

Tafseer Al-Baqarah (2: 135-138)

From the Book, Introduction to the Tafseer of the Quran,

by the Ameer of Hizb ut Tahrir, the eminent jurist and statesman, Sheikh Ata Bin Khalil Abu Al-Rashtah:

﴿وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى تَهْتَدُوا قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ \* قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَى وَعِيسَى وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ \* فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ فَقَدْ اهْتَدَوْا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِي شِقَاقٍ فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ \* صِبْغَةَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً وَنَحْنُ لَهُ عَابِدُونَ﴾ [البقرة:

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"They say, "Be Jews or Christians [so] you will be guided." Say, "Rather, [we follow] the Millah of Ibrahim, upright, and he was not of the polytheists." Say, [O believers], "We have believed in Allah and what has been revealed to us and what has been revealed to Ibrahim and Ismaeel and Ishaq and Yaqub and the Descendants and what was given to Musa and Esa and what was given to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him." So if they believe in the same as you believe in, then they have been [rightly] guided; but if they turn away, they are only in dissension, and Allah will be sufficient for you against them. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing. [And say, "Ours is] the casting by Allah. And who is better than Allah in casting? And we are worshippers of Him." [Surah Al-Baqarah 2: 135-138]

Allah (swt) clarifies in these verses the following:

1. After Allah (swt) repudiated their claim about Ibrahim and Yaqub - peace be upon them both - and clarified the invalidity of their saying that they were Jews or Christians, in the preceding verses, Allah (swt) then repudiated their call to their religion, that it is distorted and invalid and that is what they had been saying. The Jews said follow our deen for it is the best and the Christians said follow our deen for it is the best. So Allah (swt) repudiated this call of theirs as invalid and He (swt) inspired His Prophet (saaw) to say to them that instead the Truth is to follow the Millah of Ibrahim (as) who left every false and twisted religion from the invalid religions for the sake of the Deen of Truth.

In this exposing of the Jews and the Christians regarding the falsehood of their religion, is that they are Polytheists who have distorted their religion ﴿يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ﴾ "They distort words from their [proper] usages." [Surah Al-Maaida 5:13]. And similarly, they also attributed to Allah (swt) a son, as to what they describe, ﴿وَقَالَتْ﴾ "The Jews say, "Ezra is the son of Allah"; and the Christians say, "The Messiah is the son of Allah." [Surah At-Tawba 9:30]

Ibn Jarir narrated that Abdullah bin Soria Al Awaar said to the Prophet (saaw): "There is no guidance, but for what we are upon and follow O Muhammad they adopt. And the Christians say like that Allah revealed" And the Christians said something similar so Allah (swt) revealed ﴿قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾ **"Say, "Rather, [we follow] the Millah of Ibrahim, inclining toward truth, and he was not of the polytheists."** Which is a response to this statement of theirs and a demonstration of its invalidity. It is also Dalaalatul Ishaara دلالة الإشارة (Evidence of Indication) that Ibrahim is neither a Jew nor a Christian and his Millah is other than their Millah.

﴿حَنِيفًا﴾ "upright/inclined" is inclined away from the false religions to the True Deen, and Ibrahim - peace be upon him - was named Haneef (upright/inclined) because he inclined to the True Religion and submitted himself to Allah (swt).

In origin (The inclined) is inclination or direction and from its usage is the club foot (رجل حنفاء) and the clubfooted (رجل أحنف) where both feet are turned towards each other along with their toes.

2. Then Allah addresses the believers, that they believed in Allah and what was revealed to Ibrahim, Ismaeel, Ishaq and Yaqub and the sons and grandsons of Yaqub, and what was revealed to Musa and Esa (as), and every Prophet without discriminating amongst them in Prophethood, thus, we do not believe in some of them and disbelieve in others, as do the Jews and Christians, rather we believe in all of them and we submit to Allah (swt), subservient and obedient to Him.

