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Allah (SWT)¹ obliged man to the ordainments of religion but only when his faculties have fully developed. The last human faculty in development is desire, meaning that he should be fit for producing children and for life extension. We mentioned before that the fruit we eat can only be ripe and edible after it accomplishes the purpose of its existence. Its first function is not to be eaten by man but to develop a seed eligible for the extension of life². Once the seed is fully developed, the fruit is fit to be eaten. Such is the example of man, he can only be eligible for reproduction after he has reached puberty. Allah (SWT) has made this desire³ fervent because the responsibilities that ensue it will be burdensome. If Allah (SWT) had not made it so, people would have turned away from it. But He (SWT) has made it enjoyable so that the extension of life (reproduction) would continue as a result of a powerful drive.

Thus, the covenant of faith of man will be sound due to his being fully developed and prepared by Allah to enable him to carry out religious duties. Hence, man will have to abide by his commitment to the faith. So Allah (SWT) wants man to have his own identity once he is ready for preserving his lineage. When he has his fully developed identity, Allah eliminates his subordination to others. Yet, there are those who claim that they follow their forefathers! They follow them in their faith methodology but not in the rest of the worldly affairs such as clothing, food, etc. That is due to the fact that they found in this false faith what agrees with their inclinations and desires.

Allah urges His servants who have developed their own identity to consider. They must know that by being mature they should be guided to the One God. If at first you were attached to your parent as he is the one who provides for you, you should know that he is but a means Allah intended for you to have. However, Allah is your Creator and the revealer of the way of life which you must be attached to in order to prosper. Allah says what can be translated as, **"...and be apprehensive of a Day (when) no parent will recompense (for good or evil) for his child, and no begotten (child) will offer recompense (for good or evil) for his parent in anything..."** (TMQ⁴, Luqman:33). Allah shows us that if the forefathers did not consider so what about their descendants? They should rather reform themselves by abiding by the ordainments of Islam. In the chapter of '**al-Ma'idah**' there is a verse that denotes the same meaning with different wording. In the verse we're tackling He says, **"And when it is said to them, "Closely follow what Allah has sent down..."**. While in the chapter of al-Ma'idah He says, **"And when it is said to them, "Come to what Allah has sent**

1 Subhanahu wa ta'ala (Sublime and Exalted be He)

2 Producing other plants

3 The sex drive.

4 Translated meaning of the Qur'an. The Qur'an is the words of Allah revealed to His Prophet Muhammad (SAWS).

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down and to the Messenger," they say, "Enough (Literally: enough reckoning) for us is what we found our fathers (doing)." And even if their fathers did not know anything and were not guided? " (TMQ, Al-Ma'idah:104)

The two verses have some aspects in common and others that differ. Allah's words that can be translated as, "**Closely follow what Allah has sent down**" in the chapter of al-Baqarah, meaning to deeply reflect and adhere to the way of Allah. In the chapter of 'al-Ma'idah' the verse says, "**Come to what Allah has sent down and to the Messenger**" and this is the first difference. The second difference between the two verses is the disbelievers reply. In al-Baqarah chapter, they said, "**we closely follow what we have come upon from our fathers** " which is a mistake on their part. In al-Ma'idah, the reply came as, "**Enough (Literally: enough reckoning) for us is what we found our fathers (doing)**" meaning that they sufficed with what they have and negated the divine methodology. This attitude is stronger in denial. That's why Allah did not address them with the word, "**follow**" but said, "**come**" meaning come up of your nadir to the belief in the divine law. Their reply with the word "**enough for us**" means that they suffice with what they have with a vengeance.

The word *hasbuna* (enough for us) in Arabic comes from the stem *hasaba*. *Hasaba* at times mean 'to surmise' or 'to calculate'. When it denotes 'surmise' then it is mere conjecture that could be mistaken. Thus '*hasaba*' has either a moral or mathematical connotations. When Allah (SWT) tells us about the Day of *Hesab* (Reckoning) in the hereafter, He by thus indicates that it is a matter accurately calculated. As to the derived word '*housban*' it is an exaggerative term of '*hisaab*' and it means something that is absolutely meticulous in calculation. This phrase '*with housbaan*' is mentioned with the things that are precise and created by a determined estimate in the Universe. Allah says, "**The All-Merciful, He taught the Qur'an. He created man. He has taught him distinct (Literally: evident (demonstration) (speech). The sun and the moon (run)with *housbaan* (to all-precisely reckoned courses) " (TMQ, ar-Rahmaan:1-5).**

In the above verse Allah used the word *housban* when He spoke about the sun and the moon that run with a precise estimated system. If the slightest blunder should occur in their course, the system of the universe will be in disorder. In another verse Allah (SWT) says, "**The Splitter of the daybreak, and He has made the night for rest, and the sun and moon *housban* (to all-reckoned (courses))**" (TMQ, Al-Anaam (herd): 96) here the word '*housban*' means that the sun and moon are in themselves means of precise calculation. In the chapter of 'al-Kahf' the same word

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'*housban*' indicates a torment that is equivalent to the act of transgression; "**...and send on it *housban* (a reckoned (bolt)) from the heaven so that in the morning it will be a slippery dry soil**" (TMQ, al-Kahf:40).

