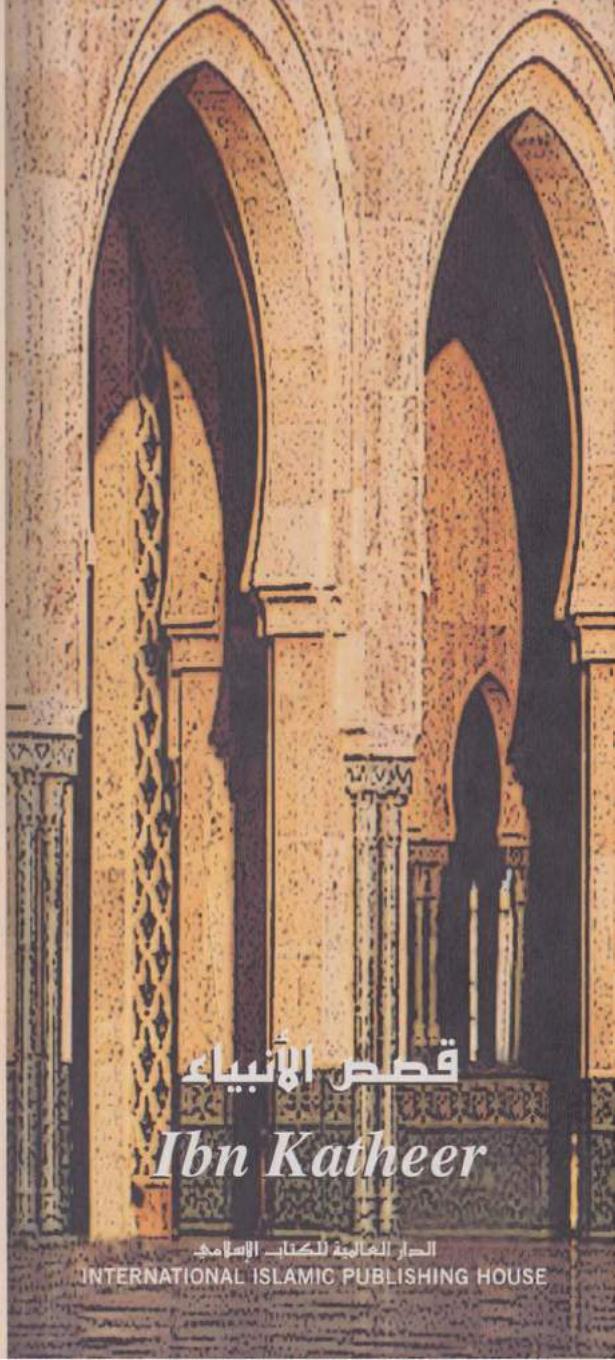


STORIES
OF THE PROPHETS

Ibn Katheer



SELECTED
STORIES OF THE PROPHETS



قصص الأنبياء

Ibn Katheer

الدار العالمية لكتاب الإسلام
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC PUBLISHING HOUSE

IN THE NAME OF
ALLAH
THE ALL-COMPASSIONATE, ALL-MERCIFUL



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Peace be upon them

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Translated by

Husain Maqbool

الدار العالمية للكتاب الإسلامي

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Transliteration Chart

إ	a
أ . ي	â
ب	b
ت	t
ه	h or t (when followed by another Arabic word)
ث	th
ج	j
ح	h̄
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	š
ض	d̄
ط	t̄

ظ	dh
ع	'
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
ـ - ه - هـ	h
و	w
و (as a long vowel)	oo
ي	y
ي (as a long vowel)	ee
ـ	,
(Omitted in initial position)	

-	Fathah	a
-	Kasrah	i
ـ	Dammah	u
ـ	Shaddah	Double letter
ـ	Sukoon	Absence of vowel

Directory of Symbols

(): *Subḥānahu wa Ta‘āla* — ‘The Exalted’

(): *Salla-Allāhu ‘Alayhi wa Sallatam* — ‘Blessings and peace be upon him’

(): *‘Alayhis-Salām* — ‘May peace be upon him’

(): *Radiā Allāhu ‘Anhu* — ‘May Allah be pleased with him’

(): *Radiā Allāhu ‘Anha* — ‘May Allah be pleased with her’

Chapter One

The Story of Prophet Adam

The Creation of Prophet Adam (ﷺ)

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“And remember when your Lord said to the angels, ‘Verily, I am going to place a successive authority [mankind] on Earth.’ They said: ‘Will You place upon it one who will make mischief therein and shed blood, while we glorify You with praises and thanks and sanctify You.’ He [Allah] said: ‘I know that which you do not know.’ And He taught Adam all the names of everything, then showed them to the angels and said: ‘Tell Me the names of these if you are truthful.’ They [angels] said: ‘Exalted are You, we have no knowledge except what you have taught us. Verily, it is You, the All-Knower, the All-Wise.’ And He said: ‘O’ Adam, inform them of their names.’ And when he informed them of their names, He said: ‘Did I not tell you that I know the unseen in the heavens and the Earth and I know what you reveal and what you have been concealing.’

And remember when We said to the angels: ‘Prostrate yourselves before Adam.’ And they prostrated except *Iblees*, he refused and was arrogant and became one of the disbelievers. And We said: ‘O’ Adam, dwell you and your wife in the Paradise and eat both of you freely with pleasure and delight, of things therein as whenever you will, but approach not this tree lest you be among the wrongdoers.’

But the *Shayṭān* [Satan] caused them to slip out of it [the Paradise] and got them out from that [condition] in which they had been. We said, ‘Get you down, all, with enmity between yourselves and you will have upon the Earth a place of settlement and provision for a time.’ Then Adam received from his Lord words. And He [the Lord] accepted his repentance. Verily, it is He Who is the Accepting of repentance, the Most Merciful. And We said, ‘Get down all of you from this place [i.e., Paradise], and when guidance comes to you from Me, whoever follows My guidance, there shall be no fear on them, nor shall they grieve. But those who disbelieve and deny Our signs, those will be the companions of Fire. They shall abide therein eternally.’”

(*Qur'an* 2: 30-39)

Allah (ﷻ), also said:

“Verily, the likeness of Jesus before Allah is the likeness of Adam. He [Allah] created him from dust, then said to him ‘Be’ and he was.”

(*Qur'an* 3: 59)

Allah (ﷻ), also said:

“O’ mankind, fear your Lord Who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women; and fear Allah through Whom you ask one another, and the wombs [i.e., fear Allah in regard to relations of kinship]. Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you.”

(*Qur'an* 4: 1)

Allah (ﷻ), also said:

“O’ mankind! Indeed We have created you from a male and a female and made you into peoples and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous. Verily, Allah is

All-Knowing, All-Aware.”

(*Qur'an* 49: 13)

Allah (ﷻ), also said:

“It is He Who created you from one soul and created from it its mate, that he might dwell in security with her.”

(*Qur'an* 7: 189)

“And surely, We have created you [O' mankind!] and given you [human] form; then We told the angels, ‘Prostrate to Adam’, so they prostrated except for *Iblees*, he was not of those who prostrated. [Allah] said: ‘What prevented you from prostrating when I commanded you?’ He [*Iblees*] said, ‘I am better than him, You created me from fire and created him from clay.’ [Allah] said, ‘Get down [you *Iblees*] from it [Paradise], for it is not for you to be arrogant therein. So get out, indeed you are of the debased.’ He [*Iblees*] said, ‘Allow me respite till the Day they are raised up.’ [Allah] said, ‘You are of those given respite.’ He [*Iblees*] said, ‘Because You have led me astray, surely I will sit in wait against them [human beings] on Your straight path. Then I will come to them from before them and behind them, from their right and from their left, and You will not find most of them as thankful ones.’ [Allah] said, ‘Get out of it [Paradise] disgraced and expelled. Whoever of them [mankind] will follow you, then surely I will fill Hell with you all.’

‘And O' Adam, dwell you and your wife in Paradise and eat from wherever you both wish, but approach not this tree lest you will be of the wrongdoers.’ But *Shaytân* [Satan] whispered to them to make apparent to them that which was hidden from them of their private parts; he said, ‘Your Lord did not forbid you this tree save that you become angels or become of the immortals.’ And he swore by Allah to them, ‘Verily, I am to you from among the sincere advisors.’ So he misled them with deception. And when they tasted of the

tree, their private parts became manifest and they began to cover themselves with the leaves of Paradise.

And their Lord called out to them [saying], ‘Did I not forbid you from that tree and tell you that *Shayṭân* is an open enemy to you.’ They [Adam and Eve] said, ‘Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves, and if You forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Your mercy, we will certainly be of the losers.’ [Allah] said, ‘Descend being enemies to one another. And for you on Earth is a place of settlement and enjoyment for a time.’ He said, ‘Therein you will live and therein you will die, and from it you will be brought forth [i.e. resurrected].’”

(Qur'an 7: 11-25)

Allah (ﷻ), also said:

“Thereof [the Earth] We created you, and into it We will return you, and from it We will bring you out once again.”

(Qur'an 20: 55)

Allah (ﷻ), also said:

“And indeed, We created man from dried clay of altered black mud. And the Jinn, We created before from the smokeless flame of fire. And [remember] when your Lord said to the angels, ‘I am going to create a human being from dried clay of altered black mud. So when I have fashioned him [in due proportion] and breathed into him [Adam] the soul which I created for him, then fall down to him in prostration.’ So the angels prostrated, all of them together, except *Iblees*, he refused to be among the prostrators.

He [Allah] said, ‘O’ *Iblees*, what is [the matter] with you that you are not with those who prostrate?’ [*Iblees*] said, ‘I am not the one to prostrate myself to a human being, whom You created from dried clay of altered black mud.’ [Allah] said, ‘Then you get out from here, for verily, you are cursed.

And verily, the curse shall be upon you till the Day of Recompense.' [Iblees] said, 'O' my Lord, give me then respite till the Day they will be resurrected.' Allah said: 'Then verily, you are of those reprieved till the Day of the time appointed.' [Iblees] said, 'O' my Lord, because you misled me, I shall indeed adorn the path of error for them [mankind] on the Earth, and I shall mislead them all. Except Your chosen slaves among them.' [Allah] said, 'This is the way which will lead straight to Me. Certainly, you shall have no authority over My slaves, except those who follow you of the *Ghaween* [the deviators]. And surely, Hell is the promised place for them all.'" (*Qur'an* 15: 26-44)

Allah (ﷻ), also said:

"And [remember] when We said to the angels, 'Prostrate to Adam.' They prostrated except *Iblees*. He said, 'Shall I prostrate to one whom You created from clay?' [Iblees] said, 'See this one whom You have honoured over me, if You give me respite till the Day of Resurrection, I will surely seize and mislead his offspring, all but a few.' [Allah] said, 'Go. And whosoever of them follows you, surely Hell will be the recompense of [all of] you; an ample recompense. And excite any of them whom you can with your voice [e.g. songs, music etc.], and assault them with your cavalry and your infantry, share with them in their wealth and children, and promise them.' But *Shaytan* promises them nothing but deceit. Verily, My slaves, you have no authority over them. And All-Sufficient is your Lord as a Guardian." (*Qur'an* 17: 61-65)

Allah (ﷻ), also said:

"And [remember] when We said to angels, 'Prostrate to Adam.' So they prostrated except for *Iblees*. He was of the

Jinn. He disobeyed the command of his Lord. Will you then take him and his offspring as protectors and helpers rather than Me while they are enemies to you? What an evil is the exchange for the polytheists and wrongdoers.'"

(*Qur'an* 18: 50)

Allah (ﷻ), also said:

"And indeed We made a covenant with Adam before, but he forgot and We found on his part no firm will-power. And [Remember] when We said to the angels, 'Prostrate to Adam,' and they prostrated all except *Iblees*, he refused. Then We said, 'O' Adam, verily this is an enemy to you and to your wife. So let him not get you both out of Paradise, so that you land in misery. Verily, you have a promise from Us that you will never be hungry therein nor naked. And you will not suffer from thirst therein nor from the sun's heat.' Then *Shayṭān* whispered to him saying, 'O' Adam, shall I guide you to the tree of Eternity and to a kingdom that never decays?' But they both ate from the tree, and so their private parts became manifest to them and they began to cover themselves with the leaves of the Paradise for their covering. And Adam disobeyed his Lord, and erred. Then his Lord chose him and turned to him with forgiveness and guided. He [Allah] said, 'Get you down from it [Paradise] all [to the Earth], being enemies to one another. Then if there comes to you guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance he shall neither go astray nor shall be distressed.'

'But whosoever turns away from My reminder, verily for him is a life of hardship and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection.' He will say, 'O' my Lord, why have you raised me up blind while I had sight?' [Allah] will say, 'Like this Our *Āyāt* [signs] came to you but you

disregarded them. And so this Day, you will be neglected.''"

(*Qur'an* 20: 115-126)

Allah (ﷻ), also said:

"Say, 'That this [Qur'an] is a Message Supreme, from which you turn away. I had no knowledge of the exalted assembly [of angels] when they were disputing and discussing [about the creation of Adam]. Only this has been revealed to me, that I am a plain Warner.' [Remember] when your Lord said to the angels, 'Truly I am going to create human being from clay.' So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him his soul created by Me, then you fall down to him prostration.' So the angels prostrated, all of them. Except *Iblees*, he was arrogant and was one of the disbelievers.'

He [Allah] said, 'O' *Iblees*, what prevents you from prostrating to one whom I have created with My Hands? Are you too proud or are you one of the high exalted?' [*Iblees*] said, 'I am better than him. You created me from fire and created him from clay.' Allah said, 'Then get out of it, for verily you are outcast. And verily, My curse is on you till the Day of Recompense. *Iblees* said, 'My Lord, give me then respite till the Day they are resurrected.' Allah said, 'Verily, you are of those allowed respite. Till the Day of the time appointed.' *Iblees* said, 'Then by Your might, I will surely mislead them all, except Your chosen slaves amongst the faithful and obedient.' Allah said, 'The truth is — and the truth I say, that I will fill Hell with you [*Shayṭān*] and those of the mankind that follow you, all together.' Say [O' Muhammad], 'No wage do I ask of you for this nor am I of the pretentious. This Qur'an is only a reminder to the worlds. And you shall certainly know the truth of it after a while.'"

(*Qur'an* 38: 67-88)

This is what has been mentioned of the story of Adam (ﷺ) in various places in the Qur'an. We have already mentioned details of this in our book of *Tafseer* and now here, we will mention what these above mentioned verses show. Also, we will mention the numerous hadiths related to this from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). We seek Allah for help.

Allah (ﷻ), spoke to the angels saying, "Verily, I am going to place successive authority [mankind generations after generations]." Then he informed them that He created them to make them succeed one after another, as He (ﷻ), said:

"And He is the One Who has made you successors on the Earth."

(Qur'an 6: 165)

He also said:

"And He will make you inheritors on the Earth."

(Qur'an 27: 62)

Thus Allah informed them about the creation of Adam (ﷺ) and his descendants. Then the angels requested more information and wisdom behind the creation. Their questioning however, was not as a result of any protest or jealousy for Adam (ﷺ) or his children as some people who explained these verses assumed.

The angels then said:

"Will you place therein one who will make mischief and shed blood."

(Qur'an 2: 30)

Qatâdah (رضي الله عنه) said that the angels knew this due to what they saw from the actions of Jinns who were before Adam (ﷺ).

'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما) said the Jinns existed for two thousand years before Adam (ﷺ) wherein they used to shed blood. Then Allah sent an army of angels who drove them away to distant islands. It is also said that the angels knew this because there is

nothing created from the Earth except that they are like this (i.e. shed blood, etc.).

The meaning of the verse, “And we glorify You with Your praise and sanctify You” is that we worship you always and none among us disobey you. If the purpose behind the creation of Adam and his children was to worship You, then here we are for that purpose day and night.

The meaning of the verse, “He said I certainly know what you do not know” is that Allah (ﷻ), had the full and perfect knowledge behind the creation of them, which they (i.e. angels) did not know. This knowledge, among other things, was that there would be Prophets, Messengers, righteous and martyrs among them.

Then Allah (ﷻ), informed them the excellence of Adam over the angels regarding knowledge by saying, “He taught Adam the names of everything”. Ibn ‘Abbas (رضي الله عنه) said that these names were of things that people know such as humans, animals, earth, lands, seas, mountains, camels, donkeys, and the like.

Rabee‘ said that it was the names of the angels that Adam (ﷺ) was informed. ‘Abdur-Rahmân ibn Zayd said it was the names of his children. However, the correct opinion among these is that Allah (ﷻ), taught Adam the names of all the creation and their functions, whether they are small or large, as per the opinion of Ibn ‘Abbas.

Imams Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Anas ibn Mâlik (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“The believers will gather on the Day of Resurrection and say to one another, ‘If we can find someone to intercede for us with Allah.’ They will come to Adam and say to him, ‘You are the father of mankind, Allah created you with His Hands and ordered the angels to prostrate to you and taught you the names of everything.’”

With respect to the verse, “Then He displayed them before the angels and said, ‘Tell me the names of these if you are truthful’”, Hasan al-Basri (may Allah be Merciful to him) said when Allah created Adam, the angels said that Allah does not create anyone except that we are more knowledgeable. Thus they were tested with this, hence the saying, “...if you are truthful”. We have mentioned other opinions regarding this in our book of *Tafseer*.

The angels said:

“Glory be to You, we have no knowledge except what You have taught us, verily You are the All-Knowing, All-Wise.”
(Qur'an 2: 31)

The meaning is that glory be to You that anybody could gain knowledge about anything except by You teaching them. This is mentioned in the following verse:

“They cannot encompass anything of His knowledge except what He wills.”
(Qur'an 2: 255)

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“He said, ‘O’ Adam, inform them of their names.’ Then when he had informed them, Allah said, ‘Didn’t I tell you that I know the unseen of the heavens and the Earth, and I also know what you reveal and what you conceal.’”
(Qur'an 2: 33)

The meaning is that Allah (ﷻ), knows the hidden just like He knows the open and apparent things.

It is said that the meaning of, “I also know what you reveal” was a refutation of the saying of the angels, “Will You place therein one who will make mischief on it”. Similarly, it is said that the meaning of, “... and what you conceal” is to refute the *Shayṭān* wherein he concealed his arrogance against Adam (ﷺ). This was the

opinion of Sa'eed ibn Jubayr, Mujâhid, as-Suddi, Dahhâk, ath-Thawri and also the opinion preferred by Ibn Jareer. Abu al-'Âliyah, Rabee' Ḥasan and Qatâdah said that the saying, "... and what you conceal" is refuting the saying of the angels that Allah will not create anyone except that they are more knowledgeable and noble than him."

The verse, "And remember when We said to the angels 'Prostrate before Adam.' They all prostrated except *Iblees*, he refused and was proud", shows the great honour to Adam from Allah when He created him with His Hand and breathed into him the soul. This is seen in the verse, "So when I have fashioned him in proportion and breathed into him the soul that I have created, fall down before him in prostration." Allah honoured Adam with four things: He created him with His Noble Hand, breathed into him the soul which He had created, ordered the angels to prostrate to him, and He taught him the names of all things.

"And We have indeed created you and then gave you human form, then We said to the angels, 'Prostrate before Adam.' So all prostrated to Adam except *Iblees* for he refused to be among those who prostrated. Allah asked him, 'What prevented you from prostrating when I commanded you?' He answered, 'I am better than him, You created me from fire, and created him from clay.'" (Qur'an 7: 11-12)

"And when your Lord said to the angels: 'I am going to create a human from sounding clay that is from shaped and mould mud. So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him the soul that I have created for him fall down in prostration to him.' So all the angels prostrated themselves except *Iblees* who refused to be among those who prostrated. Allah said, 'O' *Iblees*! Why did you not be among those who prostrated?' *Iblees* replied, 'I will not

prostrate before a human who You have created from clay or mould mud.' Allah said, 'Get out from here, for you are accursed. The curse will be upon you until the Day of Judgment.'" *(Qur'an 15: 28-35)*

"And when We said to angels, 'Prostrate before Adam.' They all prostrated except *Iblees* who said, 'Should I prostrate to one who You have created from clay?'"

(Qur'an 17: 61)

"And when We said to the angels, 'Prostrate to Adam.' They prostrated except *Iblees*; he was among the Jinn. He turned away from the order of his Lord. Will you then take him and his children as your friend instead of Me."

(Qur'an 18: 50)

Then *Shaytân* started giving reasons as to why he did not obey Allah. However, his reasons were worse than his original sin, as Allah (ﷻ), said in *Soorah al-Isrâ'*:

"And remember when We said to angels, 'Prostrate yourselves before Adam.' They all prostrated except *Iblees*. He said, 'Should I prostrate to one whom You created from clay?' He [further] said, 'See this one whom You have honoured above me, if You give me respite to the Day of Resurrection, I will surely mislead his offspring, all but a few. He [Allah] said, 'Go, and whoever of them follows you, surely Hell will be the recompense for you all — an ample recompense. And excite any of them whom you can, with your voice, and assault them with your cavalry and your infantry, share with them in their wealth and children, and promise them.' But *Shaytân* promises them nothing but deceit. Verily, My slaves, you have no authority over them. And All-Sufficient is your Lord as a Guardian."

(Qur'an 17: 61-65)

And He, (ﷺ), said in *Soorah al-Kahf*:

“And remember when We said to the angles, ‘Prostrate before Adam.’ They all prostrated except *Iblees*, who was one of the Jinn. He diverted from the order of his Lord. Will you then take him and his progeny as your friend than Me.”

(*Qur'an* 18: 50)

The meaning is that he disobeyed Allah wilfully and out of pride. It was due to his nature that misled him, since he was created from fire. Imam Muslim reported on the authority of 'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said:

“The angels were created from light and the jinn were created out of searing fire. And Adam was created from what has been described to you.”

Hasan al-Baṣri (may Allah be Merciful to him) said: “*Iblees* was never among the angels (or one of them) at any time.”

And Shahr ibn Haushab said: “He was one of the jinn. Then when they caused corruption on the earth, Allah sent to them an army of angels who killed them and made them flee to remote islands. *Shayṭân* (*Iblees*) was one of those, was captured and taken to the heavens, and thus he stayed there. Then when the angels were ordered to prostrate before Adam, he refused to do so as commanded.”

Allah said in *Soorah Sâd*:

“Remember when your Lord said to the angels, ‘I am going to create a human from clay. So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him the soul which I created for him, fall down in prostration before him. Then all the angels prostrated, all of them, except *Iblees*, he was arrogant and from among those who disbelieved. He [Allah] said, ‘O’ *Iblees*, what prevented you from prostrating before whom I created with My Hands? Are you haughty or are you of the

high ones?" *Iblees* said, 'I am better than him, You have created me from fire, and You created him from clay.' He [Allah] said, 'Then get out from here; for verily you are outcast. And verily My curse is on you till the Day of Recompense.' He [*Iblees*] said, 'My Lord, then give me respite till the Day the dead are resurrected.' He [Allah] said, 'Verily, you are of those allowed respite. Till the Day of the time appointed.' He [*Iblees*] said, 'By Your might, then I will surely mislead them all, except Your chosen slaves amongst them.' He [Allah] said, 'The Truth is — and the Truth I say, that I will fill hell with you and those of them [mankind] that follow you, together.''" (*Qur'an* 38: 71-85)

And He (ﷻ) said in *Soorah al-A'râf*:

"He [*Iblees*] said, 'Because You have led me astray, surely I will sit in wait against them [human beings] on Your straight path. Then I will come to them from before them and from behind them, and from their right, and from their left, and You will not find most of them as thankful ones.'"'

(*Qur'an* 7: 16-17)

So the happy people are those who oppose the *Shaytân* and the ruined are those one who follow him.

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Sabrah ibn Abi al-Fâkah (رضي الله عنه) that he heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say:

"Verily, the *Shaytân* lies in wait for the children of Adam on every path."

The Qur'anic exegetes differed concerning the angels who were ordered to prostrate before Prophet Adam (ﷺ). They differed as to whether they were all the angels, as is indicated by the verses or were they the angels on the earth only? The majority of the scholars held the first opinion.

Then context of the verses supports the opinion of the majority, as well as the following part of a hadith, "... and He made His angels to prostrate before him." The words here are also general. And Allah knows best.

Allah's saying to *Iblees*, "Get down from here" and also "Get out from here" are a clear indication that he was in the sky (heavens) and then Allah ordered him to descend from there and was degraded from the high status and position that he had gained due to his worship. In fact, his worship resembled that of the angels in obedience and worship. All this was taken away from him when he showed arrogance and jealousy, and disobeyed his Lord. Thus he was thrown down to the earth in utter humiliation and banishment.

Allah (ﷻ), ordered Adam and his wife to dwell in the Paradise and said:

"And We said, 'O' Adam, dwell you and your wife in the Paradise, and eat therefrom, freely as you please; and do not approach this tree, lest you become transgressors.' "

(*Qur'an* 2: 35)

And He said in *Soorah al-A'râf*:

"He [Allah] said, 'Get out from here disgraced and expelled. Whoever of them follows you, I will certainly fill Hell with you all. And O' Adam, dwell you and your wife in the Paradise, and eat from anywhere you may desire, but you both should not approach this tree, lest you become transgressors.' "

(*Qur'an* 7: 18-19)

Allah also said:

"And when We said to the angels, 'Prostrate yourselves to Adam.' They all prostrated except *Iblees*, he refused [to do so]. So We said to Adam: 'He is an enemy to you and your wife, so do not let him expel you both from the Paradise, so

that you will be disgraced. Verily, you have a promise from Us that you will never feel hungry therein nor be naked. And you will not suffer from thirst therein nor from the sun's heat.''" *(Qur'an 20: 116-119)*

The context of these verses indicates that the creation of Eve (Hawwa) took place before Prophet Adam entered Paradise and before he was ordered to dwell therein. This is seen in the following part of a verse, "O' Adam, dwell you and your wife in the Paradise." Ishâq ibn Yasâr mentioned this as well as this is the apparent meaning from the verses.

However as-Suddi reported from Abu Šâleħ and Abu Mâlik that Ibn 'Abbâs, Ibn Mas'ood and other Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) said:

"Iblees was expelled from Paradise and Adam was dwelt in it. He wandered around in it alone as he had no partner in whom he could seek comfort. Once when he slept and then woke up, he found a woman sitting near his head, who Allah had created from his ribs. Adam asked her, 'What are you?' She replied, 'A woman.' He further asked her, 'What are you created for?' She replied, 'So you can seek comfort in me.' The angels, who were well aware of the extent of the knowledge of Adam, asked him, 'What is her name O' Adam?' He said, 'Hawwa (Eve).' They asked, 'Why it was Hawwa?' Adam replied, 'Because she was created from a living thing.'"

Muhammad ibn Ishâq narrated from Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that she was created from the smallest rib of his left side while he was sleeping. Then that empty place was filled with flesh.

This opinion is confirmed by the following saying of Allah (ﷻ):

"O' mankind, fear Allah the One Who created you from a single soul, and from that soul He created his wife, and from

the pair of them scattered many men and women.”

(*Qur'an* 4: 1)

And Allah also said in another verse:

“It is He [Allah] Who created you from a single person and from him He created his wife in order that he may enjoy the pleasure of living with her. When he covered [had sexual relations with] her, she became pregnant and she carried it about lightly...”

(*Qur'an* 7: 189)

Imams Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Treat women nicely, for a woman is created from a rib, and the most curved portion of the rib is its upper portion. So if you try to straighten it, you will break it; and if you leave it, it will remain crooked, so treat women nicely.”¹

The Qur'anic exegetes differed regarding what is meant by the tree in the verse, “And do not approach this Tree”. It is said that it is referring to vine. This opinion was reported from Ibn 'Abbâs, Sa'eed ibn Jubayr and others. The Jews claimed that it is referring to wheat. Wahb ibn Munabbih said that its seeds are softer than butter and sweeter than honey. Abu Mâlik had the opinion that it was a palm tree. Ibn Jurayj reported that Mujâhid suggested it was a fig tree. This was also the opinion of Qatâdah and Ibn Jurayj. And Abu al-'Âliah said that the tree was such that if anybody ate from it, he excreted, and it was not befitting to excrete in Paradise.

All these different opinions are close. However, it should be noted that Allah did not specify it and left it vague, and had there been any benefit by knowing its details, He would have mentioned it for us, as He did with some other things in the Qur'an.

¹ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Anbiyâ'*, Bâb *Khalq Adam*; Muslim, *Kitâb ar-Ridâ'*, Bâb *Wâsiyah bin-Nisa*.

