

SECTION 14: Some Directions for Muslims

101 O you who believe, ask not about things which if made known to you would give you trouble; and if you ask about them when the Qur'ān is being revealed, they will be made known to you. Allāh pardons this; and Allāh is Forgiving, Forbearing.^a

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنَ أَشْيَاءٍ
إِن تُبَدَّ لَكُمْ فَسَوْفَ يَكُونُ عَلَيْكُمُ
عَذَابٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ تَسْأَلُوا عَنْهَا
حِينَ يُنزَّلَ الْقُرْآنُ تُبَدَّ لَكُمْ وَعَفَا اللَّهُ
عَنْهَا وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠١﴾

102 A people before you indeed asked such questions, then became disbelievers therein.^a

قَدْ سَأَلَهَا قَوْمٌ مِّن قَبْلِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَصْبَحُوا
بِهَا كَافِرِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

103 Allāh has not ordained a *baḥīrah* or a *sā'ibah* or a *waṣīlah* or a *ḥāmī*, but those who disbelieve fabricate a lie against Allāh. And most of them understand not.^a

مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ بَعِيرَةٍ وَلَا سَائِبَةٍ
وَلَا وَصِيلَةٍ وَلَا حَامٍ وَلَٰكِنَّ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكِبَابَ وَ
كَتَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

101a. As Islām discouraged rigorous practices, such as monastic life, it also prohibited questions relating to details on many points which would require this or that practice to be made obligatory, and much was left to individual will or the circumstances of the time and place. The exercise of judgment occupies a very important place in Islām and this gives ample scope to different nations and communities to frame laws for themselves to meet new and changed situations. The Ḥadīth shows that the Prophet also discouraged questions on details in which a Muslim could choose a way for himself (B. 3:28, 29).

102a. It does not refer to a particular people. The history of previous nations shows that the statement is generally true.

103a. The liberation of certain animals in honour of idols was a practice among the Arabs, and as Islām uprooted every vestige of idolatry, this practice is condemned here. *Baḥīrah* (from *baḥara*, meaning *he cut* or *slit*) means a *she-camel having her ear slit*. When a she-camel (according to some also a *ewe* or a *she-goat*) had brought forth five (or seven, or ten) young ones, the last of these, if a male, was slaughtered, but if a female, her ear was slit. According to others it was the mother; she being also exempted from slaughter and from carrying burdens (LL).

Sā'ibah (from *sāba*, which means *it ran of itself*) signifies any beast left to pasture without attention. According to some, it was the mother of a *baḥīrah*, or a she-camel which, having brought forth females at ten successive births, was set at liberty to pasture where she would, and was not ridden nor was her milk taken (LL).

Waṣīlah (from *waṣala*, i.e. *he connected* or *joined*) means a *she-goat* which brought forth twins, a male and a female; when the male was brought forth alone it was slaughtered to the idols, the female alone being kept; but in the case of the male and the female being born twins, the male was considered to be joined to the female, and was not therefore sacrificed to the gods (Rz).

Ḥāmī (from *ḥamā-hu*, i.e. *be prohibited* or *interdicted* it or *protected* or *guarded* it) means a *stallion-camel that has prohibited* or *interdicted his back* (to be used for bear-

104 And when it is said to them, Come to that which Allāh has revealed and to the Messenger, they say: Sufficient for us is that wherein we found our fathers. What! even though their fathers knew nothing and had no guidance!

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
وَالِی الرَّسُولِ قَالُوا حَسْبُنَا مَا وَجَدْنَا
عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أَوْ كُوفَانِ آبَائِهِمْ
لَا يَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

105 O you who believe, take care of your souls — he who errs cannot harm you when you are on the right way. To Allāh you will all return, so He will inform you of what you did.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ لَا
يُضُرُّكُمْ مَن ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ إِلَىٰ
اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا
كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

106 O you who believe, call to witness between you, when death draws nigh to one of you, at the time of making the will, two just persons from among you, or two others from among others than you,^a if you are travelling in the land and the calamity of death befalls you. You should detain them after the prayer. Then if you doubt (them), they shall both swear by Allāh (saying): We will not take for it a price, though there be a relative nor will we hide the testimony of Allāh,^b for then certainly we shall be sinners.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا شَهَادَةٌ بَيْنَكُمْ إِذَا
خَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ حِينَ الْوَصِيَّةِ
اِثْنَيْنِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ أَوْ آخَرَيْنِ مِمَّنْ
غَيْرِكُمْ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ صَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَأَصَابَتْكُم مُّصِيبَةُ الْمَوْتِ تَحْبِسُونَهُمَا
مِن بَعْدِ الصَّلَاةِ فَيُقْسِمْنَ بِاللَّهِ إِنْ
ارْتَبْتُمْ لَا نَشْتَرِي بِهِ ثَمَنًا وَلَا كُوفَانًا
قُرْبَىٰ وَلَا نَكْتُمُ شَهَادَةَ اللَّهِ إِنَّا إِذًا
لَمِنَ الْآثِمِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

ing a rider or any burden); that is left at liberty and not made any use of; whose offspring in the second degree of descent has been fertile (LL).

