

(78) *“Those among the Children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of David (AS) and Jesus (AS), son of Mary (AS). That was because they disobeyed and were ever transgressing beyond bounds.”* Psalms of David (AS) and Injeel given to Jesus (AS) has different passages and statements by these noble Prophets cursing the *Children of Israel*. David (AS) prophesied about the wickedness of the *Jews* and said: *“The sinner speaketh what will condemn him, and there is no fear of God before his eyes.”*<sup>1</sup> And he said: *“They brought forth against me the word of error; he who slept shall he not awake? Shall then the man of my peace (i.e., my friend), whom I trusted, who ate my food, lift up his foot against me?”*<sup>2</sup> Likewise Prophet Jesus (AS) also condemned them and he said: *“Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?”*<sup>3</sup> They were cursed because they disobeyed Allah’s commandments and transgressed against His creatures.

(79) *“They did not to forbid one another from committing iniquities. Verily, evil was what they used to do.”* As we already mentioned in the previous discourse, one of the reasons for the downfall of a society is that they do not enjoin good and forbid one another from committing evil deeds. The same applies to the *Children of Israel*; they in their time did not forbid each other from the wickedness they did and indeed it was evil what they used to commit.

(80) *“You see many of them taking the disbelievers as their protectors and helpers. Evil indeed is that which their souls have sent forward before them, for that Allah's Wrath fell upon them and in torment they will abide.”* Allah (SWT) curses the *Jews* for taking the disbelievers as their friends and protectors. The *Jews* of *Madinah* had so much hatred against Prophet Muhammad (SAW) that they even made friendship ties with the pagan Arabs and considered them better than the Muslims. But Allah (SWT) says that they have only sent forth for themselves their evil deeds in

the Hereafter and for that reason they incurred His wrath and punishment upon themselves, which they will suffer forever.

(81) *“And had they believed in Allah (SWT), and in the Prophet (SAW) and in what has been revealed to him, never would they have taken them as protectors and helpers, but many of them are the transgressors.”* i.e. if the *Jews* had believed in Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW) and what was revealed to him i.e. the *Qur’an*, then surely they would have not sided with the disbelievers and made them their friends and protectors instead of the believers. But Allah (SWT) says that most of them disobeyed and became evildoers.

The following *ayaat* were revealed concerning the delegation that *An-Najashi* of Ethiopia sent to Prophet Muhammad (SAW). They were the followers of the teachings of Jesus (AS), who when came to the Prophet (SAW) and heard the *Qur’an*, they wept and felt humbled and immediately embraced Islam.

(82) *“Verily, you will find the strongest among men in enmity to the believers (Muslims) are the Jews and the Pagans.”* The *Jews* and the Pagan Arabs were the worst enemies of Islam. This is because the *Jews* knew that what Prophet Muhammad (SAW) brought was the truth but they in their arrogance and defiance rejected his message and rebelled against the commandments of Allah (SWT). Even today we see that Israel is the worst enemy of Islam and has even made ties with the Pagan Hindus<sup>4</sup> against the Muslims. *“And you will find the nearest in love to the believers (Muslims) are those who say: “We are Christians.” That is because amongst them are priests and monks, and they are not proud.”* This does not refer to those *Christians* who merely say that we are *Christians*, but to those who sincerely follow the true teachings of Prophet Jesus (AS) and the *Injeel*. This is because amongst them are those who are monks and priests who worship their Lord and they are free from pride.

(83) *“And when they listen to what has been sent down to the Messenger (SAW), you see their eyes overflowing with tears because of the truth they have recognized. They say: “Our Lord! We believe; so write us down among the witnesses.”* When the delegation from Ethiopia came to the Prophet (SAW) and heard the *Qur’an*, they cried and were humbled, as they recognized the truth of the Prophethood of Muhammad (SAW), whose advent was already prophesized in their Scriptures. Thus they embraced Islam and prayed to Allah (SWT) to count them among the witnesses of the truth.

(84) *“And why should we not believe in Allah (SWT) and in that which has come to us of the truth? And we wish that our Lord will admit us along with the righteous people.”* They further supplicated to Allah (SWT) and humbled themselves in His obedience. They very much wished for admission among the righteous.

(85) *“So because of what they said, Allah rewarded them Gardens under which rivers flow, they will abide therein forever.”* Thus Allah (SWT) rewarded them for their obedience and recognizing the truth and admitted them in Paradise, which will be their abode forever. *“Such is the reward of good-doers.”* i.e. those who devote their lives for Allah’s religion and worship Him alone with full sincerity and devotion. This indeed is the recompense of the righteous.

(86) *“But those who disbelieved and belied Our revelations, they shall be the dwellers of the (Hell) Fire.”* On the contrary, the disbelievers and those who deny Allah's revelations will be the inmates of Hellfire and they will remain in it forever.

(87) *“O you who believe! Make not unlawful the good things, which Allah (SWT) has made lawful to you, and transgress not. Verily, Allah (SWT) does not like the transgressors.”* i.e. do not exaggerate in your religion and make it difficult for you to follow by even prohibiting those things which Allah

(SWT) has made lawful for you and do not fall into extravagance; rather accept what He has made lawful for you with gratitude, because He does not like those who exceed the bounds set by Him.

