

MESSAGE OF THE QUR'AN

Translation and Brief Elucidation

By

Dr. Israr Ahmad

Surah Al-Ma'idah

(The Repast / The table laden with food)

(Recap of verses 67 – 86 of Surah Al-Ma'idah and fresh exposition of verses 87 – 100 of the same Surah, inclusive)

Translator's note:

For the sake of continuity and coherent explanation, most of the general discourse has been made by employing the 'male' as a prototype, which is in no way meant to be diminutive of the opposite gender or to disrespect the status of women.

Moreover, each verse (Ayah) has been kept as a continuum in order to prevent the misrepresentation of meanings, which may occur when the verses are broken up and the translation of those verses becomes kaput when done in bits and pieces.

Cross-references taken from other parts of the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Messenger of Allah (SAAW) are provided in italics.

The Translation of the Holy Qur'an done by the Message International – USA (www.FreeQuran.com) and edited by Saheeh International – UK, Dar Al Mountada – Saudi Arabia and Al Qummah – Egypt has been used in order to synchronize the use of modern English Language, which we believe will give a more accomplished sense of understanding to Today's mind.

Recap of verses 67 – 86 of Surah 5, Al-Ma'idah

The reader would recall that we had concluded our exposition of verses 67 – 86 of Surah Al-Ma'idah in the previous issue of Hikmat e Qur'an. A brief recap of the exposition follows:

- 1- In verse 67, Allah (SWT) commands His Messenger (SAAW) to convey His (SWT) message to mankind and thus fulfil his (SAAW) mission. The verse also states (hypothetically) that if the Prophet (SAAW) did not deliver the message revealed to him (SAAW) then he (SAAW) would not have done justice to his (SAAW) mission of conveying Allah's (SWT) message. The point was further elucidated by the Holy Prophet (SAAW) at the end of His (SAAW) sermon during the Farewell Pilgrimage with certain questions to which the Companions (RA) unanimously responded with detailed answers to bear witness that he (SAAW) had fulfilled his (SAAW) responsibility completely. The verse also conveys Allah's (SWT) direction to the Holy Prophet (SAAW) to not fear any harm from the "evil of men", for He (SWT) will support him (SAAW) and protect him (SAAW) from his (SAAW) enemies. The verse ends with the ordinance that the Prophet's (SAAW) duty is only to convey the message and it is Allah (SWT) who guides (to the straight path) whom He (SWT) Wills, or the opposite of it.
- 2- Verse 68 expounds the fact that the Jews and Christians ought to establish the Torah and the Gospel by observing the edicts of their scriptures honestly and making them the law of life. Hence, had the Jews and the Christians adhered to the teaching attributed in their Scriptures to Allah (SWT) and the Prophets (AS), they would certainly have become a truth-loving group of people and would have been able to see in the Qur'an that very light which had illuminated the earlier divine Scriptures. There would then have been no question of their abandoning their religion in order to follow Prophet Muhammad (SAAW). Instead, they intensified their opposition towards the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet (SAAW). This verse warns the People of the Book that they cannot

attain salvation unless they adhere to the laws revealed to them by Allah (SWT) and believe in that which He (SWT) has sent to His (SWT) last Prophet (SAAW). The verse also emphasizes that the Holy Prophet (SAAW) ought not to grieve about those who reject faith for they will certainly be punished for their disbelief

- 3- The context of verse 69 makes it clear that it is not attempting to enumerate in detail all the articles of faith in which one should believe, or all the principles of conduct which one should follow in order to merit reward from Allah (SWT). The aim of the verse is merely to repudiate the illusion cherished by the Jews that, by virtue of their being Jews, they have a monopoly of salvation. They had long entertained the notion that a special and exclusive relationship existed between them and Allah (SWT). They thought, therefore, that all who belonged to their group were predestined to salvation regardless of their beliefs and actions, whereas all non-Jews were predestined to serve as fodder for hell-fire. To clarify this misgiving the Jews are told in this verse that what really matters in the sight of Allah (SWT) is true faith and good deeds rather than formal affiliation with a certain religious community.
- 4- Verses 70 and 71 have a closely knit subject matter. In verse 70, Allah (SWT) reminds the Jews of their covenant that He (SWT) took from them at Mount Sinai that they will obey Him (SWT) and His (SWT) Messengers (AS) and associate none other with Him (SWT). But instead they followed their desires and whenever Allah (SWT) sent them His (SWT) Messengers (AS) with guidance and truth, they either called them imposters or killed them (*we seek Allah's (SWT) refuge from doing such evil actions*). Verse 71 is a continuation to the previous verse in its theme. The verse makes it clear that those who mocked at Allah's (SWT) Messengers (AS) and killed them, thought that no affliction from Allah (SWT) would follow and they will never be punished or put to trial for their crimes. So they became blind from the truth and turned a deaf ear to Allah's (SWT)

