

142741 - Commentary on the verse “ ‘He has given me the Scripture and made me a Prophet’ ” [Maryam 19:30]

the question

Allah says in Soorat Maryam: In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful (interpretation of the meaning): “He [‘Eesa (Jesus)] said: ‘Verily, I am a slave of Allaah, He has given me the Scripture and made me a Prophet’ ” [Maryam 19:30].

My question is: What was the Book or Scripture meant by Sayyiduna ‘Eesa (peace be upon him)? Was it the Gospel? If it was, how could it be given to a child in the cradle? Does it mean that he knew it by heart? And how did he teach it to the people?.

Detailed answer

What is meant by the Book or Scripture in the verse in which Allah says (interpretation of the meaning): “He [‘Eesa (Jesus)] said: ‘Verily, I am a slave of Allaah, He has given me the Scripture and made me a Prophet’ ” [Maryam 19:30] is the Gospel. It is expressed in the past tense (“He has given me”) to indicate that it would indeed happen and Allah would give him the Scripture in the future. Or the meaning may be: He has decreed that He will give me the Scripture.

‘Ikrimah said: “He has given me the Scripture” means: He has decreed that He will give me the Scripture. This was narrated from him by Ibn Katheer in his Tafseer (5/229).

Al-Shanqeeti (may Allah have mercy on him) said in Adwa’ al-Bayaan: The correction interpretation, in sha Allah, of the words in this verse, “He has given me the Scripture and made me a Prophet” is as follows: It is expressed in the past tense to describe something that will happen in the future, by way of confirming that it will come to pass. There are many similar examples in the Qur’aan, such as the verses in which Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“The Event (the Hour or the punishment of disbelievers and polytheists or the Islamic laws or commandments) ordained by Allaah will come to pass, so seek not to hasten it”

[al-Nahl 16:1]

“And the Trumpet will be blown, and all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth will swoon away, except him whom Allaah wills. Then it will be blown a second time, and behold they will be standing, looking on (waiting).

69. And the earth will shine with the light of its Lord (Allaah, when He will come to judge among men), and the Book will be placed (open), and the Prophets and the witnesses will be brought forward, and it will be judged between them with truth, and they will not be wronged.

70. And each person will be paid in full of what he did; and He is Best Aware of what they do.

71. And those who disbelieved will be driven to Hell in groups...”

[al-Zumar 39:68-71]

“And those who kept their duty to their Lord (Al-Muttaqoon – the pious) will be led to Paradise in groups...”

[al-Zumar 39:73]

In all of these verses, the verbs in the original Arabic are in the past tense but what is meant is the future, by way of confirming that it will come to pass. And there are many similar examples in the Qur'aan.

What we have mentioned about the verb being in the past tense in the phrase “He has given me the Scripture” etc., referring to the future is the correct view, in sha Allah, and it is different from those who claim that he became a Prophet or was given the Scripture when he was still a child, because of the apparent meaning of the words. End quote.

And Allah knows best.