progeny of Imran. And Allah (SWT) says: "and Allah (SWT) hears and knows all things"

(35) *"Remember! when the wife of Imran said: "O my Lord! I do dedicate unto You what is in my womb for Your special service""* This *ayah* describes the birth of Mary (AS), the mother of Jesus (AS). The wife of Imran i.e. the mother of Mary (AS), supplicated to Allah (SWT) to grant her offspring and that she would dedicate her child to Allah's (SWT) service. *"so accept this of me for You hear and know all."* i.e. only You hear Your servants and know their intentions.

(36) *"When she was delivered of the child she said: "O my Lord! behold! I have given birth to a daughter". And Allah (SWT) knew best what she brought forth, "and the male is not like the female. I have named her Mary and I commend her and her offspring to Your protection from the Evil one the Rejected.""* i.e. she was not expecting a girl to be born and hoped that it would have been a male, since a male is free from some physical shortcomings and social disabilities associated with a female so she thought that it would have served the purpose better for which she had dedicated her child. And she sought refuge with Allah (SWT) to save her child and her offspring from the evil of Satan.

(37) *"And her Lord graciously accepted her: He made her grow in purity and goodness"* Allah (SWT) accepted Mary (AS) as a result of her mothers supplication and made her grow up into a pious and righteous person. *"She was assigned to the care of Zechariah (AS)"* Zechariah (AS) was the maternal uncle of Mary (AS) and Allah (SWT) assigned him to be her guardian in the temple. *"Every time that he entered her chamber to see her he found her supplied with sustenance. He said: "O Mary! from where have you gotten this?""* Whenever Zechariah (AS) entered the praying place of Mary (AS), he would find with her all kinds of unseasoned fruits. When he saw this he asked her about these fruits, and she replied, *"She said: "From Allah (SWT); for Allah (SWT) provides sustenance to whom He pleases without measure.""* It is clear from this *ayah* that Mary (AS) received food and provision in her seclusion from Allah (SWT) directly without any human intervention.

(38) *"Thereupon Zechariah (AS) prayed to his Lord: "O my Lord! Grant me upright descendants; surely You hear all prayers.""* Zechariah (AS) had become an old man and

his wife also was very old and sterile but when he saw Mary (AS) with all the provision provided to her miraculously by Allah (SWT), he also supplicated to Him to provide him with a righteous child. And surely Allah (SWT) listens to all prayers of His servants.

(39) *"While he was standing in prayer in the chamber, the angels called unto him: "Allah gives you glad tidings of John (AS) who shall confirm the truth of a Word from Allah (SWT)""* The angels delivered the good news to Zechariah (AS) while he was supplicating to his Lord that Allah (SWT) is going to bless him with a child, his name will be *Yahya* (AS) (John the Baptist) and he will confirm the *word* of Allah (SWT). Jesus (AS) has been described as a *word* of Allah (SWT) in the *Qur'an*, which refers to his birth because he was born at the command of Allah (SWT), when He said: *"Be"*. Therefore by confirming the word of Allah (SWT), it means that John (AS) will be the first person to believe in Jesus (AS) as a true Prophet of Allah (SWT). *"And he will be noble and chaste and a Prophet from among the righteous."* i.e. he will be a very chaste and righteous person and will be one of His Prophets

(40) *"He said: "O my Lord! how shall I have a son seeing I am very old and my wife is barren?"* When the angels gave the glad tidings to Zechariah (AS) of a child, he was surprised and wondered as how can he have children as he has become very old and his wife is barren. *"(Allah) said: "Thus Allah (SWT) does what He wills."* i.e. despite your old age and sterility of your wife, Allah (SWT) will bestow upon you a son and He does what He wills.

(41) *"He said: "O my Lord! give me a sign!" "Your Sign shall be that you shall not speak to people for three days but with signals."* i.e. Zechariah (AS) asked his Lord for a sign to assure him and his wife of the birth of their child. Therefore Allah (SWT) gave him a sign that he will not be able to speak with the people except by sign language for three days. *"Then celebrate the praises of your Lord again and again and glorify Him in the evening and in the morning."* Then Allah (SWT) commanded Zechariah (AS) to glorify His praise and thank Him for He blessed him with a child.

