

## QS 18 Q 17:22 – 39

17.22 Take not with God another deity, or you will end up disgraced, thwarted.

17.23 Your Lord decrees: that you worship none but Him, and graciousness to parents.

If they attain old age with you, either or both, say not to them: “Phew!” and do not scold them but speak to them words of kindness.

17.24 And lower to them the wing of humility, out of compassion, and say: “My Lord, grant them mercy, as they raised me up when I was young.”

17.25 Your Lord knows best what lies in your souls; if you are virtuous, He is All-Forgiving to those who turn back to Him.

17.26 Give kinsmen their due, as also the poor and the wayfarer. But do not squander and dissipate,

17.27 for squanderers are the brothers of devils. And Satan has ever been ungrateful to his Lord.

17.28 And if you turn away from them, seeking a mercy from your Lord which you hope for, speak to them words of comfort.

17.29 Let not your hand be chained to your neck, nor spread it out as far as it extends, or else you will end up worthy of blame, regretful.

17.30 Your Lord spreads out His bounty to whomever He wills – and withholds it. In respect of His servants, He is All-Versed, All-Seeing.

17.31 And do not kill your infants for fear of poverty; it is We who provide for them as well as you. Killing them is a mighty sin.

17.32 Do not come near to adultery; it is debauchery and a wretched path to follow.

17.33 Do not kill the soul which God declares hallowed except in justice. Whoever is killed unjustly, We have granted authority to his guardian. But he should not exceed the limit in killing, for he has already obtained divine support.

17.34 Do not come near the property of orphans, except in the fairest manner, until the orphan attains manhood. Be faithful to your compacts, for a compact shall be a thing questioned about.

17.35 Be fair in measures when you measure out, and weigh with a balance that is true: that would be better and more rewarding.

17.22 N’assigne point à Allah d’autre divinité; sinon tu te trouveras méprisé et abandonné.

17.23 Et ton Seigneur a décrété: «N’adorez que Lui; et (marquez) de la bonté envers les père et mère: si l’un d’eux ou tous deux doivent atteindre la vieillesse auprès de toi, alors ne leur dis point: «Fi!» et ne les brusque pas, mais adresse-leur des paroles respectueuses.

17.24 et par miséricorde, abaisse pour eux l’aile de l’humilité, et dis: «O mon Seigneur, fais-leur, à tous deux, miséricorde comme ils m’ont élevé tout petit».

17.25 Votre Seigneur connaît mieux ce qu’il y a dans vos âmes. Si vous êtes bons, Il est certes Pardonneur pour ceux qui Lui reviennent se repentant.

17.26 «Et donne au proche parent ce qui lui est dû ainsi qu’au pauvre et au voyageur (en détresse). Et ne gaspille pas indûment,

17.27 car les gaspilleurs sont les frères des diables; et le Diable est très ingrat envers son Seigneur.

17.28 Si tu t’écarter d’eux à la recherche d’une miséricorde de Ton Seigneur, que tu espères, adresse-leur une parole bienveillante.

17.29. Ne porte pas ta main enchaînée à ton cou [par avarice], et ne l’étend pas non plus trop largement, sinon tu te trouveras blâmé et chagriné.

17.30 En vérité ton Seigneur étend Ses dons largement à qu’il veut ou les accorde avec parcimonie. Il est, sur Ses serviteurs, Parfaitement Connaisseur et Clairvoyant.

17.31 Et ne tuez pas vos enfants par crainte de pauvreté; c’est Nous qui attribuons leur subsistance, tout comme à vous. Les tuer, c’est vraiment, un énorme péché.

17.32 Et n’approchez point la fornication. En vérité, c’est une turpitude et quel mauvais chemin!

17.33 Et, sauf en droit, ne tuez point la vie qu’Allah a rendu sacrée. Quiconque est tué injustement, alors Nous avons donné pouvoir à son proche [parent]. Que celui-ci ne commette pas d’excès dans le meurtre, car il est déjà assisté (par la loi).

