

(35. (Remember) when the wife of `Imran said: "O my Lord! I have vowed to You what is in my womb to be dedicated for Your services, so accept this from me. Verily, You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knowing.") (36. Then when she gave birth to her, she said: "O my Lord! I have given birth to a female child, and Allah knew better what she bore, "And the male is not like the female, and I have named her Maryam, and I seek refuge with You for her and for her offspring from Shaytan, the outcast.")

The Story of Maryam's Birth

The wife of `Imran mentioned here is the mother of Maryam, and her name is Hannah bint Faqudh. Muhammad bin Ishaq mentioned that Hannah could not have children and that one day, she saw a bird feeding its chick. She wished she could have children and supplicated to Allah to grant her offspring. Allah accepted her supplication, and when her husband slept with her, she became pregnant. She vowed to make her child concentrate on worship and serving Bayt Al-Maqdis (the Masjid in Jerusalem), when she became aware that she was pregnant. She said,

(رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ)

(O my Lord! I have vowed to You what is in my womb to be dedicated for Your services, so accept this from me. Verily, You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knowing.) meaning, You hear my supplication and You know my intention. She did not know then what she would give birth to, a male or a female.

(فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ)

(Then when she gave birth to her, she said: "O my Lord! I have given birth to a female child, and Allah knew better what she bore.)

(وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَىٰ)

(And the male is not like the female,) in strength and the commitment to worship Allah and serve the Masjid in Jerusalem.

(وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ)

(And I have named her Maryam,) thus, testifying to the fact that it is allowed to give a name to the newly born the day it is born, as is apparent from the Ayah, which is also a part of the law of those who were before us. Further, the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah mentioned that the Prophet said,

«وُلِدَ لِي اللَّيْلَةَ وَوَلَدٌ، سَمَّيْتُهُ بِاسْمِ أَبِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ»

(This night, a son was born for me and I called him by my father's name, Ibrahim.) Al-Bukhari and Muslim collected this Hadith.

They also recorded that Anas bin Malik brought his newborn brother to the Messenger of Allah who chewed a piece of date and put it in the child's mouth and called him `Abdullah. Other new born infants were also given names on the day they were born.

Qatadah narrated that Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, that Samurah bin Jundub said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«كُلُّ غُلَامٍ رَهِينٌ بِعَقِيْقَتِهِ، يُذْبَحُ عَنْهُ يَوْمَ سَابِعِهِ،
وَيُسَمَّى وَيُحْلَقُ رَأْسُهُ»

(Every new born boy held in security by his `Aqiqah, until his seventh day, a sacrifice is offered on his behalf, he is given a name, and the hair on his head is shaved.)

This Hadith was collected by Ahmad and the collectors of the Sunan, and was graded Sahih by At-Tirmidhi. We should mention that another narration for this Hadith contained the wording, "and blood is offered on his behalf," which is more famous and established than the former narration, and Allah knows best.

Allah's statement that Maryam's mother said,

«وَإِنِّي أَعِيْذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيْمِ»

("...And I seek refuge with You for her and for her offspring from Shaytan, the outcast.") means, that she sought refuge with Allah from the evil of Shaytan, for her and her offspring, i.e., `Isa, peace be upon him. Allah accepted her supplication, for `Abdur-Razzaq recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَا مِنْ مَوْوَدٍ يُوَلَّدُ إِلَّا مَسَّهُ الشَّيْطَانُ حِيْنَ يُوَلَّدُ،
فَيَسْتَهْلُ صَارِحًا مِنْ مَسِّهِ إِيَّاهُ، إِلَّا مَرِيْمَ وَابْنَهَا»

(Every newly born baby is touched by Shaytan when it is born, and the baby starts crying because of this touch, except Maryam and her son.)

Abu Hurayrah then said, "Read if you will,

(وَإِنِّي أَعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَدُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ)

(And I seek refuge with You for her and for her offspring from Shaytan, the outcast)." The Two Sahihs recorded this Hadith.

(فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا
وَوَكَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ
وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَمْرَيْمُ أَنَّى لَكَ هَذَا قَالَتْ
هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ
حِسَابٍ)

(37. So her Lord (Allah) accepted her with goodly acceptance. He made her grow in a good manner and put her under the care of Zakariyya. Every time he entered the Mhrab to (visit) her, he found her supplied with sustenance. He said: "O Maryam! From where have you gotten this" She said, "This is from Allah." Verily, Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills, without limit.)

Maryam Grows Up; Her Honor is with Allah

Allah states that He has accepted Maryam as a result of her mother's vow and that He,

(وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا)

(made her grow in a good manner) meaning, made her conduct becoming, her mannerism delightful and He made her well liked among people. He also made her accompany the righteous people, so that she learned righteousness, knowledge and religion.

(وَوَكَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا)

(And put her under the care of Zakariyya) meaning, Allah made Zakariyya her sponsor. Allah made Zakariyya Maryam's guardian for her benefit, so that she would learn from his

tremendous knowledge and righteous conduct. He was the husband of her maternal aunt, as Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Jarir stated, or her brother-in-law, as mentioned in the Sahih,

«فَإِذَا بِيَحْيَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ، وَهُمَا ابْنَا الْخَالَةِ»

(I saw John and `Isa, who are maternal cousins.)

We should state that in general terms, what Ibn Ishaq said is plausible, and in this case, Maryam was under the care of her maternal aunt. The Two Sahih recorded that the Messenger of Allah decided that `Amarah, the daughter of Hamzah, be raised by her maternal aunt, the wife of Ja`far bin Abi Talib, saying,

«الْخَالَةُ بِمَنْزِلَةِ الْأُمِّ»

(The maternal aunt is just like the mother.)

Allah then emphasizes Maryam's honor and virtue at the place of worship she attended,

كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا
رِزْقًا

(Every time he entered the Mihrab to (visit) her, he found her supplied with sustenance.)

Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Abu Ash-Sha`tha, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Ad-Dahhak, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, `Atiyah Al-`Awfi and As-Suddi said, "He would find with her the fruits of the summer during winter, and the fruits of the winter during summer." When Zakariyya would see this; d

قَالَ يَمْرِيْمُ اُنِّي لِكِ هَذَا

(He said: "O Maryam! From where have you gotten this") meaning, where did you get these fruits from

قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

(She said, "This is from Allah." Verily, Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills, without limit.)

(هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ
لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ - فَنادتهُ
المَلِيكَةُ وَهُوَ قائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي المِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللّٰهَ
يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَى مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَسَيِّدًا
وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ - قَالَ رَبِّ اُنِّي
يَكُوْنُ لِي عُلْمٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي الكِبَرُ وَاْمْرَاتِي عَاقِرٌ
قَالَ كَذٰلِكَ اللّٰهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَآءُ - قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ
لِي ءَايَةً قَالَ ءَايٰتُكَ اِلَّا تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ ثَلٰثَةَ اَيَّامٍ اِلَّا
رَمْزًا وَاذْكُر رَّبَّكَ كَثِيْرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِالعَشِيِّ وَاَلْبَكْرِ
(

(38. At that time Zakariyya invoked his Lord, saying: "O my Lord! Grant me from You, a good offspring. You are indeed the All-Hearer of invocation.") (39. Then the angels called him, while he was standing in prayer in the Mihrab, (saying): "Allah gives you glad tidings of Yahya, believing in the Word from Allah, and Sayyidan, and Hasuran, a Prophet, from among the righteous.") (40. He said: "O my Lord! How can I have a son when I am very old, and my wife is barren" (Allah) said: "Thus Allah does what He wills.") (41. He said: "O my Lord! Make a sign for me." (Allah) said: "Your sign is that you shall not speak to the people for three days except by signals. And remember your Lord much, and glorify (Him) in the afternoon and in the morning.")

The Supplication of Zakariyya, and the Good News of Yahya's Birth

When Zakariyya saw that Allah provided sustenance for Maryam by giving her the fruits of winter in summer and the fruits of summer in winter, he was eager to have a child of his own. By then, Zakariyya had become an old man, his bones feeble and his head full of gray hair. His wife was an old women who was barren. Yet, he still supplicated to Allah and called Him in secret,

(رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ)

(O my Lord! Grant me from Ladunka,) from You,

(ذُرِّيَّةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ)

(A good offspring) meaning, a righteous offspring,

(إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ)

(You are indeed the All-Hearer of invocation.) Allah said,

(فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ)

(Then the angels called him, while he was standing in prayer in the Mhrab,) meaning, the angels spoke to him directly while he was secluded, standing in prayer at his place of worship. Allah told us about the good news that the angels delivered to Zakariyya,

(أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَى)

(Allah gives you glad tidings of Yahya,) of a child from your offspring, his name is Yahya. Qatadah and other scholars said that he was called Yahya (literally, `he lives') because Allah filled his life with faith.

Allah said next,

(مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ)

(believing in the Word from Allah) Al-`Awfi reported that Ibn `Abbas said, and also Al-Hasan, Qatadah, `Ikrimah, Mujahid, Abu Ash-Sha`tha, As-Suddi, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Ad-Dahhak, and several others said that the Ayah,

(مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ)

(believing in the Word from Allah) means, "Believing in `Isa, son of Maryam."

Abu Al-`Aliyah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, Qatadah and Sa`id bin Jubayr said that Allah's statement,

(وَسَيِّدًا)

(And Sayyidan) means, a wise man. Ibn `Abbas, Ath-Thawri and Ad-Dahhak said that Sayyidan means, "The noble, wise and pious man." Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib said that Sayyid is the scholar

and Faqih. `Atiyah said that Sayyid is the man noble in behavior and piety. `Ikrimah said that it refers to a person who is not overcome by anger, while Ibn Zayd said that it refers to the noble man. Mujahid said that Sayyidan means, honored by Allah.

