Summary of Juz 6

Surat An-Nisa continued

If someone is treated unfairly, they can disclose the wrongdoers' identity. An important principle of religion is 'it's all or none'. You cannot choose to do one thing and leave out another, it is a complete submission or complete rejection, no half-way!

Next is the story of the Prophet Isa and how the Jews betrayed him. It also criticises the Christians for manufacturing stories around his crucifixion, resurrection and divinity. The Quran is categorical about Isa not being killed. He was raised alive to heaven and will return near the end of time. Despite this criticism of the Jews and Christians we are reminded not to stereotype, they are not all alike: some are guided and others misguided.

The process of revelation was the same for all the prophets, so Isa was no different from the rest of the prophets. So, why do you regard Isa as the son of God? "Those who deny the truth and stop others from the path of Allah have wandered far" (169).

People are warned; Do not be fanatics nor stretch the meaning of the gospels in a way that contradicts Isa's teachings. Their beliefs, that he died for the sins of humanity, the trinity and that he was the son of God, are all false. Why do they think that Isa would be embarrassed to be called the servant of Allah? The Prophet Muhammed was great in many ways, but he was proud to be called 'the servant of Allah'. He is the messenger a clear proof of Allah's majesty. So, those who believe in Allah and hold firmly to their belief in Him, will be treated kindly with His grace, and He will guide them towards Himself along a straight path.

More on inheritance; those who die childless: if they had a sister, she would inherit half; If there are two sisters, they inherit two thirds (176).

Surat al-Ma'ida - The Feast

This chapter was revealed in Madinah after the Treaty of Hudaibiya, except verse 3, "Today I have completed your religion for you …" which was revealed at the Farewell Hajj 10AH/631CE. The period after the Treaty of Hudaibiya marked a new era in the history of Muslims. Now they were free to preach and propagate Islam in the Arabian Peninsula, as agreed in the treaty. The economic prowess of the Jewish tribes had now waned and the Muslims were confident and optimistic.

Allah's contract with Muslims is laid out. It puts it in the context of the contracts the Jews and Christians had with God. They broke the law, invented false beliefs and changed some of the laws in the Torah and the Gospel. So, they were dismissed from the privilege of the favoured people of Allah. Muslims are warned, abide by the Shariah to earn Allah's favour. Allah prefers those who obey the law.

The new Muslim state needed laws to function as a well-ordered civil society. In this surah, eighteen new laws are decreed: contracts; testimony and the importance of honest witnesses; respecting sacred months; slaughtering animals; the lawfulness of seafood; rules of entering into a state of ihram for pilgrimage; intermarriage with Jewish and Christian women; apostasy; rules for cleanliness; the penalty for stealing; the penalty for brigandage and sedition; prohibition of intoxicants and gambling; atonement for breaking an oath; hunting whilst in a state of ihram; making a will at the time of death; and the penalty for those who violate divine laws.

They are set in the context of various historical events. For example, the story of the Israelites' refusal to obey Musa when told to enter the Holy Land. The lesson is disobeying Allah's messengers deserves punishment; the story of the murder of Abel by Cain, an abominable crime. The relationships of various groups in the Arabian Peninsula are surveyed, and the Christian-Muslim relationship is highlighted: "You will find the nearest and most affectionate to the believers are …the Christians' (82).

Cooperate and don't hate

Muslims are reminded that do not let others past wrongs stop you from being cooperative. Let bygones be bygones. Hatred is a bad policy.

The next section forbids certain kinds of meat: "carrion; blood; pork; whatever is slaughtered in a name other than Allah's; animals killed by strangulation, a blow to the body, fallen from a height, gored; eaten by beasts of prey– unless you are able to slaughter it before it dies – and anything slaughtered on the altars of idols" (3). Animals caught by hunting Dogs and trained birds of prey are halal.

Extramarital affairs are forbidden, to be pure, get married. Muslims are permitted to marry Jewish and Christian women; don't engage in sex outside of marriage, nor have love affairs.

The five daily prayers are obligatory before the prayer perform the ritual washing of Wudu. Justice is important for building social cohesion and harmony. Behave justly, give up discrimination: "Believers, be committed to Allah as witnesses for fairness, and do not let the hatred of a community stop you from being just" (8).

The Israelites contract is revisited, some kept the contract, others neglected it. So, they are invited to follow the way of the blessed Prophet to amend their past wrongs. Particularly the Christian doctrine of Trinity, "Those who say, "The Messiah son of Maryam is God," are denying the truth" (17).

The punishment for those who start a war is the death penalty

The next section is an invitation to get closer to Allah through mindfulness, good company, the search for a spiritual teacher and ways of doing good. This only comes from righteousness, not wealth. Another Divine law to promote justice: eye for an eye is just, but to pardon is charity.

Religious differences are by Allah's will

"For every community in the past, We established law and a way of life. Had Allah wanted, He would have made you one nation, but He chose to test you regarding what He gave you; so, compete in doing good works. You will all return to Allah in the end, and He will inform you regarding your differences" (48). A warning against choosing sides out of fear and not being just, remember Victory is for the lovers of Allah, a harsh warning is given to those who give up their faith, they will ruin themselves.

Similarly, a warning is given to those who poke fun at the religious practices of others. "When you call to the prayer, they treat it as a joke and game since they don't understand" (59). They're warned: "they will suffer the curse and anger of Allah and will become like monkeys, pigs and the worshippers of false gods" (60). Christians are invited to give up Trinity so they may achieve salvation.