

**Fast 28: Prophets and Messengers — were mortals, and so are their followers**

- Continuing the subject of the rejectors of prophets looking down upon prophets as “nothing but mortals”, the devil or Iblīs said the same about mankind when he was asked along with the angels to submit to man:

“He (Allah) said: O Iblīs, what is the reason that you are not with those who submit? He said: I am not going to submit to a mortal, whom You have created of sounding clay, of black mud fashioned into shape.” (15:32–33)

قَالَ يَا إِبْلِيسُ مَا لَكَ أَلَّا تَكُونَ مَعَ السَّاجِدِينَ  
 قَالَ لَمْ أَكُنْ لِأَسْجُدَ لِبَشَرٍ خَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ  
 صَلْصَالٍ مِنْ حَمِئٍ مَسْنُونٍ

Thus the rebellious nature of man refuses to submit to his humble nature. It is also said that this is, in fact, symbolic of prophets and their rejectors. “Adam” here is any prophet and Iblīs stands for those who refuse to accept his message because they consider him as a mere mortal.

- The Quran says that to assert that God cannot grant His revelation to a mortal is to dishonour Allah:

“And they do not honour Allah with the honour due to Him, when they say: Allah has not revealed anything to a mortal.” (6:91)

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِذْ قَالُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ  
 عَلَيَّ بَشِيرٍ مِنْ شَيْءٍ

The verse in fact says that they “underestimate” Allah when they say this. It is the very greatness and high status of Allah which requires that He send revelation to a mortal, so that mortals can also achieve greatness on their scale. The verse goes on to say:

“And you are taught what neither you nor your fathers knew.” (6:91)

وَعَلَّمْتُمْ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنْتُمْ وَلَا آبَاؤُكُمْ

The revelation, even though to a lowly mortal, discloses to people such knowledge as neither they nor their forefathers knew. But they ignore that fact and keep objecting to the fact that the recipient is a mortal.

- People who were previously favoured with prophets arising among them also became so arrogant as to consider themselves above mortals. The Quran says:

“And the Jews and the Christians say: We are the sons of Allah and His beloved ones. Say: Why does He then

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ وَالنَّصَارَى نَحْنُ أَبْنَاءُ اللَّهِ

punish you for your sins? Rather, **you are mortals from among those whom He has created.** He forgives whom He pleases and punishes whom He pleases.” (5:18)

أَحِبَّاءُ قُلُوبِهِمْ يَعْذِبُكُمْ بِذُنُوبِكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ  
بَشَرٌ مِمَّنْ خَلَقَ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ

It is in the Jewish scriptures that, many times, God became angry with the Israelites for committing sins and He sent punishment of various sorts on them. As regards Christians, in the book of Ephesians, Paul emphasises to Christian converts to avoid the sins which they saw around them, and he lists several of those sins. Then he adds:

“Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be partakers with them.” (Ephesians, 5:6–7)

A Christian commentator (at [www.bible-studys.org](http://www.bible-studys.org)) writes as follows in explanation of these verses:

“Let no one deceive you with empty words, telling you that sin is tolerable and that God will not exclude unrepentant sinners from His kingdom. ... Even worse than being a lost person who was committing these sins, would be *someone pretending to be a child of God committing these sins.*”

According to this warning by Paul, despite the Christian doctrine that sins are forgiven through the belief that Jesus atoned for all the sins of mankind, a Christian committing sins may incur the wrath of God and be excluded from His kingdom.

The Quran’s statement, “Why does He then punish you for your sins?”, refers to their own contradiction. On the one hand, Jews and Christians, each in their own way, consider themselves as “the sons of Allah and His beloved ones”. On the other hand, their own scriptures acknowledge that they can be subject to the punishment of God for committing sins. The Quran adds that this is because they are “mortals from among those whom He has created”. The same laws apply to them as to any mortal: if they do good they will earn God’s favour, and if they do wrong there is no guarantee that God will not punish them.

There is also a lesson in this for modern Western nations, although on the face of it they might have ceased to follow the Jewish or the Christian scriptures. They consider themselves above and superior to other nations of the world. In fact, that attitude is a continuation of their former religious beliefs that they are the chosen ones of God. That attitude is a source of many calamities and wars that have befallen the world. It can only be removed by taking this advice of the Quran: You are only mortals like the other mortals created by the same Creator.