Allah's statement,

(وَحَصُورًا)

(And Hasuran) does not mean he refrains from sexual relations with women, but that he is immune from illegal sexual relations. This does not mean that he does not marry women and have legal sexual relations with them, for Zakariyya said in his supplication for the benefit of Yahya,

(هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً)

(Grant me from You, a good offspring), meaning, grant me a son who will have offspring, and Allah knows best.

Allah's statement,

(وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ)

(A Prophet, from among the righteous) delivers more good news of sending Yahya as Prophet after the good news that he will be born. This good news was even better than the news of Yahya's birth. In a similar statement, Allah said to the mother of Musa,

(إِنَّا رَأَدُّوهُ إِلَيْكَ وَجَعَلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ)

(Verily, We shall bring him back to you, and shall make him one of the Messengers.) 28:7

When Zakariyya heard the good news, he started contemplating about having children at his age. He said,

(قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلْمٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي الْكِبَرُ
وَأَمْرَاتِي عَاقِرٌ قَالَ)

("O my Lord! How can I have a son when I am very old, and my wife is barren" (He) said...)
meaning the angel said,

(كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ)

("Thus Allah does what He wills.") meaning, this is Allah's matter, He is so Mighty that nothing escapes His power, nor is anything beyond His ability.

(قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً)

(He said: "O my Lord! Make a sign for me") meaning make a sign that alerts me that the child will come,

(قَالَ آيَاتُكَ إِلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمْزًا)

((Allah) said: "Your sign is that you shall not speak to the people for three days except by signals.") meaning, you will not be able to speak except with signals, although you are not mute. In another Ayah, Allah said,

(ثَلَاثَ لَيَالٍ سَوِيًّا)

(For three nights, though having no bodily defect.) 19:10

Allah then commanded Zakariyya to supplicate, thank and praise Him often in that condition,

(وَادْكُرْ رَبَّكَ كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَرِ)

(And remember your Lord much and glorify (Him) in the afternoon and in the morning.)

We will elaborate more on this subject in the beginning of Surah Maryam (chapter 19), Allah willing.

(وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلِكَةُ يَمْرَيْمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ
وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ - يَمْرَيْمُ
اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ -
ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ

إِذْ يُلقُونَ أَقْلَمَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ
إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ)

(42. And (remember) when the angels said: "O Maryam! Verily, Allah has chosen you, purified you, and chosen you above the women of the nations.") (43. "O Maryam! Submit yourself with obedience (Aqnuti) to your Lord and prostrate yourself, and bow down along with Ar-Raki` in.") (44. This is a part of the news of the Ghayb (Unseen) which We reveal to you. You were not with them, when they cast lots with their pens as to which of them should be charged with the care of Maryam; nor were you with them when they disputed.)

The Virtue of Maryam Over the Women of Her Time

Allah states that the angels spoke to Maryam by His command and told her that He chose her because of her service to Him, because of her modesty, honor, innocence, and conviction. Allah also chose her because of her virtue over the women of the world. At-Tirmidhi recorded that `Ali bin Abi Talib said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah say,

«خَيْرُ نِسَائِهَا مَرْيَمُ بِنْتُ عِمْرَانَ، وَخَيْرُ نِسَائِهَا
خَدِيجَةُ بِنْتُ خُوَيْلِدٍ»

(The best woman (in her time) was Maryam, daughter of `Imran, and the best woman (of the Prophet's time) is Khadijah (his wife), daughter of Khuwaylid.)"

The Two Sahihs recorded this Hadith. Ibn Jarir recorded that Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«كَمُلَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ كَثِيرٌ، وَلَمْ يَكْمُلْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ
إِلَّا مَرْيَمُ بِنْتُ عِمْرَانَ وَآسِيَةُ امْرَأَةِ فِرْعَوْنَ»

(Many men achieved perfection, but among women, only Maryam the daughter of `Imran and Asiah, the wife of Fir`awn, achieved perfection.)

The Six -- with the exception of Abu Dawud - recorded it. Al-Bukhari's wording for it reads,

«كَمُلَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ كَثِيرٌ، وَلَمْ يَكْمُلْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ
إِلَّا أَسِيَّةُ امْرَأَةِ فِرْعَوْنَ، وَمَرْيَمُ بِنْتُ عِمْرَانَ،
وَإِنَّ فَضْلَ عَائِشَةَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ كَفَضْلِ الثَّرِيدِ
عَلَى سَائِرِ الطَّعَامِ»

(Many men reached the level of perfection, but no woman reached such a level except Asiah, the wife of Fir`awn, and Maryam, the daughter of `Imran. The superiority of `Aishah (his wife) to other women, is like the superiority of Tharid (meat and bread dish) to other meals.)

We mentioned the various chains of narration and wordings for this Hadith in the story of `Isa, son of Maryam, in our book, Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah, all the thanks are due to Allah.

Allah states that the angels commanded Maryam to increase acts of worship, humbleness, submission, prostration, bowing, and so forth, so that she would acquire what Allah had decreed for her, as a test for her. Yet, this test also earned her a higher grade in this life and the Hereafter, for Allah demonstrated His might by creating a son inside her without male intervention. Allah said,

(يَمْرِيْمُ اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ
الرَّكَعِيْنَ)

("O Maryam! Submit yourself with obedience (Aqnuti) and prostrate yourself, and bow down along with Ar-Raki`in.")

As for Qunut (Aqnuti in the Ayah), it means to submit with humbleness. In another Ayah, Allah said,

(بَلْ لَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ كُلُّ لَّهُ قَانُونَ)

(Nay, to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth, and all surrender with obedience (Qanitun) to Him.) 2:116

Allah next said to His Messenger after He mentioned Maryam's story,

(ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ)

(This is a part of the news of the Ghayb which We reveal.) "and narrate to you (O Muhammad),

(وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يُلْقُونَ أَقْلَمَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ
مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ)

(You were not with them, when they cast lots with their pens as to which of them should be charged with the care of Maryam; nor were you with them when they disputed.) meaning, "You were not present, O Muhammad, when this occurred, so you cannot narrate what happened to the people as an eye witness. Rather, Allah disclosed these facts to you as if you were a witness, when they conducted a lottery to choose the custodian of Maryam, seeking the reward of this good deed."

Ibn Jarir recorded that `Ikrimah said, "Maryam's mother left with Maryam, carrying her in her infant cloth, and took her to the rabbis from the offspring of Aaron, the brother of Musa. They were responsible for taking care of Bayt Al-Maqdis (the Masjid) at that time, just as there were those who took care of the Ka'bah. Maryam's mother said to them, `Take this child whom I vowed to serve the Masjid, I have set her free, since she is my daughter, for no menstruating woman should enter the Masjid, and I shall not take her back home.' They said, `She is the daughter of our Imam,' as `Imran used to lead them in prayer, `who took care of our sacrificial rituals.' Zakariyya said, `Give her to me, for her maternal aunt is my wife.' They said, `Our hearts cannot bear that you take her, for she is the daughter of our Imam.' So they conducted a lottery with the pens with which they wrote the Tawrah, and Zakariyya won the lottery and took Maryam into his care." `Ikrimah, As-Suddi, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, and several others said that the rabbis went into the Jordan river and conducted a lottery there, deciding to throw their pens into the river. The pen that remained afloat and idle would indicate that its owner would take care of Maryam. When they threw their pens into the river, the water took all the pens under, except Zakariyya's pen, which remained afloat in its place. Zakariyya was also their master, chief, scholar, Imam and Prophet, may Allah's peace and blessings be on him and the rest of the Prophets.

(إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلِكَةُ يَمْرَيْمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ
مِّنْهُ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِي
الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ - وَيُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي
الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ - قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّى
يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ

يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ
فَيَكُونُ)

(45. (Remember) when the angels said: "O Maryam! Verily, Allah gives you the glad tidings of a Word from Him, his name will be Al-Masih, `Isa, the son of Maryam, held in honor in this world and in the Hereafter, and he will be one of those who are near to Allah.") (46. "He will speak to the people, in the cradle and in manhood, and he will be one of the righteous.") (47. She said: "O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man has touched me." He said: "So (it will be) for Allah creates what He wills. When He has decreed something, He says to it only: `Be! and it is.")

Delivering the Good News to Maryam of `Isa's Birth

This Ayah contains the glad tidings the angels brought to Maryam that she would give birth to a mighty son who will have a great future. Allah said,

إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلِكَةُ مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ
مِّنْهُ)

((Remember) when the angels said: "O Maryam! Verily, Allah gives you the glad tidings of a Word from Him,) a son who will come into existence with a word from Allah, `Be', and he was. This is the meaning of Allah's statement (about Yahya)

(مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ)

(Believing in the Word from Allah.) 3:39 , according to the majority of the scholars.

(اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ)

(His name will be Al-Masih, `Isa, the son of Maryam) and he will be known by this name in this life, especially by the believers. `Isa was called "Al-Masih" (the Messiah) because when he touched (Mash) those afflicted with an illness, they would be healed by Allah's leave. Allah's statement,

(عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ)

(`Isa, the son of Maryam) relates `Isa to his mother, because he did not have a father.

(وَجِيهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ)

(Held in honor in this world and in the Hereafter, and will be one of those who are near to Allah.) meaning, he will be a leader and honored by Allah in this life, because of the Law that Allah will reveal to him, sending down the Scripture to him, along with the other bounties that Allah will grant him with. `Isa will be honored in the Hereafter and will intercede with Allah, by His leave, on behalf of some people, just as is the case with his brethren the mighty Messengers of Allah, peace be upon them all.

`Isa Spoke When He was Still in the Cradle

Allah said,

(وَيُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا)

(He will speak to the people, in the cradle and in manhood,) calling to the worship of Allah Alone without partners, while still in the cradle, as a miracle from Allah, and when he is a man, by Allah's revelation to him.