message. Even after that Allah (SWT) turned to them in mercy and forgave them but they still persisted in their disbelief and many of them again turned blind and deaf. The verse points out that Allah (SWT) observes all their actions and He (SWT) is Ever Watching over what they do.

- 5- In verse 72, Allah (SWT) censures the Christians for their claim that Jesus (AS) is God incarnate (*we seek Allah's (SWT) refuge from such evil ideology*). They believe that Jesus (AS) claimed divinity for himself but in this verse Allah (SWT) rebukes them and says that Jesus (AS) never uttered such words, instead he (AS) commanded the Children of Israel to worship Allah (SWT) alone, besides whom none stands worthy of worship. The verse indicates that associating partners with Allah (SWT) is the worst crime a person can commit and it deserves the severest of punishments. Thus Allah (SWT) has forbidden Paradise for such people and has decreed Hellfire as their eternal abode, and there will be no helper or protector for such wrongdoer.
- 6- In verse 73, Allah (SWT) again rebukes the Christians for their false belief of Trinity and commands them to refrain from uttering such words and worship Him (SWT) alone without attributing any partners or Son (as a matter of theological discussion, as endorsed by the Christians in their false doctrine of "Trinity") to Him (SWT), and believe in Jesus (AS) only as His (SWT) Messenger (AS) and His (SWT) servant. The verse decrees that if they persist in their disbelief and polytheism (shirk) then a painful punishment awaits them in the Hereafter.
- 7- In verse 74, Allah (SWT) in His (SWT) Absolute mercy, calls upon the Christians to repent for their sins and from associating partners to Him (SWT), to achieve His (SWT) forgiveness. This, despite the fact that the Christians had committed such grave sins and persisted in their polytheism (shirk) provides evidence that Allah (SWT) forgives those who repent and mend their ways. He (SWT) is Forgiving, Merciful.

8- Verse 75 repudiates the fabricated Christian doctrine of the divinity of Christ (AS) yet again. The nature of the Messiah is clear from the indications given here; he (AS) was merely a human being. He (AS) was one born from the womb of a woman, who (AS) had a known genealogy, who (AS) possessed a physical body, who (AS) was subject to all the limitations of a human being and who (AS) had all the attributes and characteristics of human beings. He (AS) slept, ate, felt the discomfort of heat and cold and was so human that he (AS) was even put to the test by Satan. How could any reasonable person believe that such a being was either God or a partner or associate of God in His godhead? But the Christians continue to insist on the divinity of the Messiah (AS), whose life has been portrayed in their own Scriptures as that of a human. The fact of the matter is that they do not believe at all in the historical Messiah. They have woven a Messiah out of their imagination and have deified that imaginary being. The true status of Jesus (AS) in Islam is that he (AS) is one of the honourable Messengers (AS) of Allah (SWT) just like all other Prophets (AS) and Messengers (AS) that came before him (AS), thus refuting the false beliefs of the Christians that he (AS) claimed divinity himself (AS). The verse also sheds some light on the person of Marriyum (AS), the mother of Jesus (AS), and says that she (AS) was a very pious and virtuous woman and contrary to the beliefs of the Christians she (AS) never claimed divinity for herself or her son Jesus (AS). The verse culminates by establishing that while Allah (SWT) has made His (SWT) revelations clear to them by using the simplest yet irrefutable of logics, the Christians still choose to ignore the truth due to issues of ego.

9- In verse 76, Allah (SWT) commands His Prophet (SAAW) to ask those who worship other deities besides Him (SWT) that how can their minds be so perverted that they worship those who cannot prevent any harm from them nor can they benefit them in any manner? The underlying message of the verse is that only Allah (SWT) ought to be worshipped and it is only

He (SWT) who has the authority and power to protect His (SWT) creation and bring them benefit. He (SWT) sees all His servants and He (SWT) hears all what they say.