(88) *“And eat of the things which Allah (SWT) has provided for you, lawful and good, and fear Allah (SWT) in Whom you believe.”* i.e. eat all the pure and lawful things that Allah (SWT) has made lawful for you and always remain conscious of Allah (SWT) in whom you believe, by fulfilling His commandments and obeying Him sincerely.

(89) *“Allah (SWT) will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths.”* We already commented upon the subject of unintentional oaths in *ayah* 225 of surah *Al-Baqarah*. *“But He will punish you for your deliberate oaths; for its expiation feed ten poor persons, on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families; or clothe them; or set free a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days. That is the expiation for the oaths when you have sworn. And protect your oaths. Thus Allah (SWT) makes clear to you His revelations, that you may be grateful.”* This *ayah* describes the expiation for breaking one’s deliberate oaths. Allah (SWT) has given a person the choice of three things; Feeding ten poor persons with the average kind of food that he feeds his family, by giving each person half a *Saa*<sup>5</sup> of the usual local staple, such as rice, wheat etc. This is equivalent to approximately one-and-a-half kilograms. If he cannot feed ten persons then he should give clothing for ten poor people, which means giving each of them clothing that is suitable for praying in and if he cannot afford then he has to free a believing slave. And whoever cannot do any of the above should fast for three consecutive days. Therefore, be mindful of your oaths and pay their expiation if you broke them. In this way Allah (SWT) explains His revelations and makes clear His signs to the mankind, so that they are grateful to Him.

(90) *“O you who believe! Intoxicants and gambling, dedication to stones, and raffling by arrows are an abomination of Satan’s handiwork. So avoid that in order that you*

*may be successful.*" In this *ayah* Allah (SWT) forbids the believers from the consumption of intoxicants and gambling. For further explanation on the prohibition of intoxication and gambling refer to *ayah* 219 of *Al-Baqarah* and *ayah* 43 of *An-Nisa*, and refer to *ayah* 3 of this surah for dedication to stone alters and making decision by raffling of arrows. All these are filthy works of the cursed *Satan*. Therefore Allah (SWT) commands His servants to avoid such things and stay away from them as far as possible, so that they may be successful in this world and in the Hereafter.

(91) *"Satan wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah (SWT) and from the prayer."* These are the tools of *Satan* to distract a believer from the worship and remembrance of his Lord and to stir up hatred and discord between the believers. *"So, will you not then abstain?"* This is a stern and final warning from Allah (SWT) concerning the consumption of Intoxicants and gambling.

(92) *"And obey Allah (SWT) and the Messenger (SAW), and beware. Then if you turn away, you should know that it is Our Messenger's duty to convey (the Message) in the clearest way."* Allah (SWT) commands His servants to obey Him and His Messenger (SAW) and abstain from all these things which He has prohibited for you. But those who do not then only they themselves will be responsible for the consequences and there will be no blame on the Prophet (SAW) as his duty is only to convey His message clearly to mankind and it is Allah (SWT) who guides whom He Wills and He will not guide those who disbelieve in Him and His Messengers.

(93) *"Those who believe and do righteous good deeds, there is no sin on them for what they ate (in the past)."* At that time when the *ayaat* prohibiting the intoxicants were revealed, some people asked the Prophet (SAW) about those who died drinking it i.e. before its prohibition. Thus Allah (SWT) revealed these *ayaat*, which meant that He will forgive those who

consumed intoxicants before its prohibition if they had firm faith in Him and His Messenger (SAW) and performed righteous deeds afterwards. *“If they fear Allah (SWT), and believe and do righteous good deeds, and again fear Allah (SWT) and believe, and once again fear Allah (SWT) and do good deeds with perfection. And Allah (SWT) loves the good-doers.”* This is a very important *ayah* which gives an explanation of the three essential elements of *Deen: Islam, Iman* and *Ihsan*. This is also explained in the hadith of Gabriel in which he asked the Prophet (SAW) about these three essential elements. When angel Gabriel asked him about Islam, he replied: *“Islam is that you bear witness that there is no God, except the One Allah (SWT) and that Muhammad (SAW) is the Messenger of Allah (SWT); that you establish your prayers; that you pay Zakah (obligatory charity); that you fast during Ramadan; and that you undertake the Hajj of the Bait Allah, if you are in a position to do so.”* Then Gabriel asked the Prophet (SAW) about Iman, he replied: *“It is to believe in Allah (SWT), His angels, His books, His Messengers, and the Last Day, and to believe in divine destiny, both the good and the evil thereof.”* Then he asked about Ihsan, so the Prophet (SAW) replied: *“It is to worship Allah (SWT) as though you are seeing Him, and while you see Him not, yet truly He sees you”*. Within these three stages the driving force that carries a person from one stage to a higher one is *Taqwa*. It is a state of mind and heart which reflects in every aspect of a believer’s life. It can also be termed as God-consciousness i.e. consciousness of one's duty towards Him, and an awareness of one's accountability to Him. Thus increase in consciousness and awareness of a believer’s duty towards Allah (SWT) also increases him in faith, and spiritually takes him up to a higher level.