There is another difference of opinion concerning the whereabouts of the Paradise mentioned in the verse: was it in the heavens or on the earth? The majority of the scholars held the opinion that the Paradise referred to was in the heavens, called *Jannatul Mâ'wah* (the Garden of Abode). This is the apparent meaning indicated by the Qur'anic verses and other hadiths, such as Allah's saying, "And We said, 'O' Adam, dwell you and your wife in the Garden'." The letters *Alif* and *Lam* in the word *al-Jannah* (translated as Garden) are not for generality or for something that was mentioned previously. Rather, it is referring to something known in the minds, which is the *Jannatul Mâ'wah*. This is similar to what Moosa said to Adam (peace be upon them) during their dialogue, "Why did you expel us and yourself from Paradise."

Imam Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) and Hudhayfah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Allah will gather the people, so the believers will stand up when the Paradise will be brought nearer to them. They will come to Adam and say, 'O' our father, open for us the Paradise.' He will reply, 'Wasn't it the sin of your father which got you out of the Paradise?' "

In this hadith, there is strong evidence that it was *Jannatul Mâ'wah*.

Other scholars said that the Paradise that Adam entered was not the Paradise that has eternal life since he was ordered not to eat from a particular tree. He also slept in it and was expelled from it, and even *Shayṭân* entered it. All these factors contradict the opinion that it was *Jannatul Mâ'wah*. Numerous scholars, including Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما), held this opinion. It is also mentioned in the Torah.

So basically there are two opinions from the scholars regarding the Paradise into which Adam and Eve were entered. The first is that it was *Jannatul Mâ'wah*, the Paradise where people will be forever. The second opinion is that it was a Paradise created specifically for

Adam and Eve, and where they were put to trial. Those who held this second opinion are further divided as to where this Paradise was? Hasan al-Baṣri said that it was in the heaven since Allah descended them from it. The second opinion is that it was on the earth since Allah put them to trial by forbidding them from eating from a particular tree and this is the opinion of Ibn Yahya. At any rate, all this happened after *Iblees* was ordered to prostrate before Adam. And Allah knows best the truth.

The scholars who held the second opinion raised a question that needs to be answered. They said that there is no doubt that Allah expelled *Iblees* when he refused to prostrate and ordered him to get out of it. This command was not like other religious rulings where any disobedience could occur. That order was a preordained Divine decree that could not be refrained from or prevented from occurring. That is why Allah said, “Get out from here despised and expelled.” He (ﷻ) said in another verse, “Get down from here, it is not for you to be arrogant in it.” And in another verse, He said, “Get out from it as you are rejected one.”

Whatever may be the meaning of ‘from here’ or ‘from it’, whether it is the Paradise, or heaven or the status, it is quite clear that it was not possible for *Iblees* to be in those places after being expelled. Neither he could stay there or even pass through it.

They further said that it is clear from the contexts of the verses that *Iblees* whispered his evil thoughts to Adam and addressed him, saying:

“Shall I guide you to the tree of Eternity and to a dominion
that never decays?” *(Qur'an 20: 120)*

He also said, as quoted in the Qur'an:

“Your Lord only forbade you to approach this tree lest you
become angels or immortal. And he swore to them: ‘Truly I

am to you a sincere advisor.' Thus he led them on by delusion."

(*Qur'an* 7: 20-22)

It is said that these verses are clear that *Iblees* met them inside Paradise.

This point was answered by saying it is not impossible for him to have met them in Paradise while he was passing by, and not as a resident of it. He could have also whispered his evil thoughts to them while being at the gate of Paradise or from beneath the heavens. However, these answers require more discussion. And Allah knows best.

The scholars who held the opinion that the Paradise referred to in the verses was on the earth, supported their view with a number of evidences. Amongst these is a hadith reported by 'Abdullah, the son of Imam Ahmad, on the authority of Ubaiy ibn K'ab that he said:

"When death approached Adam, he desired for the grapes of Paradise. His sons went out to bring those for him. On their way, the angels met them and said, 'Where are you going, O' sons of Adam?' They said, 'Our father has desired to eat the grapes of Paradise.' The angels said to them, 'Go back, you have fulfilled his desire.' When they returned back to him, they found that he had already died. They washed his body, embalmed and shrouded him and Jibreel (ﷺ) led other angels in prayer upon him, and then they buried him. After that, the angels said to Adam's children, 'This is the procedure for burying your dead.'"

The scholars said that the point to note from this hadith is that if it was not possible for Adam's children to reach the Paradise in which Adam was living and desired to eat from its grapes, they would not have gone in search for it. So this clearly shows that this Paradise was on the earth and not in the heaven. And Allah knows best.

In the verse, "The *Shayjān* then made them slip from it," the 'it' refers to the Paradise. "... and took them out of what they were

in," is referring to him taking them out of the Divine favours and happiness to a dwelling of hardship, labour and misfortunes. This was only due to *Shayṭân*'s whisperings and how he had beautified his evil thoughts to them.

Allah said:

"The *Shayṭân* whispered to both of them in order to uncover that which was hidden from them of their private parts. He said: 'Your Lord did not forbid you this tree save that you should become angels or become of the immortals.'"

(*Qur'an* 7: 20)

What he meant was that if you both eat from this tree, you will become angels or immortals.

"And he [*Shayṭân*] swore to them, 'Verily, I am one of the sincere well-wishers for you both.'"
(*Qur'an* 7: 21)

Shayṭân even took an oath in order to emphasize what he was trying to whisper. As Allah said in another verse:

"But *Shayṭân* whispered to him saying, 'O' Adam, should I guide you to the tree of Eternity and to a dominion that will never decay?'"
(*Qur'an* 20: 120)

What *Shayṭân* meant was, "Should I take you to a tree, if you eat from it, you will obtain eternal bounties and you will have a dominion that will never come to an end or ever be destroyed." This was sheer deception and delusion, totally contrary to the reality.

The tree mentioned here could be the same tree about which Imam Ahmad reported a hadith on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Verily, there is a tree in Paradise in whose shade a rider would travel for a hundred years and the shade would still not end. That tree is the tree of eternity."

Allah said in *Soorah al-A'rāf*:

“So he misled them with deception. Then when they tasted of the tree, that which was hidden from them of their shame [private parts] became manifest to them and they began to cover themselves with the leaves of Paradise.”

(*Qur'an* 7: 22)

This is similar to another verse in *Soorah Tâ Hâ*, where Allah said:

“Then they both ate of the tree, and so their private parts became manifest to them, and they began to cover themselves with the leaves of Paradise.” (*Qur'an* 20: 121)

Eve ate from the tree before Adam did and it was her who incited Adam to eat also. And Allah knows best.

This seems to be supported by a hadith reported by Imam Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Were it not for the Children of Israel, the meat would never have become rotten. And were it not for Eve, a woman would not have cheated their husbands.”²

It is mentioned in the Torah that the one who incited Eve to eat from the tree was a snake. It had appeared to them in the best form. So Eve took its word and ate from it and gave some to Adam as well. There is no mention whatsoever in the Torah of Iblees being involved in this. At that, their eyes opened and they then knew that they were naked. They brought together leaves of figs and stitched them together in order to make a covering out of it.

However, the information that is contained in the Torah is incorrect and, in fact, it has been distorted when being translated.

² Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Anbiyâ'*, Bâb *Khalq Adam*; Muslim, *Kitâb ar-Ridâ'*, Bâb *Lao la Hawwa lam takhum...* Ahmâd, vol. 2, Pp. 304-315.

Translating from one language to another is not easy for everyone, especially if a person does not know Arabic well or did not comprehend the contents of the book. That is why there is a lot of distortion in what they translated, both in words and in meanings. The Qur'an shows clearly that Adam and Eve had clothes on them, as is mentioned in the following verse, "... removing from them their garments to expose their shame to each other." So something like this from the Qur'an is not rejected for anything that anybody else says.

Ath-Thawri reported that Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) said that the leaves referred to in the verse, "... and they began to cover themselves with leaves from the Paradise," were leaves of figs.

"And their Lord called out to them saying, 'Did I not forbid you that tree, and tell you, 'Verily the *Shayṭân* is an open enemy to you.' They said, 'Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves. If you do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we shall certainly be of the losers.'" (*Qur'an* 7: 22-23)

This verse shows that they acknowledged their mistake and repented from it. Similarly, it also shows their humility and submission, and the need to turn to Allah in times of crises. If these things prevailed in any of Adam's progeny, he would obtain the best in this world and in the Hereafter.

"He [Allah] said, 'Get down, being enemies to one another. And for you on earth is a place of settlement and enjoyment for a time.'" (*Qur'an* 7: 24)

This was addressed to Adam, Eve and *Iblees*. It is said that the snake is also meant to be included in this. They were ordered to descend from Paradise in a state of enmity and hostility.

There is a hadith that supports the opinion that the snake was with them. In this hadith, it is said that the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered to kill snakes and he said:

"We have not compromised with them since we had started our fight with them."³

In *Soorah Tâ Hâ*, Allah said:

"He [Allah] said, 'Descend you both from it altogether, you are enemies to each other.'"
(*Our'an* 20: 123)

In this verse, there is an order to two, who were Adam and *Iblees*. This is because Eve follows Adam and the snake follows *Iblees* in this.

Awzâ'ee said: "Adam stayed in Paradise for one hundred years." In another narration, it is said to be sixty years. He then said: "He cried over Paradise for seventy years, and cried over his sin for another seventy years, and cried over his son who was killed for forty years."

As-Suddi said: "Adam descended to earth in India. When he descended, the black stone also came with him along with a handful of leaves from Paradise. As a result of this, the tree of Teeb grew from them."

However, Ibn Abi Hâtim reported that Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) said: “Adam came down to earth and descended on Mount Safâ and Eve came down on Mount Marwah.”

'Abdur-Razzâq reported that Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (رضي الله عنه) said: "When Allah sent down Adam from Paradise to the earth, He taught him how to make everything and also provided him with the fruits of Paradise. So all these fruits of yours are from the fruits of Paradise, except that your fruits changes (spoils) and those in Paradise do not."

Imam Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

³ Ahmad, vol. 1, p. 230.

"The best day on which the sun rose was a Friday: on that day, Adam was created; and on that day he entered into Paradise; and on that day, he was taken out from it."

Imam Ahmad reported a similar hadith, again on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"The best day on which the sun rose was a Friday: on that day, Adam was created; and on that day he entered into Paradise; and on that day, he was taken out from it; and on that day, the Hour will be established."

Allah said:

"Then Adam received from his Lord Words. And his Lord pardoned him. Verily He is the One Who forgives, accepts repentance, the Most Merciful." (Our 'an 2: 37)

It is said that the words which Adam received from Allah are those mentioned in the following verse:

"They said, 'Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us, and have mercy on us, we shall certainly be of the losers.'" (Qur'an 7: 23)

Hadiths concerning the creation of Prophet Adam (ﷺ)

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Abu Moosa (رضي الله عنه), that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

"Allah created Adam from a handful that He had taken from all over the earth and thus the children of Adam came according to the earth. Thus amongst them there are white, red and black, and other colours mixed from these. Similarly, there are among them

those of bad and good nature and character, as well as soft and harsh and in between.”

Imam Ahmad also reported another hadith on the authority of Abu Moosa (ؓ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Allah created Adam from a handful that He had taken from all over the earth and thus the children of Adam came according to the earth. Thus amongst them there are white, red and black, and other colours mixed from these. Similarly, there are among them those of bad and good nature and character, as well as soft and harsh and in between.”⁴

As-Suddi reported from Ibn ‘Abbâs and Ibn Mas‘ood (may Allah be pleased with them) and some Companions of the Prophet that he (ﷺ) said: “Allah sent the angel Jibreel to the Earth to bring some of its soil. So the Earth said, ‘I seek refuge with Allah from you (i.e. angel Jibreel) decreasing anything from me.’ So Jibreel returned and said this to Allah, ‘O’ my Lord, the Earth sought refuge with you so I left it (and did not take anything from it).’

Then Allah, sent the angel Mikâeel for the same purpose. Again, the Earth sought refuge with Allah, and so the angel returned and said what Jibreel had said.

Then Allah, sent the angel of death for the same purpose. Again, for the third time, the Earth sought refuge with Allah. However, this time the Angel of death said, ‘I seek refuge with Allah, from returning to Him without carrying out His command.’ Then he took some soil from different parts of the Earth and not from just one place. Thus he took soil of different colours such as red, white and black. Hence the children of Adam came out from him in various colours.

⁴ Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi and Ibn Ḥibbân have recorded similar reports on the authority of Abu Moosa (ؓ). Imam Tirmidhi graded these reports as *hasan saheeh*.

Then He mixed water with the soil till it became mud. Allah (ﷻ), then said to the angels:

“Truly I am going to create man from clay. So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him his soul that I created, fall down in prostration to him.” (Qur'an 38: 71-72)”

Allah created Adam with His Hand such that the *Shaytân* should not become arrogant and thus He created him as a human, and made him remain as a body for forty years. Whenever the angels passed by him, they became frightened. The *Shaytân* was the most frightened among them. So whenever he passed by him, he would hit him, and the body would make a sound like the sound of pottery with a rattle. It is this incident that Allah (ﷻ), has mentioned in the verse:

“... from a clay, like pottery.” (Qur'an 55: 14)

Then when the body had remained for a period of time that Allah wanted it to remain before He breathed into it the soul, He said to the angels that when He breathes the soul into him (Adam), they should prostrate to him. When He breathed the soul into him, it entered the body from the head and Adam sneezed. The angels said to him to say *al-Hamdulillâh* (All Praise is to Allah). So Adam said *al-Hamdulillâh*. Then Allah said to him, “May your Lord [i.e. Allah] have mercy upon you.” And when the soul entered his two eyes, he saw the fruits of Paradise, and when the soul reached his stomach, he became hungry and desired for food. And before the soul reached his feet, he hastened to the fruits of Paradise. This is what is referred to in the verse:

“Mankind was created in haste.” (Qur'an 21: 37)

Then Allah (ﷻ), said:

“Then all the angels prostrated except the *Iblees* who refused to be among those who prostrated.”

(Qur'an 15: 30-31)

Then he mentioned the remainder of the hadith.

Some of the above mentioned parts of the story are proven by other hadiths. However the majority of it is taken from the Jewish sources.

Imam Ahmād reported on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“When Allah, created Adam, He left him for a while as long He wanted. The *Shayṭān* used to go around him. Then when he saw that he was hollow, he knew that he was a creature who would not be able to restrain himself.”⁵

Ibn Ḥibbān reported in his *Saheeh* on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“When Allah breathed the soul into Adam and it reached his head, he sneezed and said, ‘All praise is to Allah the Lord of the creation.’ Allah said to him, ‘May Allah have mercy upon you.’”

Hāfiḍh Abu Bakr al-Bazzār reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) and ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“When Allah created Adam, he sneezed and said, ‘All praise is to Allah.’ Upon this, Allah said to him, ‘May your Lord (Allah) have mercy upon you, O’ Adam.’”

‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azeez said:

“When the angels were commanded to prostrate, the first one to do so was the angel Isrāfeel. Thus Allah, rewarded him by writing the Qur'an on his forehead.”⁶

Hāfiḍh Abu Ya'lā reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

⁵ Ahmād, vol. 3, p. 152.

⁶ Ibn ‘Asākir reported this hadith.

"Verily, Allah created Adam from soil. He then made it into clay and left it for sometime. Then after that, He created from it Adam and shaped him, then He left him for some more time. Then when he was clay, like pottery, *Iblees* used to pass by him and say, 'You have been created for a great matter.'

When Allah, breathed into him the soul, the first thing it went through was his eyes. At this point, Adam (ﷺ) sneezed. Allah was merciful with him and said, 'May your Lord (Allah) have mercy upon you.' Then Allah said, 'O' Adam, go and greet those angels, and listen what they greet you back.' Then Adam went to them and greeted them saying, '*Assalámu alaykum*', upon which the angels said, '*Wa Alaykum as-Salám wa Rahmatulláhi wa barakátuhu.*' Allah said to Adam, 'This is your greeting and the greeting of your progeny.' Adam said, 'O' my Lord, what is my progeny?' Allah said, 'Choose one of My Hands.' Adam said, 'I choose Your Right.' Both Hands of Allah are His Right. Then when Allah stretched out His Hand, all of Adam's progeny were in His Palm. Some of the men had light shining out of their mouths. Adam was amazed at one man and so asked Allah, 'O' my Lord, who is this?' Allah said, 'Your son Dawood.' Adam asked, 'O' my Lord, how much lifetime did You give him?' Allah said, 'I gave him sixty years.' Adam said, 'O' my Lord, then increase his age by adding from my age such that he reaches hundred years.' So Allah granted him that and made him a witness to it.

Later when Adam had lived his lifetime, Allah sent the angel of death to him. Adam said to him, 'Isn't there still forty years left of my life?' The angel of death said, 'Didn't you give those forty years to your son Dawood?' Adam forgot that and denied it and so did his progeny."⁷

⁷ Hâfidh Abu Bakr al-Bazzâr, Tirmidhi and Nasâ'i reported this hadith. Tirmidhi graded the hadith as *hasan ghareeb*. Nasâ'i said it is a *munkar* hadith.

Tirmidhi reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“When Allah created Adam, He wiped over his back with His Hand, resulting in all the souls that were due to be born in his progeny until the Day of Judgement came out of his back. In front of every human eyes Allah made a shining light and put them before Adam. Adam said, ‘O’ my Lord, who are they?’ Allah replied, ‘They are your children.’ Adam then saw a man among them whose light attracted him. Adam asked, ‘O’ my Lord, who is this?’ Allah said: ‘He is a man who will be among the last of your children, and whose name will be Dawood.’ Adam asked Allah, ‘O’ my Lord, how many years have you written for him?’ Allah said, ‘Sixty years.’ Adam said, ‘O’ my Lord, grant him forty years more from my age.’ Then later when Adam’s life had come to an end, the angel of death came to him. Adam said to him, ‘Isn’t there another forty years of my life remaining?’ The angel replied, ‘Didn’t you give it to your son Dawood?’ Adam forgot the incident and denied it. Thereafter, his children also followed him in that.”⁸

Ibn Abi Hâtim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“... then Allah displayed them (i.e. Adam’s children) in front of him. Some of them were blind, some others were lepers and others had other sorts of diseases. Adam said, ‘O’ my Lord, why did you do this with my children?’ Allah said, ‘In order that they thank Me over My blessings.’”

⁸ Tirmidhi said regarding this hadith that it is *hasan saheeh*. Hâkim reported a similar hadith and said, “It is authentic as per the condition of Imam Muslim. Bukhari and Muslim did not report this hadith.”

Then Ibn Abi Hâtim mentioned the rest of the story about Prophet Dawood. A similar report has been recorded on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs also.

Imam Ahmâd reported on the authority of Abu ad-Darda' (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"When Allah created Adam, He struck his right shoulder and brought out from it white children. Then He struck his left shoulder and brought out from it black children. Then He said to those on his right, 'To Paradise and I do not care.' And He, said to those on the left, 'To Hell and I do not care.'"'

Ibn Abi ad-Dunya reported on the authority of al-Hasan who said:

"When Allah created Adam He brought out the people of Paradise from his right side and the people of Hell from his left side. They were then placed on the Earth, among them the blind, the deaf and those tried with hardships. Adam said, 'O' my Lord, why did you not make them all equal?' Allah replied, 'O' Adam, I like to be thanked.'"⁹

Abu Hâtim and Ibn Hibbân reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"When Allah created Adam and breathed the soul into him, Adam sneezed and said, '*al-Hamdu lillâh*.' Thus he praised his Lord with his Lord's permission. Then his Lord said to him, 'May your Lord (Allah) have mercy upon you O' Adam. Go to the angels who are sitting and greet them.' So Adam went and said, '*as-Salâmu alaykum*.' They replied, '*Wa alaykum as-Salâm wa rahmatullâh*.' Then Adam returned to his Lord and upon which Allah said, 'This is your greeting and the greeting of your children amongst themselves.' Then Allah closed His two Hands and said, 'Choose

⁹ 'Abdur-Razzâq has recorded a similar report on the authority of al-Hasan.

any of these you like.' Adam said, 'I choose the Right of my Lord and both are Right.' When Allah opened His Hand, the children of Adam were on them.' Adam said, 'O' my Lord, who are they?' Allah said, 'They are your children. The life span of each one of them is written between his two eyes.' There was a man who had the brightest shining light coming from him. He had forty years written to his life. Adam said, 'O' my Lord, who is this?' Allah said, 'This is your son Dawood.' Allah had written for him forty years. Adam said, 'O' my Lord, increase his life span.' Then it was said to him that is what is written for him. So Adam said, 'Then I give sixty years from my life to him.' So Allah said, 'You are granted that. Now, live in Paradise.' Then later he was taken out of Paradise and lived on Earth. He used to count the years of his life. After many years, the angel of death came to him, upon which Adam said, 'You have come too soon, one thousand years have been written for me.' The angel said, 'You are right, however you had given sixty years of your life to your son Dawood.' Adam forgot that incident and denied it and so did his progeny."

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Allah created Adam with a height of sixty *Dhira*' (a *Dhira*' is the distance from the elbow to the finger tips). He then said to him, 'Go and greet those angels and listen to what they greet you back because that will be your greeting and the greeting of your children.' Adam said, '*as-Salām Alaykum.*' They said, '*as-Salāmu 'Alaykum wa Rahmatullāh*', with the addition of '*wa rahmatullāh*.' So whosoever enters Paradise will enter it in Adam's image. Ever since that time, humans are reducing in their height."

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Adam's height was sixty *dhira*' and his width was seven *dhira*.'" Only Imam Ahmad reported this hadith.

Imam Ahmād reported on the authority of Ibñ ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (صلوات الله عليه وآله وسليمه) said:

“Verily, the first to deny was Adam.” He repeated this three times and then added, “When Allah created Adam, He stroked the back of Adam and brought forth all his children to exist till the Day of Resurrection. He displayed them in front of Adam. Among them, Adam saw a man who caught his eye. He asked, ‘O’ my Lord, who is this?’ Allah said, ‘This is your son Dawood.’ Adam said, ‘O’ my Lord, how much will he live?’ Allah replied, ‘Sixty years.’ Adam said, ‘O’ my Lord, add to his age sixty years.’ Allah said, ‘No, unless I increase him by reducing that much from your age.’ The life span of Adam was to be one thousand years. So then Allah increased the age of Dawood by forty years and recorded that incident and made the angels witness to that. Later, when the life span of Adam had come to an end, the angel of death came to him to take his soul. Adam said, ‘There are still forty years of my life remaining.’ It was then said to him, ‘Verily, you had given that to your son Dawood.’ Adam said, ‘No I did not.’ So then Allah, showed him the book and the angels bore witness to that incident.”

Imam Ahmād reported another hadith on the authority of Ibñ ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (صلوات الله عليه وآله وسليمه) said:

“Verily, the first to deny was Adam.” He repeated this three times and then added, “When Allah created Adam, He stroked the back of Adam and brought forth all his children to exist till the Day of Resurrection. He displayed them in front of Adam. Among them, Adam saw a man who caught his eye. He asked, ‘O’ my Lord, who is this?’ Allah said, ‘This is your son Dawood.’ Adam said, ‘O’ my Lord, how much will he live?’ Allah replied, ‘Sixty years.’ Adam said, ‘O’ my Lord, add to his age sixty years.’ Allah said, ‘No, unless you give him sixty years from your age.’ The life

span of Adam was to be one thousand years. So Allah increased the age of Dawood by forty years and recorded that incident and made the angels witness to that. Later, when the life span of Adam had come to an end, the angel of death came to him to take his soul. Adam said, 'There are still forty years of my life remaining.' It was then said to him, 'Verily, you had given that to your son Dawood.' Adam said, 'No I did not.' Allah then showed him the book and established the proof against him. He, (Allah), then completed the hundred years for Dawood and one thousand years for Adam."¹⁰

Tabarānī reported that Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: “When the verse containing the rulings pertaining to debts was revealed, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘Verily, the first to deny was Adam.’” He then mentioned the rest of the hadith.

Imam Mâlik said in his book titled *Mu'atta* that 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb (رضي الله عنه) was asked concerning the verse:

"And remember when your Lord brought forth from the loins Adam's children their offspring, and made them bear witness against themselves: 'Am I not your Lord?' They replied: 'Yes indeed'." *(Our'an 7: 172)*

'Umar replied: "I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) being asked about this verse. He replied:

'When Allah created Adam, He stroked his back with His Right Hand and took out from it some of his children. He then said, 'I have created all of them for Paradise, and they will be doing the deeds of the people of paradise.' Then He stroked his back again and took out the rest of his progeny, and said, 'They are created for Hell and will be doing the deeds of the people of Hell.' A

¹⁰ Imam Ahmad was the only one to record this hadith. In its chain is 'Ali ibn Zayd whose reporting of hadiths is weak.

Companion said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, then what is a deed for (if our places are already decided beforehand)?' The Prophet replied, 'When Allah creates a person for Paradise, He makes easy for him, and helps him to perform, the deeds of the people of Paradise. This is the case till the person dies on those deeds and then Allah enters him in Paradise due to those deeds. And when He, (ﷺ), creates a person for Hell, He makes easy for him the performance of the deeds of the people of Hell. This is done till the person dies on those deeds and then Allah enters him in the Hell due to those deeds.'"¹¹

All the above mentioned hadiths are proofs that Allah brought forth the children of Adam from his back. He then made them into two categories: the people of the right and the people of the left, and then said, "These [those on the right] are for Paradise and I do not care, and these [those people on the left] are for Hell and I do not care."

As for the part wherein Allah (ﷻ) makes the children of Adam witness against themselves and makes them affirm His *Tawheed*, this has not been reported in authentic hadiths. Also, explaining the verses of *Soorah al-A'râf* to mean this, cannot be conclusively affirmed. We have mentioned details regarding this in our *Tafseer* of the *Soorah* along with its hadiths and narrations, with their different wordings. Thus, whosoever would like more information on this should refer to that. And Allah knows best.

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Allah took the covenant from the back of Adam on the Day of 'Arafah. He brought forth from his back all his children who He

¹¹ Imam Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Abu Dawood and Nasâ'i have reported a similar hadith.

created, and spread them in front of Him. He, then spoke to them. This is referred to in the verse,

“... Am I not your Lord?” They said, ‘Yes indeed, we bear witness,’ lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, ‘Surely we were unaware of this.’ Or lest you say, ‘Our fathers before us ascribed partners to Allah, and we were only descendants after them, will You then destroy us for what those who have followed falsehood have done.’”

(Qur'an 7: 172-173)“

Majority of scholars held the opinion that Allah (ﷻ), took the covenant from his (Adam's) loins. These scholars backed their opinion with a narration reported by Imam Ahmad on the authority of Anas ibn Mâlik (رضي الله عنه). He said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“It will be said to a person in Hell on the Day of Judgement: ‘If you had all that is on the earth, would you exchange that for what you are in now?’ He will answer, ‘Yes.’ Allah will say to him, ‘I wanted from you what is lesser than that. I took the covenant from you when you were in the loin of Adam that you should not associate with Me anything. But you refused and joined associates with Me’.”

Abu Jâ'far ar-Râzi reported that Ubaiy ibn Ka'b (رضي الله عنه) said concerning the verse:

“And when your Lord brought forth from the loins of the children of Adam, their offspring...” *(Qur'an 7: 172)*

He (Ubaiy ibn Ka'b) said: “Allah gathered on that Day all of the children of Adam who were going to be created till the Day of Judgement. Allah created and shaped them, and then made them speak, so they spoke. He took a covenant and pledge from them and made them witness against themselves, ‘Am I not your Lord.’ They said, ‘Yes, indeed.’

He, (هُنَّا), then said to them, ‘I make the seven heavens and the seven earths and also your father Adam a witness against you that you should say on the Day of Judgement, ‘We did not know about this.’ You should know that there is no God worthy of worship except Me, and there is no Lord except Me. You should not associate partners with Me. I will send Messengers to you who will remind you of My Covenant and warn you of the consequences if you go against it. I will also reveal to you My Book.’

They replied, ‘We bear witness that you are our Lord and God, we have no Lord except You and we have no God except You.’ All of them affirmed their obedience on that day.

He, (هُنَّا), then raised their father Adam and he (Adam) looked towards them. He saw that among them were the wealthy and the poor as well as the beautiful and the ugly. Adam said, ‘O’ my Lord! If You had made Your slaves similar?’ Allah replied, ‘I like to be thanked.’ Adam also saw among them Prophets from whom bright light, like the lamps, was shining. All those Prophets were made to take another special covenant apart from the covenant made by all children of Adam. This was concerning their Prophetic missions, about which the Qur'an has indicated in the verse:

“And remember We took from the Prophets their covenants, and from you, Nooh, Ibraheem, Moosa, and from Jesus — the son of Mary. And We took from them a solemn covenant.” *(Qur'an 33: 7)*

Again, the All-High said:

“So remain steadfast to the religion that is the religion of natural disposition upon which Allah has created mankind. There is no alteration in Allah’s creation.” *(Qur'an 30: 30)*

And said:

“This is a warner among the warners of old.” *(Qur'an 53: 56)*

And informed that:

“And We did not find any respect for any covenant in most of them. And We found most of them wicked.”

