

Fast 24: Revealed Books — Quran as judge over previous scriptures

- Besides bringing revelation to perfection and making plain what was obscure in the previous scriptures, the Holy Quran claims to be a **guardian** over those scriptures, guarding the original teachings of the prophets of God, and a **judge** deciding the differences between them.
- After speaking of the Torah and the Gospel, it says:

“And We have revealed to you (O Prophet) the Book with the truth, verifying what is before it of the book and a guardian over it...” — 5:48
- It is elsewhere pointed out in the Quran that the teachings of the earlier scriptures had undergone alterations, and therefore only a revelation from God could separate the pure Divine teaching from the mass of error which had grown around it. This the Quran did, and hence it is called a guardian over the earlier scriptures. As for its authority as a judge, we are told:

“We certainly sent messengers to nations before you (O Prophet)... And We have not revealed to you the Book except that you may make clear to them what they differ about.” — 16:63–64
- All religions were from God, yet each denounced all others as leading people to hell. Their basic doctrines had come to differ from one another to such an extent that it had become simply unthinkable that they could have proceeded from the same Divine source; till the Quran pointed out the common ground, namely, the Unity of God, and the universality of revelation.
- For example, from the Torah it appears that it is teaching that the Israelites are the sole, chosen people of God, and that the One True God is the Lord God of the Israelites. From the Gospels it appears that it is teaching that Jesus was the son of God, who was sent to mankind out of God’s love. The Quran corrected the Jewish concept and taught that, while they were right in saying that there is only One God, He is Lord of all the worlds, not only theirs. The Quran corrected the Christian concept and it taught that they were right in saying that God loves mankind but wrong in saying that this love was shown by sending a son into the world to be sacrificed for the sins of mankind. Islam teaches that no human being can be God’s son. On the other hand, if ‘son’ means a beloved of God or one having a close relationship with God, then any human may reach this stage.
- There is much that is common to the Holy Quran and the previous scriptures, especially the Bible. The Quran has repeatedly declared that the basic principles of all

religions were the same, only the details differing according to the time and the stage of a people's development. All these principles in a more developed form are taught by the Quran, and occasionally lessons have been drawn from previous history. But it is remarkable that, both in its discussion of religious principles and in its references to history, the Quran has done away with the **defects** of the earlier books.

- In common with the Quran, the Bible mentions many prophets and chosen ones of God. These are the great figures of the Bible. Yet the Bible relates some incidents about them showing them as committing sins. The Quran rejects such stories and exonerates these prophets.
- For example, the Bible presents the prophet **Jacob** as trying to take away his older twin brother Esau's rights by denying him food and drink. It says that Jacob deceived his blind father, by pretending to be Esau, to get blessings which the father thought he was passing on to Esau. The Bible says that the prophet **Aaron**, brother of Moses, in the absence of Moses, made an image of a calf for the Israelites to worship, while the worship of an image is the most serious possible sin in the Bible. It says that the prophet and king **David** wanted to marry the wife of one of his generals, and he deliberately sent the general to a battle where it was certain he would be killed. It says that the prophet and king **Solomon** worshipped idols to please his wives.
- The Holy Quran speaks of all these great men but it accepts none of these statements and rejects most of them in unmistakable words:

Jacob was righteous: "And We gave him (i.e., Abraham) Isaac; and Jacob, a son's son. **And We made them all good.**" — Ch. 21, v. 72.

Aaron tried to stop Israelites from worshipping the calf, which was made by Samiri:

"...and the Samiri has led them astray.... he brought forth for them a calf, a (lifeless) body, having a lowing sound, so they said: This is your god and the god of Moses.... And Aaron indeed had said to them before: My people, you are only tried by it, and surely your Lord is the Beneficent God, so follow me and obey my order." — 20:85–90.

David and Solomon were righteous and God-fearing:

"and remember Our servant David, the possessor of power. **He ever turned (to Allah).**" — 38:17

"And We gave to David, Solomon. Most excellent the servant! Surely **he ever turned (to Allah).**" — 38:30