Al-Islam.org
Ahlul Bayt Digital Islamic Library Project
Published on *Al-Islam.org* (https://www.al-islam.org)

Section 15: Covetousness of this worldly life

Jesus only an apostle of Allah -The disciples of Jesus demanding Jesus to get food for them descended from heaven -Their coveting of this worldly provision.

Surah Al-Ma'idah, Verse 109

يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُ اللّهُ الرُّسُلَ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَا أُجِبْتُمْ قَالُواْ لاَ عِلْمَ لَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنتَ عَلاَّمُ الْغُيُوبِ

109. ***"(Remember) the Day Allah will gather the messengers, and say: 'What response were you given?' They will say: We have no knowledge, verily You are the All-Knowing of the Unseen'."***

This verse, in fact, is a complement for the previous verses. At the end of those verses, where the words were about bearing witness upon right or wrong, the Qur'an enjoins people to piety and being afraid of offending the command of Allah.

In this verse, it warns people of the Day Allah gathers the prophets and asks them about their messenger ship and responsibility, and tells them what the people responded when they invited those people to the Truth. The verse says:

"(Remember) the Day Allah will gather the messengers, and say: ' What response were you given? '..."

The messengers will negate of having any knowledge from their own selves, and they will depend the whole facts to the knowledge of Allah (S.w.T.) Who knows all the Unseen and the concealed affairs of the world of existence.

Here is the rest of the verse:

"... They will say: 'We have no knowledge, verily You are the All-Knowing of the Unseen'."

Thus, the verse, addressing the concerning people, implies that they are confronted with such a Lord Who is All-Knowing and Who is the, Judge of such a court. Therefore, they must be careful of right and justice in their bearing witnesses, too.

In the concluding phrase of the verse, the Qur'an remarks that the real knowledge belongs to Allah, and whatever knowledge is found in any person bas been obtained from Him. It is similar to the fact that only He knows the Unseen, and He gives a part of its knowledge to whomever He desires.

Surah Al-Ma'idah, Verse 110

إِذْ قَالَ اللّهُ يَا عِيسى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ اذْكُرْ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَى وَالِدَتِكَ إِذْ أَيَّدتُّكَ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلاً وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَاةَ وَالإِنجِيلَ وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي فَتَنفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي وَتُبْرِئُ الأَكْمَهَ وَالأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوتَى بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَنكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ مِنْهُمْ إِنْ هَـذَا إِلاَّ سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ

110 ***"(Remember) when Allah said: 'O' Jesus, son of Mary! Remember My blessing on you and on your mother, when I strengthened you with the Holy Spirit, you spoke to the people (both) in the cradle (through miracle) and in adulthood (through revelation) and when I taught you the Book and the Wisdom and the Torah and the Evangel, and when you did make of clay a thing like the shape of a bird, by My leave and then did breathe into it and it became a bird, by My leave; and you did heal the blind and the leprous, by My leave, and you did raise the dead (from their graves), by My leave and (remember) when I withheld the Children of Israel from you when you brought them manifest proofs, but those who disbelieved among them said: 'This is nothing but clear magic'."***

From the above verse on, up to the end of Surah Al-Ma'idah, the contents of the verses are about Jesus (as).

In this verse speaking about Messiah (as), sorts of divine favors, and at the top of all, strengthening him with the Holy Spirit, have been stated.

The purpose of blessing on Messiah's mother may be the glad tidings about Jesus to her and the talk between Mary and the angels, referred to in verses 45 to 50 from Surah 'Ale-'Imran, No 3, where it says:

"(Remember) when the angels said: ' O' Mary ! ..."

Thus, even prophets should not neglect the remembrance of the blessings of Allah. Allah's graces and

blessings of Allah. Allah's graces and blessings bestowed to His saints, cause encouragement in the followers of Truth.

