

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

End Notes

- [1] Scholars are of the opinion that Imran mentioned in these *ayaat* was the father of *Maryam* (AS) and thus grandfather of *'Isa* (AS). On the other hand, some believe that Imran was the father of *Musa* (AS) and *Haroon* (AS). It is also possible that both opinions are correct and the father of *Maryam* (AS) may have been 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 nuzulihi wa qatlihi ad-Dajjal (Cairo: Maktabat As-Sunnah, 1990), 20.
- [4] Surah Al-An'aam (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.

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ISLAM: DEEN, NOT RELIGION

The struggle to establish the domination of Islam is one of our basic, though unfortunately forgotten, duties. The significance of this obligation is underscored by a tradition according to which Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is reported to have said: "If a Muslim dies and he had neither participated in any war for the cause of Almighty Allah (SWT) nor had he a desire to take part in such a war, then he dies in a state of a certain kind of nifaq (i.e., hypocrisy, and not of true faith)." A Muslim whose life is devoid of the Jihad to establish the system of Khilafah, and who lacks the longing and the deep-felt desire to participate in it and to sacrifice his life for this purpose, can certainly be a Muslim in the legal sense of the word but such a person cannot be a Momin in the judgement of Almighty Allah (SWT). This is because true conviction or Iman, although itself a hidden and covert reality, necessarily manifests itself in the form of Jihad for the cause of Almighty Allah (SWT). This, according to the Holy Quran, is what defines a true believer.

"They alone are the believers who come to believe in Allah and His messenger and afterwards never doubt, and who strive in the way of Allah with their wealth and their lives. Only they are truthful and sincere." (Al-Hujurat 49:15)

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i.e. what Allah (SWT) has revealed to Muhammad (SAW) regarding 'Isa (AS) and his life is the truth and wise admonition and remembrance.

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٥٩﴾

(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 'Isa (AS) to be Allah's son or one of the Trinity because of his miraculous birth, as he was created without a father. But then Adam (AS) is more entitled to it because he was created without a father or a mother. 'Isa is like Adam in the sight of Allah (SWT). He created him (Adam) of dust and then said to him: 'Be', and he was.

الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ الْمُنْتَرِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

(60) This is the Truth from your Lord, therefore, do not be of those who doubt.

i.e. what we have explained about 'Isa (AS) and his life is the truth, therefore do not doubt it.

فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَل لَّعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿٦١﴾

(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 'Isa (AS) and his birth. At that, Allah (SWT) commanded Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to call them to a *Mubalahah* [5] if they did not accept the truth. At this revelation, the Christians decided not to accept the challenge and went back to Najran.

إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ وَمَا مِن إِلَهِ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٦٢﴾

(62) Verily, this is the true narrative and none has to be worshipped but Allah and indeed Allah is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

i.e. whatever has been revealed regarding 'Isa (AS) is definitely the correct narration "and none has to be worshipped but Allah" This *ayah* is condemnation of the Christian believers who worship 'Isa (AS) and claim that he is Allah's son.

فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٦٣﴾

(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 fully perceiving the truth, deny it and persist in their falsehood and thus create mischief.

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يُعَذِّبُنِي وَإِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَىٰ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ مَا جَعَلْتُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيهَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

(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. I will make those who follow you superior to those who reject Faith till the Day of Resurrection, then shall you all return unto Me and I will judge between you of the matters wherein you used to dispute.*

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" [4] Here in this *ayah* it refers to the fact that Allah (SWT) has raised 'Isa (AS) bodily unto the heavens and it is the belief of the Muslims that he will return before the Day of Resurrection. "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 the Jews are the ones who rejected 'Isa (AS) along with those Christians who changed and distorted the religion given to him. But among them, there were also sincere Christians who followed the true teachings of 'Isa (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.

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَعَذَّبْنَاهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

(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 'Isa (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 nor will they have any helpers.

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَجِبُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

(57) *As to those who believe and do righteous deeds, Allah (SWT) will pay them their reward in full. And Allah (SWT) does not like the wrongdoers.*

On the other hand, Allah (SWT) mentions the rewards of the believers in the Hereafter because of the righteous acts they used to do in this world.

ذَلِكَ نَسْنُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ ﴿٥٨﴾

(58) *This what We recite to you is revelation and a Wise reminder.*

are believers, these miracles should testify that 'Isa (AS) was a Messenger of Allah.

وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَلَا حِلَّ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي هُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَاتٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا ۝

(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 have come to you with a Sign from your Lord. So fear Allah and obey me.

'Isa (AS) had come to confirm the previous teachings of Prophets and Messengers, especially Musa (AS), and to make certain things lawful which were forbidden according to the old law. "I have come to you with a Sign from your Lord. So fear Allah and obey me." i.e. I have brought the truth from Allah (SWT), so submit yourselves to Him in all obedience and follow me.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَأَعْبُدُواهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ۝

(51) Truly, Allah is my Lord and your Lord; so worship Him (alone). This is the straight path.

The path shown by all the Prophets including 'Isa (AS) to mankind was to worship Allah (SWT) alone and submit and be loyal to Him.

فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عَيْسَىٰ مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَأَشْهَدُ بِأَنَّكَ مُسْلِمُونَ ۝

(52) When Jesus found disbelief in them he said: "Who will be my helpers to Allah (SWT)?" Said the Disciples: "We are Allah's (SWT) helpers, we believe in Allah (SWT) and bear witness that we are Muslims."

When 'Isa (AS) perceived disbelief amongst the Jews and felt that they were not willing to listen to the word of Allah (SWT), he called out to his people as to who would 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 'Isa (AS) who were a few amongst the Children of Israel that believed in him as the true Messenger of Allah (SWT).

رَبِّنَا آمَنَّا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ۝

(53) "Our Lord! We believe in your revelations and we follow the Messenger. So count us among those who bear witness."

i.e. we follow the Injeel which Allah (SWT) revealed to His Messenger, 'Isa (AS) and bear witness to the truth of His message.

وَمَكَرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرٌ الْمَكْرِينَ ۝

(54) And they (disbelievers) plotted and planned and Allah planned too and Allah is the best of planners.

The Jews plotted against 'Isa (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.

قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿٤٧﴾

(47) She said: "O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man has touched me?" He said: "Even so Allah (SWT) creates what He wills; when He has decreed a plan He but says to it 'Be' and it is!"

When the angels gave the glad tidings of a son to *Maryam* (AS), she was surprised as was *Zakariyya* (AS) when he was given the good news of his son, *Yahya* (AS). So she asked as to how she could have a child when no man had ever touched her. In reply, 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 immediately at the mere utterance of 'Be'.

وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنجِيلَ ﴿٤٨﴾

(48) And Allah (SWT) will teach him the Book, wisdom, the Torah and the Injeel.

i.e. Allah (SWT) will give *Masih* (AS) knowledge and wisdom and he will profess the same religion previously given to *Musa* (AS) along with the knowledge of *Injeel*.

وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَبْرَصَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُخِي الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

(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. And I inform you what you eat and what you store in your houses. Surely therein is a Sign for you if you believe.

Allah (SWT) sent *'Isa* (AS) to the *Children of Israel* as His Messenger along with the miracles that he performed by His will. In the previous *ayah*, Allah (SWT) mentions *Yahya* (AS) as His Prophet (*Nabi*) whereas He sent *'Isa* (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 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*. A Prophet may be killed but a Messenger cannot be killed. All the Prophets are not Messengers, yet all the Messengers are by default Prophets. "Surely therein is a Sign for you if you believe." i.e. for those who

Maryam (AS) dedicated her to the service of Allah (SWT) in the temple, the priests and scholars of the temple started to argue amongst themselves as to who shall be the custodian of *Maryam* (AS). Prophet *Zakariyya* (AS) asked them to give her in his custody as he was their chief and also the husband of *Maryam*'s maternal aunt, but they did not want to give *Maryam* (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) win and he took *Maryam* (AS) in his custody.

إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ لِمَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْهُ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ
وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

(45) Remember when the angels said: "O Mary! Allah gives you the good news with a Word from Him that you will be given a son, his name will be Christ, Jesus, the son of Mary. He will be noble in this world and the Hereafter; and he will be from those who are very close to Allah (SWT)."

This noble *ayah* contains the glad tidings given to *Maryam* (AS) about the birth of her son *'Isa* (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". Allah (SWT) refers to *'Isa* (AS) as the son of *Maryam* (AS) because he was born miraculously without any father. "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 one of the nearest to Him.

وَيُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

(46) "He will speak to the people in the cradle and in maturity. And he will be among the righteous."

This *ayah* states that *Masih* (Jesus) (AS) spoke to the people from his cradle defending his mother when they accused her of being unchaste and he will also speak to them when he reaches his maturity. The Arabic word كَهْلًا (*kahlan*) is translated as maturity or mature age i.e. when a person reaches his full strength or someone who has reached the ripe age. In the *Qur'an*, this word is only used in reference to *Masih* (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 *Masih* (AS) was raised up to Allah's presence in his early 30s and that he will live for 40 years when he comes again. [3] Therefore, *'Isa* (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.

When the angels gave the glad tidings of a child to *Zakariyya* (AS), he was surprised and wondered as to how he could have a child at such an old age and when his wife was also 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.

قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً ۚ قَالَ آيَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمْرًا ۖ وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِالْعِشِيِّ
وَالْإِبْكَارِ ﴿٤١﴾

(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. Then celebrate the praises of your Lord again and again and glorify Him in the evening and in the morning."

Zakariyya (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 would not be able to speak to people except by sign language for three days and ordered him to glorify and thank Him.

وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَايِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

(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 *Maryam* (AS) for her virtue and chasteness above women of all nations and has purified her. The 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]

يَمْزِجُ بَيْنَ أَفْتَتَى لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْتَجِدِّي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

(43) O Mary! Be obedient to your Lord and prostrate yourself and bow down with those who bow down.