106a. The following story is related in connection with this verse. Two brothers, both Christians, Tamim Dāri, and ‘Adi, were entrusted by their dying Muslim companion Budail, in Syria, with certain property to be made over to his relatives on their return to Madinah. The two brothers, however, stole a cup of silver, making over the remaining property; the relatives found a complete list disclosing the existence of the stolen cup of silver as being part of the original property, and thus the evidence of the Christian brothers was shown to be false.

This story abundantly proves that so late as the revelation of this chapter, Muslim and Christian relations were still friendly. It further demonstrates that the evidence of the followers of an alien religion is admissible according to the Holy Qur’ān.

106b. “The testimony of Allāh” stands for the testimony which Allāh has enjoined to be borne uprightly.

107 If it be discovered that they are guilty of a sin, two others shall stand up in their place from among those against whom the first two have been guilty of a sin; so they shall swear by Allāh: Certainly our testimony is truer than the testimony of those two, and we have not exceeded the limit, for then surely we should be unjust.

فَإِنْ عُنِيَ عَلَىٰ آلِهِمَا اسْتَحَقَّ إِتْمَانًا فَآخَرِينَ
يَقُومُونَ مَقَامَهُمَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَحَقَّ
عَلَيْهِمُ الْاَوْلَايَيْنَ فَيَقْسِمُونَ بِاللَّهِ لَشَهَادَتُنَا
أَحَقُّ مِنْ شَهَادَتِهِمَا وَمَا اعْتَدَيْنَا إِلَّا
إِذَا لَيْسَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

108 Thus it is more probable that they will give true testimony^a or fear that other oaths will be taken after their oaths. And keep your duty to Allāh and hearken. And Allāh guides not the transgressing people.

ذَلِكَ آدَتِي أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِاللَّهَادَةِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهَا
أَوْ يَخَافُوا أَنْ تُرَدَّ أَيْمَانٌ بَعْدَ آيَاتِهِمْ
وَآتَقُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْمَعُوا وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي
الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾

SECTION 15: Christian Love of this Life

109 On the day when Allāh will gather together the messengers and say: What was the response you received? They will say: We have no knowledge. Surely Thou art the great Knower of the unseen.^a

يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ الرُّسُلَ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَا
أُجِبْتُمْ قَالُوا لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا بِئِنَّكَ
أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿٧٩﴾

110 When Allāh will say: O Jesus, son of Mary, remember My favour to thee and to thy mother, when I strengthened thee with the Holy Spirit; thou spoked to people in the cradle and in old age, and when I taught thee the Book and the Wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel, and when thou didst determine out of clay

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ لِيَعْقِصِي ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ إِذْ كُرِّ
نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَتِكَ إِذْ أَيَّدتُّكَ
بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ فَكَلَّمَ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ
وَكَهْلًا وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَإِذْ تَخَلَّقْنَا مِنْ
الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي فَتَنفَخُ فِيهَا

108a. A statement is said to be *'alā wajhi-hī* when it is made in a proper manner (LL, under *qaṣṣ*). The word *wajh* means *face* as well as *drift, mode* or *course*. The giving of testimony *'alā wajhi-hā* therefore means *giving it truly* or *according to facts*.

109a. The question is, Did those to whom you were sent accept your message and remain true to it, or was it otherwise? The answer of the prophets is that only Allāh knew how their message was received, because they could not say how far its rejecters were guilty, nor how far the accepters of the message remained true to it after their death.

a thing like the form of a bird by My permission, then thou didst breathe into it and it became a bird by My permission; and thou didst heal the blind and the leprous by My permission; and when thou didst raise the dead by My permission;^a and when I withheld the Children of Israel from thee when thou camest to them with clear arguments — but those of them who disbelieved said: This is nothing but clear enchantment.

111 And when I revealed to the disciples, saying, Believe in Me and My messenger, they said: We believe and bear witness that we submit.

112 When the disciples said: O Jesus, son of Mary, is thy Lord able to send down food to us from heaven?^a He said: Keep your duty to Allāh if you are believers.