Muhammad bin Ishaq recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَا تَكَلَّمَ مَوْلُودٌ فِي صِغَرِهِ إِلَّا عِيسَى وَصَاحِبُ
جُرَيْجٍ»

(No infant spoke in the cradle except `Isa and the companion of Jurayj.)

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Prophet said,

«لَمْ يَتَكَلَّمْ فِي الْمَهْدِ إِلَّا ثَلَاثَةٌ: عِيسَى، وَصَيْبِيُّ
كَانَ فِي زَمَنِ جُرَيْجٍ، وَصَيْبِيُّ آخَرَ»

(No infant spoke in the cradle except three, `Isa, the boy during the time of Jurayj, and another boy.)

(وَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ)

(And he will be one of the righteous.) in his statements and actions, for he will possess, pure knowledge and righteous works.

` Isa was Created Without a Father

When Maryam heard the good news that the angels conveyed from Allah, she said;

(رَبِّ أُنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ)

("O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man has touched me.")

Mary said, "How can I have a son while I did not marry, nor intend to marry, nor am I an indecent woman, may Allah forbid" The angel conveyed to Maryam, Allah's answer,

(كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ)

(So (it will be) for Allah creates what He wills.)

He is Mighty in power and nothing escapes His ability. Allah used the word `create' here instead of the word `does' as in the tale about Zakariyya 3:40 , to eradicate any evil thought concerning `Isa. Allah next emphasized this fact when He said,

(إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ)

(When He has decreed something, He says to it only: "Be! and it is.) meaning, what Allah wills, comes into existence instantly and without delay. In another Ayah, Allah said,

(وَمَا أَمْرُنَا إِلَّا وَحِدَةً كَلِمَةً بِالْبَصَرِ)

(And Our commandment is but one as the twinkling of an eye.) 54:50 , meaning, "We only issue the command once, and it comes into existence instantly, as fast as, and faster than, a blink of the eye. "

(وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ -
وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّنْ
رَّبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلَقُ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ

فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَةَ
 وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا
 تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً
 لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ - وَمُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ
 التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ
 وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا - إِنَّ
 اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ)

(48. And He will teach him the Book and Al-Hikmah, and the Tawrah and the Injil.) (49. And will make him a Messenger to the Children of Israel (saying): "I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I design for you out of clay, a figure like that of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave; and I heal the blind, and the leper, and I bring the dead to life by Allah's leave. And I inform you of what you eat, and what you store in your houses. Surely, therein is a sign for you, if you believe.") (50. "(And I have come) confirming that which was before me of the Tawrah, and to make lawful to you part of what was forbidden to you, and I have come to you with a proof from your Lord. So have Taqwa of Allah and obey me.") (51. "Truly, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him (Alone). This is the straight path.")

The Description of `Isa and the Miracles He Performed

Allah states that the good news brought to Maryam about `Isa was even better because Allah would teach him,

(الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ)

(the Book and Al-Hikmah). It appears that the `Book' the Ayah mentioned here refers to writing. We explained the meaning of Al-Hikmah in the Tafsir of Surat Al-Baqarah.

(التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ)

(the Tawrah and the Injil). The Tawrah is the Book that Allah sent down to Musa, son of `Imran, while the Injil is what Allah sent down to `Isa, son of Maryam, peace be upon them, and `Isa memorized both Books. Allah's statement,

(وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ)

(And will make him a Messenger to the Children of Israel) means, that Allah will send `Isa as a Messenger to the Children of Israel, proclaiming to them,

(أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلَقُ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ)

(I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I design for you out of clay, a figure like that of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave). These are the miracles that `Isa performed; he used to make the shape of a bird from clay and blow into it, and it became a bird by Allah's leave. Allah made this a miracle for `Isa to testify that He had sent him.

(وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ)

(And I heal him who is Akmah) meaning, 'a person who was born blind,' which perfects this miracle and makes the challenge more daring.

(وَالأَبْرَصَ)

(And the leper) which is a known disease,

(وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ)

(And I bring the dead to life by Allah's leave).

Many scholars stated that Allah sent every Prophet with a miracle suitable to his time. For instance, in the time of Musa, magic was the trade of the time, and magicians held a high position. So Allah sent Musa with a miracle that captured the eyes and bewildered every magician. When the magicians realized that Musa's miracle came from the Almighty, Most Great, they embraced Islam and became pious believers. As for `Isa, he was sent during a time when medicine and knowledge in physics were advancing. `Isa brought them the types of miracles that could not be performed, except by one sent by Allah. How can any physician bring life to clay, cure blindness and leprosy and bring back to life those entrapped in the grave Muhammad was sent during the time of eloquent people and proficient poets. He brought them a Book from Allah; if mankind and the Jinn tried to imitate ten chapters, or even one chapter of it, they will utterly fail in this task, even if they tried to do it by collective

cooperation. This is because the Qur'an is the Word of Allah and is nothing like that of the creatures.

`Isa's statement,

(وَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ)

(And I inform you of what you eat, and what you store in your houses) means, I tell you about what one of you has just eaten and what he is keeping in his house for tomorrow.

(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ)

(Surely, therein), all these miracles,

(لَايَةً لَكُمْ)

(is a sign for you) testifying to the truth of what I was sent to you with,

(إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ
التَّوْرَةِ)

(If you believe. And I have come confirming that which was before me of the Tawrah,) affirming the Tawrah and upholding it,

(وَالْحِلَّ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ)

(and to make lawful to you part of what was forbidden to you.)

This part of the Ayah indicates that `Isa abrogated some of the Laws of the Tawrah and informed the Jews of the truth regarding some issues that they used to dispute about. In another Ayah;

(وَلَا بَيِّنَ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي تَخْتَلَفُونَ فِيهِ)

(And in order to make clear to you some of the (points) in which you differ) 43:63 .

`Isa said next,

(وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ)

(And I have come to you with a proof from your Lord.) "Containing affirmation and evidence to the truth of what I am conveying to you."

(فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ
فَاعْبُدُوهُ)

(So have Taqwa of Allah and obey me. Truly, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him (Alone).) for I and you are equal in our servitude, submission and humbleness to Him,

(هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ)

(This is the straight path.)

(فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَى مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي
إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ ءَامِنًا
بِاللَّهِ وَآشْهَدُ بِأَنَا مُسْلِمُونَ - رَبَّنَا ءَامِنًا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ
وَآتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ - وَمَكْرُؤًا
وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَكْرِينِ)

(52. Then when `Isa came to know of their disbelief, he said: "Who will be my helpers in Allah's cause" Al-Hawariyyun said: "We are the helpers of Allah; we believe in Allah, and bear witness that we are Muslims.") (53. "Our Lord! We believe in what You have sent down, and we follow the Messenger `Isa ; so write us down among those who bear witness.") (54. And they (disbelievers) plotted and Allah planned too. And Allah is the Best of those who plot)

The Disciples Give Their Support to `Isa

Allah said,

(فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَى)

(Then when `Isa came to know), meaning, `Isa felt that they were adamant in disbelief and continuing in misguidance. He said to them,

﴿مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ﴾

(Who will be my helper in Allah's cause) Mujahid commented, "Meaning, who would follow me to Allah" However, it appears that `Isa was asking, "Who would help me convey the Message of Allah"

The Prophet said during the Hajj season, before the Hijrah,

﴿مَنْ رَجُلٌ يُؤْوِينِي حَتَّى أَبْلُغَ كَلَامَ رَبِّي؟، فَإِنَّ
فَرِيضًا قَدْ مَنَعُونِي أَنْ أَبْلُغَ كَلَامَ رَبِّي﴾

(Who will give me asylum so that I can convey the Speech of my Lord, for the Quraysh have prevented me from conveying the Speech of my Lord.) until he found the Ansar. The Ansar helped the Prophet and gave him refuge. He later migrated to them, they comforted the Prophet and protected him from all his enemies, may Allah be pleased with them all. This is similar to what happened with `Isa, for some of the Children of Israel believed in him, gave him their aid and support and followed the light that was sent with him. This is why Allah said about them;

﴿قَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَى مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي
إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ ءَامَنَّا
بِاللَّهِ وَآشْهَدُ بِأَنَا مُسْلِمُونَ - رَبَّنَا ءَامَنَّا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ
وَآتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ)

(Al-Hawariyyun said: "We are the helpers of Allah; we believe in Allah, and bear witness that we are Muslims. Our Lord! We believe in what You have sent down, and we follow the Messenger; so write us down among those who bear witness.") Hawari in Arabic - means 'support'. The Two Sahih recorded that when the Prophet encouraged the people to fight during the battle of Al-Ahzab, Az-Zubayr came forward, and again, when the Prophet asked for fighters a second time. The Prophet said,

﴿إِنَّ لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ حَوَارِيًّا، وَحَوَارِيِّي الزُّبَيْرُ﴾

(Every Prophet has a Hawari, and Az-Zubayr is my Hawari)

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn ` Abbas said about,

(فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ)

(so write us down among those who bear witness) "Meaning among the Ummah of Muhammad."
This Hadith has a good chain of narration

The Jews Plot to Kill ` Isa

Allah states that the Children of Israel tried to kill ` Isa by conspiring to defame him and crucify him. They complained about him to the king who was a disbeliever. They claimed that ` Isa was a man who misguided people, discouraged them from obeying the king, caused division, and separated between man and his own son. They also said other lies about ` Isa, which they will carry on their necks, including accusing him of being an illegitimate son. The king became furious and sent his men to capture ` Isa to torture and crucify him. When they surrounded ` Isa's home and he thought that they would surely capture him, Allah saved him from them, raising him up from the house to heaven. Allah put the image of ` Isa on a man who was in the house; when the unjust people went in the house while it was still dark, they thought that he was ` Isa. They captured that man, humiliated and crucified him. They also placed thorns on his head. However, Allah deceived these people. He saved and raised His Prophet from them, leaving them in disarray in the darkness of their transgression, thinking that they had successfully achieved their goal. Allah made their hearts hard, and defiant of the truth, disgracing them in such disgrace that it will remain with them until the Day of Resurrection. This is why Allah said,

(وَمَكْرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَكْرِينَ)

(And they plotted, and Allah planned too. And Allah is the Best of those who plot.)

(إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَعْيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَا كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ
وَمَطَّهَرْنَاكَ مِنْ الْغَلْبَةِ وَأَخَذْنَاكَ فِي الْيَمِينِ
وَأَتَيْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْحَقُّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَى
مَرْجِعِكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ -
فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَأَعَذَّبْنَاهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا فِي الدُّنْيَا
وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ - وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ

وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ - ذَلِكَ نَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ
الآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ)

t(55. And (remember) when Allah said: "O `Isa! I will take you and raise you to Myself and purify save you from those who disbelieve, and I will make those who follow you superior to those who disbelieve till the Day of Resurrection. Then you will return to Me and I will judge between you in the matters in which you used to dispute." (56. "As to those who disbelieve, I will punish them with severe torment in this world and in the Hereafter, and they will have no helpers.") (57. And as for those who believe and do righteous good deeds, Allah will pay them their reward in full. And Allah does not like the wrongdoers.) (58. This is what We recite to you of the verses and the Wise Reminder.)

Meaning of ` Take You

Allah said,

(إِنِّي مُتَوَقِّئِكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ)

(I will take you and raise you to Myself) while you are asleep. Allah said in a similar Ayat,

(وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَقَّكُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ)

(It is He Who takes your souls by night (when you are asleep).) 6:60 , and,

(اللَّهُ يَتَوَقَّى الْأَنْفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ
فِي مَنَامِهَا)

(It is Allah Who takes away the souls at the time of their death, and those that die not during their sleep.) 39:42 .

The Messenger of Allah used to recite the following words when he would awaken;

«الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَحْيَانَا بَعْدَ مَا أَمَاتَنَا، وَإِلَيْهِ
النُّشُورُ»

(All the thanks are due to Allah Who brought us back to life after He had caused us to die (sleep), and the Return is to Him).

Allah said,

(وَيَكْفُرَهُمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَى مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَنًا عَظِيمًا
وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ
اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ)

(And because of their disbelief and allegations against Maryam and because of their saying "We killed Al-Masih `Isa, son of Maryam, the Messenger of Allah, but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but it appeared that way to them) until,

(وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ
رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ
وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ
مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا - بَلْ
رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا)

(وَإِنْ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ
وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا)

(For surely; they killed him not But Allah raised him up unto Himself. And Allah is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise. And there is none of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) but must believe in him before his death. And on the Day of Resurrection, he `Isa will be a witness against them.) 4:156-159

`His death' refers to `Isa, and the Ayah means that the People of the Book will believe in `Isa, before `Isa dies. This will occur when `Isa comes back to this world before the Day of Resurrection, as we will explain. By that time, all the People of the Book will believe in `Isa, for he will annul the Jizyah and he will only accept Islam from people. Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Al-Hasan said that Allah's statement,

(إِنِّي مُتَوَقِّئُكَ)

(I will take you) is in reference to sleep, for Allah raised `Isa while he was asleep.

Altering the Religion of `Isa

Allah said,

(وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا)

(And purify save you from those who disbelieve) by raising you to heaven,

(وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى
يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ)

(And I will make those who follow you superior to those who disbelieve, till the Day of Resurrection)

This is what happened. When Allah raised `Isa to heaven, his followers divided into sects and groups. Some of them believed in what Allah sent `Isa as, a servant of Allah, His Messenger, and the son of His female-servant.

However, some of them went to the extreme over `Isa, believing that he was the son of Allah. Some of them said that `Isa was Allah Himself, while others said that he was one of a Trinity. Allah mentioned these false creeds in the Qur'an and refuted them. The Christians remained like this until the third century CE, when a Greek king called, Constantine, became a Christian for the purpose of destroying Christianity. Constantine was either a philosopher, or he was just plain ignorant. Constantine changed the religion of `Isa by adding to it and deleting from it. He established the rituals of Christianity and the so-called Great Trust, which is in fact the Great Treachery. He also allowed them to eat the meat of swine, changed the direction of the prayer that `Isa established to the east, built churches for `Isa, and added ten days to the fast as compensation for a sin that he committed, as claimed. So the religion of `Isa became the religion of Constantine, who built more than twelve thousand churches, temples and monasteries for the Christians as well as the city that bears his name, Constantinople (Istanbul). Throughout this time, the Christians had the upper hand and dominated the Jews. Allah aided them against the Jews because they used to be closer to the truth than the Jews, even though both groups were and still are disbelievers, may Allah's curse descend on them.

When Allah sent Muhammad , those who believed in him also believed in Allah, His Angels, Books and Messengers in the correct manner. So they were the true followers of every Prophet who came to earth. They believed in the unlettered Prophet , the Final Messenger and the master of all mankind, who called them to believe in the truth in its entirety. This is why they had more right to every Prophet than his own nation, especially those who claim to follow their Prophet's way and religion, yet change and alter his religion. Furthermore, Allah abrogated all the laws that were sent down to the Prophets with the Law He sent Muhammad with, which

consists of the true religion that shall never change or be altered until the commencement of the Last Hour. Muhammad's religion shall always be dominant and victorious over all other religions. This is why Allah allowed Muslims to conquer the eastern and western parts of the world and the kingdoms of the earth. Furthermore, all countries submitted to them; they demolished Kisra (king of Persia) and destroyed the Czar, ridding them of their treasures and spending these treasures for Allah's sake. All this occurred just as their Prophet told them it would, when he conveyed Allah's statement,

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ
قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ
وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا
يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا

(Allah has promised those among you who believe and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession in the land, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practice their religion which He has chosen for them. And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they worship Me and do not associate anything with Me.) 24:55 .

Therefore, Muslims are the true believers in `Isa. The Muslims then acquired Ash-Sham from the Christians, causing them to evacuate to Asia Minor, to their fortified city in Constantinople. The Muslims will be above them until the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, he, Muhammad , who is truthful and who received the true news, has conveyed to Muslims that they will conquer Constantinople in the future, and seize its treasures.

Threatening the Disbelievers with Torment in This Life and the Hereafter

Allah said,

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يٰعِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ خُذْ بِكَرْسِيِّكَ وَجِئْنَا نَسُّفَ الْأَرْضِ وَجِئْنَا بِطَبَقٍ فِيهِ الْهَاجِرُونَ وَجِئْنَا بِسُلَيْمَانَ خَلِيفَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجِئْنَا بِدَاوُدَ إِذْ قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِّي آيَةً قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي مَكِينٌ ذِكْرُ الْقُرْآنِ وَإِنِّي لَأَتْلُوهُ وَإِنِّي لَأَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبُ وَإِنِّي لَأَشْفَعُ عِنْدَ رَبِّي وَإِنِّي لَأَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبُ وَإِنِّي لَأَشْفَعُ عِنْدَ رَبِّي وَإِنِّي لَأَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبُ وَإِنِّي لَأَشْفَعُ عِنْدَ رَبِّي

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَأَعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا فِي الدُّنْيَا
وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَّاصِرِينَ)

(And I will make those who follow you superior to those who disbelieve till the Day of Resurrection. Then you will return to Me and I will judge between you in the matters in which you used to dispute. As to those who disbelieve, I will punish them with a severe torment in this world and in the Hereafter, and they will have no helpers.)

This is what Allah did to the Jews who disbelieved in `Isa and the Christians who went to the extreme over him. Allah tormented them in this life; they were killed, captured, and lost their wealth and kingdoms. Their torment in the Hereafter is even worse and more severe,

(وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَاقٍ)

(And they have no Waq (defender or protector) against Allah) 13:34 .

(وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ
أَجْرَهُمْ)

(And as for those who believe and do righteous good deeds, Allah will pay them their reward in full) in this life, with victory and domination, and in the Hereafter, with Paradise and high grades,

(وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ)

(And Allah does not like the wrongdoers.)

Allah then said,

(ذَلِكَ نَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ)

(This is what We recite to you of the verses and the Wise Reminder.) meaning, "What We narrated to you, O Muhammd, regarding `Isa, his birth and his life, is what Allah conveyed and revealed to you, sent down from the Al-Lawh Al-Mahfuz (The Preserved Tablet). So there is no doubt in it. Similarly, Allah said in Surah Maryam;

ذَلِكَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قَوْلَ الْحَقِّ الَّذِي فِيهِ
يَمْتَرُونَ - مَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ مِنْ وُلْدٍ سُبْحَانَهُ
إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ)

(Such is `Isa, son of Maryam. (It is) a statement of truth, about which they doubt (or dispute). It befits not Allah that He should beget a son. Glorified be He. When He decrees a thing, He only says to it: "Be!" and it is.)

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ
تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ - الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا
تَكُنْ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ - فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا
جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ
وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ
فَنَجْعَلْ لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ - إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ
الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ
الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ - فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ
بِالْمُفْسِدِينَ)

(59. Verily, the likeness of `Isa before Allah is the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to him: "Be!" and he was.) (60. (This is) the truth from your Lord, so be not of those who doubt.) (61. Then whoever disputes with you concerning him after the knowledge that has come to you, say: "Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves, then we pray and we invoke Allah's curse upon the liars.") (62. Verily, this is the true narrative, and there is no god except Allah. And indeed, Allah is the Almighty, the All-Wise.) (63. And if they turn away, then surely, Allah is All-Aware of those who do mischief.)

