

Quran Appreciation - Winter Term (Jan-Mar 2018)

The Story of Nabi Isa (a)

Response of his people

Verses for the session

وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَنْكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ

And when I withheld the children of Israel from you when you came to them with clear arguments, but those who disbelieved among them said: This is nothing but clear magic.

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

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

(Sura Maidah, verse 110-111)

Reflections

- What are the clear arguments referred to here? (the miracles, the wisdom and teachings of Nabi Isa . . .)
- Why did the people not accept him?
- Magic seems a convenient excuse. They couldn't understand how he did it so they attribute it to magic.
- Who are the disciples? How are they different from the group described in the previous verse?

Cross reference verses

Magic as an accusation against Prophets - 46:7

Types of revelation - 42:51

Revelation (Ilham) to the mother of Nabi Musa - 28:7

Internal instinct of the bee (a form of revelation) - 16:68

Tafsir

As with all Prophets, Nabi Isa faced strong opposition from the people he was sent to. Those who disbelieved rejected his message and did not accept his miracles. They claimed it was magic so people would not be affected by it.

Another of Allah's favors on Nabi Isa was the protection from such people who would have liked to destroy him and his mission. Despite the stubbornness and opposition of the people, Nabi Isa was helped by Allah to propagate his mission.

The revelation sent to the disciples (in verse 111) is different from the revelations to the Prophets. Revelation is of many types. An inspiration to the heart is also termed as Wahy (revelation), specifically known as Ilham. Even internally inspired instincts are termed as wahy, as in the example of the bee (16:68). It could also be that the revelation being referred to in this verse is that sent on Nabi Isa who then conveyed it to the disciples.

The name Hawariyyun was given to the disciples - the pure ones - as they were pure internally and worked to purify society from all sins through their preachings. According to Imam Ridha (a) the number of disciples were twelve.

Note that in this verse Allah asks them to believe in Him and in His Messenger - both beliefs go together. When people are guided and are open to the truth they immediately accept, as the disciples did. Their faith was manifested in their words. Faith goes from the heart to the tongue and then to the limbs.

Important Lessons

- 1) People will use excuses to reject what they don't want to accept.
- 2) Even clear signs are not accepted by those who are hardened against the truth.
- 3) Belief and words/actions go together.

Ideas

- 1) Discuss the differences between miracle and magic. See: <https://www.al-islam.org/prophethood-sayyid-saeed-akhtar-rizvi/miracles>
- 2) Discuss and do an activity on types of revelation. See <https://www.al-islam.org/quran-and-hadith-allamah-sayyid-saeed-akhtar-rizvi/chapter-1-revelation>
<https://www.al-islam.org/articles/divine-revelation-islamic-perspective-divine-guidance-and-human-understanding-mohammad-ali-shomali>

Sources:

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