So if the Jews and Christians had believed in such a belief, i.e. in Allah (swt) and all His Messengers and all that He revealed to His Messengers, they would be of the guided. However if they turned away from that and believed in some of the messengers and disbelieved in others, and believed in some of what Allah has revealed and altered and changed some as they do- they will not harm you in any way - which is an address to the Messenger of Allah (saaw) - Allah (swt) will grant you authority over them and Allah listens to all that they have to say of calumny against Him (swt) and He is knowing of what they hide of harmful machinations against Islam and Muslims.

Allah (swt) has fulfilled His promise to His Messenger (saaw) and strengthened him against his enemies, particularly the Jews, and that was so in the punishment Bani Qayniqaa'a, the killing Qurayza, the exile of Bani Nadeer, the elimination of the Jewish entity of Khyber and other than them from amongst the enemies of the Messenger of Allah, may peace and prayers be upon him.

﴿وَمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْنَا﴾ **"And what was revealed to us"** ﴿أَنْزَلَ﴾ **"revealed"** is defined by prepositions (إلى) "to" and (على) **"upon"**. Here it is ﴿أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْنَا﴾ **"revealed to us"** and in another Ayah ﴿وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْنَا﴾ **"and what was revealed upon us"** [Surah Aali-Imran 3:84] ﴿قُلْ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ﴾ **"Say, "We have believed in Allah and in what was revealed upon us and what was revealed to Ibrahim"** [Surah Aali-Imran 3: 84]

﴿الْأَسْبَاطِ﴾ **"Descendants"** is the plural of (سيبط) **"male descendant"** and (السَّبْطِ) **"the male descendant"** is the grandson and what is meant by that is the sons and their

descendants, the children of Yaqub, and they are grandsons of Ibrahim and Ishaq and the progeny of the grandsons of Ibrahim, Ishaq and Yaqub. And therefore it has been said about Hassan and Hussein - may Allah (swt) be pleased with them - they are of the Descendants of the Messenger of Allah (saaw).

﴿فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ﴾ **“So if they believe in the same as you believe in”** (الفاء)

“the Faa letter” is a conjunction i.e. connecting that which comes after it with that which comes before it. And (الباء) (the Ba) is prepositional such as saying the Almighty ﴿وَالَّذِينَ كَسَبُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ جَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ بِمِثْلِهَا﴾ **“But they who have earned [blame for] evil doings - the recompense of an evil deed is its equivalent”** [Surah Yunus 10:27] any the like. And it is meaning ﴿فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ فَقَدْ اهْتَدَوْا﴾ **“And if they believed similar to your Iman they would have been guided”** i.e. if they believed in everything that you believed of Allah and His messengers and whatsoever was revealed to the Messengers rather than believing in some and disbelieving in some, rather all that you believed.

﴿وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا﴾ **“If they turn away”** i.e. if they did not believe everything that you believed.

﴿فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِي شِقَاقٍ﴾ **“they are only in dissension”** i.e. so they are not except in dispute and enmity they are not of those requesting the truth in anything.

﴿فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ﴾ **“And Allah will suffice you against them.”** i.e. He will suffice you against their opposition and the and the sufficiency is not in relation to the nobility but also the actions of the nobility, i.e. He will suffice you against their hostility by strengthening you over them. So thus Allah has fulfilled His promise and eradicated the Jewish entity and granted victory to His Messenger, and All Praise be to Allah the Lord of the Worlds.

3. Then Allah clarifies that this Iman which is mentioned in the previous verse is the transforming color of Allah (swt) that purifies the believers from the filth of Kufr and its stain, and that does not color the best of them and it is the decoration of the believer and his adornment that drives him to the worship of Allah alone and limits him to obedience to Allah Almighty, grateful for His Blessings.

﴿صِبْغَةَ اللَّهِ﴾ **“the casting by Allah,”** the casting is as the sifter imprints the mold of his body on the seat (casting his mold) through weight, and (الصَّبْغَةُ) *Sibgha* here is used metaphorically here to the similar relationship of the evidence upon belief, it cleanses its possessor of the defilement of Kufr and gives him a new casting because of the good faith in the Hereafter washes and cleans the dirt and colors it, giving it purity and serenity and beautiful because of the coloring.

﴿وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً﴾ **“And who is better than Allah in casting?”** a question of repudiation i.e. there is no casting better than the casting by Allah.