**The Similarities Between the Creation of Adam and the Creation of
`Isa**

Allah said,

(إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ)

(Verily, the likeness of `Isa before Allah) regarding Allah's ability, since He created him without a father,

(كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ)

(is the likeness of Adam), for Allah created Adam without a father or a mother. Rather,

(خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ)

(He created him from dust, then (He) said to him: "Be!" and he was.)

Therefore, He Who created Adam without a father or a mother is able to create `Isa, as well, without a father. If the claim is made that `Isa is Allah's son because he was created without a father, then the same claim befits Adam even more. However, since such a claim regarding Adam is obviously false, then making the same claim about `Isa is even more false.

Furthermore, by mentioning these facts, Allah emphasizes His ability, by creating Adam without a male or female, Hawa' from a male without a female, and `Isa from a mother without a father, compared to His creating the rest of creation from male and female. This is why Allah said in Surah Maryam,

(وَلِنَجْعَلَهُ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ)

(And We made him a sign for mankind) 19: 21 .

Allah said in this Ayah,

(الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ)

((This is) the truth from your Lord, so be not of those who doubt.) meaning, this is the only true story about `Isa, and what is beyond truth save falsehood Allah next commands His Messenger to call those who defy the truth, regarding `Isa, to the Mubalah (the curse).

The Challenge to the Mubalah

فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ
تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ
وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ

(Then whoever disputes with you concerning him after the knowledge that has come to you, say: "Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves") for the Mubalahah,

(ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلُ)

(then we pray), supplicate,

فَنَجْعَلُ لَعْنَتُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ

(and we invoke Allah's curse upon the liars) among the two of us.

The reason for the call to Mubalahah and the revelation of the Ayat from the beginning of this Surah until here, is that a delegation from the Christians of Najran (in Yemen) came to Al-Madinah to argue about `Isa, claiming that he was divine and the son of Allah. Allah sent down the beginning of this Surah until here, to refute their claims, as Imam Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar and other scholars stated.

Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar said in his famous Srah, "The delegation of Christians from Najran came to the Messenger of Allah . The delegation consisted of sixty horsemen, including fourteen of their chiefs who make decisions. These men were Al-`Aqib, also known as `Abdul-Masih, As-Sayyid, also known as Al-Ayham, Abu Harithah bin `Alqamah, of the family of Bakr bin Wa`il and Uways bin Al-Harith. They also included, Zayd, Qays, Yazid, Nabih, Khuwaylid, `Amr, Khalid, `Abdullah and Yuhannas. Three of these men were chiefs of this delegation, Al-`Aqib, their leader and to whom they referred for advice and decision; As-Sayyid, their scholar and leader in journeys and social gatherings; and Abu Harithah bin `Alqamah, their patriarch, priest and religious leader. Abu Harithah was an Arab man from the family of Bakr bin Wa`il, but when he embraced Christianity, the Romans and their kings honored him and built churches for him (or in his honor). They also supported him financially and gave him servants, because they knew how firm his faith in their religion was." Abu Harithah knew the description of the Messenger of Allah from what he read in earlier divine Books. However, his otherwise ignorance led him to insist on remaining a Christian, because he was honored and had a high position with the Christians. Ibn Ishaq said, "Muhammad bin Ja`far bin Az-Zubayr said that, `The (Najran) delegation came to the Messenger of Allah in Al-Madinah, entered his Masjid wearing robes and garments, after the Prophet had prayed the `Asr prayer. They accompanied a caravan of camels led by Bani Al-Harith bin Ka`b. The Companions of the Messenger of Allah who saw them said that they never saw a delegation like them after that... Then Abu Harithah bin `Alqamah and Al-`Aqib `Abdul-Masih or As-Sayyid Al-Ayham spoke to the Messenger of Allah , and they were Christians like the king (Roman King). However, they disagreed about `Isa; some

of them said, 'He is Allah,' while some said, 'He is the son of Allah,' and some others said, 'He is one of a trinity.' Allah is far from what they attribute to Him."

Indeed, these are the creeds of the Christians. They claim that 'Isa is God, since he brought the dead back to life, healed blindness, leprosy and various illnesses, told about matters of the future, created the shape of birds and blew life into them, bringing them to life. However, all these miracles occurred by Allah's leave, so that 'Isa would be a sign from Allah for people.

They also claim that 'Isa is the son of Allah, since he did not have a father and he spoke when he was in the cradle, a miracle which had not occurred by any among the Children of Adam before him, so they claim. They also claim that 'Isa is one of a trinity, because Allah would say, 'We did, command, create and demand.' They said, 'If Allah were one, he would have said, 'I did, command, create and decide.' This is why they claim that 'Isa and Allah are one (Trinity). Allah is far from what they attribute to Him, and we should mention that the Qur'an refuted all these false Christian claims.

Ibn Ishaq continued, "When these Ayat came to the Messenger from Allah, thus judging between him and the People of the Book, Allah also commanded the Prophet to call them to the Mubalahah if they still refused the truth. The Prophet called them to the Mubalahah. They said, 'O Abu Al-Qasim! Let us think about this matter and get back to you with our decision to what we want to do.' They left the Prophet and conferred with Al-'Aqib, to whom they referred to for advice. They said to him, 'O 'Abdul-Masih! What is your advice?' He said, 'By Allah, O Christian fellows! You know that Muhammad is a Messenger and that he brought you the final word regarding your fellow ('Isa). You also know that no Prophet conducted Mubalahah with any people, and the old persons among them remained safe and the young people grew up. Indeed, it will be the end of you if you do it. If you have already decided that you will remain in your religion and your creed regarding your fellow ('Isa), then conduct a treaty with the man (Muhammad) and go back to your land.' They came to the Prophet and said, 'O Abu Al-Qasim! We decided that we cannot do Mubalahah with you and that you remain on your religion, while we remain on our religion. However, send with us a man from your Companions whom you are pleased with to judge between us regarding our monetary disputes, for you are acceptable to us in this regard.'"

Al-Bukhari recorded that Hudhayfah said, "Al-'Aqib and As-Sayyid, two leaders from Najran, came to the Messenger of Allah seeking to invoke Allah for curses (against whoever is unjust among them), and one of them said to the other, 'Let us not do that. By Allah, if he were truly a Prophet and we invoke Allah for curses, we and our offspring shall never succeed afterwards.' So they said, 'We will give you what you asked and send a trusted man with us, just a trusted man.' The Messenger of Allah said;

«لَأُبْعَثَنَّ مَعَكُمْ رَجُلًا أَمِينًا حَقَّ أَمِينٍ»

:

«قُمْ يَا أَبَا عُبَيْدَةَ بْنِ الْجَرَّاحِ»

:

«هَذَا أَمِينُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ»

("Verily, I will send a trusted man with you, a truly trustworthy man." The Companions of the Messenger of Allah all felt eager to be that man. The Messenger said, "O Abu `Ubaydah bin Al-Jarrah! Stand up." When Abu `Ubaydah stood up, the Messenger of Allah said, "This is the trustee of this Ummah.")

Al-Bukhari recorded that Anas said that the Messenger of Allah said on another occasion,

«لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَمِينٌ، وَأَمِينُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ أَبُو عُبَيْدَةَ بْنُ
الْجَرَّاحِ»

(Every Ummah has a trustee, and the trustee of this Ummah is Abu `Ubaydah bin Al-Jarrah.)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Ibn `Abbas said, "Abu Jahl, may Allah curse him, said, 'If I see Muhammad praying next to the Ka`bah, I will step on his neck.' The Prophet later said,

«لَوْ فَعَلَ لَأَخَذَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ عِيَانًا، وَلَوْ أَنَّ الْيَهُودَ
تَمَنَوُا الْمَوْتَ لَمَاتُوا، وَرَأَوْا مَقَاعِدَهُمْ مِنَ النَّارِ،
وَلَوْ خَرَجَ الَّذِينَ يَبَاهِلُونَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَرَجَعُوا لَا يَجِدُونَ مَالًا وَلَا أَهْلًا»

(Had he tried to do it, the angels would have taken him publicly. Had the Jews wished for death, they would have perished and would have seen their seats in the Fire. Had those who sought Mubalahah with the Messenger of Allah, went ahead with it, they would not have found estates or families when they returned home)." Al-Bukhari, At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i also recorded this Hadith, which At-Tirmidhi graded Hasan Sahih.

Allah then said,

(إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ)

(Verily, this is the true narrative) meaning, what we narrated to you, O Muhammad, about `Isa is the plain truth that cannot be avoided,

(وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ
الْحَكِيمُ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا)

(and none has the right to be worshipped but Allah. And indeed, Allah is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. And if they turn away,) by abandoning this truth,

(فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُفْسِدِينَ)

(then surely, Allah is All-Aware of those who do mischief.) for those who abandon the truth for falsehood commit mischief, and Allah has full knowledge of them and will subject them to the worst punishment. Verily, Allah is able to control everything, all praise and thanks are due to Him, and we seek refuge with Him from His revenge.

(قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا
وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا
يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ
تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ)

(64. Say: "O people of the Scripture: Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allah the same, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah." Then, if they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims.")

Every Person Knows about Tawhid

This Ayah includes the People of the Book, the Jews and Christians, and those who follow their ways.

(قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ)

(Say: "O people of the Scripture! Come to a word")

`Word' - in Arabic - also means a complete sentence, as evident from this Ayah. Allah described this word as being one,

(سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ)

(that is the same between us and you), an honest and righteous word that is fair to both parties. Allah then explained this word,

(أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا)

(that we worship none but Allah (Alone), and that we associate no partners with Him,) we worship neither a statue, cross, idol, Taghut (false gods), fire or anything else. Rather, we worship Allah Alone without partners, and this is the message of all of Allah's Messengers. Allah said,

(وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ
أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ)

(And We did not send any Messenger before you but We revealed to him (saying): "None has the right to be worshipped but I (Allah) , so worship Me (Alone and none else).") 21:25 and,

(وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ
وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّغُوتَ)

(And verily, We have sent among every Ummah a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allah (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Taghut (all false deities).") 16:36 . Allah said next,

(وَلَا يَتَّخِذُ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ)

("and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah.") Ibn Jurayj commented, "We do not obey each other in disobedience to Allah."

(فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ)

(Then, if they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims.") if they abandon this fair call, then let them know that you will remain in Islam as Allah has legislated for you.

We should mention that the letter that the Prophet sent to Heraclius reads, "In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. From Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, to Heraclius, Leader of the Romans: peace be upon those who follow the true guidance. Embrace

Islam and you will acquire safety, embrace Islam and Allah will grant you a double reward. However, if you turn away from it, then you will carry the burden of the peasants, and,

(يَأْهَلِ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ
أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ
بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا
فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ)

("O people of the Scripture: Come to a word that is the same between us and you, that we worship none but Allah (Alone), and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah." Then, if they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims.")"

Muhammad bin Ishaq and other scholars said that the beginning of Surah Al `Imran, and more than eighty verses thereafter; were revealed about the delegation of Najran. Az-Zuhri stated that the people of Najran were the first people to pay the Jizyah (tax money paid to the Muslim State). However, there is no disagreement that the Ayah that ordained the Jizyah 9:29 was revealed after the Fath (conquering Makkah, and therefore, after the delegation of Najran came to Al-Madinah). So, how can this Ayah 3:64 be contained in the Prophet's letter to Heraclius before the victory of Makkah, and how can we harmonize between the statements of Muhammad bin Ishaq and Az-Zuhri The answer is that the delegation of Najran came before Al-Hudaybiyyah (before the victory of Makkah), and what they paid was in lieu of the Mubahalah; not as Jizyah. The Ayah about the Jizyah was later revealed, and its ruling supported what occurred with the Najran people. In support of this opinion, we should mention that in another instance, the ruling on dividing the booty into one - fifth (for the Prophet) and four-fifths (for the fighters) agreed with the practice of `Abdullah bin Jahsh during the raid that he led before Badr. An Ayah later on upheld the way `Abdullah divided the booty. Therefore, it is possible that the Prophet wrote this statement (Say, "O People of the Scripture. . .") in his letter to Heraclius before the Ayah was revealed. Later on, the Qur'an agreed with the Prophet's statement, word by word. It is also a fact that the Qur'an was revealed in agreement with what `Umar said regarding the captured disbelievers at Badr, the Hijab (Muslim woman code of dress), refraining from performing prayer for the hypocrites, and regarding his statements:

(وَآتَّخِذُوا مِنْ مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى)

(And take you the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim as a place of prayer.) 2:125 , and,

(عَسَى رَبُّهُ إِن طَلَّقَنَّ أَنْ يُبَدِّلَهُ أَزْوَاجًا خَيْرًا
مِّنْكَنَّ)

(It may be if he divorced you (all) that his Lord will give him instead of you, wives better than you.) 66:5 .

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تُحَاجُّونَ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَا أُنزِلَتِ
التَّوْرَةُ وَالْإِنْجِيلُ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ -
هَٰأَنْتُمْ هَٰؤُلَاءِ حَٰجَجْتُمْ فِيمَا لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلِمَ
تُحَاجُّونَ فِيمَا لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا
تَعْلَمُونَ - مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا
وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُّسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ
- إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ لَلَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَٰذَا
النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(65. O people of the Scripture! Why do you dispute about Ibrahim, while the Tawrah and the Injil were not revealed till after him Have you then no sense) (66. Verily, you are those who have disputed about that of which you have knowledge. Why do you then dispute concerning that of which you have no knowledge It is Allah Who knows, and you know not.) (67. Ibrahim was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim Hanifa and he was not of the Mushrikin) (68. Verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Ibrahim are those who followed him, and this Prophet and those who have believed. And Allah is the Wali (Protector and Helper) of the believers.)

Disputing with the Jews and Christians About the Religion of Ibrahim

Allah censures the Jews and Christians for their dispute with Muslims over Ibrahim Al-Khalil and the claim each group made that he was one of them. Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasar reported that Ibn `Abbas said, "The Christians of Najran and Jewish rabbis gathered before the Messenger of Allah and disputed in front of him. The rabbis said, `Ibrahim was certainly Jewish.' The Christians said, `Certainly, Ibrahim was Christian.' So Allah sent down,

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تُحَاجُّونَ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ)

(O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Why do you dispute about Ibrahim,) meaning, `How is it that you, Jews, claim that Ibrahim was Jew, although he lived before Allah sent down the Tawrah to Musa How is it that you, Christians, claim that Ibrahim was Christian, although Christianity came after his time" This is why Allah said,

(أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ)

(Have you then no sense)

Allah then said,

(هَأَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ حَاجِبْتُمْ فِيْمَا لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلِمَ
تُحَاجُّونَ فِيْمَا لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ)

(Verily, you are those who have disputed about that of which you have knowledge. Why do you then dispute concerning that of which you have no knowledge)

This Ayah criticizes those who argue and dispute without knowledge, just as the Jews and Christians did concerning Ibrahim. Had they disputed about their religions, which they had knowledge of, and about the Law that was legislated for them until Muhammad was sent, it would have been better for them. Rather, they disputed about what they had no knowledge of, so Allah criticized them for this behavior. Allah commanded them to refer what they have no knowledge of to He Who knows the seen and unseen matters and Who knows the true reality of all things. This is why Allah said,

(وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ)

(It is Allah Who knows, and you know not.)

Allah said,

(مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ
حَنِيفًا مُّسْلِمًا)

(Ibrahim was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim Hanifa), shunning Shirk and living in Iman,

(وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ)

(and he was not of the Mushrikin.)

This Ayah is similar to the Ayah in Surat Al-Baqarah,

(وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى تَهْتَدُوا)

(And they say, "Be Jews or Christians, then you will be guided...") 2:135 .

Allah said next,

(إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَذَا
النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(Verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Ibrahim are those who followed him, and this Prophet and those who have believed. And Allah is the Wali (Protector and Helper) of the believers.)

This Ayah means, "The people who have the most right to be followers of Ibrahim are those who followed his religion and this Prophet, Muhammad , and his Companions from the Muhajirin, Ansar and those who followed their lead." Sa`id bin Mansur recorded that Ibn Mas`ud said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«إِنَّ لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ وَلِيًّا مِنْ النَّبِيِّينَ، وَإِنَّ وَلِيَّيَّ مِنْهُمْ
أَبِي وَخَلِيلُ رَبِّي عَزَّ وَجَلَّ»

(Every Prophet had a Wali (supporter, best friend) from among the Prophets. My Wali among them is my father Ibrahim, the Khalil (intimate friend) of my Lord, the Exalted and Most Honored)

The Prophet then recited,

(إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ)

(Verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Ibrahim are those who followed him...)

Allah's statement,

(وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

(And Allah is the Wali (Protector and Helper) of the believers.) means, Allah is the Protector of all those who believe in His Messengers.

(وَدَّتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يُضِلُّوكُمْ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ - يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ - يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَلْبِسُونَ الْحَقَّ بِالْبَطْلِ وَتَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ - وَقَالَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ ءَأَمِنُوا بِالَّذِي أُنزِلَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَجَهُ النَّهَارِ وَكَفَرُوا ءآخِرَهُ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ - وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا لِمَنْ تَبِعَ دِينَكُمْ قُلْ إِنَّ الْهُدَىٰ هُدَىٰ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُؤْتَىٰ أَحَدٌ مِّثْلَ مَا أُوتِيْتُمْ أَوْ يُحَاجُّوكُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ قُلْ إِنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ - يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ)

(69. A party of the People of the Scripture wish to lead you astray. But they shall not lead astray anyone except themselves, and they perceive not.) (70. "O People of the Scripture! Why do you disbelieve in the Ayat of Allah, while you bear witness.") (71. "O People of the Scripture! Why do you mix truth with falsehood and conceal the truth while you know") (72. And a party of the People of the Scripture say: "Believe in the morning in that which is revealed to the believers, and reject it at the end of the day, so that they may turn back.) (73. And believe no one except the one who follows your religion." Say (O Prophet): "Verily, right guidance is the guidance of Allah." (And they say:) "Do not believe that anyone can receive like that which you have received, otherwise they would engage you in argument before your Lord." Say: "All the bounty is in the Hand of Allah; He grants to whom He wills. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower.") (74. He selects for His Mercy whom He wills and Allah is the Owner of great bounty.)

**The Envy the Jews Feel Towards Muslims; Their Wicked Plots
Against Muslims**

Allah states that the Jews envy the faithful and wish they could misguide them. Allah states that the punishment of this behavior will fall back upon them, while they are unaware. Allah criticizes them,

(يَاهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأَنْتُمْ
تَشْهَدُونَ)

(O People of the Scripture!: Why do you disbelieve in the Ayat of Allah, while you bear witness.)

You know for certain that Allah's Ayat are true and authentic,

(يَاهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَلْبِسُونَ الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُونَ
الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ)

(O People of the Scripture: Why do you mix truth with falsehood and conceal the truth while you know) by hiding what is in your Books about the description of Muhammad , while you know what you do.

(وَقَالَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ ءَامِنُوا بِالَّذِي
أُنزِلَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامِنُوا وَجَهَ النَّهَارَ وَكَفَرُوا
ءَاخِرَهُ)

(And a party of the People of the Scripture say: "Believe in the morning in that which is revealed to the believers, and reject it at the end of the day,)

This is a wicked plan from the People of the Book to deceive Muslims who are weak in the religion. They decided that they would pretend to be believers in the beginning of the day, by attending the dawn prayer with the Muslims. However, when the day ended, they would revert to their old religion so that the ignorant people would say, "They reverted to their old religion because they uncovered some shortcomings in the Islamic religion." This is why they said next.

(لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ)

(so that they may turn back.) Ibn Abi Najih said that Mujahid commented about this Ayah, which refers to the Jews, "They attended the dawn prayer with the Prophet and disbelieved in

the end of the day in order to misguide the people. This way, people would think that they have uncovered shortcomings in the religion that they briefly followed."

(وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا لِمَن تَبِعَ دِينَكُمْ)

("And believe no one except the one who follows your religion.")

They said, do not trust anyone with your secret knowledge, except those who follow your religion. Therefore, they say, do not expose your knowledge to Muslims in order to prevent them from believing in it and, thus, use it as proof against you. Allah replied,

(قُلْ إِنَّ الْهُدَىٰ هُدَىٰ اللَّهِ)

(Say: (O Prophet) "Verily, right guidance is the guidance of Allah.")

Allah guides the hearts of the faithful to the perfect faith through the clear Ayat, plain proofs and unequivocal evidence that He has sent down to His servant and Messenger Muhammad . This occurs, O you Jews, even though you hide the description of Muhammad . the unlettered Prophet whom you find in your Books that you received from the earlier Prophets. Allah's statement;

(أَنْ يُؤْتَىٰ أَحَدٌ مِّثْلَ مَا أُوتِيْتُمْ أَوْ يُحَاجُّوْكُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ)

((And they say:) "Do not believe that anyone can receive like that which you have received, otherwise they would engage you in argument before your Lord.")

They say, "Do not disclose the knowledge that you have to the Muslims, to prevent them from learning it and thus becoming your equals. They will be even better because they will believe in it or will use it against you as evidence with your Lord, and thus establish Allah's proof against you in this life and the Hereafter." Allah said,

(قُلْ إِنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ)

(Say: "All the bounty is in the Hand of Allah; He grants to whom He wills.) meaning, all affairs are under His control, and He gives and takes. Verily, Allah gives faith, knowledge and sound comprehension to whomever He wills. He also misguides whomever He wills by blinding his sight, mind, sealing his heart, hearing and stamping his eyes closed. Allah has the perfect wisdom and the unequivocal proofs.

(وَاللَّهُ وَسِعَ عَلِيمِيحْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ
دُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ)

(And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures' needs, All-Knower." He selects for His mercy whom He wills and Allah is the Owner of great bounty.) meaning, He has endowed you, O believers, with tremendous virtue, in that He honored your Prophet Muhammad over all other prophets, and by directing you to the best Shari` ah there is.

(وَمِنَ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ إِن تَأْمَنهُ بِقِنطَارٍ يُؤَدُّهُ
إِلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ إِن تَأْمَنهُ بدينَارٍ لَّا يُؤَدُّهُ إِلَيْكَ إِلَّا
مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قَائِمًا ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا
فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ سَبِيلٌ وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ
يَعْلَمُونَ - بَلَى مَنْ أَوْفَى بِعَهْدِهِ وَاتَّقَى فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ
يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ)

(75. Among the People of the Scripture is he who, if entrusted with a Qintar (a great amount of wealth), will readily pay it back; and among them there is he who, if entrusted with a single silver coin, will not repay it unless you constantly stand demanding, because they say: "There is no blame on us to betray and take the properties of the illiterates (Arabs)." But they tell a lie against Allah while they know it.) (76. Yes, whoever fulfills his pledge and fears Allah much; verily, then Allah loves the Muttaqin (the pious).)

How Trustworthy Are the Jews

Allah states that there are deceitful people among the Jews. He also warns the faithful against being deceived by them, because some of them,

(مَنْ إِن تَأْمَنهُ بِقِنطَارٍ)

(if entrusted with a Qintar (a great amount)) of money,

(يُؤَدُّهُ إِلَيْكَ)

(will readily pay it back;) This Ayah indicates that this type would likewise give what is less than a Qintar, as is obvious. However,

(وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ بِدِينَارٍ لَّا يُؤَدُّهُ إِلَيْكَ إِلَّا مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قَائِمًا)

(and among them there is he who, if entrusted with a single silver coin, will not repay it unless you constantly stand demanding,) and insisting on acquiring your rightful property. If this is what he would do with one Dinar, then what about what is more than a Dinar We mentioned the meaning of Qintar in the beginning of this Surah, while the value of Dinar is well known. Allah's statement,

(ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ سَبِيلٌ)

(because they say: "There is no blame on us to betray and take the properties of the illiterates (Arabs).") means, what made them reject the truth (or what they owed) is that they said, "There is no harm in our religion if we eat up the property of the unlettered ones, the Arabs, for Allah has allowed it for us." Allah replied,

(وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(But they tell a lie against Allah while they know it.) for they invented this lie and word of misguidance. Rather, Allah would not allow this money for them unless they had a right to it.

`Abdur-Razzaq recorded that Sa`sa`ah bin Yazid said that a man asked Ibn `Abbas, "During battle, we capture some property belonging to Ahl Adh-Dhimmah, such as chickens and sheep." Ibn `Abbas said, "What do you do in this case" The man said, "We say that there is no sin (if we confiscate them) in this case." He said, "That is what the People of the Book said,

(لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ سَبِيلٌ)

(There is no blame on us to betray and take the properties of the illiterates (Arabs).)

Verily, if they pay the Jizyah, then you are not allowed their property, except when they willingly give it up."

Allah then said,

(بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِ وَاتَّقَىٰ)

(Yes, whoever fulfills his pledge and fears Allah much,) fulfills his promise and fears Allah among you, O People of the Book, regarding the covenant Allah took from you to believe in Muhammad when he is sent, just as He took the same covenant from all Prophets and their nations. Whoever avoids Allah's prohibitions, obeys Him and adheres to the Shari`ah that He sent with His Final Messenger and the master of all mankind.

(فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ)

(verily, then Allah loves the Muttaqin.)

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا
أُولَئِكَ لَا خَلْقَ لَهُمْ فِي الْأُخْرَةِ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ
وَلَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ)

(77. Verily, those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allah's covenant and their oaths, they shall have no portion in the Hereafter (Paradise). Neither will Allah speak to them nor look at them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them, and they shall have a painful torment.)

There is No Share in the Hereafter for Those Who Break Allah's Covenant

Allah states that whoever prefers the small things of this short, soon to end life, instead of fulfilling what they have promised Allah by following Muhammad , announcing his description from their books to people and affirming his truth, then,

(أُولَئِكَ لَا خَلْقَ لَهُمْ فِي الْأُخْرَةِ)

(they shall have no portion in the Hereafter.)

They will not have a share or part in the Hereafter's rewards,

(وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ)

(Neither will Allah speak to them nor look at them on the Day of Resurrection) with His mercy. This Ayah indicates that Allah will not speak words of kindness nor look at them with any mercy,

(وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ)

(nor will He purify them) from sins and impurities. Rather, He will order them to the Fire,

(وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ)

(and they shall have a painful torment.)

There are several Hadiths on the subject of this Ayah, some of which follow. The First Hadith

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Dharr said, "The Messenger of Allah said, c

«ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ، وَلَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ، وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ»

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«المُسَيَّلُ، وَالْمُنَقِقُ سِلْعَتَهُ بِالْحَلْفِ الْكَاذِبِ،
وَالْمَنَّانُ»

(There are three persons whom Allah will not speak to, look at on the Day of Resurrection or purify, and they shall taste a painful torment. I said, `O Messenger of Allah! Who are they, may they gain failure and loss' He said, repeating this statement thrice, `The Musbil (man whose clothes reach below the ankles), he who swears while lying so as to sell his merchandize and the one who gives charity and reminds people of it).'" This was also recorded by Muslim, and the collectors of the Sunan. Another Hadith

Imam Ahmad recorded that `Adi bin `Amirah Al-Kindi said, "Imru' Al-Qays bin `Abis, a man from Kindah, disputed with a man from Hadramut in front of the Messenger of Allah concerning a piece of land. The Prophet required the man from Hadramut to present his evidence, but he did not have any. The Prophet required Imru' Al-Qays to swear to his truthfulness, but the man

from Hadramut said, `O Messenger of Allah! If you only require him to swear, then by the Lord of the Ka`bah (Allah), my land is lost.' The Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ حَلَفَ عَلَى يَمِينٍ كَاذِبَةٍ لِيَقْتَطِعَ بِهَا مَالَ أَحَدٍ، لَقِيَ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِ غَضَبَانِ»

(Whoever swears while lying to acquire the property of others, will meet Allah while He is angry with him.)" Raj'a' one of the narrators of the Hadith, said that the Messenger of Allah then recited,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا)

(Verily, those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allah's covenant and their oaths...)

Imru' Al-Qays said, `What if one forfeits this dispute, what will he gain, O Messenger of Allah' The Prophet answered, `Paradise.' Imru' Al-Qays said, `Bear witness that I forfeit all the land for him.'" An-Nasa'i also recorded this Hadith. Another Hadith

Imam Ahmad recorded that `Abdullah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«مَنْ حَلَفَ عَلَى يَمِينٍ هُوَ فِيهَا فَاجِرٌ، لِيَقْتَطِعَ بِهَا مَالَ امْرِئٍ مُسْلِمٍ، لَقِيَ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِ غَضَبَانِ»

(Whoever takes a false oath to deprive a Muslim of his property will meet Allah while He is angry with him.)

Al-Ash`ath said, "By Allah! This verse was revealed concerning me. I owned some land with a Jewish man who denied my right, and I complained against him to the Messenger of Allah. The Prophet asked me, `Do you have evidence' I said, `I don't have evidence.' He said to the Jew, `Take an oath then.' I said, `O Allah's Messenger! He will take a (false) oath immediately, and I will lose my property.' Allah revealed the verse,

(إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا)

(Verily, those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allah's covenant and their oaths...)"