(*Qur'an* 7: 102)

It is already been mentioned before that when Allah commanded the angels to prostrate to Adam, they all obeyed the Divine command. Only the *Iblees* refused to prostrate to him out of jealousy and enmity. As a result, Allah expelled him from the Divine presence and threw him on the earth, accursed and disgraced.”

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“When a son of Adam prostrates after reading a part of the Qur'an that contains a *sajdah* (prostration), Satan withdraws away. He says while crying, ‘Woe to me, the son of Adam was commanded to prostrate and he obeyed the command thus for him is Paradise; while I was commanded to prostrate but I disobeyed the command, thus for me is Hell.’”¹²

Scholars differed as to whether the ‘Paradise’ that Adam (ﷺ) and his wife Eve stayed in was in the heavens or on the Earth. We have already mentioned the details of this issue earlier in this book. Anyhow, they stayed there eating therefrom whatever they desired. Then when they ate from the tree that they were forbidden eating from, their covering was removed from them and they were sent down to Earth. We have already mentioned the various opinions concerning where they descended on earth.

Scholars also differed concerning the duration of stay of Adam and Eve in the Paradise. Some have said that the duration was few

¹² Ahmad, vol. 2, p. 443; Muslim, *Kitâb al-Eemân Bâb hayân itlâq ism al-kufîr 'alâ man-taraka aṣ-Ṣalâh*.

days from the worldly perspective of a day. Imam Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said: "Adam was created in the last hour of Friday."

Similarly, we have already seen the hadith:

"And on that Day (Friday) Adam was created and then on that day he was expelled from the Paradise."

If it were that the day in which Adam was created was the day in which he was expelled, where each day is like the day of ours, then it will be that he stayed only a part of it. This opinion does not seem credible. However, if his expulsion took place on a different day to the day of his birth, and if the length of those days was equal to six thousand years, as has been narrated by Ibn 'Abbâs, Mujâhid and Dâhhâk, then he lived there for a long period of time. Ibn Jareer also preferred this opinion.

Ibn Jareer said that it is known that he was created in the last hour of Friday, where one hour is equal to eighty-three years and four months. Adam (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) was kept in the state of just a body for forty years before the soul was breathed into him. Then he stayed in Paradise for forty-three years and four months before his expulsion. However, Allah knows best.

'Abdur-Razzâq reported that 'Atâ ibn Abi Rabah said: "When Adam was expelled to earth, initially his two feet were on the ground and his head was in the sky. Then later his height was reduced to sixty *dhira'*."¹³

However, this opinion does not seem to be credible because of the hadith we have mentioned above on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه). In this hadith, the Messenger of Allah (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

¹³ Tabari, vol. 17, Pp. 20, 21.

"Allah created Adam with a height of sixty *dhira* ' and ever since that time, the heights of children of Adam have been reducing."

Ibn Jareer reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that:

"Allah said to Adam, 'I have a sacred place on earth that is in line with My Throne. So go and make a house for Me there and circumambulate it like the angels circumambulate My Throne.' Then Allah sent an angel to Adam to show him the place and then he taught him the rites to be performed there. Then each step Adam took became an act of worship."

He also said that: "The first food Adam ate on the earth was when Jibreel (ﷺ) came to him with seven grains of wheat. Adam asked him, 'What are they?' Jibreel replied, 'They are from the tree which you were forbidden to eat from, but you ate from it.' Adam said: 'Then what should I do with them now?' Jibreel said, 'Sow them on the earth.' Then Adam sowed them as he was told. Each of those grains weighed more than one hundred thousand grains. Adam harvested them after they started to grow. He then ground them, kneaded them, then finally baked bread and ate from them. All this had taken a lot of effort and hard work. That is what the Qur'an has referred to in the verse:

"... so do not let him expel you both from the Paradise, thus leading you to suffer hardship." (Our 'an 20: 117)"

Adam and Eve's first clothes were from sheep wool. He separated them and then spun them. Afterwards, Adam (ﷺ) wove a Jubbah for himself and a suit of armour and scarf for Eve.

There is difference of opinion with regard to whether they had any children when they were in Paradise? It is said that they had their children on the earth. However, there is another opinion that they had children in Paradise. Cain and his sister were born when they were still living in Paradise.

Exegetes have mentioned that Adam (ﷺ) and Eve had one boy and one girl in each delivery. They were commanded that every son from a delivery should marry the sister of his brother with whom she was born. Similarly, every daughter from a delivery should marry the brother of her sister with whom he was born. It was not permissible for a son to marry his sister with whom he was born in the same delivery.

The Story of 2âbeel (Cain) and Hâbeel (Abel) — Two sons of Adam

Allah the All-High said:

“And recite to them the true story of the two sons of Adam, when they offered a sacrifice. It was accepted from one of them and not accepted from the other. The latter said, ‘I will kill you.’ The former said, ‘Allah accepts only from those who are pious. Yet, if you stretch out your hand against me to kill me, I shall not stretch out my hand to kill you, for I fear Allah, the Lord of the worlds. I prefer that you bear the burden of my sin and your sin, and so become an inhabitant of the Fire, that is the recompense of the transgressors.’ His soul then prompted him to kill his brother and he killed him, and became one of the losers. Then Allah sent a raven scratching into the earth to show him how to bury the corpse of his brother. He said, ‘Woe to me, was I not even able to do as this raven thus burying my brother?’ He became full of remorse.”

(*Qur'an* 5: 27-31)

We have already discussed this in our book of *Tafseer* in the explanation of *Soorah al-Mâ'idah* that will suffice. And all praise is to Allah, (ﷻ). We will mention here briefly what some Companions and those who followed them in righteousness have narrated.

Some Companions narrated that Adam married the son from one delivery to the daughter from another delivery. Hâbeel (Abel) wanted to marry the sister of Qâbel (Cain). Cain was older than him and his twin sister was more beautiful. So Cain wanted to keep his twin sister for himself. Adam (ﷺ) ordered Cain to marry her with Abel, but he refused to do so. Then he ordered them both to offer a sacrifice, and left for Makkah to perform Hajj.

After Adam had left, both offered their sacrifices. Abel, who was a shepherd, offered a fat lamb. Cain offered a bundle of the worst crops he had grown. A fire came down and destroyed the sacrifice of Cain, leaving the sacrifice of Abel untouched. Cain became angry and threatened Abel, “I will kill you so that you do not marry my sister.” Abel replied, “Allah accepts only from those who fear Him.”

In another version of the incident, ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr (رضي الله عنه) said: “By God, the victim (Abel) was the stronger of the two, however, obedience restrained him from stretching his hand out to Cain to kill him.”

Abu Jâ‘far al-Bâqir mentioned that Adam was present and saw each of them offer their sacrifices and also saw the acceptance from Abel. Cain said to Adam (ﷺ), “Abel’s offering was accepted only because you prayed for him and did not pray for me.” Then he threatened his brother regarding the matter they had a dispute in.

One night, Abel was late after tending his flock. So Adam (ﷺ) sent Cain to see what happened to him. When Cain went looking for him, he found him and there he said, “Your offering was accepted, but mine was not.” Abel replied, “Allah accepts only from those who fear Him.” This made Cain angry and hit his brother with the iron he held in his hand thus killing him. There is another opinion that suggests that Cain killed Abel by throwing a rock on his head while he was sleeping. In a third version of the incident, it is said that he strangled him to death and bit him like a beast.

Hâbel's (Abel) response to Qâbel (Cain) when the latter threatened him is a sign of his noble characters and piety. His response was,

"Yet, if you stretch out your hand against me to kill me, I shall not stretch out my hand to kill you, for I fear Allah, the Lord of the worlds." (Our'an 5: 28)

He restrained himself from responding with the same threat that his brother made towards him.

It is authentically reported by both, Bukhari and Muslim that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"When two Muslims confront each other with their swords, then the murderer and the murdered both are in Hell." The Companions asked, "O' Messenger of Allah, we understand the case of the murderer but what about the victim?" The Prophet said, "Because he was also keen to kill the other man."¹⁴

The verse:

"I prefer that you bear the burden of my sin and your sin, and so become an inhabitant of the Fire, that is the recompense of the transgressors." (Qur'an 5: 29)

— means that I do not want to kill you even though I am stronger than you. I want you to bear the sin of murdering me with the sins of whatever you have done previously. Mujâhid, as-Suddi, Ibn Jareer and others held this opinion.

This should not be misunderstood to mean that the sins of a murder victim transfer automatically to the murderer, as some people may understand it. Ibn Jareer has mentioned that there is consensus contrary to this erroneous understanding.

¹⁴ Bukhari, Kitâb al-Fitan Bâb idha iktâqa al-Musalmân bi sayfihimâ; Muslim, Kitâb al-Fitan, Bâb idha tawjîha al-Musalmân bi savfihima.

It should be noted here that there is a hadith attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said, “The murderer does not take any sin from the murdered.” This is not a hadith since it has no basis absolutely and no chain. No compiler of hadith recorded it. It is neither an authentic hadith, nor *hasan* nor even any weak one.

However, it may happen with some people on the Day of Judgement that when the good deeds of the murderer could not recompense for the crime of murder he had committed, the murder victim may demand that his sins be transferred to the murderer. This will happen in all types of crimes and injustices a person commits against others. Without doubt, murder is one of the greatest crimes. And Allah knows best. All praise is to Allah, we have mentioned this in detail in our book of *Tafseer*.

Imams Ahmad, Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi have reported the following on the authority of Sa‘d ibn Abi Waqqāṣ (رضي الله عنه) who was present at the time of the *fitnah* which took place when the Caliph ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān (رضي الله عنه) was murdered. He said: “I bear witness that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

‘There will be *Fitnah* very soon. The one who sat down during it will be better than the one who is standing. Similarly, the one who is standing will be better than who was walking. And the one who is walking will be better than the one who is running.’ Sa‘d (رضي الله عنه) said, ‘Tell me what I should do if someone enters my home and wants to kill me?’ The Prophet replied, ‘Be like the son of Adam.’”

In another version of the same hadith, it says: “Be like the better of the two sons of Adam.”¹⁵

¹⁵ Ahmad, vol. 1, p. 169; Abu Dawood, *Kitāb al-Fitan*, *Bāb an-Nahie an as-Sa‘ee fi al-Fitnah*. Imam Muslim, Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi and Ibn Mājah all reported this hadith on the authority of Abu Dharr.

Imam Ahm̄ad reported on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

"No person is killed unjustly except that the first son of Adam bears a part of that sin. This is because he was the first to kill."¹⁶

The historians have mentioned that Adam (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) became very sad when his son Hâbeel (Abel) was killed. It is asserted that he expressed this in some poems. However, it cannot be conclusively said that Adam said these poems.

Mujâhid says that the punishment of Qâbel (Cain) for murdering Abel was brought forward to the day he killed his brother. This was in the form of his shanks being joined against his thighs. Also, his face was turned towards the sun such that it moved wherever the sun moved. All this was as a punishment for his sin, his transgression and envy against his brother and parents.

It has been reported that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

"No sin is able to hasten the Divine punishment in this world, though one has to suffer for his sin in the Hereafter, than the sin of rebellion and the breaking of family ties."¹⁷

From what I (i.e. Ibn Katheer) have read from the book of the people of the scripture, what they claim to be the Torah, that Allah, (عز وجل) postponed his punishment and granted him a respite. He resided in a land called *Nawad* in the east of 'Adn, which is now called *Qineen*. He had a son called Khanookh (Enoch). Subsequently, Enoch had a son called 'Indar, and he had a son called Mehwâeel, who in turn had a son called Methushael, who was the father of

¹⁶ Ahm̄ad, vol. 1, p. 383. A number of hadith compilers save Abu Dawood reported this, also narrated similarly by 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âs, and Ibraheem Nakha'ee.

¹⁷ Ahm̄ad, vol. 5, Pp. 36, 38.

Lamech. The latter married two women called ‘Adah and Sillâ. ‘Adah gave birth to a son called Ibel who was the first to live in tents and obtained wealth. She also had another son called Nobel, the first one to play the harp and flute. Sillâ gave birth to a son called Tubalqeen who was the first to make tools out of bronze and iron. She also gave birth to a daughter called N’ama.

It has also been reported in the same narration that Adam (ﷺ) had a third son who was named by his wife as Sheeth (Seth). She said that he was a recompense for Hâbeel (Abel) who was killed by Qâbel (Cain). Seth had a son called A’noosh (Enos).

It is said that when Seth was born, Adam was one hundred and thirty years old, and he lived another eight hundred years after that. When Enos was born, Seth was one hundred and sixty five years old. He lived another eight hundred and seven years afterwards. He had other sons and daughters apart from Enos.

Enos had a son called Qeenân (Kenan) when he was ninety years old. He then lived another eight hundred and fifteen years after that and had other sons and daughters also.

When Kenan was seventy years old, he had a son called Mahlâeel. After that, he lived another eight hundred and forty years and had other sons and daughters. At the age of sixty-five, Mahlâeel had a son called Yared. He then lived for another eight hundred years after that and had other children also.

When Yared reached the age of one hundred and sixty-two, Enoch was born. After that, he lived for another eight hundred years and had other children.

Khanookh (Enoch) at the age of sixty-five had Methushelakh. He then lived for eight hundred years and had other children. When Methushelakh reached the age of one hundred and eighty-seven years, he had his son Lamech. He lived for another seven hundred and eighty-two years and had other children.

Lamech had a son called Nooh (Noah) at the age of one hundred and eighty-two. He lived afterwards for five hundred and ninety five years and had other children. Nooh had sons called Shâm, Hâm and Yâpheth when he was five hundred years old. This is what is mentioned in their book they call the Torah.

The claim that the above-mentioned details were revealed by Allah is certainly questionable. Many scholars found many faults with the Torah and have challenged the claim. It is obvious that they are added in the Torah, possibly as an explanation of the details. There are many errors in it and we will mention these in their appropriate places with the Will of Allah.

Imam Abu Jâ'far ibn Jareer has mentioned in his book of history that Eve gave birth to forty children in twenty pregnancies. Ibn Ishaq mentioned this along with the details of their names. And Allah knows best. In another version, it is suggested that she had one hundred and twenty pregnancies with one boy and one girl in every pregnancy. Oldest of them were Qâbeel (Cain) and his sister Qaleemâ while the youngest of them were 'Abdul Mugheeth and his sister Umm ul-Mugheeth.

From them, mankind multiplied and scattered throughout the land. They grew in their number and spread farther and farther in the land.

Allah the Exalted says:

“O’ mankind, fear your Lord Who has created you from one soul, and out of that soul He created his spouse, and from them both He scattered many men and many women.”

(*Qur'an 4: 1*)

Historians have mentioned that Adam (ﷺ) lived till he saw four hundred thousand of his children and grandchildren before he died. And Allah knows best.

The All-High says:

“He [Allah] is the One Who created you from a single soul, and from that soul created his wife, in order that he might seek comfort in her. And when he covers her, she bore a light burden and carried it about. But when it became heavy, they both prayed to Allah, their Lord, saying, ‘If You grant us a righteous child, indeed we shall be grateful.’ But then when He granted them a righteous child, they ascribed partners to Him in that which He granted them. But Allah is Exalted, High above all that they ascribe to Him.”

(Qur'an 7: 189-190)

We see in these verses that Adam (ﷺ) is mentioned first because he is the father of mankind. The speech is then generalised. It does not refer to Adam and Eve.

There is a hadith narrated by Samrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) supposedly said:

“When Eve used to deliver, her children used to pass away. Then *Iblees* visited her and said, ‘If you name the next son ‘Abdul Harith, he will live.’ Consequently, Eve named her next child ‘Abdul Harith and he survived. So this is from the things that *Shayṭân* told and ordered her with.”

Tirmidhi, Ibn Jareer and Ibn Abi Ḥâtim reported this hadith. However, this hadith is weak and at best it can be said it is the view of a Companion and not the speech of the Prophet (ﷺ). This is also supported by the fact that Hasan al-Baṣrî mentioned an explanation contrary to this and if he thought it was authentic, he would not have gone against it.

Also, it is a known fact that Allah created Adam and Eve in order that they be the parents of all mankind and to have many sons and daughters. So if this is the case, how can the hadith mentioned

above be true which says the Eve's children used to pass away at a young age?

So what we can say conclusively is that the narration is not the speech of the Prophet (ﷺ) but rather the opinion of a Companion. And Allah knows best. All praise is to Allah, we have mentioned more details about this in our book of *Tafseer*.

Ibn Hibbân reported in his book *Saheeh* on the authority of Abu Dharr (رضي الله عنه) who asked the Prophet (ﷺ):

"O' Messenger of Allah! How many Prophets were there?" He replied, "One hundred and twenty-four thousand." I said, "O' Messenger of Allah! How many Messengers were there out of them?" He replied, "Three hundred and thirteen, a large number." I said, "O' Messenger of Allah! Who was the first of them?" He replied, "Adam." I said, "O' Messenger of Allah! Was he a Prophet and Messenger?" He said, "Yes, Allah created him with His Hand, then he breathed into him the soul which He created for him, then He gave him a perfect shape."

It is mentioned in a hadith, reported by Bukhari and Muslim, concerning the Night Journey of the Prophet (ﷺ) that when the Prophet passed by Adam on the first heaven, Adam (رضي الله عنه) said to him: "Welcome to the pious son and pious Prophet." The Prophet then said:

"There was a huge crowd on his right side, and similarly, on his left side there was a huge crowd. When he looked on his right side, he smiled; and when he looked on his left side, he cried. The Prophet (ﷺ) then said, "O' Jibreel, what is the matter?" He replied, "He is Adam and they are the souls of his children. When he looked on his right, who were the people of Paradise, he smiled; but when he looked on his left, who were the people of Hell, he cried."

As regards the hadith: "... then I passed by Yusuf and he was given half of beauty", the scholars said that it means Yusuf was given half of the beauty that Adam was given. This seems to be a reasonable opinion because Allah (ﷻ) created Adam and shaped him with His Noble Hand, and then He breathed into him the soul that He created for him. This being the case, He, (ﷻ), must have created Adam in the best shape and beauty.

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"When Allah created Paradise, the angels said, 'Our Lord, let us have it, because You have created the world for mankind, in which they eat and drink.' Allah said to them, 'By My Glory and Splendour, I shall not make the pious progeny of one whom I have created with My Hand to be like one whom I said, 'Be,' and he came into existence.'"

The Death of Adam and his son Sheeth (Seth)

Sheeth means the Gift of Allah. He was named so because he was recompensed for Hâbeel (Abel) after he was killed.

Abu Dhar (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Allah sent down one hundred and four Scriptures. Of those, fifty were upon Sheeth."

Muhammad ibn Ishâq said: "When death approached Adam, he covenanted with his son Sheeth and taught him the hours of the day and night, and the acts of worship to be performed in those hours. He also informed him about the flood that was going to come after him."

Ibn Ishâq also said: "It is said that the lineage of all mankind goes back to Sheeth and that all other of his children passed away without leaving any lineage."

And Allah knows best.

When Adam (ﷺ) died, and it was Friday, the angels came to him with embalmment and shroud from Allah from the heaven and they consoled his son Sheeth. Ibn Ishâq said that the sun and moon eclipsed for seven days and seven nights.

Imam Ahîmad's son 'Abdullah reported on the authority of Yahya ibn Damrah as-Sâ'di who said: "I saw a learned man teaching in Madeenah, so I enquired about him." People said, "He is Ubaiy ibn Ka'b." Ubaiy said, "When death approached Adam (ﷺ), he said to his sons, 'My sons, I desire for the fruits of Paradise.' They all went in search for it. The angels met them on their way. They were carrying his shroud and embalmment, as well as tools for digging and instruments for measurement. They asked them, 'O' children of Adam, where are you going, and what are you searching for?' They replied, 'Our father is ill and desired the fruits of Paradise.' The angels said, 'Go back to your father as he is about to die.' The angels came to Adam. Then when Eve saw them, she recognized them as having come to take the soul of Adam and then held onto Adam. Adam said, 'Stay away from me as I was born before you. Leave me alone with the angels of my Lord, (ﷺ).' They took out his soul, washed and shrouded his body, and embalmed him. Then they prayed on him, dug a grave and placed him in it and filled it with the earth. Then they said, 'O' children of Adam, this will be your tradition regarding burial'."¹⁸

As regards where was Adam (ﷺ) buried, there are different opinions from scholars concerning the location of the grave. The

¹⁸ Ahmad, vol. 5, p. 136.

widespread opinion is that he was buried in India near the mountain where he descended. As per other opinion he was buried on the mountain of Abu Qubays in Makkah. It is also said that at the time of the flood, Nooh (ﷺ) took him and Eve in a coffin and buried them in *Bayt al-Maqdis* in Jerusalem. Ibn Jareer held this last opinion.

Ibn ‘Asâkir reported that some people said that Adam’s head is near Ibraheem’s mosque while his feet are near the rocks of *Bayt al-Maqdis*. It is also said that Adam died after Eve by one year.

As regards how long did Adam live, we have mentioned earlier a narration on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs and Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with them). In it, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Adam’s age was written in the Preserved Tablet (*al-Lauh al-Mâkhoodeh*) as one thousand years.”

This does not contradict what is in the Torah that he lived for nine hundred and thirty years. This is because the Jews distorted the teachings in the Torah while what we have is the truth that has been protected from any distortion.

However, if we assume that Adam’s age mentioned in the Torah is free from distortion, even then we can combine between that and the authentic hadith. What is mentioned in the Torah is referring to Adam’s stay on the earth. This is nine hundred and thirty years of the solar calendar, and which makes nine hundred and fifty seven years of the lunar calendar. The remaining forty-three years, in order for his age to reach one thousand years, is his period of stay in Paradise.

Ibn ‘Asâkir reported that ‘Atâ al-Khurasâni said: “When Adam died, all creation cried over him for seven days.”

After the death of Adam, his son Sheeth took charge of his mission. As reported by Ibn Hâibbân on the authority of Abu Dharr (رضي الله عنهما), Sheeth became a prophet and fifty scriptures were revealed to him.

Prior to his death, Sheeth entrusted the mission to his son Enos, who carried it out after him. Then after him, his son Kenan and then his son Mahlâeel took the charge of the mission. Mahlâeel is the one whom the Persians claimed to be the King of Seven Regions. He was the first to cut trees, build cities and great castles. He built the city of Babylon and the farthest city of Soos (Sus) a city in Khuzistân where lies the grave of the Prophet Daniâl (Daniyal). He overpowered the *Iblees* and his army, and then scattered them into mountains and valleys, and killed a huge number of them. He had a great crown, delivered sermons to people, and his rule lasted for forty years.

After his death, his son Yared took the charge of his mission, and then his son Enoch (Khumookh), who is known as Idris.

Chapter Two

The Story of Idris (Enoch) (ﷺ)

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And mention in the Book, Idris, he was a truthful Prophet.
And We raised him high in the heaven.” (*Qur'an 19: 56-57*)

Allah (ﷻ), praised Idris (Enoch) in this verse and described him as Prophet and Truthful. As many of genealogists have mentioned, our Prophet's ancestral line meets him.

After Adam and Sheeth (Seth), he was the first man to be sent as a Prophet, peace be upon all of them.

Ibn Ishâq said that he was the first man to write with a pen. He was born while Adam (ﷺ) was still alive and lived with him for three hundred and eight years of his life.

Allah (ﷻ), said, “And We raised him high in the heaven.” The explanation of this verse has been mentioned in Bukhari and Muslim. The hadith is concerning the Night Journey of our Prophet (ﷺ). The hadith says, “The Prophet passed by him on the fourth heaven.”

Ibn Jareer reported on the authority of Hilâl ibn Yasâf who said, “Ibn ‘Abbâs asked Ka'b (may Allah be pleased with them all) in my presence, ‘What is the meaning of the verse, ‘And We raised him high in the heaven?’’ Ka'b replied, ‘Allah revealed to Idris, ‘I would raise for you every day the same amount of the deeds as of all Adam's children.’’ Perhaps what he meant was referring to the deeds of his time only. So Idris wanted to increase his deeds. When a friend from among the angels visited him, Idris said to him, ‘Allah has revealed to

me such and such, so could you please speak to the angel of death so that I could increase my deeds.' The angel then carried him on his wings and went up into the heaven. When they passed by the fourth heaven, they met the angel of death, who was descending. The angel spoke to him regarding what Idris had spoken to him before. The angel of death said, 'Where is Idris?' He replied, 'He is upon my back.' The angel of death said, 'How amazing, I was sent to seize his soul and was told to meet him in the fourth heaven. I kept thinking how I could seize it in the fourth heaven when he is on the earth?' Then he took his soul out. That is what is meant in the verse, "And We raised him high in the heaven"."

Imam Bukhari said that Ibn Mas'ood and Ibn 'Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with them all) said that Ilyâs is Idris. Their evidence is from the hadith concerning the Night Journey wherein it is stated that:

"When the Prophet (ﷺ) passed by him, he said, 'Welcome to the pious brother and pious Prophet.' We see that the Prophet (ﷺ) did not say as Adam and Ibraheem said, 'Welcome to the pious Prophet and pious son'."

Thus, Ibn Mas'ood and Ibn 'Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with them) say were he to be in his lineage, he should have said as they both said.

This evidence is not conclusive because it could be that the narrator did not remember it properly or he may have said that to show his humility and affection. Similarly, there could be other explanations for its invalidity as evidence.

Chapter Three

The Story of Nooh (Noah) (ﷺ)

*H*e is Nooh ibn Lamech ibn Methuselah ibn Idris ibn Yared ibn Mahaleel ibn Qeenân (Kenan) ibn Enos ibn Sheeth (Seth) ibn Adam (peace be upon them all).

Nooh (Noah) (ﷺ) was born after one hundred and twenty-six years of the death of Adam (ﷺ) as Ibn Jareer and others have mentioned.

According to what we have mentioned from the Torah, there were one hundred and forty-six years between the death of Adam and birth of Nooh (Noah). Ibn Hibbân reported in his book *Ṣaheeh* on the authority of Abu Umamah (رضي الله عنه) that a man asked the Prophet (ﷺ):

“O’ Messenger of Allah, was Adam a Prophet?” The Prophet replied, “Yes, a prophet who Allah spoke to.” The man then asked, “Then how much time was there between the two of them?” The Prophet replied, “There were ten *Qarn* (centuries) between the two of them.”¹⁹

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“There were ten *Qarn* (centuries) between Adam and Nooh, all lived according to Islam.”

If what is meant by a *Qarn* is one hundred years, as mentioned in the hadith, then there must be at least one thousand years between them

¹⁹ This hadith is narrated according to the conditions of Imam Muslim.

since there are ten *Qarn* between them. However, a *Qarn* could be more than this. This is supported by the fact that Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) said that those ten centuries are referring to when the people lived according to Islam. So there probably were later centuries wherein people did not live according to the Islamic teachings and which required a Messenger to be sent.

However, if the meaning of *Qarn* is a generation of people, as is sometimes mentioned in the Qur'an, then there could be thousands of years between Adam and Nooh (peace be upon them). This is because the generations of people who were before Nooh (ﷺ) used to live for a long period of time. The Qur'an says:

“And how many generations [Quroon] have We destroyed after Nooh [Noah]?...”
(Qur'an 17: 17)

In another verse it says:

“Then after them, We raised up another generation [Qarn].”
(Qur'an 23: 31)

Also, the verse:

“... And many generations [Quroon] between them.”
(Qur'an 25: 38)

And lastly, the verse:

“... And how many generations [Qarn] have We destroyed before them.”
(Qur'an 19: 98)

The Prophet (ﷺ) used the word *Qarn* to mean a generation. The hadith says: “The best of the generations is my generation...”

Anyhow, it is known that Allah (ﷻ), sent Nooh (ﷺ) when his people started worshipping idols and false gods, and treaded the path of darkness and ignorance. Thus Allah sent him as a mercy for His slaves. Nooh was the first Messenger to be sent upon this earth. This

fact is seen in a hadith concerning the situation of the people on the Day of Judgement and when they will go to certain Prophets and Messengers in order to start the Judgement of that Day.

Ibn Jubayr and others have mentioned that the people he was sent to were called Banu Râsib.

The scholars differed regarding the age of the Prophet Nooh (Noah) when he was sent as a Messenger. A number of opinions were put forward. Among these are that he was fifty years old, or three hundred and fifty, and even four hundred and eighty. Ibn Jarcer mentioned these and stated that all three were narrated from Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) at some point or another.

Allah (ﷻ), mentioned his story and the story of his people in a number of verses in the Qur'an. He also mentioned how He sent a flood to those who rejected his call. Similarly, He mentioned how He saved Nooh and those on his Ark. All these events are mentioned in different chapters of the Qur'an. Some of these are in *Soorahs: al-A'râf, Yunus, Hood, al-Anbiyâ', al-Mu'minoon, ash-Shu'arâ', al-Ankaboot, as-Saffât, al-Qamar*, and the whole *Soorah Nooh*. Now, we will mention these.