- 10-** In verse 77, Allah (SWT) commands His Messenger (SAAW) to tell the Jews and the Christians not to transgress the bounds set by Him (SWT) and not to exaggerate in religion [e.g. Allah (SWT) sent Jesus (AS) as His Messenger but the Christians exaggerated his status and gave him the rank of God]. It also warns them not to follow the evil ways and misguidance of the deviant nations who lived before them. The verse, in essence, calls the Christians' attention towards their "fundamental" error of fabricating the whole spin of "trinity."
- 11-** Verses 78 and 79 are related to the same reference point and subject matter thus they need to be understood together. Verse 78 uses reference points of Prophet David (AS) found in the Old Testament and the Gospel (Injeel) revealed unto Prophet Jesus (AS), both of whom (AS) cursed the Children of Israel for their transgressions. The verse also explains that they were cursed because they disobeyed Allah's (SWT) commandments and transgressed against His (SWT) creation. Verse 79 picks up from where the previous verse was concluded and identifies that one of the reasons for the downfall of a society is that they do not enjoin good and forbid one another from committing evil deeds. The same applies to the Children of Israel; they in their time did not forbid each other from the wickedness they did and indeed it was evil what they used to commit. The corruption of any nation begins with that of a few individuals. If the collective conscience of that nation is alive, the pressure of public opinion keeps those persons in check and prevents the nation as a whole from becoming corrupted. But if instead of censuring such individuals, the nation leaves them free to behave corruptly, the corruption originally confined to a few continues to spread till it engulfs the whole nation. It was this ill of the nation as a whole that ultimately caused the degeneration of the Children of Israel.

- 12-** In verse 80, Allah (SWT) curses the Jews for taking the disbelievers (of Arabia) as their friends and protectors. The Jews of Madinah had so much hatred against Prophet Muhammad (SAAW) that they made friendships and alliances even with the pagan Arabs and considered them better than the Muslims. But Allah (SWT) says that they have only sent forth for themselves their evil deeds in the Hereafter and for that reason they have incurred His (SWT) wrath and punishment, which they will suffer forever.
- 13-** Verse 81 reasons that logically speaking, those who believe in Allah (SWT), the Prophets (AS) and the Scriptures should naturally be more sympathetic towards those who at least share with them belief in Allah (SWT), in Prophethood and in revelation (whatever their disagreements on other religious issues may be), instead of befriending the polytheists. It was ironic, therefore, that the Jews should openly support the polytheists in the struggle between polytheism and monotheism, and that their sympathies in the conflict between those who rejected Prophethood and those who believed in it should lie expressly with the former. Despite all this, they brazenly claimed to be true believers in Allah (SWT), in the Prophets (AS) and in the Scriptures. The verse points out the misguided arrogance and ego of the Jews as the reason for this sinister attitude.
- 14-** Verses 82 through 85 are considered by most commentators to have been revealed concerning the delegation that Negus (An-Najashi) of Ethiopia sent to Prophet Muhammad (SAAW). They were the followers of the teachings of Jesus (AS) and when they came to the Prophet (SAAW) and heard the Qur'an, they wept and felt humbled, immediately embracing Islam. (Allah SWT knows Best). Verse 82 clearly declares that the Jews and the Pagan Arabs were the worst enemies of Islam. This is because the Jews knew that what Prophet Muhammad (SAAW) brought (i.e. The Qur'an) was the truth but they in their arrogance and defiance rejected his (SAAW) message and rebelled against the commandments of Allah (SWT). Even today we see that the imposter state of Israel is the worst

enemy of Islam and has even made ties with the Pagan Hindus of India against the Muslims. Secondly, the verse does not refer as "Christians" to those who merely say that "we are Christians", but to those who sincerely follow the true teachings of Prophet Jesus (AS) and the Gospel (Injeel). The verse further says that the reason for the affection in the heart of real Christians for Muslims is because amongst them are those who are monks and priests who worship their Lord and they are not arrogant. Verse 83 refers to the incident when the delegation from Ethiopia came to the Prophet (SAAW) and heard the Qur'an, they cried and were humbled, as they recognized the truth of the Prophethood of Muhammad (SAAW), whose advent was already prophesized in their Scriptures. Thus they embraced Islam and prayed to Allah (SWT) to count them among the witnesses of the truth. Verse 84 enunciates the other supplication that they made to Allah (SWT). The verse depicts the way in which they humbled themselves in His (SWT) obedience, made themselves ready to embrace the truth and submitted earnestly before Allah (SWT) their utmost desire to be included among the righteous. Verse 85 articulates the way in which Allah (SWT) answered to their supplications, mentioned in the previous two verses. Allah (SWT) rewarded them for their obedience and recognizing the truth by admitting them (decreeing to admit them) in Paradise, which will be their eternal abode. In a nutshell, the verse explains that those who devote their lives for Allah's (SWT) religion and worship Him (SWT) alone with sincerity and devotion become eligible for His (SWT) everlasting pleasure as recompense.

