

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Friday Khutbah – 27/11/2014

## The false claims of the Chosen People and the Promised Land

Last Friday talk was about the history of *Bait Al-Maqdis* and its Masjid throughout the centuries and the nature of the conflict over who has the right in the holy land. I concluded by saying that the mission of the Prophet Muhammad (*salla Allahu alaihi wasallam*), his night journey from Al-Masjid Al-Haram in Makkah to Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa in Jerusalem and his leading of the prophets in prayer in Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa – all of that was a clear indication and declaration that the right in the holy city had moved to the Muslims. This transfer effectively took place during the conquest of *Sham* during the time of *Khalifa Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, radhia Allahu ‘unhu* – who travelled from Madinah to *Bait Al-Maqdis* to receive the keys of the city from the Christian leaders – and since then Muslims have been living in Palestine and it remained under Muslim rule for almost 1200 years.

However, *ahl al-Kitab* do not accept the fact that Muslims have the right in the city. It was for this that they always wanted to occupy *Bait al-Maqdis* and launched the Crusade and colonial wars to capture it. They did not rest until they handed it and the land of Palestine to the state of the Zionist gangs.

It is not only the People of the Book who dispute the Muslim right in *Bait al-Maqdis*. Even some Muslims might have some doubts in their mind when they read some of the Qur’anic verses regarding *Bani Israel*- without understanding and without combining all the verses on the subject together to ascertain the truth of the matter. Some half-learned so-called Muslims might even go to the extent of claiming that the Qur’an gives a sacred right in the land of Palestine to the Jews quoting the Qur’anic verses: “Recall when Musa said to his people, ‘O my people, remember the favour of Allah upon you when He made prophets from among you, made you possessors (of houses and servants) and gave you what He did not give to anyone in the worlds. O my people! Enter the holy land which Allah has assigned to you, and do not turn back for then you will be returned as losers.’

It is important then to explain the truth in this matter. As an introduction to this subject, I would like to talk first about something which is related to this; the false claim of the Jews that they are “the chosen people” of God!

It is true that Allah (*subhanahu wa ta’ala*) had preferred the nation of *Bani Israel* over the pagan people of their time as Allah says in *Surah al-Baqara* verse 47: “O Children of Israel! Remember My favour which I bestowed upon you and that I preferred you over *al-‘Aalameen*” (mankind and jinn.) The interpreters of the Qur’an are in agreement that they were preferred over the people of their time. It was not an eternal preference for there is no doubt that the Muslim *Ummah* is more honourable in the sight of God than them, their Shari’ah is better and their prophet Muhammad –*salla Allahu alaihi wa sallam*- is the best of all the children of Adam - prophets included.)

The essence of the Jewish preference (when they were preferred) was not on the basis of their race or decent from Ibrahim and Isaq, peace be upon them. It was to do with the fact that Allah had sent many prophets from among them and gave them divine revelation and law.

This preference was manifested in different forms including:

i) Their deliverance from the persecution and humiliation which they suffered in Egypt under the Pharaoh and his people#

ii) It was also manifested in other forms such as the large number of reformist prophets who were sent to them, the special types of food which Allah provided them with and so on. Allah (*subhanahu wa ta'ala*) says: "Moses said to his people: "Recall when Musa said to his people, 'O my people, remember the favour of Allah upon you when He appointed among you prophets and made you possessors (of houses and servants) and gave you that which He had not given anyone among the worlds." Surah5 V.20.

The interpreters of the Qur'an say: "that which God had not given anyone among the worlds": were the partition of the sea which allowed them to cross the Red Sea to Sinai , the clouds which shaded them from the sun and the food of manna and quail which was sent down to them.

The preference which was given to the Children of Israel was; however, conditional. It was not arbitrary or biased. In return for the favours, Allah took their covenant as the Qur'an says: "O Children of Israel, remember My favour which I bestowed upon you, and fulfill your covenant with Me and I shall fulfill My covenant with you, and fear none but Me. And believe in what I have revealed confirming the revelation which is with you, and be not the first to reject it....." (*Surah al-Baqara* 40-41)

However, the Jews did not fulfill their covenant with Allah as Allah (*subhanahu wa ta'ala*) says: "So for their breaking of the covenant We cursed them and made their hearts hard. They distort words from their places ....." (Qur'an 5:13)

"We took the covenant of the Children of Israel and sent to them Messengers. Whenever there came to them a Messenger with what their souls did not desire; a party of them (the Messengers) they denied and a party they killed." (Qur'an 5:70.)

When they breached their covenant with Allah, they no longer remained the preferred or chosen people. Instead they were cursed and turned into a nation with which Allah is angry as the Qur'an says: "Curses were pronounced on those from among the Children of Israel who rejected faith by the tongue of Dawud and of 'Isa son of Mary because they disobeyed and persisted in transgress." (Qur'an 5:78)

Allah's honour and preference was switched to a new nation on basis of the same conditions. This new nation is the Muslim *Ummah* as Allah (*subhanahu wa ta'ala*) says: "You are the best nation ever raised for human kind enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong and believing in Allah. Had the People of the Book believed it would have been better for them; among them were believers, but most of them were transgressors" (Qur'an 3:110.)

However, the Jews claim they are the eternally chosen people of God merely because of their decent from Ibrahim and Ishaq and not on the basis of belief and action. This claim of superiority on ancestral decent cannot be correct and acceptable by *Shari'ah* or logic. Allah has no kinship with any of his creation. All human beings are His slaves and servants.

According to the Qur'an people can only be chosen to a position of preference on the basis of their *Iman* (faith) and good deeds as Allah says: "And remember when Abraham was tried by his Lord with some commands, which he fulfilled them. He (Allah) said: I will make you a leader for the people; He said: And of my descendants, He (Allah) said: My covenant does not include the wrong-doers." *Al-Baqara* No. 2 verse 124:

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What is said about the claim of the 'chosen people' could also be said about the claim of the 'promised land' – that both were conditional and temporary.

It was true the Children of Israel were promised to enter the sacred land but they were commanded to fight the Canaanites and purify the holy land from polytheism but they refused to carry out the command. The punishment for their rebellion was that they were left to wander in the desert for forty years. That generation was not to see the holy land. Forty years afterwards they crossed the Jordan into the holy land led by Joshua son of Nun, but by that time Musa, Haroun (*peace be upon them*) and the whole of the elder generations had died.

If the Jews had a sacred right to the land of Palestine with no condition and when they were doing the worst things -like what they are doing nowadays in Al-Quds and Palestine- why were they deprived of this privilege even when they were led by their prophets Musa and Haroun (*peace be upon them*).

Historically, Palestine remained under Jewish rule only for short periods. It was ruled by the Canaanites, Babylonians, Greek, Romans, Muslims, Crusades and Muslims again until 1917.

The divine law of preference and establishment on earth is clearly outlined in the book of Allah (*subhanahu wa ta'ala.*) Had the Muslim *Ummah* followed the instructions given in their book, then their enemies would not have been able to overcome it. However, when they deserted the teachings of the Qur'an, then they got lost, and leadership was taken away from them. They remained at the back end of the caravan of humanity and became an object of humiliation by the Jews. This situation is set to continue until the *Ummah* repent to Allah and returns to its *Deen*.