Allah (ﷻ), said in *Soorah al-A'râf*:

"And We sent Nooh [Noah] to his people, and he said, 'O' my people, worship Allah, you have no God other than Him. Truly I fear for you the punishment of a Great Day.' The leaders of his people said, 'We see that you are in plain error.' He said, 'O' my people, there is no error in me. However, I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds. I bring you the messages of my Lord, and I advise you, and I know from Allah what you do not know.' Do you wonder that an admonition came to you from your Lord by a man from among you in order that he may warn you, and that you may fear Allah, and that you may find mercy?" But they

rejected him. So We rescued him and those with him in the Ark and We drowned those who had disbelieved in Our Signs. Indeed, they were a blind people.” (*Qur'an* 7: 59-64)

And said in *Soorah Yunus*:

“And relate to them the story of Nooh [Neah]. He said to his people, ‘O’ My people, if my stay amidst you and my reminding you the signs of Allah has become hard on you, then I have put my trust in Allah. So gather your plan and get your associates together. Thereafter let not your plan be ambiguous upon you, then pass your judgement against me and give me no respite. Then if you turn away, I have not asked you for any reward. For my reward is only from Allah and I have been commanded to be of those who are Muslims [i.e. have submitted themselves].’ But they rejected him. So We rescued him and those with him in the Ark and made them inherit the earth. And We drowned those who rejected Our Signs. See then what was the end of those who were warned [and then rejected the warnings].”

(*Qur'an* 10: 72-73)

Again in *Soorah Hood*, Allah (ﷻ) said:

“And We have sent Nooh to his people and he said, ‘I am a clear warner to you, that you worship none but Allah. Indeed I fear for you the punishment of a painful Day.’ But the leaders of the disbelievers from among his people said, ‘We do not see you except a man like ourselves, and we see none following you except the most low of us. Nor do we think that you have any superiority over us, rather we think you are liars.’

He said, ‘O’ my people, inform me, if I have a clear sign from my Lord and He has bestowed His Mercy upon me, which has been obscured from your sight, shall we compel

you to accept it when you are averse to it. O' my people, I do not ask of you any reward for this, my reward is only with Allah. I shall not drive away those who believe, indeed they shall meet their Lord, but I see you are ignorant people. O' my people, who would save me from Allah if I drive them away? Will you then not understand? And I do not say to you that I possess the treasures of Allah, or that I know the Unseen, or that I am an angel. Nor do I say to those your eyes despise that Allah will not grant them any good; Allah knows best what is in their souls, and if I did that I would be among the unjust.'

They said, 'O' Nooh, certainly you have disputed with us, and have prolonged our disputation. So bring now what you have threatened us with, if you are among the truthful people.' He said, 'Allah will bring it to you if He Wills and you are not someone who can stop Allah. All my advice would be of no benefit to you if Allah has ordained for you to be left astray, even if it is my desire to advise you. He is your Lord and to Him you shall return.' Or do they say, 'He has forged it himself?' Say O' Nooh, 'If I had forged it myself, I shall bear the consequences, and I am clear of the crime you are committing.'

And it was revealed to Nooh [Noah], 'No more of your people shall believe in you other than those who have already believed, so do not grieve longer at their misdeeds. Construct the Ark under Our Eyes and according to Our Revelation, and do not speak to Me further on behalf of those who have been unjust; they shall be drowned.' So he began to construct the Ark. Whenever the leaders of his people passed him by, they mocked at him. Nooh said, 'If you mock us now, we shall mock you similarly. And you shall soon come to know who will have a punishment which will disgrace him, and who will be afflicted with the

inevitable and lasting calamity.'

Until when Our Command came and the fountains of the earth gushed forth. We said, 'Load a pair of every kind in it, and your family, except the one against whom the Word has already gone forth, and take also those who have believed.' However, only a few believed with him. He said, 'Board the Ark, in the Name of Allah it will move and shall cast anchor. Indeed, my Lord is All-forgiving, Most Merciful. And the Ark sailed with them upon waves like mountains. Nooh [Noah] called out to his son who had kept himself at a distance, 'O' my son, board with us and do not be with the unbelievers.' His son said, 'I will take refuge with the mountain that will protect me from the water.' Nooh said, 'There is no protector today from Allah's punishment, except that He should have mercy.' Then the waves came between them, and he was among those who drowned. And then it was said, 'O' earth, swallow your water, and O' sky, cease your rain.' The water abated and the Command was completed, and the Ark came to rest upon mount Judi. It was said, 'Away with those who do wrong.' Nooh supplicated his Lord and said, 'O' my Lord, my son is from my family, and your promise is true, and You are the Most Just of the judges.' Allah said, 'O' Nooh, he is not from your family, his conduct is unrighteous. So do not ask Me about that of which you have no knowledge, I admonish you lest you should become one of the ignorant.'

He (Nooh) said, 'My Lord, in You I seek refuge lest I should ask You anything of which I have no knowledge. So, if You do not forgive me and have mercy upon me, I shall be one of the losers.' It was said, 'O' Nooh, descend in peace from Us, and with blessing upon you and upon the nations of those with you. And some nations We shall give them enjoyment for a time and then We shall afflict them with a

painful punishment. Such is one of the stories of the unseen which We have revealed to you, which neither you nor your people knew of before this. So be patient, ultimately the pious shall be successful.''" *(Qur'an 11: 25-49)*

And said in *Soorah al-Anbiyâ*:

"And Nooh [Noah] when he called Us before, We answered his prayer, and rescued him and his family from the great distress; and We helped him against those of his people who rejected Our Signs. Indeed they were an evil people, so We drowned them all." *(Our'an 21: 76-77)*

In *Soorah al-Mu'minoon*, Allah (ﷻ) said:

"And We sent Nooh to his people, he said, 'O' my people, worship Allah, you have no other God but Him. Will you then fear.' The leaders of the disbelievers among his people said, 'He is no more than a human like yourselves, who wishes to gain superiority over you; had Allah willed, He would have sent down angels. We have not heard of this among our forefathers. He is only a possessed man, so wait for him for a time.'"

"He said, 'My Lord, help me for they accused me of falsehood.' So We revealed to him, 'Construct the Ark under Our Eyes and as We reveal. Then when Our Command comes, and the oven gushes forth, take aboard two pairs of every kind and your family, except those of them against whom the Word has already been spoken. And do not plead with Me concerning the evildoers, for they shall be drowned.'"

"And when you have embarked upon the Ark and those with you, say, 'Praise be to Allah who has saved us from the evildoers.' And say, 'My Lord, let my landing be blessed, for You are the Best of those who bring to land.' Surely, in

this there are signs, even though We are ever putting people to test.”

(*Qur'an* 23: 23-30)

And said in *Soorah ash-Shu'arâ'*:

“The people of Nooh [Noah] disbelieved in the Messengers. When their brother Nooh said to them, ‘Why do you not fear Allah? I am trustworthy Messenger to you. So fear Allah and obey me. I do not ask you for any reward for it, my reward is indeed only with the Lord of the worlds, so fear Allah and obey me.’

They said, ‘How should we believe in you while only the lowest followed you?’ He said, ‘And I do not have any knowledge of what they did before, surely their account is only with my Lord if only you could understand. I am not one to drive away the believers, I am only a clear warner.’ They said, ‘O’ Nooh, if you do not desist, you will be stoned.’

He said, ‘My Lord, my people have rejected me. So judge between me and them, and rescue me and the believers with me.’ So We rescued him and those with him in the laden Ark. Then We drowned the rest afterwards. Surely, there is a sign in this, but most of them are not believers. And indeed your Lord is the Almighty, the Most Merciful.”

(*Qur'an* 26: 105-122)

And in *Soorah al-Ankaboot*:

“And We sent Nooh to his people. He lived among them one thousand years less fifty, then the flood seized them because they were evildoers. We rescued him and those in the Ark and made it a sign to the worlds.” (*Qur'an* 29: 14-15)

And in *Soorah as-Saffât*:

“And Nooh called to Us and how excellent were We to

answer the prayer. We rescued him and his family from the grievous distress and made only his progeny to remain [on the earth]. And We left this blessing for him among the generations to come. Peace be upon Nooh [Noah] among the nations. Likewise We reward the righteous. He is indeed one of Our believing slaves. Then we drowned the others."

(*Qur'an* 37: 75-82)

Allah (ﷻ) again said in *Soorah al-Qamar*:

"Before them the people of Nooh disbelieved. They rejected Our slave and said, 'A possessed man' and he was repulsed. So he supplicated to his Lord saying, 'I am overpowered so give me victory.' So We opened the gates of heaven with pouring water; and We caused the ground to gush forth springs, so the water met according to the decree which had been ordained.

And We carried him upon a vessel well planked and nailed; floating before Our Eyes, a reward for him who was disbelieved. And We left it as a sign, so is there anyone who will accept the admonishing. How was My punishment and My warning. And We have indeed made this *Qur'an* easy for remembrance, so is there any that will remember?"

(*Qur'an* 54: 9-17)

Also, Allah revealed a whole *Soorah* about Nooh (Noah) and his people, where He (ﷻ) said:

"In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful."

"We sent Nooh to his people, 'Warn your people before there comes to them a severe punishment.' He said, 'O' my people, I am a clear warner to you that you should worship Allah and fear Him and obey me so that He may forgive you yours sins, and give you respite for an appointed term. When the term given by Allah is accomplished, it cannot be

deferred, if only you know.'

He said, 'O' my Lord, I have called my people night and day, but my calling has only increased them in their fleeing away. And whenever I have called them that You might forgive them, they put their fingers in their ears, and covered themselves up with their clutches, persisted and became arrogant. Then indeed I invited them openly. Further I have announced to them in public, and I have persisted to them in private. I said, 'Ask your Lord for forgiveness, indeed He is the Most Forgiving. He will send rain to you in abundance, and He will bestow upon you wealth and sons, and provide for you gardens, and will make for you rivers.'

What is the matter with you that you are not conscious of Allah's Majesty? He has created you in stages. Did you not see how Allah has created seven heavens one above another, and made the moon a light therein and made the sun a lamp? And Allah has produced you from the earth as a growth. And afterwards He will make you return there and then raise you afterwards. And Allah has made the earth for you as a carpet, so that you may travel along its roads and the paths of valleys.

Nooh [Noah] said, 'My Lord, they have disobeyed me, and followed him whose wealth and children increase him only in loss. And they have devised a tremendous plot and they have said, 'Do not forsake your gods, and do not forsake Wadd nor Suwa'. Nor Yagooth or Ya'ooq or Nasr.' And they led many astray. Do not grant any increase to the evildoers except in error.'

Because of their sins they were drowned, and cast into the Fire, and they did not find anyone apart from Allah to help them. Nooh said, 'My Lord, leave not even one of the disbelievers upon the earth. For, if You leave them, they will

lead Your slaves astray and will not beget any except the wicked and ungrateful ones. My Lord, forgive me, my parents, and whoever enters my house as a believer, and all believing men and believing women, and do not increase the evildoers except in perdition.''" (*Qur'an* 71: 1-28)

We have already mentioned details about all these verses in our book of *Tafseer* in their appropriate places. Here, we will mention the complete story as a whole, taking from the various places from the Qur'an, and also what the hadiths and narrations affirm.

Allah (ﷻ), also mentioned in other places of the Qur'an the story of Nooh (Noah). He praised him and rebuked those who disobeyed. He, (ﷻ), mentioned in *Soorah an-Nisâ'*:

"Verily, We have sent the revelation to you [O' Muhammad] as We sent the revelation to Nooh [Noah] and the Prophets after him. We also sent the revelation to Ibraheem, Isma'eel, Ishâq, Ya'qoob, al-Asbât [the offspring of the twelve children of Ya'qoob], 'Eesa, Ayyub, Yunus, Hâroon and Sulaymân. And to Dawood, We gave the *Zaboor*. And Messengers We have mentioned to you before, and Messengers We have not mentioned to you. And to Moosa Allah spoke directly. Messengers are bearers of good news as well as of warning in order that mankind should have no plea against Allah after the coming of Messengers. And Allah is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise." (*Qur'an* 4: 163-165)

And said in *Soorah al-An'am*:

"And that was Our Proof that We gave Ibraheem against his people. We raise whom We will in degrees. Certainly, your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing. And We bestowed upon him Ishâq and Ya'qoob, each of them We guided and before him, We guided Nooh. And among his progeny Dawood,

Sulaymân, Ayyub, Yusuf, Moosa and Hâroon. Thus do We reward the good-doers. And Zakariya, Yahya, ‘Eesa and Ilyâs, each one of them was of the righteous. And Isma’el, Elisha, Yunus and Loot. And each one of them We preferred above the mankind and jinns. And also some of their fathers and their progeny, and their brethren, We chose them and We guided them to the straight path.” (*Qur'an* 6: 83-87)

And in *Soorah al-A'râf*:

“Has not the story reached them of those before them? The people of Nooh, ‘Ad, Thamood, the people of Ibraheem, the dwellers of Madyan and the cities overthrown. To them came their Messengers with clear proofs. So it was not Allah Who wronged them, but they used to wrong themselves.”

(*Qur'an* 9: 70)

And said in *Soorah al-Ibraheem*:

“Has not the news reached you of those before you, the people of Nooh, ‘Ad, Thamood, and those after them? None knows them but Allah. To them came their Messengers with clear proofs, but they put their hands in their mouths [biting them with anger] and said, ‘Verily, we disbelieve in that with which you have been sent, and we are really in grave doubt as to that to which you invite us [Islamic monotheism].’”

(*Qur'an* 14: 9)

And in the two places in *Soorah al-Isrâ'*:

“O’ offspring of those whom We carried [in the ship] with Nooh. Verily, he was a grateful slave.”

(*Qur'an* 17: 3)

Also:

“And how many generations have We destroyed after Nooh [Noah]. And sufficient is your Lord as an All-Knower and

All-Seer of the sins of His slaves.” (*Qur'an* 17: 17)

Allah (ﷻ), also said:

“And remember when We took from the Prophets their covenant and from you [O' Muhammad], and from Nooh, Ibraheem, Moosa and ‘Eesa son of Mary. We took from them a strong covenant.” (*Qur'an* 33: 7)

And said in *Soorah Sâd*:

“Before them, the people of Nooh, ‘Ad and Fir‘aun, the man of stakes [with which he used to punish the people] belied the Messengers. Similarly, Thamood, the people of Loot and the dwellers of the wood [all belied the Messengers]. Such were the confederates. Not one of them but belied the Messengers. Therefore My torment was justified.”

(*Qur'an* 38: 12-14)

And in *Soorah Ghâfir*:

“The people of Nooh and the confederates after them denied their Messengers. And every disbelieving nation plotted against their Messenger to seize him and disputed by means of falsehood to refute therewith the truth. So I seized them with punishment and how terrible was My punishment. Thus has the Word of your Lord been justified against those who disbelieve, that they will be dwellers of the Fire.”

(*Qur'an* 40: 5-6)

Again in *Soorah ash-Shu‘arâ'* Allah (ﷻ), said:

“He [Allah] has ordained for you the same religion which He ordained for Nooh [Noah] and that which We have revealed to you. And that which We ordained for Ibraheem, Moosa, and ‘Eesa; saying you should establish religion [i.e. to do what it orders you to do] and make no divisions in it.

Intolerable to the *Mushrikoon* is that to which you call them. Allah chooses for Himself whom He wills, and guides unto Himself who turns to Him in repentance and in obedience.”

(*Qur'an* 26: 13)

Similarly in *Soorah Qâf*, He (ﷻ) said:

“Denied before them [i.e. the pagans of Makkah] the people of Nooh, the dwellers of Rass and Thamood. And also, the ‘Âd, Fir'aun and the brethren of Loot. Similarly, the dwellers of the wood and the people of Tubba. Everyone of them denied their Messengers, so My threat took effect.”

(*Qur'an* 50: 12-14)

And said in *Soorah Dhâriyât*:

“So were the people of Nooh [Noah] before them. Verily, they were a people who were *fâsiqoon* [rebellious, disobedient to Allah].”

(*Qur'an* 51: 46)

And in *Soorah an-Najm* He said:

“And the people of Nooh aforetime. Verily, they were more unjust and more rebellious and transgressing [in disobeying Allah and His Messenger Nooh].”

(*Qur'an* 53: 52)

Further in *Soorah al-Hadeed* Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And indeed, We sent Nooh and Ibraheem and placed in their offspring Prophethood and scripture. And among them there are some who are guided; but many of them are *fâsiqoon*.”

(*Qur'an* 57: 26)

And in *Soorah at-Tahreem* said:

“Allah sets forth an example for those who disbelieve the wife of Nooh and the wife of Loot. They were under two of Our righteous slaves, but they both betrayed them. So they

[Nooh and Loot] did not avail against Allah and it was said,
‘Enter the Fire along with those who enter.’”

(*Qur'an* 66: 10)

We have already mentioned the hadith reported by Imam Bukhari on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) who said that:

“There were ten *Qarn* between Adam and Nooh, all lived according to Islam.”

And we discussed that *Qarn* meant either a period of time or a generation of people.

After those pious generations, certain incidents happened that led the people of the time gradually starting to worship idols. It has been reported by Imam Bukhari on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs commenting on the verse: “And they said, ‘Do not forsake your gods, and do not forsake Wadd nor Suwa’, neither Yaghooth nor Ya’ooq nor Nasr.” Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said:

“They were the names of pious people from among them. Following their death, *Shayṭân* inspired their people to erect statues in the places where they used to sit, and to call them with their names. They did so, however, at this point, they were not worshipped until that generation died and the new generation deviated. Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) further said that Arabs afterwards worshipped those idols. This was also the opinion of ‘Ikrimah, Dahhâk, Qatâdah and Muhammad ibn Ishâq (may Allah’s mercy be upon them).”

Ibn Jareer reported in his *Tafseer* on the authority of Muhammad ibn Qays who said: “They were pious people during the period between Adam (رضي الله عنه) and Nooh (رضي الله عنه), and they had followers. When they died, their followers said, ‘If we make statues of them, it will be more pleasing to us in our worship and will remind us of them.’ So they built statues of them. But when they died and other generations came after them, *Iblees* approached them saying, ‘Your

forefathers used to worship them, and through that worship they got rain. So why don't you worship them also? And that is how they came to worship them.'"

Ibn Abi Hâtim reported on the authority of Abu al-Mutâhhir, who said: "People mentioned Yazeed ibn al-Muhallab near Abu Jâfar i.e., Bâqar — while he was in prayer. When he finished his prayer, he said to them, 'You have mentioned Yazeed ibn al-Muhallab; he was killed in a land where idols were first worshipped.' Then he mentioned Wadd, and said, 'He was a pious man who was loved by his people. But when he died, they gathered and remained around his grave in Babylon and were overwhelmed by grief on the death of this man. When *Iblees* — *Shaytân* — saw them in this state, he came to them disguised as a man and said, 'I saw your grief on the death of this man. So should I make a statue like him which could be erected, thus you may remember him?' They answered, 'Yes.' So he made a statue like him which they erected up in their gathering place and they remembered him. When *Shaytân* noticed their keenness in remembering him, he suggested, 'Should I build a statue of him in the homes of everyone of you, so that each one of you could remember him in his home?' They agreed. The *Shaytân* then made the statue and they were placed in each house and the people used it to remember him. Their children's generation saw what their fathers did for their remembrance. However, when their children came, they had no idea of how their fathers remembered them and so gradually they took them as their god. So the first one to be worshipped besides Allah was Wadd, the idol they named after Wadd himself."

The result of this was that every idol was worshipped by a different group of people. And after a long period of time had passed by, people started making idols of them for themselves so that their importance could be fully realized. Thus they were worshipped instead of Allah. We have dealt at length about the various schools that sprung and the rest in our *Tafseer Book*.

Imams Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Umm Salamah and Umm Habibah (may Allah be pleased with them both) that they mentioned to the Prophet (ﷺ) the name of a church called ‘Mária’ in Abyssinia which they had seen. They had also mentioned to him its beauty and images therein. On that, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Those images were of pious people. When they died, the people built on their graves a place of worship. They then drew those images therein. Those people are the worst creation in front of Allah.”²⁰

The point to be noticed from all this is that when evil took its root on the earth and people started worshipping idols, Allah sent Nooh (Noah) as His messenger. He called them to worship none other than Allah, Who has no partners or equals. He also forbade them from worshipping anybody or anything apart from Allah.

Nooh was the first Messenger to be sent on the earth. The proof of this is a hadith from Imams Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said in the hadith concerning the intercession:

“... The people would come to Adam and say, ‘O’ Adam, you are the father of mankind. Allah created you by His Hand, then breathed into you the soul that He created, commanded the angels to prostrate before you, and then made you live in Paradise. Would you not then intercede for us with your Lord? Do you not see what we are in?’ Adam will reply, ‘My Lord is very angry. He has never been so angry before and will never be so angry after. He had forbidden me from eating from the tree, but I disobeyed Him. I am only concerned about myself, I am only concerned with myself. Go to somebody else. Go to Nooh. ‘People will then go to

²⁰ Bukhari, *Kitâb as-Ṣalâh. Bâb Hal tanbîsh Quboôr Mushriki al-Jâhiliyyah*; Muslim, *Kitâb al-Masâjid, Bâb an-Nahi ‘an Binâ’ al-Masâjid ‘ala al-Quboôr*.

Nooh and say, ‘O’ Nooh, you were the first Messenger to the people and Allah had called you a grateful slave. Do you not see what we are in and where our situation has reached? Would you not intercede for us with your Lord?’ He will reply, ‘My Lord is very angry. He has never been so angry before and will never be so angry after. I am only concerned with myself, I am only concerned with myself...’²¹

When Allah (ﷻ), sent Nooh (Noah) (ﷺ) as a Messenger, he called people to worship Allah without associating any partner with Him. Also, he asked them not to worship idols, statues, and false gods. They must believe and acknowledge the Oneness of Allah, with no god worthy of worship other than Him, and with no Lord other than Him. Similarly, Allah sent every Messenger with the same mission after him. All of those Messengers were from the progeny of Nooh (ﷺ), as is mentioned in the Qur'an:

“And We made his progeny to remain [on this earth].”

(*Qur'an* 37: 77)

In another verse, Allah the All-High said about Nooh and Ibraheem (peace be upon them):

“... And We made the Prophethood and book in their progeny...”

(*Qur'an* 57: 26)

That means every Prophet after Nooh (ﷺ) was from his progeny, and so is the case after Ibraheem (ﷺ).

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And We certainly sent among every people a Messenger who said, ‘Worship Allah and avoid false gods’...”

(*Qur'an* 16: 36)

²¹ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Anbiyah, Bâb wa lagad Arsâlah Noohan.*

Also, Allah (ﷻ), said:

"And ask those of Our Messengers whom We sent them before you, 'Did We appoint any deities other than the Most Gracious, to be worshipped?'" (Our 'an 43; 45)

He, (He), also said:

"And we sent no Messenger before you but revealed to him that there is no God but I; so worship Me." (*Our'an* 21: 25)

For this reason, Nooh (Noah) said to his people:

"... Worship Allah, you have no God but him, I fear for you the punishment of a great Day." (Our'an 7: 59)

He also said:

"Do not worship but Allah, I fear for you the punishment of a painful Day." *(Our' an 11: 26)*

Also:

"O' my people! Worship Allah. You have no god except Him, will you then not fear Him?" (Our'an 23: 23)

Again, in another place in the Our'an, Nooh is reported to have said:

"O' my people, I am a clear warner to you that you should worship Allah and fear Him and obey me so that He may forgive you your sins, and give you respite for an appointed term. When the term given by Allah is accomplished, it cannot be deferred, if only you know.' He said, 'O' my Lord, I have called my people night and day. But my calling has only increased them in their fleeing away. And whenever I have called them that You might forgive them, they put their fingers in their ears, and covered themselves up with their clutches, persisted and became arrogant. Then

indeed I invited them openly. Further I have announced to them in public, and I have persisted to them in private. I said, 'Ask your Lord for forgiveness, indeed He is the Most Forgiving. He will send rain to you in abundance, and He will bestow upon you wealth and sons, and provide for you gardens, and will make rivers for you. What is the matter with you that you are not conscious of Allah's Majesty?' He has created you in stages." *(Our'an 71: 2-14)*

Allah (ﷻ), mentioned in these verses that Nooh (ﷺ) called his people in various ways: during the day and night, in public and in private, by giving them glad tidings if they obey and warning them of the consequences if they disobey. But none of the means succeeded. Rather, they carried on in deviation, transgression and worshipping idols. They faced Nooh (ﷺ) and his followers with enmity all the time and with utter contempt. Also, they threatened them with stoning and expulsion:

"The leaders of his people said we find you in a clear error."

(*Qur'an* 7: 60)

Nooh (ﷺ) answered them saying:

"O' my people, there is no error in me, I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds. I convey to you the Messages of my Lord, and advise you. And I know from Allah what you know not." *(Our'an 7: 61-62)*

He made clear to them he is not in any error as they claimed. Rather he is on the straight path and he is the Messenger of the Lord of this universe. The One Who creates things only by saying "Be". And as is the case with all Messengers, Nooh (عليه السلام) too was clear in his message, vocal in his sincere advice and was the most knowledgeable person about Allah, (عز وجله).

Their reply to Nooh (ﷺ) was:

"We do not see you except that you are a human like ourselves, and we do not see your followers except those who are apparently most low among us. Similarly, we do not find in you any merit over us. In fact, we think of you as liars."

(*Qur'an* 11: 27)

His people were in surprise as to how a human could become a Messenger. They mocked him and his followers as the most low of them. It is said that his followers were the weak among his people. *Harqil* (Heraclius) had said that it is the weak who follow the Messengers. This is because they do not have any barrier (such as pride and fame), preventing them from following the truth.

The translated word 'apparently' in the verse quoted above from *Soorah Hood* means that as soon as Nooh (ﷺ) put his message to them, they accepted it without any reflection or contemplation. However, what the followers were accused of was exactly what Allah praised them for. This is because the truth is apparent and does not need any reflection or deep thinking. Rather the truth, as soon as it becomes clear, must be followed.

For this reason, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said in praise of Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه):

"I did not call anyone to Islam except he had stumbled except Abu Bakr, he never faltered."

For this reason and virtue of Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) that led the people to pledge their *Bay'ah* to him on the day of *Saqeefah* (i.e. the day when the successor to the Prophet was decided) without any reflection and hesitation. This was because his excellence over others was obvious to all the Companions (may Allah be pleased with all of them).

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had initially desired to record his decision to appoint Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) as his successor. He then did not write this and explained his decision of not writing by saying:

“Allah and the believers refuse (to have as the successor to the Prophet) anyone except Abu Bakr.”²²

The Qur'an tells us what Nooh said to his people:

“He said, ‘O’ my people, inform me, if I have a clear sign from my Lord, and He has bestowed His Mercy upon me, which has been obscured from your sight, shall we compel you to accept it when you are averse to it.’” (*Qur'an* 11: 28)

We see in these verses how Nooh (ﷺ) addressed them with politeness and called them gently towards the truth. Allah (ﷻ), had said to Prophet Moosa and Hāroon (may peace be upon them):

“And speak to him [i.e. Fir'aun] a gentle word that he may be mindful or he may fear.” *(Qur'an 20: 44)*

And said in another verse:

“Invite all to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching, and reason with them in ways that are most gracious...” *(Qur'an 16: 125)*

Nooh (ﷺ) said: “If I have a clear sign from my Lord, and He has bestowed His Mercy upon me.” This referred to his prophethood and messengership. Again the part of the verse: “... which has been obscured from your sight,” means that you did not understand or were not guided to it. And the part: “... shall we compel you to accept it when you are averse to it,” means should we make you angry about it or force you to accept it. And, “... O’ my people, I do not ask of you any reward for this, my reward is only with Allah,” means that I do not seek any reward in return for my duty of conveying the Message to you which will benefit you in this world and the Hereafter. I only seek my reward from Allah. Whose reward is the best and more lasting than what you want to give me.

²² Muslim, *Kitāb al-Fadā'il*, *Bāb min Fadā'il Abi Bakr*. Ahmad, vol. 4, .p. 322.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“I shall not drive away those who believe. Indeed they shall meet their Lord, but I see that you are ignorant people.”

(*Qur'an 11: 29*)

This verse shows that his people asked him to expel those with him. They promised to him that they would join him if he did so. He refused to do so by saying: “... indeed they shall meet their Lord,” which means: I fear Allah if I do such a thing, because if I drive them out, they will have a point against me when they meet their Lord.

At the time of our Prophet (ﷺ), the disbelievers of Quraysh asked him to expel the low and weak Muslims who believed in him, like ‘Ammâr, Şuhayb, Bilâl, Khabbâb and others. Allah (ﷻ), forbade him from doing this. We have mentioned this in detail in our book of *Tafseer* in the explanation of the chapters, *al-An'âm* and *Kahf*.