- 15- Verse 86 provides a mirror image of the previous passage of verses and the consequent conclusion (verses 82 – 85). Unlike the faithful believers, the disbelievers and those who deny Allah's (SWT) revelations would be the inmates of the Hellfire and they will remain in it, suffering indescribable torment, eternally.

Exposition of verses 87 to 100 of Surah Al-Ma'idah

Verse 87

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحْرِمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

“O you who have believed, do not prohibit the good things which Allah has made lawful to you and do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors.”

In this verse, Allah (SWT) gives the commandment to not exaggerate in religion (The Deen of Islam) and make it difficult for Muslims to follow in their everyday lives. This normally occurs when Muslims (including ulema) start giving decrees on the basis of their doubts and whims about *Halal* (lawful) and *Haram* (un-lawful) by even prohibiting those things which Allah (SWT) has made lawful and hence fall into the trap of extravagance. Muslims are required to accept wholeheartedly what Allah (SWT) has made lawful with gratitude and abstain from whatever He (SWT) has made unlawful, as enunciated in the Qur'an and the Ahadith of the Holy Prophet (SAAW), because He (SWT) does not like those who exceed the bounds set by Him (SWT).

Verse 88

وَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي أَنْتُمْ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

“And eat of what Allah has provided for you [which is] lawful and good. And fear Allah, in Whom you are believers.”

The meaning of the verse is self-evident, when He (SWT) decrees that Muslims ought to eat all the pure and lawful things that Allah (SWT) has made lawful for them. The essence of the verse is that Muslims must always remain conscious of Allah (SWT) in Whom they believe, by fulfilling His (SWT) commandments and obeying Him (SWT) sincerely.

Verse 89

لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا عَقَّدْتُمُ الْأَيْمَانَ ۚ فَكَفَّارَتُهُ إِطْعَامُ عَشْرَةِ مَسْكِينٍ مِنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعَمُونَ أَهْلِيكُمْ أَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ ۖ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ ۚ ذَلِكَ كَفَّارَةُ أَيْمَانِكُمْ إِذَا حَلَفْتُمْ ۚ وَاحْفَظُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ ۚ كَذَلِكَ يَبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾

“Allah will not impose blame upon you for what is meaningless in your oaths, but He will impose blame upon you for [breaking] what you intended of oaths. So its expiation is the feeding of ten needy people from the average of that which you feed your [own] families or clothing them or the freeing of a slave. But whoever cannot find [or afford it] - then a fast of three days [is required]. That is the expiation for oaths when you have sworn. But guard your oaths. Thus does Allah make clear to you His verses [i.e., revealed law] that you may be grateful.”

The subject of unintentional oaths has already been expounded in verse 225 of Surah Al-Baqarah. Unintentional oaths imply what is sworn to only out of habit of speech or what one utters carelessly without true intent. This verse deals in more detail about deliberate (intended) oaths.

In this verse, Muslims are told not to take oaths indiscriminately or swear to do that which is sinful, requiring expiation. The verse describes the expiation for breaking one's deliberate oaths. Allah (SWT) has given a person the choice of three things; Feeding ten poor persons with the average kind of food that he feeds his family, by giving each person half a *Saa'* (a measure of quantity) of the usual local staple, such as rice, wheat etc. This is equivalent to approximately one-and-a-half kilograms. If he cannot feed ten persons then he should give clothing for ten poor people, which means giving each of them clothing that is suitable for praying in and if he cannot afford then he has to free a believing slave. However, whoever cannot do any of the above should fast for three consecutive days. Therefore, Allah (SWT) directs the Muslims to be mindful of oaths and pay their expiation in case of breaking them. In this way Allah (SWT) explains His (SWT) revelations and makes clear His (SWT) signs to the mankind, so that they are grateful to Him (SWT).