The Two Sahihs recorded this Hadith. Another Hadith

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah said,

«ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَلَا يَنْظُرُ
إِلَيْهِمْ، وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ، وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ: رَجُلٌ مَنَعَ
ابْنَ السَّبِيلِ فَضْلَ مَاءٍ عِنْدَهُ، وَرَجُلٌ حَلَفَ عَلَى
سِلْعَةٍ بَعْدَ الْعَصْرِ يَعْني كَاذِبًا وَرَجُلٌ بَايَعَ إِمَامًا،
فَإِنْ أَعْطَاهُ وَفَى لَهُ، وَإِنْ لَمْ يُعْطِهِ لَمْ يَفِ لَهُ»

(Three persons whom Allah shall not speak to on the Day of Resurrection, or look at, or purify them, and they shall taste a painful torment. (They are) a man who does not give the wayfarer some of the water that he has; a man who swears, while lying, in order to complete a sales transaction after the `Asr prayer; and a man who gives his pledge of allegiance to an Imam (Muslim Ruler), and if the Imam gives him (something), he fulfills the pledge, but if the Imam does not give him, he does not fulfill the pledge).

Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi also recorded this Hadith, and At-Tirmidhi graded it Hasan Sahih.

(وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ لَفَرِيقًا يَلْوُونَ أَلْسِنَتَهُم بِالْكِتَابِ
لِتَحْسَبُوهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ
وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ
وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ)

78. And verily, among them is a party who distort the Book with their tongues, so that you may think it is from the Book, but it is not from the Book, and they say: This is from Alla0h, but it is not from Alla0h and they speak a lie against Alla0h while they know it.

The Jews Alter Allah's Words

Allah states that some Jews, may Allah's curses descend on them, distort Allah's Words with their tongues, change them from their appropriate places, and alter their intended meanings. They do this to deceive the ignorant people by making it appear that their words are in the Book of Allah. They attribute their own lies to Allah, even though they know that they have lied and invented falsehood. Therefore, Allah said,

(وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ)

(and they speak a lie against Allah while they know it.)

Mujahid, Ash-Sha`bi, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that,

(يَلْوُونَ أَلْسِنَتَهُمْ بِالْكِتَابِ)

(who distort the Book with their tongues,) means, "They alter them (Allah's Words)."

Al-Bukhari reported that Ibn `Abbas said that the Ayah means they alter and add although none among Allah's creation can remove the Words of Allah from His Books, they alter and distort their apparent meanings. Wahb bin Munabbih said, "The Tawrah and the Injil remain as Allah revealed them, and no letter in them was removed. However, the people misguide others by addition and false interpretation, relying on books that they wrote themselves. Then,

(وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ)

(they say: "This is from Allah," but it is not from Allah;)

As for Allah's Books, they are still preserved and cannot be changed." Ibn Abi Hatim recorded this statement. However, if Wahb meant the books that are currently in the hands of the People of the Book, then we should state that there is no doubt that they altered, distorted, added to and deleted from them. For instance, the Arabic versions of these books contain tremendous error, many additions and deletions and enormous misinterpretation. Those who rendered these translations have incorrect comprehension in most, rather, all of these translations. If Wahb meant the Books of Allah that He has with Him, then indeed, these Books are preserved and were never changed.

(مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُؤْتِيَهُ اللَّهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ
وَالنُّبُوَّةَ ثُمَّ يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ كُونُوا عِبَادًا لِي مِنْ دُونِ
اللَّهِ وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّنِيَّيْنَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ
الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ - وَلَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ
تَتَّخِذُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَالنَّبِيِّيْنَ أَرْبَابًا أَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْكَفْرِ
بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ)

(79. It is not (possible) for any human being to whom Allah has given the Book and Al-Hukm and prophethood to say to the people: "Be my worshippers rather than Allah's." On the contrary (he would say): "Be you Rabbaniyyun, because you are teaching the Book, and you are studying it.")
(80. Nor would he order you to take angels and Prophets for lords. Would he order you to disbelieve after you have submitted to Allah's will)

No Prophet Ever Called People to Worship him or to Worship Other Than Allah

This Ayah 3:79 means, it is not for a person whom Allah has given the Book, knowledge in the Law and prophethood to proclaim to the people, "Worship me instead of Allah," meaning, along with Allah. If this is not the right of a Prophet or a Messenger, then indeed, it is not the right of anyone else to issue such a claim.

This criticism refers to the ignorant rabbis, priests and teachers of misguidance, unlike the Messengers and their sincere knowledgeable followers who implement their knowledge; for they only command what Allah commands them, as their honorable Messengers conveyed to them. They also forbid what Allah forbade for them, by the words of His honorable Messengers. The Messengers, may Allah's peace and blessings be on all of them, are the emissaries between Allah and His creation, conveying Allah's Message and Trust. The messengers indeed fulfilled their mission, gave sincere advice to creation and conveyed the truth to them. Allah's statement,

(وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّينَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكُتُبَ
وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ)

(On the contrary (he would say), "Be you Rabbaniyyun, because you are teaching the Book, and you are studying it.") means, the Messenger recommends the people to be Rabbaniyyun. Ibn `Abbas, Abu Razin and several others said that Rabbaniyyun means, "Wise, learned, and forbearing." Ad-Dahhak commented concerning Allah's statement,

(بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكُتُبَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ)

(because you are teaching the Book, and you are studying it.) "Whoever learns the Qur'an deserves to become a Faqih (learned)."

(وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ)

(and you are studying it), preserving its words.

Allah then said,

(وَلَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَتَّخِذُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ أَرْبَابًا)

(Nor would he order you to take angels and Prophets for lords.) The Prophet does not command worshipping other than Allah, whether a sent Messenger or an angel.

(أَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْكَفْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ)

(Would he order you to disbelieve after you have submitted to Allah's will) meaning, he would not do that, for whoever calls to worshipping other than Allah, will have called to Kufr. The Prophets only call to Iman which commands worshipping Allah Alone without partners. Allah said in other Ayat,

(وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ
أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ)

(And We did not send any Messenger before you (O Muhammad) but We revealed to him (saying): "None has the right to be worshipped but I, so worship Me".) 21:25 ,

(وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ
وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ)

(And verily, We have sent among every Ummah a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allah (Alone), and avoid Taghut (all false deities).") 16:36 , and,

(وَاسْأَلْ مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رُسُلِنَا أَجَعَلْنَا
مِنْ دُونِ الرَّحْمَنِ ءَالِهَةً يُعْبَدُونَ)

(And ask those of Our Messengers whom We sent before you: "Did We ever appoint gods to be worshipped besides the Most Gracious (Allah)") 43:45

Allah said concerning the angels,

وَمَنْ يَقُلْ مِنْهُمْ إِنِّي إِلَهٌ مِّنْ دُونِهِ فَذَلِكَ نَجْزِيهِ
جَهَنَّمَ كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ)

(And if any of them should say: "Verily, I am a god besides Him (Allah)," such a one We should recompense with Hell. Thus We recompense the wrongdoers.) 21:29 .

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ
وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُّصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ
لْتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِ وَتَتَّصِرُنَّهُ قَالُوا أَأَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَخَذْتُمْ عَلَىٰ
ذَلِكَمْ إِصْرِي قَالُوا أَقْرَرْنَا قَالَ فَاشْهَدُوا وَأَنَا
مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ - فَمَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ
هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ)

(81. And (remember) when Allah took the covenant of the Prophets, saying: "Take whatever I gave you from the Book and Hikmah, and afterwards there will come to you a Messenger confirming what is with you; you must, then, believe in him and help him." Allah said: "Do you agree (to it) and will you take up Isri" They said: "We agree." He said: "Then bear witness; and I am with you among the witnesses.") (82. Then whoever turns away after this, they are the rebellious.)

Taking a Pledge From the Prophets to Believe in Our Prophet, Muhammad

Allah states that He took a pledge from every Prophet whom He sent from Adam until `Isa, that when Allah gives them the Book and the Hikmah, thus acquiring whatever high grades they deserve, then a Messenger came afterwards, they would believe in and support him. Even though Allah has given the Prophets the knowledge and the prophethood, this fact should not make them refrain from following and supporting the Prophet who comes after them. This is why Allah, the Most High, Most Honored, said

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَا آتَيْتُكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ
وَحِكْمَةٍ

(And (remember) when Allah took the covenant of the Prophets, saying: "Take whatever I gave you from the Book and Hikmah.") meaning, if I give you the Book and the Hikmah,

ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِ
وَلَتَنْصُرُنَّهُ قَالَ أَأَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَخَذْتُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَلِكُمْ
إِصْرِي

("and afterwards there will come to you a Messenger confirming what is with you; you must, then, believe in him and help him." Allah said, "Do you agree (to it) and will you take up Isri")

Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Ar-Rabi`, Qatadah and As-Suddi said that `Isri' means, "My covenant." Muhammad bin Ishaq said that,

(إِصْرِي)

(Isri) means, "The responsibility of My covenant that you took," meaning, the ratified pledge that you gave Me.

قَالُوا أَأَقْرَرْنَا قَالَ فَاشْهَدُوا وَأَنَا مَعَكُمْ مِنَ
الشَّاهِدِينَ قَالُوا تَوَلَّىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ

(They said: "We agree." He said: "Then bear witness; and I am with you among the witnesses." then whoever turns away after this,") from fulfilling this pledge and covenant, c

(قَالُوا لِيكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ)

(they are the rebellious.) `Ali bin Abi Talib and his cousin `Abdullah bin `Abbas said, "Allah never sent a Prophet but after taking his pledge that if Muhammad were sent in his lifetime, he would believe in and support him." Allah commanded each Prophet to take a pledge from his nation that if Muhammad were sent in their time, they would believe in and support him. Tawus, Al-Hasan Al-Basri and Qatadah said, "Allah took the pledge from the Prophets that they would believe in each other", and this statement does not contradict what `Ali and Ibn `Abbas stated.