(94) *“O you who believe! Allah (SWT) will certainly make a trial of you with something in the game that is well within reach of your hands and your spears, that Allah (SWT) may test who fears Him unseen.”* Allah (SWT) tests His servants with bounties, calamities and afflictions, so that the earnest and sincere believers who fear Him, though unseen, can be distinguished

from those who lack zeal and genuine belief. In this *ayah* the game refers to the hunt of animals which is not allowed in state of *Ihram*. Thus Allah (SWT) says that He tests the believers by making a lawful animal well within their reach of their hands or their spears. *"Then whoever transgresses thereafter, for him there is a painful torment."* This is a threat for those who transgress and disobey Allah (SWT) even after they have been warned and they will suffer a painful punishment in the Hereafter.

(95) *"O you who believe! Do not game while you are in a state of Ihram, and whosoever of you kills it intentionally, the penalty is an offering, brought to the Ka'bah, of a domestic animal equivalent to the one he killed, as determined by two just men among you; or, for expiation, he should feed poor persons, or its equivalent in Fasting, that he may taste the heaviness (punishment) of his deed."* This *ayah* describes the rulings on expiation of killing an animal while in state of *Ihram*. It states that if a person hunts a domestic animal like sheep, goat, cow etc. intentionally while in state of *Ihram* for *Hajj* or *Umrah* then he has to offer a sacrifice at *Ka'bah*, of an animal similar to one that was killed, which will be judged by two men among the believers. If the guilty person cannot afford to sacrifice an animal then he must feed six poor people or fast for three days.<sup>6</sup> This is all done so that the guilty person tastes the evil consequences of his actions. *"Allah (SWT) has forgiven what is past, but whosoever commits it again, Allah (SWT) will take retribution from him. And Allah (SWT) is All-Mighty, All-Able of Retribution."* i.e. Allah (SWT) forgives those sins committed during the time of ignorance, but those who repeats it again after it has been declared prohibited, then He will take retribution from him, and surely Allah (SWT) is All-Mighty and capable of retribution.

(96) *"Lawful to you is the pursuit of water-game and its use for food for the benefit of yourselves and those who travel, but forbidden is the pursuit of land-game as long as you are in a state of Ihram."* Those who travel by sea are allowed to hunt

and eat its food even if they are in a state of *Ihram* for Pilgrimage while the prohibition of hunting on land for them remains unlawful. *"And fear Allah (SWT) to Whom you shall be gathered back."* i.e. be mindful of your duty to Allah (SWT) and refrain from what He has forbidden to you and remember that you will all be assembled in His presence.

(97) *"Allah (SWT) has made the Ka'bah, the Sacred House, an asylum of security for mankind, and also the Sacred Month and the animals of offerings and the garlanded."* Allah (SWT) has made the city of *Makkah* sacred, in which war is prohibited, thus giving a sense of security for those living in it or in its precincts. Further Allah (SWT) reminds us the sanctity of the Sacred month (*Dhul-Hijjah*) so that we refrain from what He has prohibited in it i.e. warfare, and also of those animals sent to the *Ka'bah* for sacrifice and those who have garlands in their necks to mark them off as sacred. *"that you may know that Allah (SWT) has knowledge of all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, and Allah (SWT) has full knowledge of everything."* i.e. Allah (SWT) has made all these symbols as a sign for mankind so that they know that He has supreme knowledge of everything.

(98) *"Know that Allah (SWT) is Severe in punishment and that Allah (SWT) is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."* i.e. He is severe in punishment for those who disobey Him and reject His commandments, but He forgives and bestows His mercy upon those who repent and do righteous deeds thereafter.

(99) *"The Messenger's duty is but to convey (the Message). And Allah (SWT) knows all that you reveal and all that you conceal."* The duty of the Prophet (SAW) is only to give warning and convey the message. Allah (SAW) knows all that you hide and all that you reveal.

(100) *"Say: "Not equal are the evil things and the good things, even though the abundance of evil may please you. "So fear Allah (SWT) much, O men of*

*understanding in order that you may be successful.”* This is an admonition to all mankind that all that is evil cannot be equal to all that is good even though the abundance of bad may dazzle them and they might get inclined towards it. Thus Allah (SWT) commands those who have sound minds to fear Him alone and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds that He has forbidden and perform all kinds of good things that He has permitted so that they may prosper in this world and in the Hereafter.

### **Foot Notes**

[1] Psalm 36: 1.

[2] Psalm 61: 9.

[3] Gospel of Matthew 23: 33.

[4] Bilateral relations between India and Israel have strengthened significantly in recent years with both nations experiencing a convergence of interests on a range of issues, especially in war against Islam.

[5] One Saa' is equal to four Mudd, and one Mudd is equal to the amount held by cupping the two hands together. It is a measure by volume and not by weight.

[6] At-Tabari 11: 31.