Verse 90

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رَجُسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

“O you who have believed, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone alters [to other than Allah], and divining

arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it that you may be successful."

In this verse Allah (SWT) manifestly prohibits the believers from:

- 1- The consumption of intoxicants,
- 2- Gambling,
- 3- Dedication (sacrificing) on stone alters to other than Allah (SWT), and
- 4- Making decisions by raffling of arrows.

For further explanation on the prohibition of intoxication and gambling one can refer to verse 219 of Surah Al-Baqarah and verse 43 of Surah An-Nisa, and refer to verse 3 of this Surah (al-Ma'idah) for the prohibition of dedication to stone alters and making decision by raffling of arrows. The verse declares that the four actions mentioned above (and the likes of them) are "filthy" deeds and ascribes them to the revolting actions of the accursed Satan. Therefore Allah (SWT) commands His (SWT) servants to avoid such things and stay away from them as far as possible, so that they may be successful in this world and in the Hereafter.

Moreover, the prohibition understood from the word "avoid" is stronger than if Allah (SWT) had merely said, "Abstain." The former requires distancing oneself from anything remotely related to these practices.

Verse 91

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

"Satan only wants to cause between you animosity and hatred through intoxicants and gambling and to avert you from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. So will you not desist?"

Picking up from the subject of prohibitions mentioned in the previous verse, Allah (SWT) describes in detail that these are the tools of Satan to distract a believer from the worship, belief and remembrance of his

one and only Lord – Allah (SWT) - and to stir up hatred and discord among the believers.

Exegetes agree that this is a stern and final warning from Allah (SWT) regarding the prohibition of the consumption of intoxicants and gambling, as if to say “give up or else!”

Verse 92

وَاطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَاحْذَرُوا فَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿٩٢﴾

“And obey Allah and obey the Messenger and beware. And if you turn away – then know that upon Our Messenger is only [the responsibility for] clear notification.”

In this verse, Allah (SWT) commands His (SWT) servants to obey Him (SWT) and His (SWT) Messenger (SAAW), and abstain from all those things which have been declared as unlawful (*Haram*) and thus prohibited for Muslims. The verse also warns that those who do not obey as required, then only they themselves will be responsible for the consequences and there will be no blame on the Prophet (SAAW), as his (SAAW) duty is only to convey Allah's (SWT) message clearly to mankind and it is Allah (SWT) alone who guides whomsoever He (SWT) Wills and He (SWT) does not guide those who (keep on) disbelieving in Him (SWT) and His (SWT) Messengers (AS), hence bringing the Jews and Christians into the picture too along with the Muslims.

Verse 93

لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعِبُوا إِذَا مَا اتَّقَوْا وَآمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَآمَنُوا ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا
وَاحْسَنُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

“There is not upon those who believe and do righteousness [any] blame concerning what they have eaten [in the past] if they [now] fear Allah and believe and do righteous deeds, and then fear Allah and believe, and then fear Allah and do good; and Allah loves the doers of good.”

When the verse absolutely prohibiting the intoxicants was revealed, some people asked the Prophet (SAAW) about the fate of those who

used alcohol but died before its prohibition, or those still alive but used intoxicants before prohibition. Thus Allah (SWT) revealed this verse, making it clear that He (SWT) would forgive (as He SWT pleases) those who consumed intoxicants before its prohibition, provided that they had firm faith in Him (SWT) and His Messenger (SAAW), which was required of them at the time of their death, and those who were still living kept performing righteous deeds.

Secondly, this crucial verse also gives a clear explanation of the three essential elements of Deen: *Islam*, *Iman* and *Ihsan*. This is also explained in the famous hadith of Gabriel (AS), in which he (AS) asked the Prophet (SAAW) about these three essential elements of the Deen. When the angel Gabriel (AS) asked him (SAAW) about *Islam*, he (SAAW) replied: "Islam is that you bear witness that there is no God, except the One Allah (SWT) and that Muhammad (SAAW) is the Messenger of Allah (SWT); that you establish your obligatory prayers; that you pay Zakah (obligatory charity); that you fast during the month of Ramadan; and that you perform the *Hajj* if you are in a position to do so." Then Gabriel (AS) asked the Prophet (SAAW) about *Iman*, he (SAAW) replied: "It is to believe in Allah (SWT), His (SWT) angels (AS), His (SWT) books, His (SWT) Messengers (AS), the Last Day (Judgement and Resurrection), and to believe in Divine Destiny, both the good and the evil thereof." Then the angel (AS) asked about *Ihsan*, to which the Prophet (SAAW) replied: "It is to worship Allah (SWT) as though you are seeing Him (SWT), and while you see Him (SWT) not, yet verily He (SWT) sees you."

