

(51) *“O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians as friends and protectors; they are but friends and protectors to one another.”* Allah (SWT) prohibits the Muslims to take the *Jews* and the *Christians* as their friends and protectors. Because they are only friends and protectors to one another against Islam and have a strong enmity against the Muslims.

This *ayah* is more applicable in present times because we see that throughout the long Judeo-Christian history the relationship between the *Jews* and the *Christians* has not been good and it is quite understandable as the latter not only hold the former responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus (AS) but also resent their slander that Jesus (AS) was born out of wedlock. Today, however, all this has changed. The *Jews* have gradually eroded the *Christian* society dividing them into different factions, most of which support them. Protestant *Christians*, in general, and among them Evangelical *Christians*, in particular, provide massive financial and political support to the *Jews* to the extent that these *Christian* conservatives are sometimes often referred to as *Christian Zionists* for their blatant bias.¹ *“And if any amongst you takes them as friends and protectors, then surely he is one of them. Verily, Allah (SWT) guides not those people who are the wrongdoers.”* Allah (SWT) warns the believers that if they take them as friends and protectors then they will be counted as one of them and surely they will have wronged themselves and He will not guide such wrongdoers.

(52) *“And you see those in whose hearts there is a disease, they hurry to their friendship, saying: “We fear lest some misfortune of a disaster may befall us.”* This refers to the hypocrites of *Madinah* who made the disbelievers their friends in secret and in public, and when they were asked as to why they befriended these enemies of Islam, they said that they fear that the disbelievers might defeat the Muslims. Therefore, if this be the outcome of a battle they should be in a position to have their support and favor in return. *“Perhaps Allah (SWT) may bring a victory or a decision according to His Will. Then they will become regretful for what they have been keeping as a secret in themselves.”* i.e. whenever Allah (SWT) made the

Muslims victorious or gave a decision according to His Will, the hypocrites would regret for what they hid in their hearts. Scholars say that in this *ayah*, victory refers to the conquering of *Makkah*² and the decision according to His Will refers to the *Jizyah* paid by the *Jews* and the *Christians*.

(53) *"And those who believe will say: "Are these the men who swore their strongest oaths by Allah (SWT) that they were with you?"*" The hypocrites had promised help and protection to the enemies of Islam in secret, but when the Muslims became victorious, the true reality of the hypocrites was exposed. Then, not only the Muslims abandoned them but they also turned back from their promises with the disbelievers. This made the Muslims ask the disbelievers: are these hypocrites not the same people who promised help for you? *"All that they did has been in vain, and they have become the losers."* i.e. all their claims and promises were nothing but lies and they surely have not succeeded in their schemes.

(54) *"O you who believe! Whoever from among you turns back from his religion, Allah (SWT) will bring a people whom He will love and they will love Him; humble towards the believers, stern towards the disbelievers, fighting in the Way of Allah (SWT), and never afraid of the blame of the blamers."* In this *ayah* Allah (SWT) gives a stern warning to the Muslims not to turn back from Islam, and if they do so then He will replace them with people who are more obedient and righteous than them and whom He loves and they will love Him. They will have the following qualities: they will be stern towards the unbelievers and very lenient and humble with their fellow believers. They will do *Jihad* in His cause and will have no fear of reproach from any critic. *"That is the Grace of Allah (SWT) which He bestows on whom He wills. And Allah (SWT) is All-Embracing, All-Knower."* i.e. this is only from His bounty and Grace that He gives such qualities to whoever He wishes and this is very easy for Him. Surely Allah (SWT) is All-Sufficient for the needs of His creatures and knows everything. He is Munificent, Knowing.

(55) *“Verily, your Protector or Helper is Allah (SWT), His Messenger (SAW), and the believers; those who perform regular prayers, and give regular charity and they bow down.”*

The hypocrites take their friends from the disbelievers or others from the Jews and the Christians instead of the believers but the real protecting friends are Allah (SWT), His Messenger (SAW) and the faithful believers who perform their regular prayers, give the poor their due and bow down in humility when they give charity. Alternatively it also means that they bow down in prayers in congregation with other believers.

(56) *“And whosoever takes Allah (SWT), His Messenger (SAW), and those who have believed, as Protectors, then the party of Allah (SWT) will be the victorious.”* i.e. these are the people who will gain success in this world and in the Hereafter. Allah's followers are sure to triumph.