The angels told *Maryam* (AS) to submit herself in obedience, to praise Allah (SWT) and prostrate and bow in front of Him.

ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ ۚ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يُلْقُونَ أَقْلَامَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنْتَ
لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

(44) These are the news from the unseen which We are revealing to you. 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.

This *ayah* indicates that the Prophets of Allah (SWT) did not know the unseen, unless the knowledge of it was revealed to them by the will of Allah (SWT). "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 the mother of

(37) *And her Lord graciously accepted her: He made her grow in purity and goodness. She was assigned to the care of Zechariah. 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?" She said: "From Allah (SWT); for Allah (SWT) provides sustenance to whom He pleases without measure.*

Allah (SWT) accepted Maryam (AS) as a result of her mother's supplication and made her grow up into a pious and righteous person. Zakariyya (AS) was the maternal uncle of Maryam (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 Zakariyya (AS) entered the praying place of Maryam (AS), he would find with her all kinds of unseasoned fruits. When he saw this, he asked her about these fruits, and she replied, "From Allah (SWT); for Allah (SWT) provides sustenance to whom He pleases without measure."

هَذَاكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ ﴿٣٧﴾

(38) *Thereupon Zechariah prayed to his Lord: "O my Lord! Grant me upright descendants; surely You hear all prayers."*

Zakariyya (AS) was an old man as was his wife, but when he saw Maryam (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.

فَتَدَاثُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيحْيَى مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

(39) *While he was standing in prayer in the chamber, the angels called unto him: "Allah gives you glad tidings of John who shall confirm the truth of a Word from Allah. And he will be noble and chaste and a Prophet from among the righteous."*

The angels delivered the good news to Zakariyya (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). 'Isa (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".

قَالَ رَبِّ أَلَيْسَ لِي عِلْمٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِيَ الْكِبَرُ وَأُمْرَأَتِي عَائِرَةٌ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ ﴿٣٩﴾

(40) *He said: "O my Lord! How shall I have a son seeing I am very old and my wife is barren?" (Allah) said: "Thus Allah (SWT) does what He wills."*

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.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

(33) Allah did choose Adam and Noah the family of Abraham and the family of Imran above all people.

The Prophet (SAW) was from the progeny of *Ibrahim* (AS), while *Imran* (AS) [1] was the father of *Musa* (AS) and *Haroon* (AS) from whose lineage was *Maryam* (AS).

ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

(34) Offspring one of the other. And Allah (SWT) hears and knows all things.

i.e. they all had the same lineage. *Imran* was amongst *Ibrahim*'s offspring and *'Isa* (AS) and *Yahya* (AS) were from the progeny of *Imran*.

إِذْ قَالَتْ امْرَأَتُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي نَدَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٣٥﴾

(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, so accept this of me for You hear and know all".

This *ayah* describes the birth of *Maryam* (Mary) (AS), the mother of *'Isa* (AS). The wife of *Imran* i.e. the mother of *Maryam* (AS) supplicated to Allah (SWT) to grant her an offspring and she would dedicate her child to Allah's service. "So accept this of me for You hear and know all." i.e. only You hear Your servants and know their intentions.

فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَىٰ وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ

وَإِنِّي أَعِزُّهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ﴿٣٦﴾

(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."

She was not expecting a girl to be born and was hoping for a male child, as according to her views, a male child would have served the purpose better for which she had dedicated her child. She named the female child *Maryam* and sought refuge with Allah (SWT) to save her child and her offspring from the evil of Satan.

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا ۖ وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا ۖ كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْبِحْرَابِ وَجَدَ

عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَمْزِيكُمُ اللَّهُ هَذَا ۖ قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

MESSAGE OF THE QUR'AN

Translation and Brief Elucidation

By

Dr. Israr Ahmad

Aal-e-Imran

(Ayaat 31- 63)

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾

(31) Say: "If you do love Allah (SWT) follow me: Allah (SWT) will love you and forgive you your sins for Allah (SWT) is Oft-Forgiving Most Merciful."

This is an extremely important *ayah*. Allah (SWT) explicates that the love of Allah (SWT), the basis and essence of Islam, is attained by following His Messenger (SAW). A difference must be clarified between obeying the Prophet (SAW) (*Ita'at*) and following the Prophet (SAW) (*Ittiba'*). Obeying means to do whatever the Prophet (SAW) has ordered us to do and abstain from whatever he (SAW) has asked us to refrain from. To follow means to try to copy the day-to-day habits of the Prophet (SAW) out of sheer love for him. This is spiritually higher than merely obeying and this action will make the follower the beloved of Allah (SWT).

قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

(32) Say: "Obey Allah and His Messenger. But if they turn back then Allah (SWT) does not love those who reject Faith"

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). This *ayah* proves that defying or rejecting Prophet Muhammad (SAW) constitutes disbelief in Islam. Thus *Ita'at* is a fundamental requirement for every Muslim but to attain a higher spiritual level, one should strive for *Ittiba'*.

From here, we begin the second section of this *surah* from *ayah* 33 to 64. It was revealed in 9 A.H when a deputation of scholars from the