(42) *"And when the angels said: "O Mary! Allah (SWT) has chosen you, purified you and chosen you above the women of all nations." In this ayah Allah (SWT) states that He chose Mary (AS), for her virtue and chasteness above women of all nations. She was a very unique woman and Allah (SWT) purified her and chose her because of her service to Him. She was one of those women who achieved perfection as Messenger of Allah (SAW) once said: "Many men achieved perfection, but among women, only Mary the daughter of Imran and Asiah, the wife of Pharaoh, achieved perfection." 2*

(43) *"O Mary! Be obedient to your Lord and prostrate yourself and bow down with those who bow down." The angels told Mary (AS) to submit herself in obedience of her Lord, praise Him, increase acts of worship like prostration and bowing and be grateful to Him for what He has bestowed on her. Thus preparing her for the big news of the birth of her son Jesus (AS).*

(44) *" These are the news from the unseen which We are revealing to you" This ayah indicates that the prophets of Allah (SWT) did not know the unseen, unless the knowledge of it was revealed to them as much as Allah (SWT) willed. "You were not present with them when they cast their pens to decide which of them should be the guardian of Mary (AS); nor were you with them when they argued about it" When Mary's (AS) mother dedicated her in the way of Allah (SWT) in the temple, the priests and scholars of the temple started to argue among themselves as to who shall be the custodian of Mary (AS). Prophet Zechariah (AS) asked them to give her in his custody as he was their chief and also the husband of Mary's (AS) maternal aunt. But they did not want to give Mary (AS) to him as each of them wanted to be her guardian himself. Therefore, they decided to cast lots with the pens with which they used to write the Torah and in the end Allah (SWT) made Zechariah (AS) won the lot and thus he took Mary (AS) in his custody.*

(45) *"Remember when the angels said "O Mary! Allah (SWT) gives you the good news with a Word from Him that you will be given a son"" This noble ayah contains the glad tidings given to Mary (AS) about the birth of his son Jesus (AS). As mentioned earlier in ayah 39, the Word of Allah (SWT) refers to his birth because he was born at the command of Allah (SWT), when He said: "Be". Further Allah (SWT)*

says: *"his name will be Christ, Jesus (AS) the son of Mary (AS)"* Allah (SWT) refers to Jesus (AS) as the son of Mary (AS) because he was born miraculously without any father. We will further elaborate this in the next few *ayat*. And Allah (SWT) says: *"He will be noble in this world and the Hereafter; and he will be from those who are very close to Allah (SWT)"* i.e. He will be honored by Allah (SWT) in this world and the Hereafter and will be among those who are foremost in faith, virtue and shall be favoured by Him.

(46) *"He will speak to the people in the cradle and in maturity"* This *ayah* states that Jesus (AS) spoke to the people from his cradle defending his mother when they accused Mary (AS) of being unchaste and he will also speak to them when he reaches his maturity. The Arabic word كَاهِلَان (kahlan) is translated as maturity or mature age i.e. when a person reaches its full strength or someone who has reached the ripe age. In *Qur'an* this word is only used in reference to Jesus (AS) and to express the prime of manhood. Islamic scholars agree that it denotes the age of 35 or above. They base their views on a hadith reported by Ibn Abbas (RA) that Jesus (AS) was raised up to Allah's (SWT) presence in his early 30s and that he will live for 40 years when he comes again.³ Therefore, Jesus (AS) has not died yet, Allah (SWT) raised him up unto Himself because the *Jews* wanted to kill him, and he will descend again at the end of time and rule the earth according to Islam. And Allah (SWT) says: *"And he will be among the righteous."*

(47) *"She said: "O my Lord! how shall I have a son when no man has touched me?" He said:!"* When the angels gave the glad tidings to Mary (AS) of a son, she was surprised and astonished as was Zechariah (AS) when he was given the good news of his son John (AS). So she said as to how can I have a child when I did not marry anyone, so Allah (SWT) says: *"Even so: Allah (SWT) creates what He wills; when He has decreed a plan He but says to it 'Be' and it is"* i.e. nothing is beyond His power and whatever He wills comes into existence with the blink of an eye at the mere utterance of 'Be'.