There are some matters stated in this verse which will be referred to as follows:

1. A woman can be promoted so high in the rank that she may be spoken about together with a prophet.

"(Remember) when Allah said: 'O' Jesus, son of Mary! Remember My blessing on you and on your mother, when I strengthened you with the Holy Spirit....."

2. By a single statement in the cradle, Jesus confirmed both his own prophet hood and his mother's chastity and inerrancy.

"... you spoke to the people (both) in the cradle (through miracle) and in adulthood (through revelation).....

3. Prophets should have both knowledge and awareness; and also they should know the words of the former prophets and have a new message both.

"... and when I taught you the Book and the Wisdom and the Torah and the Evangel....."

4. The miraculous breath of Christ caused an inanimate thing to fly. But the hearts of the Children of Israel were not moved by it.

"... and when you did make of clay a thing like the shape of a bird, by My leave....."

5. When Allah gives prophets the ability of restoring to life and healing the sick, people's supplicating and imploring for help must also be permissible. (We question the opponents of this idea whether it can be considered that Allah gives an ability to a person but prohibits people from paying attention to it.)

"... and then did breathe into it and it became a bird, by My leave; and you did heal the blind and the leprous, by My leave, and you did raise the dead (from their graves), by My leave....."

6. The Children of Isreal attempted the life of Jesus (as), but that malice was warded off by Allah.

"...and (remember) when I withheld the Children of Israel from you when you brought them manifest proofs, but those who disbelieved among them said: 'This is nothing but clear magic'."

Imam Rida (as) said:

"There were two phrases carved on the ring of Jesus (as) *which were recited: " Happy is the servant by whom Allah is remembered; and woe on the servant because of whom Allah be forgotten."*1 .

Jesus (as) said:

*"Whatever bad word that you utter, you will receive its response in Hereafter."*2

Imam Sajjad (as) said that Jesus (as) told the disciples:

*"Verily the world is a bridge to pass through, so do not try to furnish and maintain it."*3

Surah Al-Ma'idah, Verse 111

وَإِذْ أَوْحَيْتُ إِلَى الْحَوَارِيِّينَ أَنْ آمِنُواْ بِي وَبِرَسُولِي قَالُوَاْ آمَنَّا وَاشْهَدْ بِأَنَّنَا مُسْلِمُونَ

111. ***"And*** **(*remember*)** ***when I revealed unto the disciples: 'Believe in Me and in My Messenger,' they said: 'We believe, and bear You witness that we are Muslims*** **(*who submit ourselves*)** ***'."***

The objective meaning of 'revealing unto the disciples', mentioned in the verse, is either inspiring unto their own hearts, or conveying the Message by the way of revealing it unto Jesus (as).

Thus, sometimes Allah may inspire some inspiration unto the receptive hearts.

The Divine inspirations unto people are alongside the path of confirming the Divine Prophets, inspirations, not against them. Therefore believing in Allah is not aloof from believing in His Messenger.

The verse says:

"And **(*remember*)** ***when I revealed unto the disciples: 'Believe in Me and in My Messenger,' they said: 'We believe, and bear You witness that we are Muslims*** **(*who submit ourselves*)** ***'."***

Surah Al-Ma'idah, Verses 112 – 113

إِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَن يُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا مَآئِدَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاء قَالَ اتَّقُواْ اللّهَ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ

قَالُواْ نُرِيدُ أَن نَّأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَن قَدْ صَدَقْتَنَا وَنَكُونَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ

112. ***"(Remember) when the disciples said: 'O'Jesus son of Mary! is your Lord able to send down to us a table from the sky? ' (Jesus) said: 'Be in awe of Allah if you are believers'."***
113. ***"They said: 'We desire to eat from it, and our hearts would be at rest, and we would know that you have told us the truth, and that we may be of the witnesses upon it'."***

This holy verse points the well-known process of 'The table of Food' sent from the sky. It says:

"(Remember) when the disciples said: 'O' Jesus son of Mary! is your Lord able to send down to us a table from the sky? ..."