(57) *“O you who believe! Take not for protectors and helpers, those who take your religion for a mockery and fun from among those who received the Scripture before you, nor from among the disbelievers; and fear Allah (SWT) if you indeed are true believers.”* To emphasize the importance of this command, it has been repeated here, which clearly forbids the Muslims from taking the enemies of Islam and its followers as their friends and protectors. Allah (SWT) then commands His servants to fear Him alone and have faith in Him.

(58) *“And when you call for prayers, they take it (but) as a mockery and fun; that is because they are a people who understand not.”* i.e. the disbelievers used to ridicule and mock at the pronouncement of *Adhan* (Call for prayer). They treated it as a jest and a pastime. They did this because they are devoid of understanding.

(59) *“Say: “O people of the Book! Do you criticize and blame us for no other reason than that we believe in Allah (SWT), and in which has been revealed to us and in that which has been revealed before, and that most of you are transgressors.”* Allah (SWT) commands His Messenger (SAW) to ask those who make fun of Islam and its followers that you ridicule the Islamic teachings and make fun of the Muslims just for the

fact that they believe in Allah (SWT) and this *Qur'an*, along with all the scriptures revealed before it. The fact is that most of them are rebellious in nature and evil-doers.

(60) *"Say: "Shall I inform you of something worse than that, regarding the recompense from Allah (SWT): those (Jews) who incurred the Curse of Allah (SWT) and His Wrath, those of whom (some) He transformed into monkeys and swine, those who worshipped Taghut (forces of evil); such are worse in rank, and far more astray from the Right Path.""* This *ayah* criticizes the *Jews* who did not think well about the Muslims. So, Allah (SWT) says that the *Jews* themselves are the worst in retribution from Allah (SWT). They have incurred His curse and wrath upon themselves and some of them were even transformed into apes and swine, because they worshipped the devil and forces of evil which rebel against Allah (SWT). Such in Allah's (SWT) sight are the worst and those who have strayed farther from the right path.

(61) *"When they come to you, they say: "We believe." But in fact they enter with (an intention of) disbelief and they go out with the same."* i.e. the hypocrites proclaim their faith and pretend to be Muslims when they are in Prophet's presence or with the Muslims. But Allah (SWT) informs His Prophet (SAW) about the disbelief and hypocrisy that the hypocrites conceal in their hearts and the matter of fact is that they came with disbelief and they went out in the same condition. *"And Allah (SWT) knows all what they were hiding."* i.e. He knows their intentions. Allah knows best what they conceal.

(62) *"And you see many of them vie with one another in sin and transgression, and eating illegal things."* This refers to the *Jews* and we have already gone through the details of the crimes and sins committed by the *Jews* in the previous surahs. And *"Evil indeed is that which they have been doing."* Evil indeed are their actions.

(63) *"Why do not the rabbis and the religious learned men forbid them from uttering sinful words and from eating illegal things. Evil indeed is that which they have been performing."*

One of the reasons behind the degeneration of a society is that their scholars and those in authority do not enjoin good or forbid their people from committing sinful things. This is what Allah (SWT) explains about the *Jews* in this *ayah*. Their *Rabbis* and religious leaders not forbid their people from uttering sin or consuming illegal things and persisted in their evil, which eventually became the reason for their decline and punishment.

(64) *"The Jews say: "Allah's Hand is tied up." Be their hands tied up and be they accursed for what they uttered."* By this statement the *Jews* meant that Allah (SWT) does not give and spend from His bounty thus they say that He is poor and we are rich. But far holier and Glorified is He than what they utter about Him. Because of such rebellious attitude and blasphemy against Allah (SWT), He has cursed them with ignorance and misery in this world and humiliation in the Hereafter. *"Nay, both His Hands are widely outstretched. He spends as He wills."* Allah (SWT) spends and gives from His limitless bounty to whomever He Wills. He gives His servants what they ask for and bestows on them His blessings by day and by night, yet His bounty does not decrease but is perfectly full. *"Verily, the Revelation that has come to you from Allah (SWT) increases in most of them their obstinate rebellion and disbelief."* i.e. they had so much hatred and jealousy for the Prophet (SAW) and the Muslims that whenever Allah's revelations were sent to His Prophet (SAW), it increased them in their wickedness and unbelief. *"We have put enmity and hatred amongst them till the Day of Resurrection."* i.e. because of their defiance and rejection of Allah's (SWT) revelations and His Prophet (SAW). *"Every time they kindled the fire of war, Allah (SWT) extinguished it."* This refers to the plots and schemes they used to conspire against the believers. *"And they (ever) strive to make mischief on earth. And Allah (SWT) does not like the mischief makers."* When they fail in their plots and schemes, then they strive hard to spread mischief but Allah (SWT) does not love the mischief mongers.