113 They said: We desire to eat of it, and that our hearts should be at rest, and that we may know that thou hast indeed spoken truth to us, and that we may be witnesses thereof.

114 Jesus, son of Mary, said: O Allāh, our Lord, send down to us food from heaven which should be to us an ever-recurring happiness^a to the first

فَكَوْنُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي وَتُبْرِئِي الْأَكْمَهَ
وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَى
بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَنْكَ
إِذْ جِئْتَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
مِنْهُمْ إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

وَإِذْ أَوْحَيْتُ إِلَى الْحَوَارِيِّينَ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِي
وَبِرَسُولِي قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَاشْهَدْ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

إِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ لِيَسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ
هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا
مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ قَالَ تَقْوُوا اللَّهَ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾

قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَتَطْمَئِنَّ
قُلُوبُنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ صَدَقْتُنَا وَنَكُونَ
عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿١١٣﴾

قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا
أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ تَكُونُ
لَنَا عَيْدًا لِأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا وَآيَةً مِنْكَ ﴿١١٤﴾

110a. For being strengthened with the Holy Spirit, see 2:87a; for speaking in the cradle and in old age, as also for the significance of *kahl*, see 3:46a; for the miracles spoken of here, see 3:49a, 49b, 49c; for the withholding of the Israelites, see 3:54b, 55a.

112a. *Mā'idah* is from *māda*, which has two meanings: (1) *it became in a state of motion*, and (2) *he conferred a benefit or favour on him*. According to R, *māda-ni* means *he gave me food*, and *mā'idah* means both, *a table with food on it*, and *food*. It also means *knowledge*, because knowledge is the nutriment for hearts, as food is the nutriment for bodies (R). A table without food is not called *mā'idah* (LL).

114a. The word '*Id* used here means *a festival*, the literal significance being *an ever-recurring happiness or source of enjoyment*.

of us and the last of us, and a sign from Thee, and give us sustenance and Thou art the Best of the sustainers.^b

115 Allāh said: Surely I will send it down to you, but whoever disbelieves afterwards from among you, I will chastise him with a chastisement with which I will not chastise anyone among the nations.^a

وَأَرْزُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

قَالَ اللَّهُ إِنَّي مُنْزِلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ فَمَنْ
يَكْفُرْ بَعْدَ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنِّي أَعَدُّ بَعْءَ عَذَابِي
لَا أَعَدُّ بَعْءَ أَحَدًا مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

SECTION 16: False Doctrines introduced after Jesus' Death

116 And when Allāh will say: O Jesus, son of Mary, didst thou say to men, Take me and my mother for two gods besides Allāh?^a He will

وَأِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ لِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ أَنْتَ
قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمَّيَّ إِلَهَيْنِ
مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ قَالِ سُبْحَانَكَ مَا يَكُونُ

114b. This passage seems to refer to the well-known prayer for *daily bread*, which Jesus appears to have included in the famous Lord's prayer on account of the earthly inclinations of his disciples. The food of earth has no doubt been granted in abundance to the Christians, but this has deprived them of the heavenly food. Compare the Muslim's prayer in the opening chapter which craves not for bread but for the right path. The form of the prayer, that it should be *an ever-recurring happiness*, shows clearly that the prayer was not for a table laden with provisions, as is generally supposed. As to its being sent down from heaven, it should be borne in mind that, in the language of the Holy Qur'ān, everything is with God and is sent down to men. Compare 15:21: "And there is not a thing but with Us are the treasures of it, and We send it not down but in a known measure."

115a. This prophecy is being fulfilled before our eyes. The terrible calamities which the two World Wars have brought to humanity, and especially to the Christian nations, are *unprecedented* in human history — *a chastisement with which I will not chastise anyone among the nations*. And what is this punishment due to? The calamities which have befallen the world today, are due to the mad race for bread and for the wealth of this world. The neglect of the higher values of life and running blindly after material comforts has already brought to the world a ruin which it has never witnessed before, and nobody knows what catastrophe is yet in store for it.

116a. From this description of Mary being taken for a god by the Christians, some Christian critics of the Qur'ān conclude that the doctrine of the Trinity according to the Qur'ān consists of three persons — God, Jesus and Mary. But this is an absolutely unwarranted conclusion. Mary is no doubt spoken of as being taken for an object of worship by the Christians; but the doctrine of the Trinity is not mentioned here, while the Divinity of Mary is not mentioned where the Trinity is spoken of. The doctrine and practice of Mariolatry, as it is called by Protestant controversialists, is too well-known. In the catechism of the Roman Church the following doctrines are to be found: "That she is truly the mother of God, and the second Eve, by whose means we have received blessing and life; that she is the mother of Pity and very specially our advocate; that her images are of the utmost utility" (Ency. Br. 11th ed., vol. 17, p. 813). It is also stated that her intercessions are directly appealed to in the Litany. And further, that there were certain

say: Glory be to Thee! it was not for me to say what I had no right to (say). If I had said it, Thou wouldst indeed have known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thy mind. Surely Thou art the great Knower of the unseen.