The Qur'an quoted Nooh, saying:

“And I [Nooh] do not say to you that I possess the treasures of Allah, or that I know the Unseen, or that I am an angel...”

(*Qur'an 11: 31*)

Meaning that I am only a slave and Messenger. I do not possess any knowledge except what Allah has taught me. Similarly, I do not have the power to do anything except what Allah gives me ability to do. Likewise, I cannot benefit or harm myself except that Allah wants it to be. And the verse:

“... nor do I say to those your eyes despise that Allah will not grant them any good. Allah knows best what is in their souls, and if I did that, I would be among the unjust.”

(*Qur'an 11: 31*)

That is, I cannot bear witness that they will not get any good from Allah on the Day of Judgement as reward. Allah knows best their

deeds and He will reward them. If what they did was good, the reward will be good and if what they did was evil, their reward will be evil. The Qur'an quoted the response of his people:

"They said, 'How should we believe in you while only the lowest followed you?' He said, 'What they did before is not my concern, surely their account is with my Lord if only you could understand. And I am not the one to drive away the believers, I am only a clear warner.' " (Qur'an 26: 111-115)

The arguments continued between Nooh and his people for a long period of time and even then, only a few of them believed in Nooh (ﷺ). This is mentioned by Allah (ﷻ), in the Qur'an:

"... and he lived among them one thousand years less fifty, then the flood seized them and they were evildoers."

(Qur'an 29: 14)

Whenever a generation passed away from among them, they advised the succeeding one not to believe in Nooh and to disagree and fight him. When a child matured, his father would admonish him that he should never believe in Nooh. It became their nature to refuse to believe and not to follow the way of truth. Nooh (ﷺ) said, as recorded in the Qur'an:

"... and will not beget any but wicked ungrateful ones."

(Qur'an 71: 27)

The Qur'an quoted his people say:

"They said, 'O' Nooh, certainly you have disputed with us, and have prolonged our disputation. So bring that which you have threatened us with, if you are speaking the truth.' He said, 'Allah will bring it to you if He pleases, and you will not be able to stop it.' " (Qur'an 11: 32-33)

That is, only Allah, the Almighty can bring the punishment that you

want and nothing can stop Him. Rather, He is the One Who creates things by saying, "Be" and the thing comes into existence.

The Qur'an further quoted what Nooh said to his people:

"All my advice would be of no benefit to you if Allah has ordained for you to be left astray, even if it is my desire to advise you. He is your Lord and to Him you will return."

(*Qur'an 11: 34*)

That is, if Allah wants to put someone to trial, then there is none who can guide such a person. He is the One Who guides to the right path and He is the One Who let them astray. He is the doer of whatever He wills, the Almighty, the Powerful, the Knower of who deserves guidance and who deserves torment. He has the all encompassing Wisdom and the convincing proofs.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

"And it was revealed to Nooh, 'No more of your people will believe other than those who have already believed, so do not grieve any longer at what they used to do.'"

(*Qur'an 11: 36*)

This verse comforts Nooh (ﷺ) and provides consolation for him. It informs him that whoever has not believed in him already, then such a person will never believe in him afterwards.

The verse goes on, wherein Allah tells Nooh (ﷺ):

"Construct the Ark under Our Eyes and as Our Revelation, and do not speak to Me further on behalf of those who have been unjust; they shall be drowned [in the flood]."

(*Qur'an 11: 37*)

The situation was such that when Nooh gave up hope of the people amending their ways and saw no good in them and also saw that they tried all means to harm and belie him, he prayed to Allah to send 'o

them His punishment. Allah (ﷻ), then accepted his prayers and gave him what he had asked for, as He, the All-High said:

"And Nooh [Noah] called to Us and how excellent were We to answer the prayers. And We rescued him and his family from the great distress." (Our'an 37: 75-76)

(Qur'an 37: 75-76)

Allah (ﷻ), further said:

"And when Nooh called Us before and We listened his prayer, and rescued him and his family from the great distress." *(Our 'an 21: 76)*

(*Qur'an* 21: 76)

Prophet Nooh is quoted saying:

"He [Nooh] said, 'My Lord, my people have rejected me. So make judgement between me and them, and rescue me and the believers with me.'" (Our'an 26: 117-118)

(Qur'an 26: 117-118)

Allah said;

"So he called to his Lord, saying, 'I am overpowered so give me victory.'" (Qur'an 54: 10)

(Qur'an 54: 10)

And that:

"He [Nooh] said, 'My Lord, help me, for they accused me of lying.' " (Qur'an 23: 26 and 39)

(*Qur'an* 23: 26 and 39)

Allah (ﷻ), said:

"Because of their sins they were drowned and cast into the Fire, and did not find anyone apart from Allah to help them. And Nooh said, 'My Lord, do not leave even one of the disbelievers on the earth; for if You leave them, they will lead Your slaves astray and will not beget any but wicked, ungrateful ones.'" *(Qur'an 71: 25-27)*

A number of points accumulated against them that led to their destruction, such as their disbelief and evilness, and also the supplication of their Prophet against them.

At that point, Allah commanded Nooh to start constructing the Ark. It was a huge ship, there was no ship like it before its time nor anything like it afterwards.

Allah informed Nooh (Noah) that when His punishment comes upon the people, for which there is none who can stop it, then there will not be any ransoming or speech at that time. He informed Nooh about this in advance because it might have happened that when the punishment came, Nooh might have become lenient upon seeing it. This is referred to in Allah's saying:

"Do not speak to me regarding those who have done wrong for verily they are drowned." (Our'an 11: 37)

And Our'ān informs that:

"So he began to construct the Ark. Then whenever the leaders of his people passed him by, they jeered at him..."
(Our'an 11: 38)

They mocked at him because they could not believe that there would be any such flood that could drown all the people. The verse then continues:

"He [Nooh] said, 'If you mock us now, we shall mock at you likewise.'" (Qur'an 11: 38)

This means that we will ridicule you for not being guided and being persistent in the disbelief and ignorance which will cause the punishment to fall upon you. The verse then states:

"And you shall soon come to know who will have a punishment which will disgrace him and who will be

afflicted with the disgracing and lasting calamity."

(*Qur'an* II: 39)

Their nature was disbelief and stubbornness. They will be the same in the Hereafter, as they will refuse to accept that a Messenger ever came to them.

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Abu Sa'eed (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"Nooh (Noah) and his people will come on the Day of Judgement. Allah will say to Nooh, 'Did you convey My Message?' Nooh will answer, 'Yes my Lord.' Then Allah will ask his people, 'Did he convey to you My Message?' They will answer, 'No. No Prophet came to us.' Then He will say to Nooh, 'Who will bear witness for you?' He will reply, 'Muhammad and his followers.' So we will bear witness that Nooh conveyed the Message."

This is what Allah (ﷻ), said:

"And thus We have made you a just people that you will be witness over the people, and the Messenger will be a witness over you." (Our'an 2: 143)

(*Qur'an* 2: 143)

This nation will bear witness on the basis of the witness of their Prophet that Allah sent Nooh, revealed the truth to him, and subsequently he conveyed the truth to his people fully and completely. There was not a thing that would benefit them except that he ordered them to perform it. Similarly, there was not a thing that would harm them except that he forbade them from committing it.

This is the same with every Prophet and his relation to his people. Nooh (ﷺ) even warned them of the *Dajjál* — the Pseudo Christ. He was not expected to come out in his days, however Nooh informed them out of his mercy and concern for them.

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما) who said:

"Once the Prophet (ﷺ) delivered a sermon to the people. He began by praising Allah. He then mentioned the *Dajjāl*²³ — the Pseudo Christ, and said, 'I warn you against him. There was not a Prophet but he warned his people about him (*Dajjāl*). Even Nooh warned his people. But I will tell you something of him that no other Prophet told his people. Know that he is one-eyed whereas Allah is not one-eyed.'"²⁴

Imams Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Should I tell you something about *Dajjāl* which no Prophet told his people? He is one-eyed. He will bring with him the likes of Paradise and Hell. However, what he claims to be Paradise is actually the Hell. I warn you as Nooh warned his people before."²⁵

Some of the pious predecessors said that when Allah (ﷻ), answered the prayer of Nooh, He ordered him to plant a tree from which to make the ship. Thus Nooh planted the tree and waited one hundred years for it to fully grow. He then made the ship during the next hundred years. There is another opinion that Nooh made the ship in forty years. And Allah knows best.

Thawni said: "Allah ordered Nooh (ﷺ) to build the Ark eighty *Dhirā'* long, to paint it inside and outside with tar, and to make its bow curved so it can easily sail in the water."

Qatâdah said: "The Ark's length was three hundred *Dhirā'* with a width of fifty *Dhirā'* (yards). That is what is mentioned in the Torah as well according to what I have read."

²³ *Dajjāl*, a Pseudo-Christ, he will also be claiming divinity and appear before final destruction of the earth - this world.

²⁴ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Fitan, Bâb Dhikr ad-Dajjâl*.

²⁵ Muslim, *Kitâb al-Fitan, Bâb Dhikr ad-Dajjâl*. Here the wordings are from Bukhari.

Hasan al-Baṣrī said: “It’s length was six hundred *Dhirā’*, with three hundred *Dhirā’* as its width.”

Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said: “Its length was one thousand and two hundred *Dhirā’*, with a width of six hundred *Dhirā’*.”

However, there is consensus that its height was thirty *Dhirā’*. It was a three-story deck ship, with every deck ten *Dhirā’* high. The bottom deck was for animals and cattle, the middle deck was for the people, and the upper deck was for birds. Its door was on its side and there was a multi-layer cover on top of it.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“He [Nooh] said, ‘My Lord, help me for they accused me of lying.’ So We revealed to him, ‘Construct the Ark under Our Eyes and as We reveal,’...” (*Qur'an 23: 26-27*).

Meaning, to build it according to Our order and as We watch you building it in order that We guide you how to construct it.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“... And then when Our Command comes, and the oven gushes forth, take aboard two pairs of every kind and your family. Except those of them against whom the Word has already been spoken. And do not speak to Me concerning the evildoers for they shall be drowned.” (*Qur'an 23: 27*)

Allah (ﷻ), ordered him that when His Decree comes and the punishment befalls, Nooh (ﷺ) should put in the Ark a pair from every kind of animal, and all that have a soul so that the species could survive. Nooh was also ordered to take with him his family except those who have rejected his call, meaning whoever remained a disbeliever. This is because Nooh had exhausted all options of *dâwah* (preaching) that cannot be rejected and that necessitated punishment if refused. Similarly, Allah also ordered Nooh not to speak to Him

concerning the disbelievers when the punishment that they deserve due to their actions befalls them.

The word *tannoor*, translated as ‘oven’ in the verses mentioned above, has the meaning of the face of the earth. This is according to the majority of the scholars. This means that the water started gushing forth from everywhere, even the ovens that have fire. However, Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said that the *tannoor* is a spring of water in India. Ash-Shâ‘bi was of the opinion that this spring is in *Kufah* while Qatâdah said it was in the Arabian Peninsula.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“Until when Our order came and the ovens gushed forth,
We said, ‘Load a pair of every kind in it, and of your family;
except the one against whom the Word has gone forth
already. Also take those who have believed.’ However, only
a few believed with him.” *(Qur'an 11: 40)*

This was an order to Nûh that when the punishment comes, to take with him a pair of everything.

In the Bible, it is mentioned that Nûh was commanded to load seven pairs from all types of animals that are not eaten and only one pair from all types of animals that are eaten. However, this description contained in the Bible is contradictory to that which is in the Qur'an which uses the word *ithnayn* implying two.

Ibn Abi Hâtim reported on the authority of Zayd ibn Aslam's father that the Messenger of Allah (ﷻ) said:

“When Nûh took a pair of everything with him on the ship, the people said, ‘How can we be sure that the animals will survive when we have Lions with them?’ Then Allah made it suffer from a fever. This was the first fever that affected anybody on earth. Then the people complained about the foodstuff and that the rats will spoil those. Then Allah (ﷻ) made the Lion to sneeze and

when it sneezed, a cat came out of it which kept the rats under control.”²⁶

Allah’s words: “... and your family, except the one against whom the Word has gone forth already,” mean to take only those of your family who believed and leave those who disbelieved. As we will mention shortly, the son of Nooh, Yâm was one of the disbelievers.

Regarding the part of the verse, “... and also those who have believed”, mean to take from your people those who believed in you. And the part, “... but only a few believed in him” is despite the fact that Nooh (ﷺ) lived among them and called them to the way of Allah for a very long time. He called them day and night, in public and in private, sometimes by mentioning threats if he was not obeyed and at other times, by mentioning the rewards for those who believe.

The scholars differed regarding how many people boarded the Ark with Nooh. It is reported from Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) that there were eighty men along with their wives. Ka'b al-Ahbâr said that they were seventy-two people. Others said the number was ten. Yet others said the people were all from Nooh’s family only, meaning Nooh, his three sons, with his four daughters-in-laws, including the wife of Yâm who did not believe in Nooh. Yâm did not board the ship.

This last opinion is contradictory to the apparent meaning of the Qur'an. The verse clearly states that there were others who believed along with him on the ship. This is seen in the following part of the verse: “... and save me and those with me who have believed.” It is said that they were seven who boarded.

²⁶ However, this hadith is *Mursal* (meaning that the *tabi'ee* reported it directly from the Prophet with the mention of the Companion). Thus this hadith is considered weak.

The wife of Nooh (ﷺ) died before the Flood. It is said by a few that she drowned with the rest of the disbelievers. The Bible says that she was in the Ark, so it is possible that she disbelieved afterwards. She bore all of the children of the Prophet Nooh, Hâm, Sâm, Yâfuth and Yâm, who the Jews and the Christians call Kan‘ân, the one who disbelieved in Nooh (ﷺ) and thus drowned in the flood.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And when you have boarded the Ark and those with you, say, ‘Praise be to Allah Who has saved us from the evildoers.’ And say, ‘My Lord, let my landing be blessed, for You are the Best Who bring to land.’” (*Qur'an* 23: 28-29)

Allah (ﷻ), ordered Nooh (ﷺ) to praise Him as He has subjected the Ark for him. With it, he was saved, the judgement was made between him and his people. His enemies were given a punishment that pleased him. As Allah (ﷻ), said:

“The One who created all the pairs and made for you ships and cattle on which you ride, that you may sit upon them. Also, so that you may remember your Lord’s favours, and say, ‘Glory be to the One Who has subjected this to us, and we could never have been able to subdue it, and to our Lord surely we will return.’” (*Qur'an* 43: 12-14)

Similarly, Allah (ﷻ), has ordered us to supplicate before we start something so we could gain blessings and goodness, and such that its end is in our favour. Allah ordered his Messenger (ﷺ) to say a supplication at the time of his migration. This supplication was:

“And say, ‘My Lord, lead me in with the Truth, and lead me out with the Truth, and grant me strength to help me.’”
(*Qur'an* 17: 80)

Nooh (ﷺ) carried out Allah’s order and said:

“... Board it, in the Name of Allah, it will move and will cast anchor. Indeed, my Lord is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”

(*Qur'an 11: 41*)

That is the Ark will start with the Name of Allah and will finish its journey with the Name of Allah.

The next part of the verse, “Verily, my Lord is Forgiving and Merciful” means that Allah although He is Forgiving and Merciful, He also gives a painful punishment to those who deserve. His punishment is not reversed against the evildoers, like when the punishment befell on the disbelievers of the earth who worshipped other than Allah.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And the Ark sailed with them upon waves like mountains.”

(*Qur'an 11: 42*)

This is because Allah sent down rain from the sky, the like of which the people of earth had never witnessed before. Similarly, there was no rain like it after that incident. The earth gushed forth its water from its springs when it was ordered to do so. Allah (ﷻ), mentioned this in the Qur'an as:

“So he [Nooh] called his Lord, saying, ‘I am overpowered so give me victory.’ So We opened the gates of heaven with pouring water; and We caused the ground to gush forth springs. So the water met according to the decree which has been ordained. And We carried him upon a vessel well planked and nailed; floating before Our Eyes, a recompense for the one [Nooh] who was belied.” (*Qur'an 54: 10-14*)

The part “... floating before Our Eyes” means that it sailed with Our security, protection and guidance.

Ibn Jareer and others mentioned that the flood came on the 13th of the month of Abb in Coptic year.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“Surely, We bore you in the floating Ark when the water overflowed, that We might make it a reminder for you, and heeding ears may bear its [lessons] in remembrance.”

(*Qur'an* 69: 11-12)

A group of the scholars who explained the Qur'an said that the water rose fifteen *Dhirā'* above the highest mountain of the earth. This is also the number mentioned in the Bible. Others have said that it was eighty *Dhirā'* above the mountain and encompassed the whole earth, its plains and mountains, its deserts and wilds. Every living thing died as a result of this flood.

Imam Mâlik reported that Zayd ibn Aslam said:

“At the time of the flood, there were so many people on the earth that people occupied every place.”

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“... And Nooh called out to his son who had kept himself at a distance, ‘O’ my son, board with us and do not be with the disbelievers.’ His son said, ‘I will betake myself to the mountain that will protect me from the water.’ Nooh said, ‘There is no protector today from Allah’s punishment, except that He should have mercy.’ And the waves came between them, and he was among the drowned.”

(*Qur'an* 11: 42-43)

This was Yam, the son of Nooh, who was the brother of Sâm, Hâm and Yâfuth. Some said that his name was Kan'ân. He was a disbeliever and committed evil deeds. He opposed his father in his religion and teachings, thus he drowned along with all others who drowned. There were, however, others not related to Nooh who survived because they believed in him and followed his teachings.

Allah (عز وجله)، said:

“And then it was said, ‘O’ earth, swallow your water, and O’ sky, cease your rain.’ And the water abated and the order was fulfilled. The Ark came to rest on Mount Judi. It was said, ‘Away with those who do wrong.’” (*Qur'an* 11: 44)

When no one left of the disbelievers who worshipped other than Allah had remained alive, Allah commanded the earth to swallow up the water and commanded the heaven to stop sending down rain. The punishment that Allah had divinely decreed passed.

Allah (عز وجله)، said:

“But they belied him, so We saved him and those along with him in the ship, and We drowned those who belied Our *Āyât*. They were indeed a blind people.” (*Qur'an* 7: 64)

Allah (عز وجله)، said:

“They denied him but We delivered him and those with him in the ship, and We made them generations replacing one after another, while We drowned those who belied Our *Āyât*. Then see what was the end of those who were drowned.”

(*Qur'an* 10: 73)

Allah (عز وجله)، said:

“We helped him against the people who denied Our *Āyât*. Verily, they were a people given to evil. So We drowned them all.”

(*Qur'an* 21: 77)

Allah (عز وجله)، said:

“And We saved him and those with him in the laden ship. Then We drowned the rest [disbelievers] thereafter. Verily, in this is a sign, yet most of them are not believers.”

(*Qur'an* 26: 119-122)

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“Then We saved him and those with him in the ship, and made it an *Âyah* for the ‘Âlameen [mankind, jinn and all that exists].”
(Qur'an 29: 15)

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And indeed, We have left this as a sign. Then is there anyone who will remember? Then how [terrible] was My torment and My warnings? And We have indeed made the Qur'an easy to understand and remember. Then is there anyone who will remember?”
(Qur'an 54: 15-17)

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“Because of their sins, they were drowned, then were made to enter the Fire. And they found no one to help them instead of Allah. And Nooh said, ‘My Lord, do not leave any of the disbelievers on the earth. If you leave them, they will mislead Your slaves and they will beget none but the wicked disbelievers.’”
(Qur'an 71: 25-27)

Allah (ﷻ), answered the supplication of Nooh (ﷺ) and did not leave them on the earth for even a blink of an eye.

Ibn Jareer and Ibn Abi Hâtim reported in their *Tafseer* on the authority of ‘Âishah (رضي الله عنها) concerning a mother of a baby from among the people of Nooh (ﷺ). It is mentioned in it that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“If Allah was going to have mercy on anybody from the people of Nooh, He would have had mercy on the mother of a small baby.”

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

“Nooh stayed with his people (nearly) for one thousand years (i.e., 950 years). He then planted a tree for one hundred years and

waited for it to grow. When it grew and became huge, he cut it and made a ship from it. Every time his people passed by him, they mocked at him and used to say, ‘You are making a ship on the mainland? How will it sail?’ Nooh replied to them, ‘You will soon come to know.’

Then later when the water started rising, the mother of the baby, whom she loved most, became worried and went out with the baby towards a mountain. When the water reached 1/3 of her body, she rose to the mountain. When the water reached to her neck, she took her baby above her head with her hands. The water gradually rose and then they both drowned. If Allah was going to have mercy to anyone of those disbelievers, He would have had mercy upon the mother of this baby.”²⁷

However, our goal here is to say conclusively that Allah (ﷻ), did not leave anybody alive from the disbelievers.

Allah then mentioned Nooh’s appeal to Him regarding his son and his appeal to Him not to drown his son. Nooh (ﷺ) said that, “You promised me that You will save my family along with me, and my son is one of my family, and despite that, he is drowned?”

He was answered that his son was not from his family whom Allah promised to rescue. What Allah said was:

“... and your family, except those of them against whom the Word has already gone forth...” *(Qur'an 23: 27)*

Thus his son was among those against who Allah’s Decree to drown them was already ordained. That was because of his disbelief and thus his fate was that of the rest of the disbelievers.

²⁷ However, this hadith is *ghareeb*. It has been narrated by Ka'b ibn Ahbâr. It seems most likely that this is not a hadith but rather the saying of one of the narrators in the chain. This person is most likely Ka'b ibn Aḥbâr. And Allah knows best.

Then Allah (ﷻ), said:

“It was said, ‘O’ Nooh, descend in peace from Us, and with blessing upon you and upon the nations of those with you. Some nations We shall give them enjoyment for a time, and then We shall afflict them with a painful punishment.’”

(*Qur'an* 11: 48)

This is an order to Nooh to descend from the Ark after it rested on mount Judi and the water seeped away in the ground and dried up.

The part of the verse, “... in peace from Us, and with blessing upon you” means that you descend with no fear and with blessing upon you, and upon those who will be born afterwards from your children. This is because Allah (ﷻ), did not grant any children to any of the believers who were saved with Nooh. Hence Allah said:

“And We made only his progeny to remain.”

(*Qur'an* 37: 77)

So the lineage of everyone on earth goes back to one of the three children of Nooh (ﷻ), who were saved with him: Sâm, or Hâm, or Yâfuth.

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Samrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Sâm is the father of Arabs, Hâm is the father of Abyssinia and Yâfuth is the father of Rome.”²⁸

Ibn ‘Abdul Barr said: “The intent behind ‘Rome’ in the above hadith is the Rome of those days, who were the Greeks who associated to Romi ibn Lubti ibn Yunân ibn Yâfuth ibn Nooh.

It is reported from Isma‘eel ibn ‘Ayyash on the authority of Sa‘eed ibn Musayyib who said: “Nooh had three sons: Sâm, Yâfuth

²⁸ Tirmidhi has also reported a similar hadith.

and Hâm. Each of them had three children. From the progeny of Sâm came Arabs, Persians and Romans. From Yâfuth came the Turks, Shaqâlibah the slavs and the Gog and Magog people. And from Hâm came Copts, Sudanese, and the Berbers.”

Abu Bakr al-Bazzâr reported in his *Musnad* on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Nooh had three children: Sâm, Hâm and Yâfuth. From Sâm came the Arabs, Persians and the Romans. In these there is goodness. From Yâfuth came the Turks, the slav and the Gog and Magog. There is no goodness in these people. From Hâm came Copts, Sudanese and the Berbers.”²⁹

It is also said that the three children of Nooh were born after the flood and only his son Kan‘ân, who drowned in the flood. ‘Abir, another son of Nooh (ﷺ), was born and died before the flood. However, the correct opinion seems to be that all his three children were with him with their wives (sons wives) and their mother. The Torah also mentions this.

It is mentioned that Hâm had sexual intercourse with his wife on the ship. This angered Nooh (ﷺ) to the extent that he made supplication that the newborn should be deformed. It happened thereafter that the son born as a result of that was Kan‘ân ibn Hâm, who was black and became the forefather of the Sudanese.

However, in another opinion, it is said that Hâm saw his father’s private parts when the latter was asleep and did not cover it up. His brothers then covered their father’s private parts. Then Nooh made supplication against Hâm for his son to be changed and for his progeny to be slaves to other children’s progeny.

²⁹ However, the *Muhadditheen* have talked about this hadith in detail and some have said it is weak.

Qatâdah and others said: "Nooh (ﷺ) and his people boarded the Ark on the tenth day of the month of Rajab. The Ark sailed for one hundred and fifty days and then rested on Mount Joodi for a month. They descended from it on the tenth day of Muharram."

Ibn Jareer mentioned a hadith that is similar to this view. In that, it also says that they fasted that day.

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) once passed by a group of Jews who were fasting the tenth day of Muharram. The Prophet asked them:

"What is this fast about?" They replied, "This is the day when Allah saved Moosa (ﷺ) and the children of Israel from drowning and also He drowned Fir'aun (Pharaoh). Also, this is the day when the Ark rested on Mount Joodi. Thus the Prophets Moosa and Nooh (may Allah be pleased with them) thanked Allah by fasting on that day." The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "I am more close and deserving of Moosa and more deserving of fasting this day."³⁰ He then said to his Companions, "Whoever started the day fasting should complete the fast. And whoever had sexual intercourse with his wife should also finish the day as a fast."³¹

There is an authentic hadith supporting this hadith. However, the strange part of the hadith is the mention of Nooh (ﷺ) also.

Some of the ignorant from India and Iran (Fâris) denied the incident of the flood. Others among them, however, believe that it occurred. Those who deny its occurrence said: "The flood was in a place called Bâbil (Babylonia) and as such, it did not reach us. We have always lived here and inherited the land from our forefathers all the way up to Prophet Adam (ﷺ)."

³⁰ Ahmad, vol. 2, Pp. 359, 360.

³¹ Ibid, with a different chain of narrators.

However, this is the saying of the heretics, those who worship the fire and the followers of the *Shaytān*. This denial from them is their foolishness, proof of their disbelief and arrogance, and denying the Lord of the earth and the heavens.

All religions that have taken their information from the Messenger of *ar-Rahmân* (Allah) have a consensus regarding the occurrence of the flood. Similarly, they all agree that the flood encompassed every place on the earth and that Allah did not leave any of the disbelievers. This was His answer to the supplication made by Nooh (عليه السلام) and what He had already decreed divinely.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

"Verily, he was a grateful slave." (Our'an 17: 3)

It was said that this part of the verse means that Nooh (ﷺ) used to praise Allah for his food, water, clothes and everything else.

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Anas ibn Mâlik (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"Verily, Allah is pleased with a person who praises Him after he eats some food, and who praises Him after drinking some liquids."³²

What is apparent is that the one who thanks Allah for the blessings, does so by performing all the worship in all their forms, such as with the heart, the tongue and the body.

Imam Ibn Mâjah reported a hadith on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr (رضي الله عنهما) in his *Sunan* regarding the fasting of Nooh (نوح) under *Chapter concerning the fast of Nooh* that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

³² Imams Muslim, Tirmidhi and Nasâ'i reported a similar hadith on the authority of Abu Usâmah. Ahmad, vol. 3, Pp. 100, 117; Muslim, *Kitâb adh-Dhikr* and *Kitâb al-At'âmah*.

"Nooh fasted the whole year except the two days of 'Eids: '*Eid al-Fitr* and '*Eid al-Adha*."

Tabarānī reported on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr (رضي الله عنه) that he heard the Messenger of Allah (صلوات الله عليه وآله وسليمه) say:

"Nooh fasted the whole year except the two days of 'Eids: '*Eid al-Fitr* and '*Eid al-Adha*. Dawood fasted half of the year. Ibraheem fasted three days from each month. He also at times fasted the whole year and at times, did not fast for a whole year."

As regards the Hajj performed by Nooh (رضي الله عنه), Hāfidh Abu Ya'lā reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that during Hajj when Messenger of Allah (صلوات الله عليه وآله وسليمه) passed by the valley 'Asfān, asked Abu Bakr:

"What is this valley?" He replied, "This is the 'Asfān valley — it was on the way between Makkah and Madeenah." The Prophet then said to him, "Verily, Nooh, Hood and Ibraheem all passed by this valley on their he-camels on their way to Hajj."³³

Imam Ahmād reported on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) who said: "While we were with the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وآله وسليمه), a bedouin came to him wearing a long garment (*Jubbah*) made in *Sayhan*, woven with silk. The Prophet said:

'This friend of yours has put on a pure Persian style, and erased every sign of being shepherd.' Then he seized him with his *Jubbah* and said, 'I see upon you the clothe of those who do not use their intelligence?' Then he said to him, 'When death approached Prophet Nooh, he said to his son, 'I am going to tell you my will: I command you for two things and forbid you from two things. I command you to believe that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah. If the seven heavens and seven earths

³³ Ahmad, vol. 1, p. 232.

were put on one side of the scale, and the word “*Lâ ilâha illa Allâh*” on the other, the latter will outweigh the former. And I forbid you from *Shirk* and arrogance.”