Within the three stages the driving force that carries a person from one stage to a higher one is Taqwa. It is a state of mind and heart (spiritual elevation) that reflects in every aspect of a believer's life. It can also be termed as God-consciousness i.e. consciousness of one's duty towards Allah (SWT), and an awareness of one's accountability to Him (SWT). In a nutshell, an increase in consciousness and awareness of a believer's duty towards Allah (SWT) also increases his faith, and spiritually takes him up to a loftier level.

Verse 94

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِيُتَوَكَّلْ اللَّهُ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الصَّيْدِ تَنَالَهُ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَرِمَاحُكُمْ لِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَخَافُهُ بِالْغَيْبِ ۚ فَمَن
اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٤﴾

“O you who have believed, Allah will surely test you through something of the game that your hands and spears [can] reach, that Allah may make evident those who fear Him unseen. And whoever transgresses after that – for him is a painful punishment.”

Allah (SWT) tests His (SWT) servants with bounties as well as with calamities and afflictions, so that the earnest and sincere believers who fear Him (SWT), although He (SWT) is unseen to them, can be distinguished from those who lack the faith and genuine belief in Him (SWT). In this verse the game refers to the hunt of animals that is prohibited in state of *Ihram* and it has been used as an example of a “test” from Allah (SWT). Allah (SWT) tests the believers by rendering lawful animals well within their reach prohibited, when they are in the state of *Ihram*.

The essence of the verse is a warning to those who transgress and disobey Allah (SWT) even after they have been notified and they pay no heed to it, that they would suffer a painful punishment in the Hereafter due to such attitude and behaviour of betrayal and disbelief.

Verse 95

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيْدَ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرُمٌ ۚ وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مِنْكُمْ مَتَعِدًّا فَجَزَاءٌ مِّثْلُ مَا قَتَلَ مِنَ النَّعَمِ يَحْكُمُ بِهِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ هَدْيًا بِلِغَةِ الْكَعْبَةِ أَوْ كَفَّارَةٌ طَعَامُ مَسْكِينٍ أَوْ عَدْلٌ ذَلِكَ صِيَامًا لِيَذُوقَ وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِ ۗ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَمَّا سَلَفَ ۚ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَيَنْتَقِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ ﴿٩٥﴾

“O you who have believed, do not kill game while you are in the state of *Ihram*. And whoever of you kills it intentionally – the penalty is an equivalent from sacrificial animals to what he killed, as judged by two just men among you as an offering [to Allah] delivered to the Kaabah, or an expiation: the feeding of needy people or the equivalent of that in fasting, that he may taste the consequence of his matter [i.e., deed]. Allah has pardoned what is past; but whoever returns [to violation], then Allah will take retribution from him. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Owner of Retribution.”

This verse describes the rulings on expiation of killing an animal while in state of *Ihram*. It states that if a person hunts a game

intentionally while in the state of *Ihram* for *Hajj* or *Umrah*, then he has to offer a sacrifice at the *Ka'bah* of an animal similar to one that was killed, which will be judged by two men from among the believers. If the "guilty" person cannot afford to sacrifice an animal, then he must feed six poor people or fast for three consecutive days. [Ref: Narrated by Ibn Abbas (RA)] This has been decreed in order for the person guilty of making the mistake (or intentional sin) to learn a lesson related to consequences of his actions as well as to purge him of the retribution of the action in the Hereafter.

The verse also states that Allah (SWT) forgives those sins committed during the time of ignorance, but He (SWT) will take retribution from those who are repeat offenders of doing the prohibited, and surely Allah (SWT) is the All-Mighty and Capable of taking retribution as He (SWT) pleases.

Verse 96

أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ وَطَعَامُهُ مَتَاعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِلْيَارَةِ ۖ وَحُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَرِّ مَا دُمْتُمْ حُرُمًا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

"Lawful to you is game from the sea and its food as provision for you and the travellers, but forbidden to you is game from the land as long as you are in the state of *Ihram*. And fear Allah to whom you will be gathered."