17.36 Follow not what you have no knowledge of: hearing, sight and the heart – all of these, a person shall be questioned about.

17.37 Do not stride forth jauntily on earth: you will not thereby traverse the earth, nor reach up to the mountains in height.

17.38 All these are a sin in God's sight, and hateful. This is part of what your Lord has revealed to you of Wisdom.

17.39 Take not with God another deity, else you will be cast in hell, blameworthy and thwarted.

17.34 Et n'approchez les biens de l'orphelin que de la façon la meilleure, jusqu'à ce qu'il atteigne sa majorité. Et remplissez l'engagement, car on sera interrogé au sujet des engagements.

17.35 Et donnez la pleine mesure quand vous mesurez, et pesez avec une balance exacte. C'est mieux [pour vous] et le résultat en sera meilleur.

17.36 Et ne poursuis pas ce dont tu n'as aucune connaissance. L'ouïe, la vue et le cour: sur tout cela, en vérité, on sera interrogé.

17.37 Et ne foule pas la terre avec orgueil: tu ne sauras jamais fendre la terre et tu ne pourras jamais atteindre la hauteur des montagnes!

17.38 Ce qui est mauvais en tout cela est détesté de ton Seigneur.

17.39 Tout cela fait partie de ce que ton Seigneur t'a révélé de la Sagesse. N'assigne donc pas à Allah d'autre divinité, sinon tu seras jeté dans l'Enfer, blâmé et repoussé.

سورة الإسراء  
لَا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ فَتَقْعُدَ مَذْمُومًا مَكْذُولًا (22) وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أَفْ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا (23) وَأَخْفِصْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذَّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا (24) رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا فِي نُفُوسِكُمْ إِنَّا تَكُونُوا صَالِحِينَ فَإِنَّهُ كَانَ لِلْأَوَّابِينَ غُفُورًا (25) وَأَبْذَرْنَا فِي السَّمَاءِ الْغُفُورَ (26) إِنَّا الْمُبْدِرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيَاطِينِ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كُفُورًا (27) وَإِمَّا تَغْرِصْ عَنْهُمْ ارْتِيَاءَ رَحْمَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكَ تَرْجُوهَا فَقُلْ لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَيْسُورًا (28) وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ عُنُقِكَ وَلَا تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُومًا مَحْسُورًا (29) إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرًا بَصِيرًا (30) وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ خَشْيَةً إِمَّا يَكُنْ نَزْرُقُهُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ إِنَّ قَتْلَهُمْ كَانَ خِطْئًا كَبِيرًا (31) وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزَّانَا إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاجِسَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا (32) وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَمَنْ قُتِلَ مَظْلُومًا فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لَوْلِيَّهِ سُلْطَانًا فَلَا يَسْرِفُ فِي الْقَتْلِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مَنْصُورًا (33) وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَأَوْفُوا بِالْعَهْدِ إِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْئُولًا (34) وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ إِذَا كِلْتُمْ وَزَنُوا بِالْقِسْطِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا (35) وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا (36) وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَخْرِقَ الْأَرْضَ وَلَنْ تَبْلُغَ الْجِبَالَ طُولًا (37) كُلُّ ذَلِكَ كَانَ سَيِّئُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ مَكْرُوهًا (38) ذَلِكَ مِمَّا أَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ رَبُّكَ مِنَ الْحِكْمَةِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ فَتُلْقَىٰ فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَلُومًا مَذْمُورًا (39)

## Dye

Comme pour d'autres passages étudiés précédemment, nous avons affaire ici à un texte d'*instruction*, ou d'éducation morale, encadré par deux versets condamnant le *širk* (vv. 22, 39), et énonçant plusieurs règles morales, dans la lignée de l'éthique biblique (notamment certains aspects du Décalogue). On peut rapprocher ce texte de Q 6:151–153, et d'autres versets épars (cf. Günther 2007).