It was said to the Prophet (ﷺ):

“O’ Messenger of Allah! We know what *Shirk* means, but what is arrogance? Does it mean that we have a pair of beautiful shoes with beautiful laces?” The Prophet answered, “No.” Then it was said, “Is it to wear a nice dress?” The Prophet replied again, “No.” It was asked again, “Is it to ride an animal?” The Prophet said, “No.” He was again asked, “Is it to sit together with friends?” The Prophet said, “No.” They then asked him, “What is *Kibr* (arrogance) then?” The Prophet said, “Arrogance is to disregard the truth and to think low of people.”

The chain of this hadith is authentic, however, Imams Bukhari and Muslim did not report it in their books.³⁴

³⁴ Ahmad, vol. 2, p. 170.

Chapter Four

The Story of Hood (ﷺ)

*H*e is Hood ibn Shâlekh ibn Arfakhshadh ibn Sâm ibn Nooh (ﷺ). It is also said that Hood was ‘Âber ibn Shâlekh ibn Arfakhshadh ibn Sâm ibn Nooh. And also said Hood ibn Abdullah ibn Rabâh al-Jârood ibn ‘Âd ibn Ghawš ibn Iram ibn Sâm ibn Nooh as Ibn Jareer puts it.

He came from a tribe known as ‘Âd. They were Arabs who lived in al-Ahqâf — the desert mountains between Oman and Hadramaut near the sea. The place where they lived was called ash-Shâhr, and the name of their valley was Mugheeth.

Most of them lived in tents with huge pillars as the All-High said:

“Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the ‘Âd. Of the city of Iram, with lofty pillars, the like of which was never created in any place.” *(Qur'an 89: 6-8)*

And they were the earlier or the first of ‘Âd.

Ibn Hibbân reported in his *Saheeh* on the authority of Abu Dharr (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned Hood in a long hadith about Prophets and Messengers. The Prophet said:

“Four of them were Arab: Hood, Shâlekh, Shu‘ayb and your Prophet, O’ Abu Dharr.”

It is said that Hood was the first person to speak Arabic. Wahb ibn Munabbih claimed that it was not him but his father who first spoke Arabic. Others have said that Nooh (ﷺ) was the first. And yet others have said it was Adam (ﷺ) and it seems more likely. There

are other opinions too. And Allah knows best.

The Arabs who lived before Isma'eel (ﷺ) are called *Arab Āribah*, meaning the original Arabs. They were many tribes including 'Ād, Thamood, Jurhum, Ṭasm, Jadays, Umaym, Madyan, 'Imlāq, Jāsim, Qaḥṭān, Banu Yaqṭān and others.

Those who are called *Arab Mustaribah*, meaning those who assimilated themselves by means of marriage, come from the lineage of Isma'eel (ﷺ), the son of *Ibraheem al-Khaleel* (ﷺ). Isma'eel (ﷺ) was the first to speak eloquent and best Arabic. He learnt the eloquent Arabic from the tribe Jurhum who stayed near his mother Hāger in the Ḥaram area. A detailed account of this will follow soon by the Will of Allah, (ﷻ). Allah gave him the ability to speak the best and eloquent Arabic. Similarly, our Prophet (ﷺ) also spoke the way Isma'eel (ﷺ) used to speak Arabic.

The people of 'Ād — the first 'Ād — were first people to worship idols after the flood. They had three idols: Ṣamada, Samoodā and Harā.

Allah (ﷻ), sent to them their brother, Hood (ﷺ), as a Prophet who called to the worship of Allah Alone. He (Allah) said:

"And to 'Ād We sent their brother Hood. He [Hood] said, 'O' my people, worship Allah, you do not have any other god than Him. Will you then not fear Him?' The leaders of those who disbelieved from his people said, 'Most surely we think of you that you are of unsound mind and we think you are a liar.' He said, 'O' my people, I am not of unsound mind but I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds. I bring you the message of my Lord and I am your trustworthy advisor. Do you wonder that an admonition came to you from your Lord through a man from among you so that he may warn you? And remember when He made you successors to the people of Nooh and increased

you in stature broadly. Then remember Allah's bounty that you may prosper.' They said, 'Have you come to us that we may worship Allah Alone and forsake that which our fathers worshipped? Then bring to us your threats if you are truthful?' He said, 'The anger and wrath of your Lord has fallen upon you. Do you dispute with me about names which you and your fathers have come up with which Allah has sent down no authority. Then watch and wait, and I will be watching and waiting with you.' So We rescued him and those with him by Our Mercy. We severed the roots of those who disbelieved in Our Revelation, and they were not believers."

(*Qur'an* 7: 65-72)

Similarly, Allah (ﷻ), said in another *Soorah*:

"And to 'Âd We sent their brother Hood. He [Hood] said, 'O' my people, worship Allah, you have no god other than Him. You are not except those who make up lies. O' my people, I do not ask you reward for this. My reward is with Him Who created me. Will you then not understand? And O' my people, ask forgiveness from your Lord, repent to Him, and He will send plentiful rain from the skies upon you and He will increase you in strength. Do not turn away guilty.' They said, 'O' Hood, you have not brought us a clear sign and we shall not desert our gods at your word. We will not believe in you. We say nothing but that some of our gods have smitten you with evil.' Hood said, 'I call Allah to witness, and you should bear witness that I am free of what you associate with Him of other gods. So all of you together plan against me and give me no respite. I have put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord. There is no creature that moves but He has taken its forelock. Surely, my Lord is on the Straight Path. But if you turn away, I have certainly conveyed the message to you with which I was sent to you.'

My Lord will replace you with others and you will not be able to harm Him in any way. My Lord is the Keeper of all things. And when Our order came, We rescued Hood and those who believed with him through Our Mercy and saved them from a severe punishment.’ And such were the people of ‘Ad, they denied the revelation of their Lord, disobeyed His Messenger and followed the order of every insolent tyrant. They were followed by a curse in this life and on the Day of Judgement. Behold, ‘Ad disbelieved in their Lord, so away with ‘Ad, the people of Hood.” (*Qur'an* 11: 50-60)

Allah (ﷻ), mentioned the story of Hood after the story of Nooh (ﷺ) in *Soorah al-Mu'minoon*:

“Then after them We raised up another generation. And We sent among them a Messenger from themselves who said, ‘Worship Allah, you have no other god than Him. Will you then not fear Him?’ And the leaders of the disbelievers from among his people who denied their meeting with Us in the Hereafter and to who We had given the bountiful things of this world, they said, ‘He [the Prophet] is not except a man like yourselves. He eats what you eat and drinks what you drink. If you obey a man like yourselves, you surely will be losers. Does he promise you that when you are dead and have become dust and bones, you shall be raised up? Impossible, impossible that you are promised. There is nothing but the life of this world, we die and we live, and we shall never be raised up. He is nothing except a man who lied in the Name of Allah. We are not going to believe in him.’ Hood said, ‘My Lord, help me for they accused me of falsehood.’ Allah said, ‘Very soon they shall become regretful.’ The blast then seized them in truth and We made them like scum. So away with the evildoers!”

(*Qur'an* 23: 31-41)

Allah (ﷻ), mentioned the story of Hood after the story of Nooh (ﷺ) in *Soorah ash-Shu'arā'*:

"‘Ad disbelieved the Messengers when their brother Hood said to them, ‘Will you not then fear Allah? I am for you a trustworthy Messenger. So fear Allah and obey me. I do not ask from you any reward for it. Verily, my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds. Do you build a landmark on every high place to amuse yourselves? And you take for yourselves fine buildings hoping you may live forever? And when you exert your power, you do so like tyrants. So fear Allah and obey me. And fear Allah, the One Who has bestowed on you what you know. Bestowed on you cattle and children, and gardens and fountains. Indeed, I fear for you the punishment of a great day.’ They said, ‘It is the same to us whether you admonish us or whether you are not one of those who admonish us. This is nothing except the customary religion of the earlier people. We will not be punished.’ So they disbelieved him and because of that We destroyed them. Surely there is a sign in this, but most of them are not believers. And indeed your Lord is the Almighty, the All-Merciful.” (Qur'an 26: 123-140)

And Allah (ﷻ), said in *Soorah Fuṣṣilat*:

“As for ‘Ad, they behaved arrogantly in the land with no reason, and said, ‘Who is mightier than us in power?’ Could they not see that Allah Who created them is mightier than them in power? And they continued to reject Our Signs. So We sent upon them a raging wind over ill-fated evil days that We might let them taste the humiliating punishment in the life of this world and the Hereafter. And the punishment of the Hereafter is even more humiliating, and they will not be helped.” (Qur'an 41: 15-16)

Allah (ﷻ), said in *Soorah al-Ahqâf*:

“And remember the brother of ‘Ad when he warned his people at [the region of] *al-Ahqâf* — the sand dunes. And indeed warners had come before him and after him, saying, ‘Worship none but Allah, truly I fear for you the punishment of a great day.’ They said, ‘Have you come to turn us away from our gods? So bring us what you threaten us with if you are truthful.’ He said, ‘Verily the knowledge is only with Allah, and I convey to you the message with which I am sent. But I see that you are an ignorant people.’ Then when they saw it as a dense cloud coming towards their valleys, they said, ‘This is a cloud that will give us rain.’ No, rather this is what you were asking to be hastened. A wind that contains a painful punishment, destroying all things by the order of its Lord. Then there remained nothing to be seen except their dwelling places. Thus do We recompense the sinful people.”

(*Qur'an* 46: 21-25)

Allah, (ﷻ) said in *Soorah adh-Dhâriyât*:

“And in ‘Ad when We sent upon them the sterile wind which left nothing that it came upon but reduced it to ruin.”

(*Qur'an* 51: 41-42)

Allah (ﷻ), also said in *Soorah an-Najm*:

“And that it is He [Allah] Who destroyed the former ‘Ad and Thamood people. He spared none of them. And the people of Nooh aforetime. Verily, they were more unjust and more rebellious and transgressing. And He destroyed the overthrown cities [i.e. the people to whom Prophet Loot was sent]. So there covered them that which did cover. Then which of the Graces of your Lord will you doubt?”

(*Qur'an* 53: 50-55)

And Allah said in *Soorah al-Qamar*:

“‘Ad rejected warnings, then see how was My punishment and My warnings. We sent upon them a raging wind on an ill-fated day of constant calamity. It plucked up people as if they were uprooted trunks of palm trees. See how was My punishment and how true are My warning. And We have indeed made this Qur'an easy to understand. Then is there any who will receive admonition?’” (*Qur'an* 54: 18-22)

And in *Soorah al-Haqqa*:

“And ‘Ad, they were destroyed by a fierce roaring wind which He made rage against them for seven nights and eight days uninterrupted. So you could see the people lying overthrown as if they were stumps of fallen palm tree. Then do you see any remnant of them?” (*Qur'an* 69: 6-8)

And finally, Allah (ﷻ), said in *Soorah al-Fajr*:

“Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with ‘Ad, of the city of Iram, with lofty pillars. The like of which was never created in any place. And the Thamood, who hewed out rocks in the valley. And with Fir'aun of the stakes; who were insolent in the land and infested it with much corruption. Therefore your Lord loosened upon them a scourge of chastisement. Surely, your Lord is Ever Watchful.” (*Qur'an* 89: 6-14)

We have discussed each of these in our book of *Tafseer* in their respective places. All praise is to Allah.

Apart from above-mentioned references, this story is also in *Soorah at-Tawbah*, *Ibraheem*, *al-Furqan*, *al-Ankaboot*, *Sâd* and *Qâf*.

Here we will mention the details of this story from the verses along with what has come in hadiths.

It has already been mentioned that ‘Ad were the first people to worship idols after the flood. This fact is clearly stated in the verse:

“And remember when He made you successors to the people of Nooh and increased you in stature broadly.”

(*Qur'an* 7: 69)

And in the verse:

“Then after them We raised up another generation.”

(*Qur'an* 23: 31)

This verse, according to the most correct opinion of the scholars, is alluding to the people of Hood (ؑ).

Other scholars said that the first to worship idols after the flood were the people of Thamood. They refer to the following verse to support their opinion:

“The blast then seized them with justice, and We cast them away like scum.”

(*Qur'an* 23: 41)

They say that the people destroyed by the blast were the people of Sâleh (ؑ) (and not the people of ‘Ad). Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And ‘Ad, they were destroyed by a fierce roaring wind.”

(*Qur'an* 69: 6)

However, it is possible that they might have been destroyed and punished by both, the blast and the roaring wind. This is exactly what happened to the people of Madyan, the companions of Aykah, who were destroyed by a combination of punishments. If we assume this with the people of ‘Ad, then there is no difference of opinion that ‘Ad were before Thamood.

Anyway, the point is that ‘Ad were a disbelieving people who transgressed against Allah and were deeply involved in idol worship. So Allah sent a man from among themselves as a Messenger to call

them towards Allah and sincerely worship Him only in all their acts. His people called him a liar, went against him, and belittled him. So Allah sent His punishment upon them.

Allah (ﷻ), ordered Hood (ﷺ) to invite them to worship Allah Alone. He gave them glad tidings if they obey Him and seek His forgiveness. He also told them that Allah would provide for them the best of the both worlds. However, if they refused, they would be punished in both worlds. Upon this, their leaders said:

“The leaders of those who disbelieved from his people said,
‘Most surely we regard you of unsound mind’...”

(*Qur'an* 7: 66)

They said that we regard the beliefs you are inviting us to as foolishness when compared to our idol worship, from whom we seek our provisions and help. Along with this, we see that you are lying in your claim of being a Messenger of Allah.

Allah said:

“He [Hood] said, ‘O’ my people, I am not of unsound mind, but I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds. I bring you the message of my Lord, and I am your trustworthy advisor.’”

(*Qur'an* 7: 67-68)

Conveying a message necessitates not lying and not adding or hiding from the original message. Similarly, it necessitates that it should be conveyed in the most eloquent language that has no ambiguity nor any confusion.

Along with the communicative qualities for the message, Hood (ﷺ) was full of mercy and best wishes for his people. He tried his best for them to be guided. He did not seek from them any worldly reward. Rather, Hood (ﷺ) was sincere in calling towards Allah (ﷻ), in his *dawah* and advises. He only wanted his reward from the One Who sent him because the best of this world and the

hereafter is in His Hands and in His command. For this reason, Hood (ﷺ) said (in the words of the Qur'an):

“O' my people! I do not seek reward from you. Verily, my reward is with the One Who created me. Will you then not understand?”
(Qur'an 11: 51)

This means: do you not have any senses by which you distinguish and understand that I am calling you to the clear truth that your natural instinct bears witness to. That is the religion of truth with which Nooh (ﷺ) was sent and whosoever disobeyed it was destroyed. So I am here to invite you to that right path and I do not ask you any reward for my mission. Rather, my reward is with Allah, the One Who possesses harm and benefit.

There is another verse similar to this:

“Follow those who do not ask any reward of you, and who are guided. And why should I not worship the One Who created me, and to whom you shall be returned?”
(Qur'an 36: 21-22)

The people of Hood said to him:

“O' Hood, you have not brought us a clear sign, and we will not leave our gods at your word and we do not believe in you. We say nothing but that some of our gods have smitten you with some evil.”
(Qur'an 11: 53-54)

The meaning of what they said is: you did not bring us any miracle that witnesses your claim of being truthful. Thus we are not going to leave the worship of our gods on the basis of your hollow claims, with any proofs. We think that you are nothing but a crazy person. We believe that this madness has been inflicted upon you only because you have angered some of our gods.

Hood (ﷺ) said (in the words of the Qur'an):

"He [Hood] said, 'I call Allah to witness and you should bear witness that I am free of what you associate with Him as other gods. So plan against me all together and give me no respite.' " *(Qur'an 11: 54-55)*

This is a challenge from Hood (ﷺ) and degrading of their gods because he said that they are unable to benefit or harm anyone. They are mere inanimate bodies who do not have control even over themselves. If according to your claim they help you and benefit or harm you, so I am here free of them and I send my curse upon them. That is why he said: "So plan against me all together and give me no respite." This means: all of you plan against me with all that is possible and do not give me any respite for an hour or even the blink of an eye. I am not concerned with your plans and I do not care about them.

Allah said in the Qur'an that Prophet Hood said:

"Say, 'I [Hood] have put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord, there is no creature that moves but He has taken it by its forelock. Surely, my Lord is on the Straight Path.'"

(Qur'an II: 56)

This is enough as a proof that Hood was a Messenger of Allah and His slave, and that they were in ignorance and error in their worship of gods other than Allah. The false gods cannot inflict upon Hood (ﷺ) any harm nor change his fortune. So all this points to his sincerity and truthfulness, and also points to the falsehood of the beliefs they held.

This is exactly the same reasoning which Nooh (عليه السلام) used as evidence against his people. In his words:

"My people! If my residence and my reminding of the Signs of Allah has become burdensome upon you, then I have put my trust in Allah. So gather your plan and bring together

your associates and then let not your plan be ambiguous upon you, then pass your judgement against me and give me no respite.”

(*Qur'an* 10: 71)

Prophet Ibraheem (ﷺ) also used the same argument against his people. He said, as the Qur'an mentions:

“... And I fear not that which you associate with Him, unless my Lord willed something. The Knowledge of my Lord embraces all things, will you then not be admonished? And how should I fear that which you have associated with Allah, while you do not fear associating partners with Allah, for which you have received no authority. Which of the two parties is more deserving of feeling secure, if only you know? It is only those who have believed and have not polluted their Faith by associating others with Allah, have security and are rightly guided. This is Our argument which We bestowed on Ibraheem against his people. We raise up in degrees whoever We please. Surely, your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing.”

(*Qur'an* 6: 82-83)

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And the chiefs of the disbelievers from among his people, who denied their meeting with Us in the Hereafter and to whom We had given the bountiful things of this world, said, ‘He is no more than a man like yourselves, he eats what you eat, and he drinks what you drink. And if you obey a man like yourselves, you surely will be the losers. Does he promise you that when you are dead and have become dust and bones, you shall be raised up?’” (*Qur'an* 23: 33-35)

The people of Hood could not fathom the thought that Allah would send a human as His Messenger. This was the very same doubt, which every disbelieving nation had regardless of the time they lived in history. Allah (ﷻ), said:

"Is it a wonder to mankind that We revealed to a man among themselves to warn the people." (Qur'an 10: 2)

And:

"And nothing prevented the people from believing when the guidance came to them but that they said, 'Has Allah sent a human as a Messenger?' Say, 'Had there been on the earth angels walking with tranquillity, We would have sent down an angel as a Messenger from heaven to them.'"'

(*Qur'an* 17: 94-95)

For this reason Hood (⊗) said to them:

“Do you wonder that an admonition came to you from your Lord through a man from among you so he may warn you?”

(*Qur'an* 7: 63)

This means that it is not something to be surprised about because Allah sends whom He pleases.

Also, Allah, (ﷻ) said:

"Does he [Hood] promise you that when you are dead, and have become dust and bones, you will be raised up? Impossible, impossible, what you are promised. There is nothing but the life of this world, we die and we live, but we will never be raised up. He is nothing but a man who invents lies in the Name of Allah, but we are not one of those who believe in him.' He said, 'My Lord, help me, for they accuse me of falsehood.'" *(Our'an 23: 35-39)*

(*Qur'an* 23: 35-39)

They thought that the Hereafter is an improbable matter and refused to accept the resurrection of bodies after they decayed and became dust and bones. Hence they said:

"Impossible, impossible what you are promised. There is nothing but the life of this world, we die and we live, but we

will never be raised up.”

(*Qur'an 23: 35-37*)

This means that as a nation passes away, others follow them thus the cycles continues forever. This is the belief of a group called the *Dahriyah* (materialist). Some ignorant people from Zindeeq say that wombs produce and the earth swallows.

A group called *Dawriyah* believe that they return to this world after every thirty-six thousand years.

All of these beliefs are nothing but lies, disbelief, ignorance and misguidance. They are false claims and imaginations that are not backed by any credible evidence. Those among the children of Adam (ﷺ) who do not have senses and intellect have tried to use senses and intellect! Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And the hearts of only those who do not believe in the Hereafter may be inclined to it, and that they may be well pleased with it, and that they may invent what they are going to invent.”

(*Qur'an 6: 113*)

Hood (ﷺ) admonished them by saying:

“Do you build a landmark on every high place to amuse yourselves, and that you get for yourselves fine buildings as though you may live forever.”

(*Qur'an 26: 128-129*)

Prophet Hood (ﷺ) told them: do you build on every elevated place a huge landmark like palaces and castles. You are merely fooling around because you do not need them. They did not need them because they used to live in tents. Allah said:

“Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the ‘Ad? Of the city of Iram, with lofty pillars. The like of which was never created in any land.”

(*Qur'an 89: 6-8*)

So the ‘Ad of Iram were the ancient ‘Ad who lived in tents pitched by lofty pillars.

Whoever claims that Iram is a city of gold and silver and that it moves from one place to another have fallen into error and has claimed that without evidence.

Regarding the words “fine buildings” in the verse, “and that you get for yourselves fine buildings”, some regard it to be palaces, while to others they are dovecots and to some they are water resources. The part of the verse: “As though you may live forever,” means that you hope to live for a long time. The verse goes on as:

“And when you exert your power, you exert it like tyrants. So fear Allah and obey me. And fear the One Who has bestowed on you what you know. Bestowed on you cattle and children, and gardens and fountains. Indeed, I fear for you the punishment of a great day.” (*Qur'an* 26: 130-135)

His people said to him in response:

“Have you come to us that we may worship Allah Alone, and forsake that which our fathers worshipped? Then bring to us your threats, if you are among the truthful.”

(*Qur'an* 7: 70)

That is, they said to the Prophet: Did you come to us so that we worship only Allah and disregard the practices of our forefathers and ancestors? So if you are truthful in what you claim, then let those punishments which you have promised befall upon us. No matter what, we are not going to believe in you or follow you or believe in what you have brought.

Allah (ﷻ), then mentioned what the people said to Hood:

“It is the same to us whether you admonish us or you are not one of those who admonish. This is nothing other than the customary religion of the ancient people. And we are not going to be punished.”

(*Qur'an* 26: 136-138)

The Arabic word translated to mean “customary religion” is mentioned in the Qur'an as *Khuluq*. In this case, it means that the religion which we follow is nothing other than what our forefathers and ancestors followed, thus we will not change our beliefs. However, if we read it according to another recitation, it becomes *Khalq*. In such a case, it means invention or falsification; thus whatever you have brought us is nothing more than your own invention which you took from ancient books. Both recitations are possible and relate to the end of the verse where they are quoted to have said:

“And we are not going to be punished.” (*Qur'an* 26: 138)

Prophet Hood (ﷺ), said:

“The anger and wrath of your Lord has fallen you. Do you dispute with me regarding names which you and your fathers have invented and for which Allah has sent down no authority? Then wait and I will be waiting with you.”

(*Qur'an* 7: 71)

The meaning of what Prophet Hood (ﷺ) said to them is: you have deserved the anger and wrath of Allah by this behaviour. Do you go against the worship of Allah Alone, Who has no partner, by worshipping idols, which you have invented and named? You have rejected the acceptance of truth and have persisted in falsehood. Now it is the same to you whether I warn you or do not warn you. So wait for the punishment of Allah which will befall you. There is none who can turn it away.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“He said, ‘My Lord, help me, for they accuse me of falsehood.’ Allah said, ‘Very soon they will become remorseful.’ The blast then seized them with justice, and We cast them away like scum, so away with the evildoers.”

(*Qur'an* 23: 39-41)

Also Allah (ﷻ), said:

“They said, ‘Have you come to turn us away from our gods? So bring us what you threaten us with, if you are among the truthful.’ He said, ‘The knowledge is only with Allah, and I convey to you the Message with which I am sent. But I see that you are an ignorant people.’ Then when they saw it as a dense cloud coming towards their valleys, they said, ‘This is a cloud that will give us rain.’ No, this is what you were asking to be hastened. A wind wherein is a painful punishment which destroys all things by the order from its Lord. Then there did not remain anything to be seen except their dwelling places. Thus do We recompense the sinful people.”
(Qur'an 46: 22-25)

Allah also mentioned their destruction in other verses in the Qur'an. For example:

“So We rescued him and those with him by Our Mercy, and We severed the roots of those who disbelieved in Our Revelation, and they were not believers.”
(Qur'an 7: 72)

Similarly, Allah said in another place:

“And when Our order came, We rescued Hood and those who believed with him, through Our Mercy, and saved them from a severe punishment. And such were the people of ‘Ad, they denied the Revelation of their Lord, and disobeyed His Messenger, and followed the order of every insolent tyrant. They were pursued by a curse in this life, and upon the Day of Resurrection. Behold, ‘Ad disbelieved in their Lord, so away with ‘Ad the people of Hood.”
(Qur'an 11: 58-60)

And also:

"Then, when they saw it as a dense cloud coming towards their valleys, they said, 'This is a cloud that will give us rain.' No, this is what you were asking to be hastened. A wind wherein is a painful punishment." (*Qur'an* 46: 24)

This was the beginning of their punishment. They started suffering from a desire for rain, drought and famine. They wished for rain and thus when they saw clouds coming in the sky, they thought it was rain that would bring relief to them. However, to their surprise, it was contrary to their thought and hope. It was rain of punishment. That is why Allah said, "No this is what you were asking to be hastened," meaning the occurrence of the punishment. This was in response to their saying,

"... then bring us what you promised us if you are among the truthful." (*Qur'an* 11: 32)

Allah (ﷺ), said:

"... which He made it rage against them for seven nights and eight days, continuously..." (*Qur'an* 46: 7)

This means that it went on and on, unceasingly, with no respite. It said that it started on Friday. In another opinion, it is suggested that it started on Wednesday.

Then Allah said after it:

"... You could see the people lying overthrown as if they were stumps of fallen palm trees." (*Qur'an* 46: 7)

Allah likened the people of 'Ad with stumps of palm trees that have no branches coming out from them. This was the case because the wind would come to one of them, lift him, throw him in the air and then leave them fall on their heads. When they fell on earth, they were mere bodies without heads, as Allah (ﷺ), said:

"We sent upon them a raging wind on an ill-fated day of constant calamity, plucking up people as if they were uprooted trunks of palm trees." (*Qur'an 54: 19-20*)

The day the punishment came upon them is described as ill fated and thus some people take their bad omen out of Wednesday. This is an incorrect understanding and contrary to the Qur'an, because another verse reads: "We sent upon them a raging wind over ill-fated, evil days." As we know, the punishment continued for eight days. If these days are evil and ill fated in themselves, then all these seven days come under it and thus should also be taken as ominous and not just Wednesday. Nobody has ever said that all the days are ill fated and evil.

Allah said:

"And in 'Ad, when We sent upon them the sterile wind that left nothing that it came upon but reduced it to ruin."

(*Qur'an 51: 41-42*)

Sterile here means that does not produce any good because it did not pollinate any tree nor did it bring any cloud.

It is established in Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"I was helped by *Şabâ* (east wind), and 'Ad were destroyed by *Daboor* (west wind)." ³⁵

As regards the saying of Allah:

"And mention the brother of 'Ad, when he warned his people at the sand dunes — (in the region of) *al-Ahqâf*, and indeed warners had come before him and after him, saying,

³⁵ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Anbiya*, chapter "Allah saying, 'And to 'Ad, their brother Hood'" and Muslim, *Kitâb al-Istisqa*, Chapter "Reeh as-Şabâ wad-Daboor".

‘Worship none but Allah, truly I fear for you the punishment of a great day’.”

(*Qur'an* 46: 21)

It is apparent that this is speaking about the ancient or the earlier ‘Ad because its context is the same as the context of the people of Hood, who themselves were the first. It is also possible that they are the second or later ‘Ad because of what we have already mentioned and also because of a hadith we will mention shortly on the authority of ‘A’ishah (عاصة).

Regarding the saying of Allah,

“Then when they saw it as dense cloud coming towards their valleys, they said, ‘This is a cloud that will give us rain.’ No, this is what you were asking to be hastened. A wind that contains a painful punishment.” (*Qur'an* 46: 24)

When ‘Ad saw those clouds in the sky, they took it for rain clouds. It, however, turned out to be destructive clouds. They believed it to bring them relief, but it was punishment. They had put their hopes in it and received nothing but evil. It is possible that their punishment was that raging, fatal, immensely cold wind which continued for seven nights and eight days, and thus no soul was left alive. In fact, it even followed them into the mountain caves and destroyed them in there. It destroyed their palaces, fortified castles and landmarks. As they boasted about their strength and power by saying, ‘Who is mightier than us’, Allah sent upon them something that was more powerful than their might. And this was the barren wind.