(48) *"And Allah (SWT) will teach him the Book, wisdom, the Torah and the Injeel"* i.e. Allah (SWT) will give Jesus (AS) the knowledge of writing and wisdom and he will

profess the same religion previously given to Moses (AS) along with the knowledge of *Injeel*.

(49) "*And a Messenger to the Children of Israel (saying): I have come to you with a sign from your Lord in that I make for you out of clay as it were the figure of a bird and breathe into it and it becomes a bird by Allah's (SWT) leave; and I heal the blind and the lepers and bring the dead to life by Allah's (SWT) leave.*" Allah (SWT) sent Jesus (AS) to the *Children of Israel* as His Messenger along with the miracles that he performed by His will. In the previous *ayat* Allah (SWT) mentions John the Baptist (AS) as His Prophet (*Nabi*) whereas He sent Jesus (AS) to the *Children of Israel* as His Messenger (*Rasul*). The *Qur'an* has used these words separately as well as interchangeably. A Prophet (*Nabi*) is an individual who guides his people to Allah's (SWT) path while a Messenger (*Rasul*) has a special position which is only given to a few of the Prophets. Along with being a deliverer of His Lord's message a Messenger also follows a *shari'ah* (divine law) that came before him. All the Prophets are not Messengers, yet all the Messengers are by default Prophets but it is clear that they are two separate designations. "*And I inform you what you eat and what you store in your houses*" i.e. Jesus (AS) would inform people of what they have eaten and what they have stored up in their houses by Allah's (SWT) will. "*Surely therein is a Sign for you if you believe.*" i.e. if you are willing to accept the truth.

(50) "*(I have come to you) confirming which was before me of the Torah and to make lawful to you part of what was forbidden to you*" i.e. Jesus (AS) was not given any new law but he in fact confirmed the same teachings which were brought by Prophets before him and he informed them about the truth regarding things which they were disputing. "*I have come to you with a Sign from your Lord. So fear Allah (SWT) and obey me.*" i.e. I have brought the truth from Allah (SWT), so submit yourselves to Him in all obedience and follow me.

(51) "*Truly, Allah (SWT) is my Lord and your Lord; so worship Him (alone). This is the straight path.*" The path shown by all the Prophets to mankind including Jesus (AS) was to worship Allah (SWT) alone and submit and be loyal to Him.

(52) *"When Jesus (AS) found disbelief in them he said: "Who will be my helpers to Allah (SWT)?"*

The *Jews* disbelieved in Jesus (AS) and planned to kill him. When Jesus (AS) came to know of their disbelief and their intentions, he called out to his people as to who will help him in conveying the message of Allah (SWT). *"Said the Disciples: "We are Allah's (SWT) helpers, we believe in Allah (SWT) and bear witness that we are Muslims"" Hawariyyun* refers to the disciples of Jesus (AS) who were a few amongst the *Children of Israel* that believed in him as the true Messenger of Allah (SWT). They were deputed by Jesus (AS) to preach and deliver the true message of *Injeel*. They supported him and followed him and submitted themselves to Allah's (SWT) obedience.

(53) *"Our Lord! we believe in your revelations and we follow the Messenger" i.e. we follow the Injeel which Allah (SWT) revealed to His Messenger Jesus (AS). "So count us among those who bear witness." i.e. bear witness to the truth of His message.*

(54) *"And they (disbelievers) plotted and planned and Allah (SWT) planned too and Allah (SWT) is the best of planners."* The *Jews* plotted against Jesus (AS) and tried to kill him but Allah (SWT) saved him raising him up from his house to heaven. Thus Allah (SWT) frustrated their plots and surely He is the best of all planners.