(65) *"And if only the people of the Book had believed and been righteous. We would indeed have blotted out their sins and admitted them to Gardens of bliss."* i.e. if they would

have sincerely believed in Allah (SWT) and followed His Messenger (SAW), then surely He would forgive their sins and admit them in Paradise.

(66) *“And if only they had acted according to the Torah, the Injeel, and what has been sent down to them from their Lord, they would surely have gotten provision from above them and from underneath their feet.”* This means that if the People of the Book had established the laws revealed to their Prophets and believed in what was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) i.e. the *Qur’an*, then surely Allah (SWT) would have blessed them with provisions descending from the sky as well as from those grown in the earth. *“There are from among them people who are on the right course.”* This refers to those *Jews* and *Christians* who adhered to their Books and followed their laws and when Allah (SWT) sent His last Prophet (SAW) with His last revelation, they also believed in him and followed him. Amongst them was Abdullah bin Salaam (RAA), who was a very knowledgeable and pious *Jewish* scholar and as soon as he heard of Prophet’s message, he embraced Islam. *“But many of them do evil deeds.”* i.e. majority of them do nothing but evil.

(67) *“O Messenger (SAW)! Proclaim which has been sent down to you from your Lord.”* Allah (SWT) commands His Messenger (SAW) to convey His message to mankind and thus fulfill his mission. *“And if you do not, then you have not conveyed His Message.”* i.e. if you do not deliver the message revealed to you O Muhammad (SAW) then you have not done justice to your mission and conveyed Allah’s message. That is why at the Farewell *Hajj* the Prophet (SAW) asked his Companions (RAA), did I convey Allah's message. The Companions (RAA) unanimously replied, "we bear witness that you have conveyed the message and fulfilled your mission". He raised his finger towards the sky and said, O'Allah! Be witness". He repeated it thrice. *“Allah (SWT) will protect you from mankind.”* Allah (SWT) encourages His Messenger (SAW) to convey His message to mankind and asked not to fear any of them for He will support him and protect him from his enemies. *“Verily, Allah (SWT) guides not the people who disbelieve.”* i.e. Prophet’s duty is only to convey the message and it is Allah

(SWT) who guides whom He Wills and He has decided that He will not guide those who disbelieve. He does not guide the unbelievers.

(68) *"Say: "O people of the Book! You have no ground to stand on unless you act according to the Torah, the Injeel, and what has (now) been sent down to you from your Lord.""* This *ayah* warns the People of the Book that you cannot attain salvation unless you adhere to the laws revealed to you by Allah (SWT) and believe in that which He has sent to His last Prophet (SAW). *"Verily, that which has been sent down to you from your Lord increases in many of them their obstinate rebellion and disbelief."* This *ayah* has already been commented upon in *ayah* 64 of this surah. *"So be not sorrowful over the people who disbelieve."* i.e. O Muhammad (SAW) you should not grieve about those who reject faith for they will certainly be punished for their disbelief.

(69) *"Surely, those who believe, those who are the Jews and the Sabians and the Christians; whosoever believed in Allah (SWT) and the Last Day, and do what is right – on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve."* We have already commented upon this *ayah* in the explanation of *ayah* 62 of surah *Al-Baqarah*.

(70) *"Verily, We took the covenant of the Children of Israel and sent them Messengers. Whenever there came to them a Messenger with what they themselves desired not – a group of them they accused of lying and killed some."* Allah (SWT) reminds the *Jews* of their covenant that He took from them at Mount *Sinai* that they will obey Him and His Messengers and worship none with Him. But instead they followed their desires and whenever Allah (SWT) sent them His Messengers with guidance and truth, they either called them imposters or killed them.⁴

(71) *"They thought there will be no trial, so they became blind and deaf; after that Allah (SWT) turned to them; yet again many of them became blind and deaf."* i.e. those who mocked at Allah's Messengers and killed them thought that no affliction would follow and they will never be punished or put to trial for their crimes. So they became blind from the truth and turned a deaf ear to Allah's

message. Even after that Allah (SWT) turned to them in mercy and forgave them but they still persisted in their disbelief and many of them again turned blind and deaf. *"And Allah (SWT) is the All-Seer of what they do."* i.e. Allah observes all their actions. He is ever watching over what they do.