It is also probable that the wind stirred up cloud at the end of the punishment. Then those who were still alive thought it was a cloud of mercy. Then Allah sent upon them evil and fire. This has been mentioned by a number of historians. If this was the case, then it would be similar to the fate of the companions of Madyan wherein more than one kind of punishment inflicted them.

Imam Muslim reported on the authority of ‘Â’ishah (رضي الله عنها) a hadith regarding what the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) would say when the wind blew. She said that the Prophet used to say:

“O’ Allah, I ask You its good, the goodness contained in it and the goodness with which it was sent. And I seek refuge with You from its evil, the evil contained in it, and the evil with which it was sent.”

‘Â’ishah (رضي الله عنها) further added:

“Whenever the sky was covered, the Prophet’s face would change. He would enter the house and then go out, then would pace up and down. If it rained, he would become happy.”

Once, after noticing this, ‘Â’ishah (رضي الله عنها) asked him regarding it. The Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) replied,

“It could be what the people of ‘Âd have faced previously. They had said,

‘Then, when they saw it as a dense cloud coming towards their valleys, they said, ‘This is a cloud that will give us rain’.’
(Qur'an 46: 24)”

Chapter Five

The Story of Sâleh (ﷺ)

Thamood was a famous tribe named after their forefather Thamood who was the brother of Judays. Both of them were the sons of ‘Âthir ibn Iram ibn Sâm ibn Nooh (ﷺ).

They were from the Arabs al-‘Âribah, who lived in *al-Hîjrah*, between Hijâz and Tabuk. The Prophet (ﷺ) passed by this place when he went to Tabuk with the Muslims. They were a people who lived after ‘Âd and like ‘Âd, they too worshipped idols.

Thus Allah (ﷻ), sent a man to them from among themselves as His Messenger and Prophet. His name was Sâleh, his lineage was Sâleh ibn ‘Ubayd ibn Mâseh ibn ‘Ubayd ibn Hâdir ibn Thamood ibn ‘Âthir ibn Iram ibn Nooh (ﷺ). He called them to worship Allah Alone, Who has no partner, and to desist from *Shirk*, to shun all their idols and false worship. A group among them believed in him but most of them disbelieved. They tried to slander him, and even kill him. They killed the camel that Allah (ﷻ), made a proof against them. Then Allah punished them severely and destroyed them.

Allah (ﷻ), said in *Soorah al-A'râf*:

“And to Thamood We sent their brother Sâleh. He said, ‘O’ my people, worship Allah. You have no god other than Him. There has now come to you a clear sign from your Lord. This is Allah’s she-camel, a sign for you, so leave her alone to graze on Allah’s earth and do not harm her lest a painful punishment seize you.’ And remember when He made you successors after ‘Âd and established you in the land, and

enabled you to make castles on its plains, and to hew out houses from its mountains. So remember Allah's bounties and do not do mischief on earth. The chiefs of those who behaved arrogantly among his people said to those who were considered weak from those who believed, 'Do you know and believe that Šâleħ is sent by the Lord?' They said, 'Indeed, we believe in the message with which he has been sent.' Those who were haughty said, 'We certainly disbelieve in what you believe.' So they slew the she-camel and insolently defied their Lord's order. They challenged Šâleħ saying, 'Bring us that which you threaten us with; if you are a Messenger.' So a shocking earthquake seized them and they fell squatting in their abodes. So Šâleħ left them and said, 'O' my people, I indeed conveyed to you the message of my Lord and I advised you sincerely, but you do not love sincere advisors'." *(Qur'an 7: 73-79)*

(*Qur'an* 7: 73-79)

And Allah (ﷻ), said in Soorah Hood:

"And to Thamood we sent their brother Sâleh. He said, 'O' my people, worship Allah, you have no god other then Him. He has created you from the earth and made you to dwell in it. Therefore ask for forgiveness from Him, then repent to Him. Surely my Lord is Near and Responsive.' They said, 'O' Sâleh, surely you were among us a source of hope before this. Do you forbid us to worship what our fathers worshipped? Surely, we are in suspicious doubt as to what you invite us to.' He said, 'O' my people, just consider if I have a clear sign from my Lord and He has bestowed His Mercy upon me, who is there to save me from Allah if I disobey Him? Then you increase me not but in loss. And O' my people, this she-camel of Allah is a sign to you, so leave her to feed and graze in Allah's land, and do not touch her with evil, lest a near torment should seize you.' But they

killed her, and he said, ‘Enjoy yourselves in your homes for three days, this is a promise not to be belied.’ And when Our Command came, We rescued Sâleh and those who believed with him by a mercy from Us, and from the disgrace of that day. Surely, your Lord is All-Strong, All-Mighty. And the torment overtook the wrongdoers, so they lay dead, prostrate in their homes. As if they had never lived there. No doubt, Thamood disbelieved in their Lord, so away with Thamood.”
(Qur'an 11: 61-68)

And the All-High said in *Soorah al-Hijr*:

“And the people of *al-Hijr* disbelieved the Messengers; and We gave them Our Signs, but they were averse to them. They were hewing houses from the mountains, dwelling there in deemed security, so the thunderous cry seized them in the morning; and what they achieved proved of no avail to them.”
(Qur'an 15: 80-84)

And in *Soorah al-Isrâ'*:

“And nothing restrained Us from sending the signs, except that the ancient generations rejected them. And We gave to Thamood the she-camel as a clear sign, but they harmed her, and We do not send signs but to make people fear.”
(Qur'an 17: 59)

And in *Soorah ash-Shu'arâ'*:

“Thamood rejected the Messengers, when their brother Sâleh said to them, ‘Will you not fear Allah? I am a trustworthy Messenger to you. So fear Allah and obey me. And I do not ask you for any reward for it, surely my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds. Do you think you will be left secure here, in gardens and fountains, in plantations and date groves with fine spathes? And you hew houses out

of the mountains with great skills. So fear Allah and obey me, and do not obey the call of the transgressors who spread corruption in the land and do not do right.' They said, 'You are merely one of those who are bewitched. You are nothing but a human like us, so bring a sign if you are truthful.' He said, 'This is a she-camel, she shall have her portion of water, and you shall have your portion of water on an appointed day. And do not harm her, lest you be seized with a punishment of a great day.' But they killed her, and then became regretful. So the punishment seized them. Surely there is a sign in this, but most of them are not believers. Indeed your Lord is the All-Mighty, the All-Merciful."

(*Qur'an 26: 141-159*)

Allah (عز وجله), said in *Soorah an-Naml*:

"And We sent to Thamood their brother Sâleh saying, 'Worship Allah.' But they got divided into two disputing parties. He said, 'O' my people, why do you hasten for evil in preference to good? If only you ask Allah for forgiveness, you may be shown mercy.' They said, 'We regard you and your companions as a bad omen.' He said, 'Your omen is with Allah, and you are people under trial.' And there were in the city nine people who made mischief in the land, and did not act righteously. They said, 'Swear a mutual oath by Allah that we will make a night attack on him and his family, and then we will say to his heir, 'We did not witness the slaying of his family, and we are saying the truth'.' And they plotted and We planned a plan while they did not perceive. See how was the end of their plot, for we destroyed them and their people all together. So these are their houses in utter ruin because of the evil they committed. Surely there is a sign in this for people who have knowledge. And We rescued those who believed and were

god-fearing.”

(*Qur'an* 27: 45-53)

In *Soorah Fuṣṣilat*, Allah said:

“As for Thamood, we gave them guidance, but they preferred blindness to guidance, so the thunderbolt seized them with the humiliating punishment for what they earned. And We saved those who believed and were pious.”

(*Qur'an* 41: 17-18)

Also, Allah (ﷻ), said:

“Thamood rejected warnings and they said, ‘Should we follow a human, one like ourselves? Then indeed we shall be in error and insanity. Has the Message been sent to him alone among us? Rather, he is an impudent liar.’ Tomorrow they will know who is the impudent liar. We will send the she-camel as a trial for them, so watch them and bear patiently. And inform them that the water is to be shared between them and her, each one will have his drink in turn. But they called their companion, and he took a sword and killed her. See how was My punishment and how true My warning. Surely, We sent against them a single blast and they became as the dry twigs of a pen-builder. And we have indeed made this Qur'an easy to understand so is there any who will get admonished?”

(*Qur'an* 54: 23-32)

Also, Allah said:

“Thamood insolently rejected the Truth, when their most wretched broke forth with mischief; then the Messenger of Allah said to them, ‘Let the she-camel of Allah, have her drink.’ But they disbelieved him, and they killed her. For their sin, their Lord destroyed them. And He fears no consequences.”

(*Qur'an* 91: 11-15)

Allah (ﷻ), very often in the Qur'an combines the mention of 'Ad and Thamood, as is the case for example in *Soorah at-Tawbah*, *Ibraheem*, *Furqân*, *Sâd*, *Qâf*, *an-Najm* and *al-Fajr*.

It is said that the Jews and the Christians did not know concerning both of these nations, and there is nothing about these people in their Torah. However, we find in the Qur'an that shows that Moosa (ﷺ) had their knowledge and he informed his people about them. This is seen in the saying of Allah in *Soorah Ibraheem*:

"And Moosa said, 'If you and all those on earth with you disbelieve, surely Allah is All-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise.' Has not the stories reached you of those who were before you; the people of Nooh, 'Ad, Thamood and those after them? None knows about them except Allah? To them came Messengers with clear signs..." (*Qur'an 14: 8-9*)

What is apparent from the verses is that it is what Moosa (ﷺ) said to his people. However, as the origin of these two peoples was Arab, they did not record their stories and did not pay attention to preserving such stories despite the fact that such stories were known in the time of Moosa (ﷺ). All praise is to Allah, we have already mentioned on this topic in our book of *Tafseer*.

The purpose now is to mention their story, what happened to them, and how Allah (ﷻ), saved His Prophet Sâleh (ﷺ) and those who believed him. Similarly, we will mention how Allah destroyed all those who disbelieved and belied Sâleh.

We have already mentioned that Thamood were Arabs who came after 'Ad. Despite that, they did not learn any lesson from their fate. For this reason, their Prophet Sâleh (ﷺ) told them:

"Worship Allah, you have no god other than Him. There has now come to you a clear sign from your Lord. This is Allah's she-camel, a sign for you. So leave her alone to

graze on Allah's earth, and do not harm her, lest a painful punishment seize you. And remember when He made you successors after 'Ad, established you in the land, and enabled you to make castles on its plains and you take the mountains as houses. So remember Allah's bounties and do not do mischief on the earth.' " (Our'an 7: 73-74)

That is, Sâlch (ﷺ) said to them: Allah made you successors after 'Âd so that you learn a lesson from their fate and thus act righteously. He has made it easy for you to build palaces and castles on the plains. The part of verse:

"And you take mountains as houses with great skill."

(*Qur'an* 26: 149)

means: you are perfect in what you made and thus you should thank Allah and act righteously. You should also worship only Him, Who has no partner, and deviate not from His obedience, which will result in evil consequences. Due to this, Sâleh (رض) preached to them saying:

"Do you think you will be left here secure? In gardens and fountains, in plantations and date groves with fine spathes? And you take mountains as houses with great skill. So fear Allah and obey me, and do not obey the call of the transgressors who spread corruption on earth and do not act righteously." *(Our'an 26: 146-152)*

He also said to them, as mentioned in another *Soorah*:

"O' my people, worship Allah, you have no god other than Him. He created you from the earth and made you live in it. Therefore, ask Him forgiveness, then repent to Him. Surely my Lord is Near and the One Who responds to supplications." *(Our'an 11: 61)*

Allah (ﷻ) informs:

"They said, 'O' Sâleh, surely you were a source of hope before this.'" *(Qur'an 11: 62)*

That is: we used to hope that you have a perfect intellect before you started calling people to worship Allah alone and to leave whoever we worshipped beside Him and leave what our forefathers were upon. His people replied to his call saying:

"Do you forbid us the worship of what our fathers worshipped? Verily, we are in doubt regarding that which you invite us to.' Sâleh said, 'O' my people, just consider; if I have a clear sign from my Lord? And He has bestowed His Mercy upon me, who is there to save me from Allah if I disobey Him? You would not increase me except in loss.'" *(Qur'an 11: 62-63)*

These verses show how Sâleh (ﷺ) was soft with them in speech when inviting them. He said to them: What do you think if all of what I say and call to was true? What will be your excuse in front of Allah? Who will rescue you from Allah? You want me to leave my call, which is an obligation upon me. If I leave my call, none would be able to give me refuge from Allah. I will persist in calling you to worship Allah Alone, Who has no partners, till Allah's verdict comes between me and you. Their answer to his call was:

"You are merely one of those who are bewitched." *(Qur'an 26: 153)*

What they meant was that, 'Someone has performed magic on you and thus you are just unable to perceive what you are saying.'

The exegetes — the scholars who have explained the Qur'an, mentioned an incident that happened with the Thamood and the she-camel. They said that once the Thamood people gathered in a meeting place. Prophet Sâleh (ﷺ) came to them and preached them, reminded them of Allah, gave them glad tidings and warned them of

the consequences. At that, the Thamood people said to him that if he can bring out a ten-month pregnant she-camel from a particular rock, then they would all believe in him. They also described to him the characteristics they wanted in that she-camel. So Prophet Sâlehh (ﷺ) took from them a covenant that if he is able to provide what they desired, they will indeed believe in him. They all gave him the covenant.

The Prophet Sâlehh (ﷺ) stood up and prayed to Allah (ﷻ), as best and perfectly as he could. He then supplicated to Allah to give the people what they had asked for. Then Allah (ﷻ), ordered that particular rock to split and a she-camel ten-month pregnant came out of it with exactly the features they had demanded.

At that point, the Thamood people saw clear proofs and strong evidence of the truthfulness of Prophet Sâlehh's message. Consequently, many of them believed. However, most of them remained upon their disbelief and misguidance and the state of their enmity to the call. They did not follow the plain truth.

Allah (ﷻ), had decreed that the she-camel remain among them, grazing and drinking from wherever she desired. When she came to the well, she drank the water of that day. Thus the people had to fulfill their need of thirst from the water of the next day. It is said that they drank from her milk the amount that satisfied them. For this reason, Allah (ﷻ), mentioned:

“She will have her portion of water and you will have your portion of water on an appointed day.” (*Qur'an 26: 155*)

He (ﷻ) also said:

“We will send the she-camel as a trial for them. So watch them and bear patiently. And inform them that the water is to be shared between them and her, each one will have his drink in turn.” (*Qur'an 54: 27-28*)

After a long time with this condition, the Thamood elites gathered and decided unanimously that they should kill the she-camel, to get relieved and get plentiful water for themselves. The *Shayṭân* made this plan seem great and graceful to them. Allah (ﷻ), said:

“So they killed the she-camel and transgressed their Lord’s order. They said to Sâleh, ‘Bring us what you threaten us with if you are among the Messengers’.” (*Qur’ân* 7: 77)

The person who killed the she-camel was their leader Qidâr ibn Sâlîf ibn Junda’. He was strong, handsome and appeared red with blue eyes. It is said about him that he was the son of a prostitute with Sâlîf. He killed the she-camel because of the unanimous opinion of the Thamood elites, thus it is said that all of them killed her.

Ibn Jareer and other *Tafseer* scholars said that there were two women from Thamood. The first of them was Sâdooqah, who was the daughter of Mahya ibn Zuhayr ibn Mukhtâr. She was wealthy and from noble descent. She was married to a man who later became a believer, thus she divorced him. She gave herself to one of her cousins called Maṣra’ ibn Mahraj ibn Mahya and told him personally that if he kills the she-camel she would marry him. The name of the other woman was ‘Unayzah bint Ghunaym ibn Mijlaz, known as Umm Ghanmah. She was an old disbelieving woman. She had daughters from her husband called Dhuâb ibn ‘Amr who was one of the leaders. She offered Qidâr ibn Sâlîf all of her four daughters in marriage if he kills the she-camel could marry any of them he chooses. These two youths, along with seven others who volunteered, bringing a total to nine agreed to kill the she-camel. It is they who are mentioned in the following verses:

“And there were in the city nine people who made mischief in the land and did not act righteously.” (*Qur’ân* 27: 48)

These nine people tried to persuade the rest of the tribe and told them the benefits of killing the she-camel. They answered their calls and contributed towards that goal. They went out and waited for her at the watering place. When she came out, Maṣra‘ threw an arrow at her, which went into her shinbone. The women of the tribe came along with them and incited them in their plot to kill her (she-camel) by uncovering their faces to the men. Qidâr ibn Sâlîf stepped forward and killed her with his sword, making her fall on the earth.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“... they called their companion who took a sword and killed her. See how was My punishment and how true My warnings.”
(*Qur'an 54: 29-30*)

And He said:

“When their most wretched broke forth with mischief. Then the Messenger of Allah said to them, ‘Let the she-camel of Allah, have her drink.’ But they disbelieved him, and they killed her. For their sin, their Lord destroyed them and He fears no consequences thereafter.”
(*Qur'an 91: 12-15*)

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of ‘Abdullah ibn Zam‘ah (رضي الله عنه) that one day the Prophet (ﷺ) delivered a sermon. He mentioned in it the she-camel and the person who killed her. He then recited:

“When their most wretched broke forth with mischief,” and said, “There came forward a strong person motivated by his tribe, such as Abu Zam‘ah.”³⁶

Ibn Abi Hâtim reported on the authority of ‘Amâr ibn Yâsir (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said to ‘Ali (رضي الله عنه):

³⁶ Bukhari in *Tafseer of Soorah ash-Shams*; Muslim, *Kitâb al-Jannah*, chapter Hell...entering it..., vol. 4, p. 21, hadith no. 91 and Ahmad, vol. 7, p. 17.

"Should I not tell you about the most wretched person?" He replied, "Yes (please do)." The Prophet said, "Two men: one of them is the man of Thamood who killed the she-camel and the other is the one who will kill you, resulting in your beard becoming wet with your blood."³⁷

Allah (عز وجله), said:

"So they killed the she-camel and defied their Lord's order. They said, 'O' Sâleh, bring us that which you threaten us with; if you are among the Messengers.'" (*Qur'an* 7: 77)

Thus by saying this they proclaimed their utter disbelief consisting a number of disobediences such as:

- 1- They disobeyed Allah and His Prophet by committing the great sin of killing the she-camel which Allah had made a sign for them.
- 2- They demanded the hastening of their punishment which they deserved for two reasons:

One of them is the condition that Allah set with this miraculous sign:

"... and do not touch her, lest you be destroyed by a near punishment." (*Qur'an* 11: 64)

"And do not touch her with harm, lest you be seized by the punishment of a terrible day." (*Qur'an* 26: 156)

"... and touch her not with hurt lest painful torment seize you." (*Qur'an* 7: 73)

And the second: They demanded the hastening of the punishment.

- 3- They rejected the Messenger who produced the clear and undeniable evidence of his Prophethood and truthfulness which they knew perfectly well. However, they were kept away from the truth

³⁷ Ahmad, vol. 4, p. 263.

due to their persistence in disbelief and transgression. This was also the cause of the punishment befalling them. Allah said:

“... but they killed her. Thus he [Şâleh] said, ‘Enjoy yourselves in your homes for three days, this is promise that is not to be belied.’”
(Qur'an 11: 65)

The scholars have mentioned that when they killed the she-camel, the first to attack her was Qidâr ibn Sâlîf. May Allah curse him. He killed her and she fell on the ground. Then all of them moved towards her with their swords in order to cut her into pieces. When her calf saw what happened to his mother, he ran away and climbed on the mountain peak and howled three times.

That is why Şâleh (ﷺ) said to them: “Enjoy yourselves in your homes for three days.” These three days did not include the day when they killed the she-camel. They did not believe Şâleh even in this second promise of punishment. Infact, later on, they even tried to kill Şâleh (ﷺ), such that he be where the she-camel had gone. Allah (ﷻ), said:

“They said, ‘Swear a mutual oath by Allah that we will attack him and his family at night. Then we will say to his heir, ‘We did not see the murder of his family and verily we are speaking the truth’.’”
(Qur'an 27: 49)

What they meant is that they will kill him along with his family and then deny their murder in case any of his relations/allies demand for blood money.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And they plotted, and We planned while they did not perceive. Then see how was the end of their plot for We destroyed them and their people all together. So these are their houses in utter ruin due to their evil. Surely, in this is a

sign for people who have knowledge. And We rescued those who believed and had *taqwa* [used to fear Allah].”

(*Qur'an* 27: 50-53)

Allah sent a stone upon those people who plotted to murder Sâleh (ﷺ). That stone crushed them and thus destroyed them before the rest of the people. On Thursday, which was the first day of the three days they were left to wait, their faces became yellow. This was as Sâleh (ﷺ) had warned them. When it became evening they said one day of the deadline has passed. Then on the second day, which was a Friday, their faces became red. When it became evening, they said two days of the deadline have passed. Then on the third day, which was a Saturday, their faces became black. When it became evening they said all three days of the deadline have passed.

Then on Sunday morning, they perfumed themselves and sat down in readiness, waiting for the punishment that was to befall them. They had no idea regarding the details of this punishment or from which direction it was going to come.

After sunrise, a blast came from the sky and an earthquake from underneath. With it, every soul perished and there was no one alive. Thereafter, the movements stopped and so did all the noises. They remained in their houses as bodies, without life and motionless. It is said that no one was left alive except a disabled girl whose name was Kalbah bint as-Salq. She was a strong disbeliever and enemy of Sâleh (ﷺ). When she saw the punishment coming, she ran as fast as anything could run. She fled from there and came to an Arab tribe and informed them of the punishment inflicted upon her people shortly before that. She was thirsty and requested them to provide her water. And when she drank water, she died.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“As if they had never lived there. Lo! Thamood disbelieved in their Lord, so away with Thamood.” (*Qur'an* 11: 68)

It became as though they had never lived there in the first place and in such comfort and abundance.

Imām Ahmad reported on the authority of Jābir (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) once passed by the area where the Thamood were destroyed. At that point, he said:

“Do not ask for signs, for verily the people of Thamood had asked. Their sign was the she-camel. She used to go for her water from here and come back that way. They transgressed their Lord’s order and killed her. She used to drink from their water one day and they drank from her milk one day. They killed her and thus the blast which Allah sent upon them seized them all except one man who was in the *Haram* of Allah.”

The Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) asked: “Who was that person, O’ Messenger of Allah?” The Prophet replied,

“His name was Abu Rughâl. However, later when he came out from the *Haram*, the same punishment inflicted him which had inflicted his people.”³⁸

Abdur Razzâq said that Isma’el (رضي الله عنه) ibn Umaiyyah said that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) once passed by the grave of Abu Rughâl and said:

“Do you know who this man is?” The Companions said, “Allah and His Messenger know better.” The Prophet informed them saying, “This is the grave of Abu Rughâl, a man from Thamood. At the time of the punishment, he was in the *Haram*. So the *Haram* of Allah saved him from the punishment of Allah. And when he came out of it, the same punishment inflicted him that befell upon his people. He was buried here along with a piece of gold.”

³⁸ Ahmad, vol. 3, p. 296. This hadith is reported upon the conditions of Imām Muslim, however none of the authors of the six books of hadith reported it.

The people rushed towards the grave and began digging it in search for the gold. When they found it, they took it out from the grave.

Muhammad ibn Ishâq reported in his *Seerah* book on the authority of ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنهما) who said:

“When we set out with the Prophet (ﷺ) towards Tâif, he passed by a grave. He stopped and said, ‘This is the grave of Abu Rughâl, the father of Thaqeef, from the Thamood people. He was inside this *Haram*, which saved him from the punishment. But when he came out, the same punishment inflicted him, which befell his people in this very place and thus was buried here. A sign of its authenticity is that a piece of gold was buried along with him. If you dig it out, you would find it with him.’ The people hastened in its search and extracted the gold from it.”³⁹

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“So Sâleh left them and said, ‘O’ my people, verily I conveyed to you the Message of my Lord and advised you sincerely. But you do not love sincere advisors’.”

(*Qur'an* 7: 79)

This verse indicates that after Thamood were destroyed by the punishment, Sâleh (ﷺ) spoke to them. He said: I strove hard to guide you by my actions, speeches and intentions, however your habit is not to accept the truth.

This is similar to how our Prophet (ﷺ) spoke to those who were killed in the Battle of Badr and were dumped in the well. He stood there on his riding animal and said:

³⁹ This is a *mursal* hadith. However, the hadith prior to this hadith serves as evidence to its authenticity. Similarly, Abu Dawood has reported from Muhammad ibn Ishâq in his *Sunan* under the caption *Nabash al-Quboor* in *Kitâb al-Imârah*.

"O' people of well, did you find true what your Lord had promised you, for verily, I found true what my Lord had promised me." He said, "How bad was the tribe to your Prophet! You rejected me when others believed in me. You expelled me from my land when others gave me refuge. You fought against me when others aided me. So how bad was the tribe to your Prophet!"

'Umar said to the Prophet (ﷺ): "O' Messenger of Allah, do you speak to people whose bodies have dried up by now?" The Prophet (ﷺ) said to him,

"I swear by the One in Whose Hand is my soul, you are not hearing me any better than they are hearing me. But they are unable to answer."⁴⁰

It is said that Şâleħ (رضي الله عنه) moved and lived in the *Haram* of Makkah till his death.

Imam Ahmâd reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) once passed by the valley of 'Asfân on his way to the pilgrimage. He said:

"O' Abu Bakr, do you know which valley this is?" He replied, "The valley of 'Asfân." The Prophet said, "Hood and Şâleħ passed by it on their young camels whose nose bands were of fibres. Their outer garment was made from wool and they were glorifying Allah by pronouncing *Talbiyah* as they performed the Hajj."

⁴⁰ Bukhari under *Janâ'iz*, 86; *Maghâzi*, 8; Muslim under *Jeefah*, nos. 76, 77; Nasâ'i under *Janâ'iz*, 117 and Ahmad, vol. 2, p. 131.

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) passing through Thamood's ruins — The Hijr

Imam Aḥmad reported on the authority of ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar that when the Prophet (ﷺ) came with the people to Tabuk, he descended at al-Hijr near the dwellings of Thamood. The people drank from the wells from which Thamood used to drink. They kneaded their flour with it and made ovens. The Prophet ordered them to throw what was being cooked in those pots and fed the kneaded flour to their camels. Then he went from that place to the well from which the she-camel used to drink. He forbade them from entering the places of people who were punished by Allah, and said:

“I fear that the same punishment may befall upon you which befell them, so do not enter their places.”⁴¹

Imam Aḥmad reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said when he was in the area of Thamood — the Hijr:

“Do not enter the places of those who were punished except in a state of crying. If you are unable to cry, then do not enter, lest the same punishment inflicts you which inflicted them.”⁴²

Imam Aḥmad reported on the authority of ‘Amir ibn Sâ‘d who said,

“When we went for the Battle of Tabuk, people hastened towards the dwelling places of Thamood and entered them. When the news reached the Prophet (ﷺ) he called them to gather at one place. Then when I came to the Prophet, he was holding his camel and saying, ‘Do not enter the places of people whom Allah became angry with.’ A man said, ‘We are becoming amazed by

⁴¹ Aḥmad, vol. 2, p. 117.

⁴² Aḥmad, vol. 2, p. 77. Imams Bukhari and Muslim also reported this hadith.

them.' The Prophet said, 'Should I not tell you something more astonishing than that? A man from among yourselves is informing you about those who were before and after you. Then remain steadfast and righteous. Verily, Allah does not give any importance to your punishment. There will come a people who will not care about their deeds.'⁴³

It is said that the people of Sâleh (ﷺ) used to live a long time. Even though they used to build houses from mud, but they would fall (and demolish) before they died. That is why they built houses in the mountains.

⁴³ Ahmad, vol. 4, p. 231.

Chapter Six

The Story of Ibraheem (ﷺ)

*H*e is Ibraheem ibn Târekh (250) ibn Nâhoor (148) ibn Sâroogh (230) ibn Râghoo (239) ibn Fâlegh (439) ibn ‘Aber (464) ibn Shâleh (433) ibn Arfakhshadh (438) ibn Sâm (600) ibn Nooh (peace be upon them all). This is the lineage mentioned in the Bible. I have mentioned the age of everyone after their names in brackets.

Ibn Asâkir reported that ‘Ikrimah said, “Ibraheem’s (ﷺ) mother was called Amcelah and Ibraheem (Abraham) himself was nicknamed as ‘Abu Daifân’.

It is said that when his father Târekh was seventy-five years old, Ibraheem (ﷺ) and his other brothers Nâhoor and Hârân were born. Hârân had a son called Loot (ﷺ).

