

The Text of the Quran & Yusuf Ali's Translation:

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

28: 51. Now have We caused the word to reach them themselves, in order that they may receive admonition.

Walaqad wassalna lahumu alqawla laAAallahum yatathakkaroon

[Ali's comments: 3384. Before this the Quraish might have said that the Word of God had come to the Hebrews in their tongue or in Greek, which was used by the Hebrews in the time of Jesus. Now that Word is brought to their own doors, in their own Arabic tongue, by a man of their own race and family. Surely they have no excuse now for remaining strangers to the higher moral and spiritual law.]

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ هُمْ بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

*Allatheena ataynahumu alkitaba min qablihi hum bihi
yu/minoona*

28: 52. Those to whom We sent the Book
before this -- they do believe in this
(Revelation);

وَإِذَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِهِ... ﴿٥٢﴾

28: 53. And when it is recited to them, they
say:

"We believe therein,

... إِنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّنَا... ﴿٥٣﴾

for it is the Truth from our Lord:

... إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

indeed we have been Muslims (bowing to
God's Will) from before this."

*Wa-itha yutla AAalayhim qaloo amanna bihi innahu
alhaqqu min rabbina inna kunna min qablihi
muslimeena*

[3385. There were Christians and Jews who recognised that Islam was a logical and natural development of God's revelations as given in earlier ages, and they not only welcomed and accepted Islam, but claimed, and rightly, that they had always been Muslims. In that sense

Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus had all been Muslims. (R).]

أُولَئِكَ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُمْ مَرَّتَيْنِ... up

28: 54. Twice will they be given their reward,

[3386. Their credit is twofold,

- in that before they knew Islam, they followed the earlier Law in truth and sincerity, and
- when they were offered Islam, they readily recognised and accepted it, suffered in patient perseverance for its sake, and brought forth the fruits of righteousness.]

...بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَيَدْرُؤُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةَ... ..

for that they have persevered,
that they avert Evil with Good,

...وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ (٥٤)

and that they spend (in charity) out of what
We have given them.

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا اللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوا عَنْهُ... up

28: 55. And when they hear vain talk, they turn away therefrom

... وَقَالُوا لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ ...

and say:

"To us our deeds, and to you yours;

[3387. The righteous do not encourage idle talk or foolish arguments about things sacred. If they find themselves in some company in which such things are fashionable, they leave politely. Their only rejoinder is: "We are responsible for our deeds, and you for yours; we have no ill-will against you; we wish you well, and that is why we wish you to know of the knowledge we have received; after that knowledge you cannot expect us to go back to the Ignorance which we have left."]

... سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ...

peace be to you:

... لَا نَبْتَغِي الْجَاهِلِينَ (٥٥)

we seek not the ignorant."

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ... up

28: 56. It is true thou wilt not be able to guide everyone whom thou lovest: but God guides those whom He will

[3388. The immediate occasion for this was the death of Abu Talib, an uncle whom the holy Prophet loved dearly and who had befriended and protected him. The Prophet was naturally anxious that he should die in the profession of the true Faith, but the pagan Quraish leaders persuaded him to remain true to the faith of his fathers. This was an occasion of disappointment and grief to the Prophet. We are told that in such circumstances we should not grieve. All whom we love do not necessarily share our views or beliefs. We must not judge. God will guide whom He pleases and as He pleases. He alone knows the true inwardness of things.]

...وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ (٥٦)

and He knows best those who receive guidance.

Muhammad Asad's Translation:

28:51 NOW, INDEED, We have caused this word [of Ours] to reach mankind step by step, 51 **so that they might [learn to] keep it in mind.**

(28:52) As for those unto whom We have vouchsafed revelation aforetime - they [are bound to] believe in this one [as well]; 52

(28:53) and whenever it is [clearly] conveyed unto them, they [are bound to] profess, "We have come to believe in it, for, behold, it is the truth from our Sustainer - and, verily, even before this **have we surrendered ourselves unto Him!**"

28:54 These it is that shall receive a twofold reward for having been **patient in adversity**, and **having repelled evil with good**, 55 and having **spent on others** out of what We provided for them as sustenance,

(28:55) and, whenever they heard frivolous talk, 54 having turned away from it and said: "Unto us shall be accounted our deeds, and unto you, your deeds **Peace be upon you** - [but] we do not seek out such as are ignorant [of the meaning of right and wrong]."

28:56 VERILY, thou canst not guide aright everyone whom thou lovest: but it is God who guides him that wills [to be guided]; 55 and He is fully aware of all who would let themselves be guided. 56

[Asad's comments: -

51 Lit., "We have caused this word to reach them gradually" : this meaning is implied in the verbal form wassalna; which - like the grammatically identical form nazzalna - points to the gradual, step-by-step revelation of the Qur'an during the twenty-three years of Muhammad's prophetic ministry.

52 This is both a statement of historical fact - alluding to conversions of Jews and Christians in Muhammad's lifetime - and a prophecy. It must, however, be understood that, in the above context, God's "vouchsafing" revelation implies **a conscious, sincere acceptance of its teachings by those to whom it has been conveyed: for it is this sincerity that has enabled them - or will enable them to realize that the Qur'an preaches the same ethical truths as those forthcoming from earlier revelations.** (Cf. 26:196-197 and the corresponding notes 83-85.)

53 See note 44 on the identical phrase in 13:22. In the present context, the reference to "patience in adversity" and "repelling evil with good" evidently relates to the loss of erstwhile communal links, social ostracism, and all manner of physical or moral persecution which is so often the lot of persons who accept religious tenets different from those of their own community.

54 This obviously refers to attempts, based on prejudice, at deriding the spiritual re-orientation of the person concerned.

55 Or: "God guides whomever He wills" - either of these two renderings **being syntactically correct**. According to several extremely well-authenticated Traditions, the above verse relates to the Prophet's inability to induce his dying uncle Abu Talib, whom he loved dearly and who had loved and protected him throughout his life, to renounce the pagan beliefs of his ancestors and to profess faith in God's oneness. Influenced by Abu Jahl and other Meccan chieftains, Abu Talib died professing, in his own words, "the creed of Abd al-Muttalib" (Bukhari) or, according to another version (quoted by Tabari), "the creed of my ancestors (al-ashyakh)". However, the Qur'anic statement "thou canst not guide aright everyone

whom thou lovest" has undoubtedly a timeless import as well: it stresses the inadequacy of all human endeavours to "convert" any other person, however loving and loved, to one's own beliefs, or to prevent him from falling into what one regards as error, unless that person wills to be so guided.

56 The above rendering of the expression **al-muhtadin** conforms to the interpretations offered in this context by many classical commentators - e.g., "those who accept guidance" (Zamakhshari), "everyone who in time would find the right way" (Razi), "those who are prepared (musta'iddin) for it" (Baydawi), "all who deserve guidance" (Ibn Kathir), and so forth. Thus, God's guidance is but the final act of His grace with which He rewards all who desire to be guided. For a further consideration of this problem, the reader is referred to Zamakhshari's illuminating remarks quoted in note 4 on 14:4.]