(55) *"And (remember) when Allah (SWT) said: "O Jesus! I will take you and raise you to Myself and purify you of those who disbelieve" The Arabic word tawaffi literally means 'to take' and 'to receive' and it is also used in the meaning 'to seize the soul' in the Qur'an as Allah (SWT) says: "It is He who takes your souls by night"²⁴ Here in this ayah it refers to the fact that Allah (SWT) has raised Jesus (AS) into the heavens and it is the belief of the Muslims that he will return before the Day of Resurrection. Further Allah (SWT) says: "I will make those who follow you superior to those who reject Faith till the Day of Resurrection" Those who follow him are the Muslims as they follow all the Prophets and Messengers in the correct manner and *Jews* are the ones who rejected Jesus (AS) along with those Christians who changed and distorted the religion given to Jesus (AS). But among them there were also sincere Christians who followed the true teachings of Jesus (AS) and that is why they always had an upper hand on the *Jews*. "then shall you all return*

unto Me and I will judge between you of the matters wherein you used to dispute" i.e. All their disputes about faith and religion will be adjudged by Allah (SWT), when they return to Him.

(56) "As to those who reject faith I will punish them with terrible agony in this world and in the Hereafter nor will they have anyone to help" This *ayah* refers to the Jews who rejected Jesus (AS) and those Christians who made changes in their religion. Allah (SWT) says that He will punish them in this world and in the Hereafter and they will not be able to defend or protect themselves against His punishment.

(57) "As to those who believe and do righteousness deeds, Allah (SWT) will pay them their reward in full" On the other hand, Allah (SWT) mentions the rewards of the believers that He will give them their due reward in the Hereafter because of the righteous acts they used to do in this world. But He says: "And Allah (SWT) does not like the wrongdoers"

(58) "This what We recite to you is revelation and a Wise reminder." i.e. what Allah (SWT) revealed to Muhammad (SAW) regarding Jesus (AS) and his life is truth and wise admonition and remembrance.

(59) "This similitude of Jesus before Allah (SWT) is as that of Adam (AS): He created him from dust then said to him: "Be" and he was" This *ayah* addresses the Christians who believed Jesus (AS) to be Allah's (SWT) son or one of the Trinity. Allah (SWT) says. If they claim that because of the miraculous birth of Jesus (AS) i.e. he was created without a father, he is Allah's (SWT) son, then Adam (AS) is more entitled to it because he was created without a father or a mother. Jesus is like Adam in the sight of Allah (SWT). He created him (Adam) of dust and then said to him: 'Be', and he was.

(60) "This is the Truth from your Lord, therefore, do not be of those who doubt" i.e. what we have explained about Jesus (AS) and his life is the truth, therefore do not doubt it.

(61) *"If anyone disputes in this matter with you now after (full) knowledge has come to you say: "Come! let us gather together our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves: then let us earnestly pray and invoke the curse of Allah (SWT) on those who lie!""*

When the Christian deputation from *Najran* came to visit the Prophet (SAW), they argued with him on some matters regarding Jesus (AS) and his birth. Then Allah (SWT) commanded Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to call them to a *Mubalahah* ⁵ if they do not accept the truth. The Christians decided not to accept the challenge as they knew within their hearts that Muhammad (SAW) is a true Messenger of Allah (SWT) and that if they invoked Allah (SWT) for curses, then they and their offspring will certainly perish as they were the liars.

(62) *"Verily, this is the true narrative" i.e. whatever has been narrated regarding Jesus (AS) is the truth. Further Allah (SWT) says: "and none has to be worshipped but Allah (SWT)" This ayah is condemnation of the Christian believers who worship Jesus (AS) and claim that he is Allah's (SWT) son. "and indeed Allah (SWT) is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise." This is the true account. There is not god but Allah (SWT). It is the Allah (SWT) who is the Mighty, the Wise.*

(63) *"But if they turn back then surely, Allah (SWT) has full knowledge of those who do mischief." i.e. Allah (SWT) has full knowledge of those who even after they know the truth deny it and persist in their falsehood and thus create mischief.*

From here begins the third section of this surah which generally addresses the *People of the Book*. The subject-matter of this section is quite similar to the contents of the middle section of surah *Al-Baqarah*.