La transition entre le v. 22 et le v. 23 évoque très directement celle entre le premier commandement et les suivants (Ex 20:3, Dt 5:7) même si, comme le note

Hawting, on rencontre ici (comme souvent) le problème de l'identité exacte du locuteur.

### Pregill

Although it does not explicitly mention Moses or the Torah, this passage is the main version of the Biblical Decalogue in the Qur'ān, although novel elements are found here in addition to the more familiar rules; thus, infanticide, infringing on orphans' property, and cheating with regard to weights and measures are specifically prohibited as well as idolatry and murder. See the discussion in Günther 2007, where this passage is linked to the *kalima sawā'* of 3:64 – that is, the “common word” is the Decalogue itself, which all monotheists share and by which they should all abide. This argument seems especially plausible to me given the distinct echo of the First Commandment found in the latter half of 3:64.

The Israelite context of the *sūra* is clear, given the well-known allusion to Jerusalem at its opening (the identification of *al-masğid al-aqṣā* in v. 1 as the Temple is confirmed by the reference to the destruction of both the Solomonic and the Second Temple in vv. 4–7 following).

### Stefanidis

In contrast to Q 4:36–38 and Q 6:151–52, most of the injunctions in this passage are addressed to the second person singular. Bell (1937: 262) suggests that the original passage was intended for the Prophet and that the prohibitions addressed to the “people” (vv. 31–35) were inserted later, probably at Medina.

The passage is framed by two strong menaces: v. 22 *lā tağ'al ma'a llāhi ilāhan āḥara fa-taq'uda maḍmūman maḥḍūlan* and v. 39 *lā tağ'al ma'a llāhi ilāhan āḥara fa-tulqā fī ḡahannama malūman madḥūran*. The notion that the Prophet was capable of committing the greatest sin and liable to be punished in hell was offensive to many exegetes. Muslim scholars devised a special category of Qur'ānic address (*ḥiṭāb 'ayn wa-l-murād bihi ḡayruhu*; cf. Zarkašī 2009: 151) to characterize passages such as these. By holding that a verse formally addressed to the Prophet is in fact destined to humankind, they preserved the dogma of the Prophet's infallibility as well as the general understanding that the Qur'ān is primarily addressed to Muḥammad. Beyond these theological considerations, the singular address recalls the conspicuous use of the singular second person in the Biblical commandments (Exod 20 and Deut 5). This parallel does not, however, shed much light on the alternation of the singular and the plural address in the Qur'ānic passage.

### Stewart

The reference to the inquiry on the Day of Judgment about one's hearing, eyesight, and heart is striking. Does the heart (*fu'ād*) refer to one's innermost thoughts, to

one's feelings, or to one's intentions? This sounds reminiscent of a Christian theological approach—inquisition—rather than a legal approach, and that is odd here, because this is a list of legal rules.

### Toorawa

Scholars are, rightly, interested in the similarities between certain passages in the Qur'ān and the Decalogue (see Lewinstein 2001). For me, of greater interest are the *departures* from the Decalogue. The moderation—if that is the right characterization—enjoined in vv. 26–27, including the use of the agricultural root, and hapax, *B-D-R* in v. 26 is suggestive in this regard: “*wa-lā tubaddir tabḍirā*,” “and do not squander.”

Moderation might be a productive way of thinking about the underlying theme of the *sūra*, in particular the first half. Moderation is evoked by images of duality/two-ness, e.g. *marratayn* (v. 4, “two times”), *ūlāhumā* (v. 5, “the first of two”), *āyatayn* (v. 12, “two signs”), *wālidayn* (v. 23, “[two] parents”), *lahumā* (v. 24, “to the two of them”); images of alternation, e.g. Night and Day in v. 12, “*man kāna yuridu... wa man arāda*” (vv. 18–19, “Whosoever wishes... And whoever wishes”); and images of (choosing) the middle path, e.g. *aqwam* (v. 9, “most right/stable”), “*wa-lā tubaddir tabḍirā*,” “and do not squander” (v. 26) and the similar advice in v. 29, and “*fa-lā tusrif*” (v. 33, “do not go to excess”).