The verse decrees that those who travel by sea for *Hajj* or *Umrah* are allowed to hunt and eat food from the sea (such as fish) even if they are in a state of *Ihram* for the Pilgrimage. However, the prohibition of hunting on land for them, too, remains unlawful.

In the verse, Allah (SWT) orders His (SWT) servants to remain be mindful of their duty towards Him (SWT) at all times and refrain from what He (SWT) has forbidden and made unlawful for them and warns them to remember that they will all be assembled in His (SWT) presence on the Day of Judgement.

Verse 97

جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْكَعْبَةَ الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ قِيَمًا لِّلنَّاسِ ۚ وَالشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَالْهَدْيَ وَالْقَلَائِدَ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٧﴾

“Allah has made the Kaabah, the Sacred House, standing for the people and [has sanctified] the sacred months and the sacrificial animals and the garlands [by which they are identified]. That is so you may know that Allah knows what is in the heavens and what is in the earth and that Allah is Knowing of all things.”

The verse enunciates the status of the city Makkah. Allah (SWT) has declared that the city of Makkah is “sacred”, in which war (including mischief and *fasad*) is prohibited, thus ensuring a sense of security not only for those living in the city and its suburbs, but also to all those Muslims from around the world who come to the Holy city for religious or other reasons. Furthermore, Allah (SWT) reminds Muslims of the sanctity of the Sacred month of Pilgrimage (*Dhul-Hijjah*), so that they refrain from what He (SWT) has prohibited during the Holy month. Allah (SWT) also decrees that the animals sent to the *Ka'bah* for sacrifice and those who have garlands in their necks to mark them off for sacrifice are sacred.

The fact is, that Allah (SWT) has made all these “symbols” conspicuous so that they could be a clear sign for mankind to identify and understand Allah's (SWT) religion (the Deen of Islam) and also so that they could know that He (SWT) has Supreme Knowledge of everything.

Verse 98

إَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٩٨﴾

“Know that Allah is severe in penalty and that Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”

The verse is self-explanatory and its subject matter appears recurrently throughout the Qur'an. Allah (SWT) is severe in punishment for those who disobey Him (SWT) and reject His (SWT) commandments and He (SWT) forgives and bestows His (SWT) Mercy upon those who keep repenting and doing righteous deeds.

Verse 99

مَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

“Not upon the Messenger is [responsibility] except [for] notification.

And [indeed] Allah knows whatever you reveal and whatever you conceal."

The verse expounds on an extremely important issue viz. the mission and duty of a Prophet (AS). Allah (SWT) clearly defines that the duty of His Messenger (SAAW) is only to give warning (and glad tidings) and convey the message of Allah (SWT) to mankind. As for the audience of the Prophet (SAAW), Muslims and non-Muslims, past or present, Allah (SWT) knows full well all that they hide and all that they reveal. The hiding and revealing part is particularly directed towards the Jews and the Hypocrites, whose trademark was and is still today deception and betrayal.

As described earlier, exegetes of the Qur'an agree that although it appears as if the audience of the verse is the Holy Prophet (SAAW), in fact, the real audience of the verse are those (Muslims and non-Muslims, past and present) towards whom Muhammad (SAAW) has been sent as a Messenger of Allah (SWT).

Verse 100

قُلْ لَا يَسْتَوِي الْخَبِيثُ وَالطَّيِّبُ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ كَثْرَةُ الْخَبِيثِ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

"Say, "Not equal are the evil and the good, although the abundance of evil might impress you." So fear [only] Allah, O you of understanding, that you may be successful."

In this verse Allah (SWT) tells his Messenger (SAAW) to deliver an admonition to all mankind that anything and everything that is evil cannot be "equal" to anything and everything that is good, even if the "abundance" of evil may be dazzling and due to that factor, humans might get inclined towards it. Thus Allah (SWT) commands those who have sound minds to logically and rationally perceive things as they actually are and not as they might appear to be. The verse orders all humans in general and to Muslims in particular to fear Him (SWT) alone and abstain from all kinds of sins, immoral and evil deeds that He (SWT) has forbidden and perform all kinds of good deeds that He (SWT) has permitted and in many cases ordered, so that they may prosper in this world and in the Hereafter.

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And Allah (SWT) Knows Best!