(72) *"Surely, they have disbelieved who say: "Allah (SWT) is the Messiah, son of Mary." But the Messiah (AS) said: "O Children of Israel! Worship Allah (SWT), my Lord and your Lord.""* Allah (SWT) criticizes the Christians for their claim that Jesus is God incarnate. They believe that Jesus (AS) claimed divinity for himself but Allah (SWT) rebukes them and says that Jesus (AS) never uttered such words, instead he commanded the *Children of Israel* to worship Allah (SWT) alone, besides whom none stands worthy of worship. *"Verily, whosoever sets up partners in worship with Allah (SWT), then Allah (SWT) has forbidden Paradise for him, and the Fire will be his abode. And for the wrongdoers there are no helpers."* This is the worst crime a person can commit i.e. associating partners with Allah (SWT), and it deserves the severest of punishments. Thus Allah (SWT) has forbidden Paradise for such and has chosen Hellfire as their eternal abode, and their will be no helper or protector for such wrongdoers.

(73) *"Surely, disbelievers are those who said: "Allah (SWT) is the third of the three (in a Trinity)." But there is no God but One Allah (SWT). And if they desist not from saying so, verily, a painful torment will befall the disbelievers among them."* Allah (SWT) rebukes the *Christians* for their false belief of Trinity and commands them to refrain from uttering such words and worship Him alone without attributing any partners or sons to Him, and believe in Jesus (AS) only as His Messenger and His servant. But if they persist in their disbelief and *Shirk* then a painful punishment awaits them in the Hereafter.

(74) *"Will they not repent to Allah (SWT) and ask His Forgiveness? For Allah (SWT) is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."* Although they had committed such grave sins and persisted in their *Shirk*, yet Allah (SWT) in His mercy, calls them to repent from their sins and from associating partners to Him, so that He forgives

them. For surely, He forgives those who repent and mend their ways. He is Forgiving, Merciful.

(75) *"The Messiah, son of Mary, was no more than a Messenger; many were the Messengers that passed away before him."* The true status of Jesus (AS) in Islam is that he is one of the honorable Messengers of Allah (SWT) just like all other Prophets and Messengers that came before him, thus refuting the false beliefs of the *Christians* that he claimed divinity. *"His mother was a truthful woman. They both used to eat food."* She was a very pious and virtuous woman and contrary to the beliefs of the *Christians* she never claimed divinity for herself or her son Jesus (AS). In fact both of them were mere mortals and human beings and like the rest of Allah's creatures they were also subject to necessities and needed food to live, whereas Allah (SWT) does not eat. *"Look how We make the revelations clear to them, yet look how they are deluded away (from the truth)."* Allah (SWT) has made His revelations clear to them, yet see how they ignore the truth.

(76) *"Say: "How do you worship besides Allah (SWT) something which has no power either to harm or to benefit you?"* Allah (SWT) commands His Prophet (SAW) to ask those who worship other deities besides Him that how can your minds be so perverted that you worship those who cannot prevent any harm from you nor can they benefit you. *"But it is Allah (SWT) Who is the All-Hearer, All-Knower."* i.e. it is only Allah (SWT) who has the authority and power to protect you and bring benefit for you, as He sees all His servants and He hears all what they say.

(77) *"Say: "O people of the Book! Exceed not the limits in your religion other than the truth, and do not follow the vain desires of people who went astray in times gone by, and who misled many, and strayed from the Right Path."* Allah (SWT) commands His Messenger (SAW) to say to the *Jews* and the *Christians* that do not transgress the bounds set by Him and do not exaggerate in your religion e.g. Allah (SWT) sent Jesus (AS) as His Messenger but the *Christians* exaggerated his status and gave him the rank of *God*. And do not follow the evil ways and

misguidance of those who were before you. They misled many others before you and they themselves strayed from the straight path.

Foot Notes

[1] Cf. Why Protestants are supporting Jews, by Abid Ullah Jan.

[2] At-Tabari 10 : 405.

[3] Sahih Muslim 2 : 886.

[4] For more on the covenant, Refer to ayah 83 of surah Al-Baqarah and its ayah 87 on Children of Israel slaying the Prophets.