Messiah became uneasy of this question of theirs, their statement contained the smell of doubt, because he had brought plenty of verses and signs for them. So, as a warning, he admonished them:

"...(Jesus) said: 'Be in awe of Allah if you are believers'."

But, soon after that, they informed Jesus that they had not an evil aim by that suggestion. They said that they did not intend obstinacy, but they wanted to eat from that 'Table of Food' in order to obtain not only the luminosity created by that nutrition in their souls (because nutrition certainly affects in man's soul), but also their hearts would be at rest.

So, by observing that great miracle, they might reach the bound of certainty of sight and knew that whatever he had told them was true, and that they could bear witness over it.

The verse says:

"They said: 'We desire to eat from it, and our hearts would be at rest, and we would know that you have told us the truth, and that we may be of the witnesses upon it'."

Explanations

1. The reason that the Surah has been nominated by the appellation of 'Al-Ma'idah' is because of the very desire of 'Table of Food' that they demanded to come from the sky.

2. The Arabic word 'Al-Ma'idah ' means both 'food' and 'the table wherein there is food'.

Surah Al-Ma'idah, Verse 114

قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا أَنزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَآئِدَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاء تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيداً لِّأَوَّلِنَا
وَآخِرِنَا وَآيَةً مِّنكَ وَارْزُقْنَا وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ

114. ***"Jesus, son of Mary, said: 'O' Allah, our Lord! send down to us a table from the sky, to be a***

festival for us, for the first of us and for the last of us and a sign from You; and provide us (***with our***) ***sustenance, for You are the best of sustainers."***

All supplications mentioned in the Qur'an begin with /rabbana/ 'O' our Lord'!, but in this verse it has begun with two words 'O' Allah, our Lord !'. This difference may be for the importance of this miraculous happening and the concerning consequences.

Supplication, imploring for help and asking a boon from the side of the friends of Allah, is permissible. The supplication of Jesus in this verse is as follows:

"Jesus, son of Mary, said: 'O' Allah, our Lord! send down to us a table from the sky, to be a festival for us, for the first of us and for the last of us and a sign from You; and provide us (***with our***) ***sustenance, for You are the best of sustainers."***

There have been prophets sent for all human beings and generations in the history of man.

To celebrate a festival is a proper action from the point of the Qur'an. The birth of the friends of Allah and the mission of the 'Messenger of Allah (S) is not less than the descent of the table of food from the sky. So, we must always learn things from the Signs of Allah and His Power.

Surah Al-Ma'idah, Verse 115

قَالَ اللّهُ إِنِّي مُنَزِّلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ فَمَن يَكْفُرْ بَعْدُ مِنكُمْ فَإِنِّي أُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا لاَّ أُعَذِّبُهُ أَحَدًا مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ

115. ***"Allah said: ' Verily I will send it unto you, but whoever shall disbelieve thereafter among you, surely will I punish him with a punishment such as I do not punish anyone in the worlds*** (***with the like of it***)***'."***

From the point of threat, this verse is at the top in the Qur'an for warning people.

"Allah said: 'Verily I will send it unto you, but whoever shall disbelieve thereafter among you, surely will I punish him with a punishment such as I do not punish anyone in the worlds (***with the like of it***)***'."***

It is evident that the more a person expects (i.e. the Table of Food from the sky) the more he should undertake. A high summit has a dangerous deep valley.

However, it should be noted that although the table of food was descended from the sky for the companions of Jesus (as), according to some traditions, there descended fruits from Heaven for the Holy

Prophet (S), too, and the essence of Fatimah (as) was formed from those heavenly fruits.

---

1. Bihar-ul-'Anwar, vol. 14, p. 247
2. Bihar-ul-'Anwar, vol. 14, p. 314
3. Bihar-ul-'Anwar, vol. 14, p. 319

Source URL:
https://www.al-islam.org/enlightening-commentary-light-holy-quran-vol-5/section-15-covetousness-worldly-life