Back to the verse of our discussed chapter, 'al-Baqarah', we find that there is a third difference between it and the other verse in 'al-Ma'idah'. In 'al-Baqarah' chapter Allah said, "**And even if their fathers did not consider anything and they were not guided?** " while in al-Maidah He said, "**And even if their fathers did not know anything and were not guided?** " The difference is between the words '**consider**' and '**know**'. 'Consider' means to regard issues, that are already known, thoughtfully. Thus, he who knows is in less rank than he who considers. He who *considers* is the one who deduces, whereas he who *knows*, takes the knowledge from others who have this knowledge. For instance, an illiterate might learn from another without thoughtful consideration. Thus, negating knowledge is deeper in effect than the negation of consideration. This stems from the fact that lack of knowledge indicates the inability to teach others anything.

When Allah (SWT) said about those disbelievers that they '**did not consider anything**' it means that they could possibly be knowledgeable. Yet, when He said that they '**did not know**' it denotes that they neither knew nor considered. Their reply in both cases was most befitting to their status. They said, '**enough for us**' in response to their status of being ignorant. Moreover, they said '**No indeed, we closely follow what we have come upon from our fathers**' then followed their description of being unable to consider.

Thus by studying the two verses, no one can say that they are contradictory. This can be summed up in the following:

1. In the first verse He said "**closely follow**" and their reply was "**we closely follow what we have come upon from our fathers**" and the comment on their attitude was, "**And even if their fathers did not consider anything**".
2. In the second verse, He said, "come", their reply was "enough for us", the comment was "**And even if their fathers did not know anything**".

The phrase "**when it is said**" is in the passive voice denotes that this has been the universal message of all prophets. Hence, every verse in the Qur'an is in concurrence with its words and context. The end of both verses was the same, "**and they were not guided**" evidence of the fact

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that guidance from Allah is not different for those who consider and know.

"And the likeness of the ones who have disbelieved is as the likeness of one who screams to that which does not hear (anything) except an invocation and a calling out; deaf, dumb and blind; so they do not consider." (TMQ, al-Baqarah: 171)

The one who screams is the shepherd who does so to draw the attention of his herd. He only uses his vocals in doing so and walks before his herd to the water source. The herd cannot understand the words of their shepherd they only hear invocation and calling out. On the other hand, the Prophet (SAWS) is the guided shepherd (guardian) who calls the *people* to come to him and he exhorts them to follow the way of Allah. This is the differences between the shepherd to the herd and the guardian in human. The common feature between the Prophet and the shepherd is that they both invite and call. The disbelievers have a common feature with the herd; that they do not understand and only hear the call. In their response to this call they are "**deaf, dumb and blind**" as they do not listen nor understand the significance of this call. Moreover, they are dumb as they would not utter the *shahadah*⁵ and they do not consider the creation and the dominion of the heavens and earth to reach the truth.

Should we conclude from the above that by being "deaf" that they have a hearing impairment? No. Allah made the ears to hear only what is useful and made the tongue to utter what is beneficent, and the brain to think soundly. If neither the ears, nor the tongue, nor the brain do what they have been created for, then they are figuratively impaired. A person who is truly disabled has an excuse. Would that those disbelievers were really disabled so that they might be justified, but they blocked their ears from hearing the call for Islam and stopped their tongue from uttering *shahadah* and turned a blind eye to the signs of the universe. Allah (SWT) said the following, **"Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of (Or: differences) the night and the daytime there are signs indeed for ones endowed with intellects. "** (TMQ, al-Imran:190)

5 The Muslim declaration of faith, that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

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"O you who have believed, eat of the good things (only) which We have provided you, and give thanks to Allah, in case He only is (The One) Whom you do worship." (TMQ, al-Baqarah:172)

In verse 168 Allah (SWT) addressed a similar issue, **"O you mankind, eat of whatever is in the earth lawful and good"** but He addressed mankind at large. In the verse that we are dealing with the address is to those who have believed. When Allah (SWT) addresses people at large, he brings the issue of faith into focus. Whereas, the address to the believers is to show them the rules of religion. Allah commits only those who have believed to the laws of religion. Belief is a commitment and as long as one has trust in The Wise Lord, then one should derive the rules of this faith from Him (SWT). It is indeed justice from Allah that he only enforces His orders on the believers. In the human world we find that the leaders enforce their rules on all people be they content or discontent with their leadership. Moreover, they forcefully impose their will on their subjects, in case they have enough power.

Allah (SWT) orders the believers to **"eat of whatever is in the earth lawful and good"**. They are confident that provision and sustenance is from Allah The Creator and The Superb Provider. Then Allah concludes the verse saying, **"and give thanks to Allah, in case He only is (The One) Whom you do worship."** Thankfulness to Allah is the bondsman duty as long as he worships Him (SWT).

"Surely He has prohibited for you only carrion (i.e. dead meat) and blood and the flesh of swine, and whatever has been acclaimed to other than Allah. So, whoever is constrained, neither being inequitable nor aggressive, then no vice will be upon him; surely Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful."(TMQ, al-Baqarah:173)

The Arabic word *mayyet* with a stress on the 'y' means that one is going to die eventually even if one is alive at present. While, the Arabic word *mayt* without the stress denotes an actually dead being. Allah has made unlawful the already dead animals (*maytatah*) not the *mayyet* or the animals that will

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die in future! If this has been the case then every animal will be unlawful to eat. An animal is either put to death by being slaughtered then it is dead or it could die by itself. When an animal is dead by itself without being slaughtered, its blood which carries harmful substances in it is not shed but it is kept inside its body. Look at two chickens, one is slaughtered and the other is suffocated. We note a difference in their colour and in their taste after they are cooked. The slaughtered one which had its blood spilled is more savory than the other. It is remarkable that even the rejecters of faith slaughter animals before they eat them. Experience has guided them to the viability of this process despite their ignorance of the Islamic method of slaughtering.