(64) *"Say: "O people of the Book! come to equitable agreement among us that we shall worship none but Allah (SWT); that we shall not associate any partners with Him"" Allah (SWT) commands Muhammad (SAW) to call the People of the Book to a common creed between them that we will worship Allah (SWT) alone and associate no partners with Him. And "that we shall not take from among ourselves any lords beside Allah (SWT)" The Jews and Christians used to take their rabbis and priests as their Lords as Allah (SWT) said: "They (Jews and Christians) have taken their rabbis and priests to be their Lords beside Allah (SWT)..."⁶ Adi bin Hatim (RA) who reverted to Islam*

from Christianity after the call of the Messenger (SAW) commented upon this *ayah* and said to the Prophet (SAW) that they (i.e. *Jews* and *Christians*) did not worship them as described in this *ayah*. The Prophet (SAW) replied: “*Yes they did. They (rabbis and priests) prohibited the allowed for them (Jews and Christians) and allowed the prohibited, and they obeyed them. This is how they worshipped them.*”⁷ Therefore Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is commanded to call them to come to the common belief which is confirmed by the teachings of their own scriptures that there is none worthy of worship except Allah (SWT), so do not worship other Lords besides Him. Similarly, today in the so-called ‘*modern democratic society*’ people refer to other authorities as their judge and legislators besides Allah (SWT). They believe in secular democracy i.e. the principle of the sovereignty of the people and their right to choose their leaders and legislate whatever law they want even if it opposes the divine laws legislated by Allah (SWT). They believe that in democracy the supreme authority belongs to the peoples legislative assembly. Therefore, legislates that what it wills, without being accounted by anyone. This is the situation in most of the progressive democracies as well as in the most retrogressive dictatorships and these self-proclaimed lords make their own laws forcing others to submit to their standards and values, thus making people worship them. Whereas in Islam the Mastership only belongs to Allah (SWT) and only He has the authority to legislate whatever He wills for His creation. Thus in an Islamic state no legislation can be done and no decision can be taken at any level that is totally or partially repugnant to *Qur’an* and *sunnah*. Further Allah (SWT) says: “*Then, if they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims."*” i.e. If they (*Jews* and *Christians*) do not respond to this call, then let them know that unlike them you have submitted yourselves to Allah (SWT).

(65) “*O people of the Book! Why do you argue with us about Abraham (AS), while the Torah and the Injeel were not revealed till after him*” i.e. why do the *Jews* and the *Christians* dispute with the Muslims about Prophet Abraham (AS) that he was one of them, although they know that *Torah* given to Moses (AS) and *Injeel* given to Jesus (AS) were revealed long after him. That is why Allah (SWT) said: “*Have you then no sense*”.

(66) *“So far you have been disputing about which you had some knowledge! But why are you arguing about that of which you have no knowledge. Allah (SWT) knows and you do not know”* i.e. They (*Jews and Christians*) do not have any knowledge about the religion of Abraham (AS) and yet they argue about it, whereas Allah (SWT) knows that he was a Muslim, one who surrendered wholly to Allah (SWT).

(67) *“Abraham (AS) was neither a Jew nor a Christian but he was a Muslim, true in faith. And he was not one of those who associate partners with Allah (SWT)”* This is the answer to the arguments of the *Jews* and the *Christians* who claimed Prophet Abraham (AS) to be one of them. But Allah (SWT) says that Abraham (AS) was neither a *Jew* nor a *Christian* but a true Muslim *Hanifa*⁸ i.e. one wholly devoted and obedient to Allah (SWT).

(68) *“Verily, those of mankind who have the best claim to Abraham (AS) are those who followed him, and this Prophet and those who have believed”* i.e. Those who can best be described as the followers of Abraham’s (AS) religion are Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his Companions (RA). *“And Allah (SWT) is the Protector and Helper of the believers”* i.e. Allah (SWT) is the guardian of those who believe in all His Messengers and are faithful.

(69) *“Some of the People of the Book want to lead you astray, but they shall not lead astray anyone except themselves, but they perceive not.”* This refers to the *Jews* who wished they could misguide the believers and take them away from Islam but Allah (SWT) says that this behavior will backfire upon them and they will misguide only themselves but due to their arrogance and envy they do not realize it. They mislead none but themselves, though they may not, perceive it.

(70) *“O People of the Book! Why do you deny the revelations of Allah (SWT), while you bear witness”* i.e. Why do you deny Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and *ayat* revealed to him when you yourself know that it is the truth and you bear witness to the fact that you were foretold about the advent of this Prophet in your scriptures.