لِيَ أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقٍّ إِن
كُنْتُ قُلْتُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ تَعْلَمُ مَا فِي
نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ طَارِكُ
أَنْتَ عَالِمُ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿١١٧﴾

117 I said to them naught save as Thou didst command me: Serve Allāh, my Lord and your Lord; and I was a witness of them so long as I was among them, but when Thou didst cause me to die Thou wast the Watcher over them. And Thou art Witness of all things.^a

مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ أَنْ أَعْبُدُوا
اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا
مَا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ
الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنْتَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿١١٧﴾

women in Thrace, Scythia, and Arabia who were in the habit of worshipping the virgin as a goddess, the offer of a cake being one of the features of their worship. "From the time of the council of Ephesus (held in 431 A.D.)," says the same writer, "to exhibit figures of the virgin and child became the approved expression of orthodoxy ... Of the growth of the Marian cultus, alike in the east and in the west, after the decision at Ephesus it would be impossible to trace the history ... Justinian in one of his laws bespeaks her advocacy for the Empire, and he inscribes the high altar in the new church of St. Sophia with her name. Narses looks to her directions on the field of battle. The Emperor Heraclius bears her image on his banner. John of Damascus speaks of her as the Sovereign lady to whom the whole creation has been made subject by her son. Peter Damian recognizes her as the most exalted of all creatures and apostrophizes her as deified and endowed with all power in heaven and in earth, yet not forgetful of our race." The Christian world had in fact felt "the need for a mediator to deal with the very mediator", and thus Mary was raised to the throne of Divinity along with Jesus. The recent proclamation of the Pope relating to the bodily assumption of Mary supports this conclusion, and will raise a new question for the Christian world whether Trinity really consists of God, Jesus and Mary?

117a. This verse is a conclusive proof that Jesus died a natural death, and is not now alive in heaven. Here Jesus says that so long as he was among his followers he was a witness of their condition, and he did not find them holding the belief in his Divinity. The logical conclusion of this statement is that the false doctrine of his Divinity was introduced into the Christian faith *after his death*, after "Thou didst cause me to die"; see further 3:55a.

A saying of the Holy Prophet is recorded in which the Holy Prophet speaks concerning himself in the very words which are here put into the mouth of Jesus. He said that he would be shown on the day of Resurrection some men who had gone against his teachings, and "I would say what the righteous servant said: I was a witness of them so long as I was among them, but when Thou didst cause me to die, Thou wast the Watcher over them" (B. 60:8).

This saying shows clearly that as it was after the death of the Holy Prophet that his followers perverted his teachings, so it was after the death of Jesus that his followers perverted his teachings.

118 If Thou chastise them, surely they are Thy servants; and if Thou protect them, surely Thou art the Mighty, the Wise.⁴

إِنْ نَعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَبَادُكَ وَإِنْ نَنْقُضُ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١١٨﴾

119 Allāh will say: This is a day when their truth will profit the truthful ones. For them are Gardens wherein flow rivers abiding therein forever. Allāh is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Allāh. That is the mighty achievement.

قَالَ اللَّهُ هَذَا يَوْمُ يَنْفَعُ الصَّادِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَلِكَ الْقَوْمُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١٩﴾

120 Allāh's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and whatever is in them; and He is Possessor of power over all things.

لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا فِيهِنَّ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٢٠﴾

Compare John 17:3: "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent"; and John 17:12: "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name".

118a. The words *taghfir la-hum* (protect or forgive them) refer to their final protection which will be granted to the Christian nations through acceptance of Islām. If the forgiveness of sins was meant, the Divine attributes referred to would have been those speaking of forgiveness and mercy, as *al-Ghafūr*, *al-Rahīm*, i.e. Forgiving, Merciful. Instead of that the attributes referred to are *al-'Azīz al-Hakīm*, or the Mighty, the Wise, which generally indicate that some great purpose would be achieved and a transformation would be brought about. Thus Sudī, one of the earliest commentators says, commenting on the words *taghfir la-hum*: "If Thou protect them and thus bring them over from Christianity to the guidance of Islām" (IJ).