This passage also contains a hapax phrase: “*wa-lā tamši fī-l-arḍi maraḥan*” (“do not strut arrogantly [about the earth]”) in v. 37, which reprises, or is reprised, verbatim at Q 31:18. I find the concept of hapax phrase useful in thinking about Qur'ānic rhetoric, Qur'ānic narrative, and Qur'ānic poetics. Unsurprisingly, this hapax phrase also contains the hapax, *maraḥan* (“insolently”), the root for which (*M-R-Ḥ*) occurs in only one other place in the Qur'ān (Q 40:75).

### Younes

The standard (Egyptian edition) reading of v. 38 is as follows: *kullu ḍālika kāna sayyi'uhu 'inda rabbika makrūhan* (“The evil of all that is hateful in the sight of thy Lord” – Pickthall). According to Ibn Muḡāhid (1972: 380), this was the reading of four of the seven canonical readers: 'Aṣim, Ibn 'Āmir, Ḥamza and al-Kisā'i. Such a reading strikes me as awkward. Although the adjective *sayyi'* is found four times in the Qur'ān (Badawi and M. Abdel Haleem 2008: 462), this is the only occurrence of the four to which a possessive pronoun is attached. The form is thus unique.

A linguistically and stylistically sounder reading is the one attributed by Ibn Muḡāhid to Ibn Kaṭīr, Nāfi' and Abū 'Amr: *kullu ḍālika kāna sayyi'atan 'inda rabbika makrūhan* “This is all evil (a sin) hateful in the sight of thy Lord.” The noun *sayyi'a* is quite common in the Qur'ān, with 22 occurrences (ibid.).

### Zellentin

The commandment not to be wasteful (v. 27–29) reads well as the Qur’ān’s development of the pre-Islamic trope of the flamboyant poet and squanderer, as has been remarked by Neuwirth (2010:697–701, see also my comments on QS 44). Apart from this negation of aspects of pagan pre-Islamic Arabic culture, most other Qur’ānic laws stand in one relationship or another to the legal code of the Hebrew Bible. It is true that infanticide for the fear of penury seems to have been a widespread problem in Qur’ānic times, and Hawting is right in pointing out that the practice was indeed very common all around the Mediterranean. The theme of its prohibition is widespread in Christian and Jewish literature. (It is thus remarkable that the prohibition of infanticide in v. 31 does not make any reference to the Biblical Moloch tradition.)

Yet we may be able to identify a late antique channel of transmission of Biblical law, which in turn allows us to identify how the Qur’ān updates its received framework of established law. For the specific *combination* of a prohibition of idol worship, murder, and fraudulent measures in v. 22–35, along with the emphasis on prohibition of infanticide here and elsewhere (see also Q 6:151, Q 17:31, Q 60:12 and Q 81:8–9), has a special affinity to the *Didascalia Apostolorum* XVIII (esp. Vööbus 1979:32 and 181, and Zellentin 2013a:72–3). In this sense, it seems that against the background of the laws the Qur’ān’s shares with the *Didascalia*, we can identify the Qur’ān’s specific Arabic emendations of a broader Judaeo-Christian legal culture. We may even be able to pinpoint a timeline of this process.

In my comments on QS 3, I have sought to illustrate how the Qur’ān may adopt the Judaeo-Christian legal tradition to its specific Arabic context in the case of the *leges talionis*, only part of which it iterates here in v. 33. Intriguingly, when comparing the formulation of the *leges talionis* here and in Q 2:178–9, it seems that the latter passage reflects a much fuller engagement with the Judaeo-Christian tradition than does the present passage. This would corroborate basic aspects of the historical context of the Qur’ān from the point of view of its legal development, which I see as increasingly engaging its Jewish, its Christian, and its Judaeo-Christian framework.