(71) *"O People of the Book! Why do you confound the truth with falsehood and conceal the truth while you know"* i.e. you know that it is the truth which Prophet Muhammad (SAW) brought but you hide it in your Books and conceal the truth deliberately.

(72) *"Some of the People of the Book say to one another: "Believe in what is revealed to the believers in the morning and deny it in the evening; so that they may turn back"* This was one of the tricks of the *Jews* to make a show of belief for a short span of time and then immediately renounce their belief so as to deceive the simple-minded Muslims who are weak in their religious conviction and take them back to disbelief, thus weakening the force of the Islamic movement. For this purpose they sent people to *Madinah*, who would openly accept Islam in the day and then turn back to their religion in the night so as to create doubts in peoples' hearts about Islam and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). This is the reason for which Islam has ordained the punishment for apostasy. In an Islamic state, a person who abandons Islam is firstly asked to repent but if he does not repent and does not return to the true religion, then he should be killed as an apostate and a disbeliever, because of the command of the Prophet (SAW): *"The blood of a Muslim, who confesses that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that I am His Apostle, cannot be shed except in three cases: In Qisas for murder, a married person who commits illegal sexual intercourse and the one who reverts from Islam (apostate) and leaves the Muslims."*⁹

(73) *"And believe in none except those that follow your religion." Say: "True guidance is the guidance of Allah (SWT)" (Do not believe) "that any one will get the like of that you have received, or they will ever dispute with you in your Lord's presence." Say: "All bounties are in the hand of Allah (SWT), He grants them to whom He pleases"* The *Jews* said to those who were sent to *Madinah* to execute their wicked plan and not to expose their knowledge to the Muslims lest they might learn it and use it as an evidence against them before the Lord. But Allah (SWT) states that those who receive guidance, receive it from Him and none is able to mislead them. Therefore, such tricks of the *Jews* would not avail them anything and He guides whom He wills to the right faith. *"and Allah (SWT) is All-Embracing, All-Knowing"* i.e. Allah (SWT) knows who deserves honor and guidance.

(74) *"He chooses for His mercy whom He pleases, Allah is the Owner of great bounty."* He is merciful to whom He will, His grace is infinite.

(75) *"Among the People of the Book there are some who, if you trust them with a heap of gold, will readily return it back and there are others who, if trusted with a single silver coin will not repay it back unless you constantly stand demanding"* In this *ayah* Allah (SWT) acknowledges the honesty and integrity of some *Jews* and *Christians* who were sincere in their faith and obedient to Allah (SWT) which eventually lead them to embrace Islam. On the other hand most of them are deceitful people who whenever get an opportunity try to deceive the believers usurping their wealth and properties unlawfully. *"because they say, "We are not going to be called to account with regard to the non-Jewish Arabs (Gentiles)."* i.e. the *Jews* differentiated between the Israelites and non-Israelites. They believed that it is fair to be unjust in their dealings with non-Israelite and usurp their properties by whatever means. But they did not allow the same towards a fellow Israelite. This is because they only consider themselves as humans and believe that all gentiles¹⁰ are animals. As it is said in *Talmud*¹¹: *"All gentile children are animals"*¹² and at another place it is said, *"When a Jew murders a gentile, there will be no death penalty. What a Jew steals from a gentile he may keep"*¹³ But Allah (SWT) says: *"And they ascribe a lie to Allah (SWT) while they know it"* i.e. they distorted their Books and deliberately invented these lies against Allah (SWT).

(76) *"But those who fulfill their covenant and fear Allah (SWT) then verily, Allah (SWT) loves the pious."* The fulfillment of a covenant is the quality of a pious person who fears Allah (SWT) and these are the people who are most beloved to Him. The covenant here refers to the pledge of the *Jews* that Allah (SWT) took from them that they will believe in the Last Messenger (SAW) when he is sent.

(77) *"Verily! those who sell the covenant, of Allah (SWT) and their own oaths for a paltry price, they shall have no share in the Hereafter. Allah (SWT) will neither speak to them nor look at them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them and they shall have a painful torment."* Those who break their covenant and prefer the small and ephemeral things of

this life to Hereafter will have no share in the rewards to be given on the *Day of Judgment* nor will Allah (SWT) bestow His mercy on them and in fact they will be dealt in a severe manner and a woeful punishment awaits them which will torment them for ever.

(78) *"And there are some among them who distort the Book with their tongues, so that you may think it is a part of the Book but it is no part of the Book and they say "This is from Allah (SWT)" but it is not from Allah (SWT); and they tell a lie against Allah (SWT) while they know it."* Allah (SWT) describes the characteristics of the *Jews* who distorted their Books and changed their meanings in order to mislead people from the truth. They make the simple-minded people believe that this is from Allah (SWT), but in fact these are their own self-invented beliefs which are nothing but lies. Thus they knowingly ascribe a falsehood to Allah (SWT).

(79) *"It is not (possible) that a man to whom Allah (SWT) has given the Book and Wisdom and Prophethood should say to people: "Be my worshippers rather than Allah's (SWT)" on the contrary (he would say): "Be devoted servants of your Lord, because you are teaching the Book and you are studying it.""* Although this *ayah* specifically refers to the *Christians* but it also refutes the beliefs of those who attribute wrong things to the Prophets, angels or religious scholars and make them an object of worship. This *ayah* states that no Prophet of Allah (SWT) has ever advised people to worship him instead of Allah (SWT) as is the belief of the *Christians* who worship Prophet Jesus (AS) as Allah's (SWT) son. Prophet Jesus (AS) never taught them to worship him or to make him as Allah's son. In fact every Prophet sent by Allah (SWT) invited people to worship Allah (SWT) alone and devote themselves to His obedience and this is what Allah (SWT) revealed in all the Books sent to them for their guidance.

(80) *"Nor would he order you to take angels and prophets for Lords" i.e. the Prophets have always called people to worship Allah (SWT) alone and surely not to worship his self or the angels. "Would he enjoin you to disbelieve after you have become believers" i.e. worshipping anything or any person other than Allah (SWT) constitutes disbelief, so they never call people to become disbelievers; rather they call them to worship Allah (SWT) alone without any partners and to surrender themselves to Allah (SWT).*

Foot Notes

[1] Scholars are of the opinion that Imran mentioned in these ayat was the father of Mary (AS) and thus grandfather of Jesus (AS). On the other hand some believe that Imran was the father of Moses (AS) and Aaron (AS). It is also possible that both opinions are correct and the father of Mary (AS) was named Imran after their ancestor.

[2] At-Tabari 6:397. Also recorded in The Six Books (Kutub As-Sitta) with the exception of Sunan of Abu Dawood.

[3] Muhammed Khalil Herras, Fasl al-Maqal fi raf'i `Isa hayyan wa nuzulih wa qatlihi ad-Dajjal (Cairo: Maktabat as-Sunnah, 1990), 20.

[4] Surah Al-An'am (6) : 60.

[5] A **Mubahalah** is a ceremony announced in order to decisively settle a disputed matter, where each party supplicates to Allah (SWT) for immediate destruction upon themselves if they are wrong.

[6] Surah *At-Tawbah* (9) : 31.

[7] Musnad Ahmed 4 : 378, Tuhfat Al-Ahwadhi 8 : 492, At-Tabari 14 : 210.

[8] The Arabic word '*Hanif*' denotes a person who denounces all other paths in order to follow one particular course.

[9] Sahih Bukhari 9 : 17.

[10] The word **Gentile** has several meanings but in the most common modern use it refers to a non-Jew. In their scriptures they define it as following: "A **gentile** is a pagan or a heathen or some one who is not a Jew or a Christian.". Sometimes they also use the term **Goy** as a disparaging term for one who is not a Jew.

[11] The **Talmud** is a rabbinic discussions on Jewish law, Jewish ethics, customs, legends and stories, which Jewish tradition considers authoritative. It expands on the earlier writings in the Torah in general and in the Mishnah in particular. and much of Rabbinic literature. (Wikipedia)

[12] Yebamoth 98a

[13] Sanhedrin 57a.