Similarly, it is said that Ibraheem was the second son of his father, and Hârân died in the lifetime of his father in the place where he was born. This place is known as the land of the Chaldeans — Babel.

This is the most famous opinion among the historians. Ibn Asâkir authenticated this opinion, and said that he was born in Babylon.

The historians mentioned that Ibraheem (Abraham) (ﷺ) married Sârah, who was barren, thus could not bear a child.

Târekh left the land of the Chaldeans with his son Ibraheem (ﷺ), his daughter-in-law Sârah, and his grandson Loot (ﷺ), the son of Hârân and set off towards the land of Canaanites. However, on the way, they stopped at a place called Herân where Târekh died at the age of two hundred and fifty years. This indicates that he was not

born in Ḥerān. Rather, his birthplace was the land of the Chaldeans - Babel.

The land of Canaanites is the land of *Bayt al-Maqdis* (Jerusalem). They lived for a while in Ḥerān, which belonged to the Chaldeans those days. They also moved to the Arabian Peninsula and Syria. The Chaldeans used to worship the seven stars and those who lived in Damascus were upon this religion. Their religion involved facing towards the North Pole and worshipping the seven stars, with various types of sayings (utterances) and deeds. It is for this reason that we find on each of the seven gates of Damascus an altar for each of the stars. They observed specific festivals for them and offered sacrifices.

Similarly, the people of Ḥerān also worshipped stars and idols. At that time, everybody on the earth was a disbeliever. The only believers being Prophet Ibraheem, his wife and his nephew (son of his brother) Looṭ (ﷺ).

Allah, the Exalted, appointed Prophet Ibraheem (ﷺ) for the purpose of eradicating these misguidances. Allah granted him wisdom early, in his childhood. Sent him as His Messenger, and when he became old, He took him as His close friend.

Allah, the Exalted said:

“And earlier We bestowed upon Ibraheem his guidance in conduct, and We knew about him well.” (*Qur'an* 21: 51)

This means that Allah knew well that Ibraheem was suitable and fit for this position of Prophethood.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“And when Ibraheem, said to his people, ‘Worship Allah and fear Him, that is best for you, if only you knew. Verily, that which you worship other than Allah are only idols, and

you invent falsehood. Those whom you worship other than Allah have no power to provide you provision. Thus seek provisions only from Allah, worship Him, be grateful to Him, and to Him you will return. And if you disbelieve, then know that nations have disbelieved before you, and for the Messenger it is only to convey the clear Message. Have you not seen how Allah begins the creation, then repeats it. Indeed, this is an easy matter for Allah. Say, 'Travel through the earth and see how Allah originated the creation. Then Allah causes a later creation to grow. Indeed, Allah has power over all things. He punishes whom He wants to and has His Mercy upon whom He pleases. And to Him you will be returned.' And you cannot escape in the earth or in the heaven, and you have no protector or helper other than Allah. And those who disbelieve in the Signs of Allah and in the meeting with Him, it is they who have no hope of My Mercy, and it is they who will have a painful torment. So nothing was the answer of his people except that they said, 'Kill him or burn him.' Then Allah saved him from the fire. Indeed, in this are signs for those who believe. And he said, 'You have taken idols for worship other than Allah. The love between you is only in the life of this world, but on the Day of Judgement, you will disown and curse each other, and your abode will be the Fire, and you will have no helper.' But Looṭ believed in him. Ibraheem said, 'I emigrate to my Lord. Indeed, He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.' And We bestowed on him Ishâq and Ya'qoob, and We ordained among his offspring Prophethood. And We gave him his reward in this life, and verily in the Hereafter he will be among the righteous.'" (*Qur'an* 29: 16-27)

Prophet Ibraheem's first call was to his father who was among those who worshipped idols. This was because his father was the most deserving of his sincere advice.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And mention in the Book Ibraheem; surely he was a man of truth, a Prophet. When he said to his father, ‘O’ my father, why do you worship that which neither sees, nor hears, nor avails you anything? O’ my father, I have received such knowledge as has not come to you, thus follow me, and I will guide you to the straight path. O’ my father, do not worship *Shaytān*, indeed *Shaytān* was disobedient to the Most Merciful. O’ my father, I fear that a torment may afflict you from the Most Merciful, thus you become *Shaytān*’s friend.’ His father replied, ‘Are you turning from my gods, O’ Ibraheem? If you do not stop this, I will stone you. Leave me alone for a long time.’ Ibraheem said, ‘Peace be upon you. I will seek forgiveness from my Lord for you; indeed, He is to me the Most Gracious. And I am leaving you and those whom you call besides Allah. I will supplicate my Lord that I may be blessed in my invocation.’”

(Qur'an 19: 41-48)

Allah, the Exalted, mentioned in the above verses the dialogue and argument which happened between Ibraheem and his father. He mentioned how Ibraheem called his father to the truth with the best words and nice indications. Ibraheem (ﷺ) explained to his father why the worshipping of idols was falsehood because they could not hear the call of its worshippers nor could they see. How is it then that they could avail anybody’s need or provide them with sustenance and help them? Then Ibraheem said to his father what Allah has bestowed upon him the guidance and beneficial knowledge, even though he was younger than his father. Ibraheem said, as Allah has quoted him:

“O’ my father, I have received such knowledge that has not come to you, so follow me, and I will guide you to the straight path.”

(Qur'an 19: 43)

Meaning that this is a clear and easy way, which leads to goodness of this life and the Hereafter.

When Ibraheem (ﷺ) put forward this guidance and advice to his father, he rejected it and in fact threatened him if he (Ibraheem) did not stop his call. This is seen in the verse:

“O’ Ibraheem, surely if you do not stop, I will stone you.
Leave me alone for a long time.” (*Qur'an 19: 46*)

At that, Ibraheem (ﷺ) said to him: “Peace be upon you,” which means that no harm will come to you from me. Rather, you are safe from my side. This is seen in his supplication to Allah for his father wherein he said:

“I will seek forgiveness from my Lord for you; indeed, He is to me the Most Gracious.” (*Qur'an 19: 47*)

As Ibraheem (ﷺ) had promised, he sought forgiveness from Allah for his father. However, when it became clear to him that his father was an Allah’s enemy, he dissociated himself from him. Allah mentioned this in the verse:

“Ibraheem’s seeking forgiveness for his father was nothing but because of a promise he had made to his father. Then when it became clear to him that he was Allah’s enemy, he dissociated himself from him. Verily, Ibraheem is most tender-hearted, forbearing.” (*Qur'an 9: 114*)

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Ibraheem will meet his father Azar on the Day of Judgement when Azar’s face will be miserable and full of dust. Ibraheem will say to him, ‘Didn’t I tell you not to disobey me?’ His father will reply to him, ‘Today I will not disobey you.’ Then Ibraheem will say, ‘O’ Lord, You promised me that You will not disgrace me on

the Day of Judgement. So there is no disgrace greater than the disgrace of my father being distanced.' Allah will say, 'I have forbidden disbelievers from entering the Paradise.' Then it will be said, 'O' Ibraheem, look what is under your feet?' When he looks, he will find a stained and slayed. It will be taken by its edges and thrown in the Hell-fire."⁴⁴

Allah, the Exalted, said:

"And when Ibraheem [Abraham] said to his father Ázar,
 'Do you take idols for gods? Indeed, I see you and your
 people in manifest error.'" *(Qur'an 6: 74)*

This verse shows that Ibraheem's father's name was Ázar. However the majority of scholars of genealogy, as well as Ibn 'Abbás (رضي الله عنهما), said that his name was Târeh. In the Bible, his name is mentioned as Târekh. Thus it was suggested that his father was nicknamed Ázar after an idol he worshipped.

Ibn Jareer said: "The correct opinion is that his name was Ázar. It is probable that he had two names: one a nickname while the other his proper name."

Allah said:

"Thus We showed Ibraheem the dominion of the heavens and the earth so that he be certain in his Faith. When the night spread over him, he saw a star and said, 'This is my Lord.' But when it disappeared, he said, 'I do not love those who disappear.' Then when he saw the moon shining full, he said, 'This is my Lord.' But when the moon disappeared, he said, 'If my Lord does not guide me, I will be among those who go astray.' When he saw the rising of the sun, he said, 'This is my Lord, this is biggest of them all.' But when

⁴⁴ Imam Nasâ'i reported a similar hadith on the authority of Abu Hurayrah.

it set, he said, ‘O’ my people, I am free of what you associate with Allah. I have turned my face to Allah, the One Who created the heavens and the earth, and I am not of those who associate partners.’ His people argued with him. He said, ‘Do you dispute with me regarding Allah when He has guided me? I do not fear those who you associate with Him, unless my Lord wills otherwise. My Lord encompasses all things with His knowledge. Will you then not be admonished? And how should I fear that which you have associated with Allah while you do not fear that you have associated partners with Allah for which you have no authority. So which of the two parties deserves to feel secure, if only you knew?’ Only those who believe and do not associate others with Allah have security and they are the rightly guided. This was Our argument which We gave Ibraheem against his people. We raise in rank whoever We please. Indeed your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing.”

(*Qur'an* 6: 75-83)

This was the argument between Ibraheem and his people wherein he showed them that those celestial bodies observed in the sky are not fit to be worshipped or to be associated along with Allah. This is because they are themselves created. They rise at times and disappear from the world at other times. Whereas there is nothing that can disappear from Allah and there is nothing that Allah does not know about. He is the Everlasting and Eternal, without an end. There is none worthy of worship except Him. Allah said:

“And among His Signs are the night, day, sun and the moon. Do not prostrate to the sun or the moon, but prostrate to Allah Who created them, if it is He you worship?”

(*Qur'an* 41: 37)

The people of Babel used to worship idols and thus Ibraheem (ﷺ) argued with them concerning their association of partners in

worship. He broke their idols, humiliated them and showed their uselessness.

Allah (ﷻ), has mentioned them wherein He said:

“And he [Ibraheem] said, ‘You have taken idols beside Allah out of mutual affection between yourselves in this life. However, on the Day of Judgement, you will disbelieve in each other, you will curse each other. And your abode will be the Fire and you will not have any helpers.’”

(*Qur'an* 29: 25)

Allah said in *Soorah al-Anbiyâ*:

“And previously We bestowed on Ibraheem his rectitude of conduct and We were well aware of him. Remember when he said to his father and people, ‘What are these statues to which you are devoted?’ They said, ‘We found our fathers worshipping them.’ He said, ‘Verily, you and your fathers are in plain error.’ They said, ‘Have you brought us the truth or are you only joking?’ He said, ‘No. Your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the One Who originated them and I am one of those who bear witness to that. And by Allah, I will surely plan something for your idols after you have gone away.’ So he broke all of them into pieces except the biggest such that they might return to it. They said, ‘Who has done this to our gods, verily he is one of the evildoers?’ They said, ‘We heard a young man speak about them, his name is Ibraheem.’ They said, ‘Bring him in front of the people’s eyes so that they may bear witness.’ They asked, ‘O’ Ibraheem, did you do this to our gods?’ He said, ‘No, rather it was the biggest of them who did it. So ask them regarding it, if they are able to speak at all.’ So they turned to themselves and said, ‘Verily, you, yourselves are the wrongdoers.’ Then they turned to themselves [their first

thought and said]: ‘Indeed you [Ibraheem] know well that these idols do not speak. Ibraheem said, ‘Do you then worship other than Allah things that they can neither profit you nor harm you? Fie upon you and what worship other than Allah, have you then no sense?’ They said, ‘Burn him and help your gods, if you will be doing anything.’ We [Allah] said, ‘O’ fire, be cool and safe for Ibraheem.’ And they wanted to harm him, but We made them the worst losers.”

(*Qur'an* 21: 51-70)

And said in *Soorah ash-Shu'arā'*:

“And recite to them the story of Ibraheem when he said to his father and people, ‘What do you worship?’ They said, ‘We worship idols and to them we are ever devoted.’ He said, ‘Do they hear you when you call them, or do they benefit you or harm you?’ They said, ‘No, but we found our fathers doing so.’ He said, ‘Do you observe that which you have been worshipping, you and your ancient fathers? Verily, they are enemies to me save the Lord of the worlds Who created me and it is He Who guides me. And it is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink. And when I am ill, it is He Who cures me. And Who will cause me to die, and then will bring me to life again. And Who, I hope, will forgive me my faults on the Day of Judgement. My Lord, bestow on me wisdom and knowledge, and join me with the righteous.’”

(*Qur'an* 26: 69-83)

And in *Soorah as-Sâffât*:

“And verily among those who followed his [i.e. Nooh's] way was Ibraheem. When he came to his Lord with a pure heart. When he said to his father and to his people, ‘What is it that you worship? Is it a falsehood, gods other than Allah that you desire?’ Then what do you think about the Lord of

the worlds?' Then he cast a glance at the stars and said, 'Verily, I am sick.' So they turned away from him and departed. Then he turned to their gods and said, 'Will you not eat? What is the matter with you that you do not speak?' Then he turned upon them striking them with his right hand. Then they [i.e. the people] came to him hastening. He [Ibraheem] said, 'Do you worship what you have carved? While Allah created you and what you make.' They said, 'Build for him a furnace and throw him into the blazing fire.' So they plotted a plot against him, but We made them the lowest."

(Qur'an 37: 83-98)

In these verses, Allah informs us that Ibraheem (ﷺ) renounced idol worshipping in front of his people. He said, as Allah quotes in the Qur'an:

"What are these statues to which you are so devoted?"

(Qur'an 21: 52)

— i.e. why do you attend and humiliate to them so devoutly. The people replied to him saying,

"They said, 'We found our fathers worshipping them'."

(Qur'an 21: 53)

Their argument was nothing but the practice of their fathers and forefathers, and what they used to do of idol worship.

The verse goes on:

"He [Ibraheem] said, 'Verily, you and your fathers are in plain error'."

(Qur'an 21: 54)

In another verse, it states:

"When he said to his father and his people, 'What do you worship? Do you seek falsehood, gods other than Allah that

you desire? Then what do you think about the Lord of the worlds?" (Our'an 37: 85-87)

Qatâdah said: "This verse means what do you think that Allah will do to you when you meet Him after you have worshipped others besides Him?"

"He [Ibraheem] said, 'Do they hear you when you call? Or do they benefit you or harm you?' They said, 'No. But we found our fathers doing the same'." (Qur'an 26: 72-74)

His people agreed with him that their idols do not hear the one who calls them. Similarly, they do not benefit or harm anybody. Rather, the only reason they worshipped the idols was that they found their forefathers or other deviant people worshipping them. For this reason, Ibraheem (ﷺ) said to them:

"Know that what you are worshipping, you and your forefathers, they are an enemy to me, except the Lord of the worlds." *(Our'an 26: 75-77)*

This statement is conclusive evidence of the falsehood of worshipping idols. If they were able to cause harm, they would have harmed Ibraheem (ﷺ) because he freed himself from them. Similarly, if they were able to have any effect, they would have done something to Ibraheem.

"They said, 'Have you come to us with the truth or are you only among those who joke?' " (Qur'an 21: 55)

The people asked him concerning what he called them towards, whether that was as a joke or whether that was the truth.

"He [Ibraheem] said, 'But your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, Who originated them, and I am, on that, among those who bear witness.' " (Qur'an 21: 56)

His answer to them was that he was serious and truthful in his call, and that their God is Allah beside whom there is none worthy of worship. Your Lord and the Lord of everything. The Creator and Originator of everything. Thus He is the only One worthy of worship.

Ibraheem then said:

"And by Allah, I will surely plan something for your idols after you have gone away." (Qur'an 21: 57)

That is Ibraheem (ﷺ) swore that he would plan something with their idol gods after they leave for their festival. It was suggested that Ibraheem (ﷺ) said this secretly to himself, whereas Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) said that he said this to some of them openly.

The people used to celebrate a festival every year wherein they would go out of town. For this occasion, the father of Ibraheem had asked him to attend it. But he answered that he was ill. This is shown in the verse:

"And then he took a glance at the stars and said, 'I am sick'." (Qur'an 37: 88-89)

Ibraheem (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was ambiguous in his speech in order to humiliate their idols and give victory to the religion of Allah.

When the people left for their festival, he remained in the town, then he hurried towards their gods (idols), hiding himself. He found them in a special place, with various kinds of food that was offered to them in front of them. He said to them:

"Why do you not eat? What is the matter with you that you do not speak?" (Our'an 37: 91-93)

And he turned upon them striking them with his right hand. He smashed them with an axe until:

"He broke them into pieces, except the biggest of them, that

they might return and see it." (Qur'an 21: 58)

It is said that Ibraheem (ﷺ) put the axe in the hand of the biggest god.

When the people returned from their festival, they found what had happened to their gods. Upon this:

"They said, 'Who has done this to our gods? Verily, he is one of the most unjust'." (Our'an 21: 59)

If they were a people of senses, they would have understood from this clear evidence. This is because if they were true gods, they would have defended themselves against anyone who wanted to harm them.

"They said, 'We heard a youth speaking about them, he is called Ibraheem [Abraham].'" (Our'an 21: 60)

What they meant is that he spoke about them by mentioning their incapabilities and faults.

"They said, 'Bring him in front of the people's eyes that they may bear witness'." (Our'an 21: 61)

What they wanted to do was to bring him in front of a large gathering so that they all could hear what he had to say and witness the occasion. Also, the purpose included getting the people's input as to how best to punish Ibraheem. This very thing was the main purpose of Ibraheem, i.e. that all people gather in one place in order to establish the proofs against them all. This is similar to what Moosa (ﷺ) mentioned to the Pharaoh wherein he said:

"Your appointment is on the day of the festival of adornment, and let the people be assembled at high noon."

When the people had gathered and Ibraheem (ﷺ) was brought, they asked him saying:

“O’ Ibraheem, did you do this to our gods?” He said, “It was the biggest of them that did it. So ask it if it is able to speak.”

(*Qur'an 21: 62-65*)

It was suggested that what Ibraheem (ﷺ) meant was that it was the biggest of these idols who provoked me to do what I did. Furthermore, it was suggested that what Ibraheem (ﷺ) wanted was to draw their attention to the fact that their gods could not speak. This would lead to them accepting that the idols were mere objects similar to all other inanimate beings.

“Then they turned to themselves and said, ‘Verily, you, yourselves are the wrongdoers’.”

(*Qur'an 21: 64*)

This means that they started blaming themselves by saying that you yourselves are the wrongdoers since you left the gods unprotected and unguarded. After Ibraheem (ﷺ) told them that the gods do not speak, he asked:

“Do you then worship other than Allah things that cannot benefit nor harm you? Fie upon you and that you worship other than Allah, do you have no sense?”

(*Qur'an 21: 66-67*)

Allah said: “So they came to him hastening. He said, ‘Do you worship what you have made?’”

(*Qur'an 37: 94-95*)

What he meant by this is how could you worship idols that you have constructed with your own hands from wood and stones, and then shaped them? In this context, Allah said:

“And Allah created you and what you make.”

(*Qur'an 37: 96*)

than their worship of you. All of this is falsehood because worship is not obligatory or correct except to the Creator, Alone, only He Who does not have any partner.

Allah quoted the people as saying afterwards:

"They said, 'Prepare for him a furnace and throw him into the blaze.' They devised a plot against him, but We made them the lowest." (Our'an 37: 97-98)

They stopped their arguments and debates when they were cornered and did not have any evidence to prove their points regarding the gods and what they were doing was *shirk*. However, Allah outplanned them and made His religion and words superior over all others. He said:

"They said, 'Burn him and take revenge for your gods if you are going to do anything.' We said, 'O' fire, be cool and safe upon Ibraheem.' Then they planned another way to punish him, so We made them the losers." (*Our'an* 21: 68-70)

The people started gathering wood for the fire from every possible place. They did this for a long time and with such eagerness that an ailing woman made an oath that if she were cured, she would help in the collection of the wood to burn Ibraheem. They placed the fire-wood on a large piece of solid bowl like land and lit it. It became such a large and powerful blaze that its sparks seemed to touch the sky and no such thing was witnessed before.

They then placed Ibraheem (ﷺ) on a catapult made by its inventor, a Kurdish man called Heezan. Allah caused the earth to swallow him and thus, he will be sinking in it further and further till the Day of Judgement.

When they started to tie him with chains, he remembered Allah by uttering the words:

“Lâ ilâha illa anta, Subhânakâ Rabbil-‘Alameen, lakal Hamd wa lakal Mulk, lâ shareeka lak.”

“There is no deity but You, You are glorified, O’ Lord of the worlds. To You belongs all praise and the dominion. You have no partner.”

When Ibraheem (ﷺ) was tied with chains, placed on the catapult and thrown in the fire, he said:

“Hashunallâh wa nay’mal wakeel” “Allah is Sufficient for us and how good a Protector He is.”

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) who said: “The statement: ‘Allah is Sufficient for us, and how good a Protector He is’ was said by Ibraheem (ﷺ) when he was thrown in the fire. And the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said it when it was said to him (as quoted in a verse):

“People have gathered against you, so fear them. But it increased them in Faith, and they said, ‘Allah is Sufficient for us, how excellent a Protector He is.’ So they returned with blessing and bounty from Allah, no harm ever touched them.”

(*Qur'an 3: 173-174*)

Ibn ‘Asâkir reported in his history book that Abu Ya’lâ narrated from Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“When Ibraheem was thrown in the fire, he said, ‘O’ Allah, You are One in the sky and I am one on the earth and I worship you.’”

Some of the (pious) predecessors mentioned that when Ibraheem (ﷺ) was in the air after being thrown, Angel Jibreel came to him and said: “O’ Ibraheem, do you have any need?” He replied: “From you? no.”

Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) and Sa’eed ibn Jubayr said that the angel of rain said: “When will I be commanded so that I could send down rain?” However, Allah’s order was quicker.

"We [Allah] said, 'O' fire, be cool and safe on Ibraheem'."

(*Qur'an* 21: 69)

'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib (رضي الله عنه) said that it meant, 'do not harm him.' Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) and Abu al-'Âliah said: "If Allah had not said, '... safe on Ibraheem', the coolness of the fire would have harmed him."

Ka'b al-Ahbâr said: "Nobody was able to benefit on that day from any fire and it did not burn except the chain used to tie Ibraheem (رضي الله عنه)."

The renowned Qur'an scholar ad-Dâhhâk said: "It is narrated that Jibreel was with Ibraheem (رضي الله عنه) wiping off the sweat from his face. Similarly, it is said that he did not suffer from the fire anything except that sweat."

Another Qur'an scholar as-Suddi said that the angel of shadow was also with Ibraheem (رضي الله عنه). Thus he was in a place that was a green garden, surrounded by fire, where the people could see but could not get to him and similarly, he was not able to go out to them.

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said that the best words uttered by Ibraheem's father was when he saw his son in that condition and said: "How good Lord is your Lord, O' Ibraheem!"

Ibn 'Asâkir reported from Ikrimah that Ibraheem's mother looked at him and called out saying: "O' my son, I want to come to you, so pray to Allah to save me from the heat of the fire around you." Ibraheem (رضي الله عنه) said: "Yes." Then his mother came to him without the heat of the fire harming her. When she got there, she embraced and kissed him, and then returned.

Minhâl ibn 'Amr said: "I was informed that Ibraheem (رضي الله عنه) stayed there for either forty or fifty days and that he (Ibraheem) said, 'No days and nights were as good in my life as when I was in the fire. I wished that all my life were like that when I was in the fire.' May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him."

The people wanted to prevail and victorious but they were humiliated instead. Similarly, they wanted to overpower him but they were overpowered. Allah said:

“Then they looked for a way to plan against him, so We made them losers.”
(Qur'an 21: 70)

And in another verse, the word used is:

“... the lowest.”
(Qur'an 37: 98)

So they gained nothing but loss and humiliation in this world. And as for the Hereafter, their fire will not be cool or safe on them. Similarly, they will not be greeted and be spoken to with a soft speech. Rather, it will be, as Allah said:

“Evil indeed is that dwelling place and as an abode.”
(Qur'an 25: 66)

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Umm Shurayk (رضي الله عنها) that the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered the killing of the house lizard and said regarding it: “It blew in the fire of Ibraheem (ﷺ).”⁴⁵

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of 'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Kill the house lizard because it used to blow in the fire of Ibraheem to make it hotter.”

Nafey', who reported this hadith from 'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) said that she used to kill them.

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Nafey' that,

“A woman went to 'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) and saw a spear erected. She

⁴⁵ Imams Muslim, Nasâ'i and Ibn Mâjah have also reported a similar hadith from other narrators: Ibn Jurayj, Sufyân ibn 'Uaynia.

enquired, ‘What is this?’ ‘A’ishah replied, ‘We kill the house lizards with it.’ Then she mentioned from the Prophet (ﷺ) who said, ‘When Ibraheem was thrown into the fire, all the animals tried to put it out except the house lizard which blew in the fire to flare it.’⁴⁶

Also, Imam Ahmad reported another hadith that Samâmah, the slave girl of Fakiha ibn Mugheerah, said:

"I went to 'Â'ishah (عَزِيزَةً) and saw a spear laid down in her house. I asked, 'O' mother of the believers, what do you do with this spear?' 'Â'ishah replied, 'We use it to kill these house lizards because the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) informed us saying, 'When Ibraheem was thrown in the fire, there was no animal on the earth except that it tried to put out the fire but this house lizard tried to flare it up.' So the Prophet ordered us to kill it."

The Prophet Ibraheem (ﷺ) and Nimrod

Allah (ﷻ), said in *Soorah al-Baqarah*:

"Did you not see him who disputed with Ibraheem [Abraham] concerning his Lord because Allah had granted him power. When Ibraheem said, 'My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death.' He said, 'I give life and cause death.' Ibraheem said, 'Verily, Allah causes the sun to rise from the east, so make it rise from the west.' Thus the one who disbelieved was dumbfounded. And Allah does not guide people who are unjust." (Our 'an 2: 258)

Allah (ﷻ), mentioned in these verses the argument that Ibraheem (ﷺ) had with an arrogant and proud king who claimed for himself

⁴⁶ Ahmad, vol. 6, p. 317.

lordship. Ibraheem then proved the falseness of his argument and also made apparent the king's ignorance and how childish he was.

Scholars of the Qur'an and genealogists, along with others, said that this king was the king of Babylon. He was called Namrood (Nimrod) ibn Kan'ân ibn Kosh ibn Sâm ibn Nooh. Others said that he was Nimrod ibn Fâleh ibn 'Âber ibn Sâleh ibn Arfakhshadh ibn Sâm ibn Nooh.

Mujâhid and others said: "This king was one of the kings on earth at that time. As is mentioned, only four kings throughout the ages possessed the earth. Two were believers, and two disbelievers. The believers were Dhu al-Qarnayn and Sulaymân while the two disbelievers were Namrood (Nimrod) and Bakhtnaşar."

It is said that the reign of king Nimrod was for about four hundred years. Some of his characteristics were that he was proud, arrogant, and rebellious and preferred to enjoy the world.

When Ibraheem (ﷺ) called him to the worship of Allah Alone, without any partners, his deviant and ignorant attitudes made him reject that call. So he disputed with Ibraheem (Abraham) concerning his message and furthermore, he claimed for himself the lordship. When Ibraheem (ﷺ) said to him: "My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death." He (Nimrod) said: "I give life and cause death."

Qatâdah, as-Suddi and Ibn Ishâq said: "Two people, who the king wanted to kill, were brought in front of him. He then ordered one of them to be killed and spared the life of the other. Thus, it is as if, according to his claim, he granted life to one of them and caused death to the other person."

This statement of his was an argument out of the context. Ibraheem (ﷺ) proved the existence of the Creator by the things that occur around us such as the birth and death of animals. All these

events require that there be one who makes these happen since it is impossible for them to occur by themselves. Thus there must be One Who created everything and the sky with its celestial bodies. Similarly, He created wind, clouds, rain, and the animal kingdom. He gives them life and causes their death. It is for this reason that Ibraheem said: "My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death."

Thus the saying of this proud king: "I give life and cause death," does not mean that he created this phenomenon of life and death, and thereby obstinately and wilfully rejected the truth. However, if he meant what Qatâdah and others said earlier, then he did not say anything with respect to the Ibraheem's speech.

Since it was quite possible that this argument may not be very clear to so many people who attended and also who did not attend, Ibraheem (ﷺ) mentioned another proof of the existence of the Creator. And at the same argument, he refuted the claim of Nimrod and showed its falseness.

To quote the verse of the Qur'an, Ibraheem (ﷺ) then said: "Verily, it is Allah Who causes the sun to rise from the east, so make it rise from the west?" That is, the sun rises every day from the east as has been ordained by its Creator, beside whom there is none worthy of worship, the Creator of everything. Thus if you are what you claim to be that you give life and cause death, then make this very same sun rise from the west. This is because the one who gives life and causes death, it is He only Who can do anything. He can neither be prevented nor overpowered, rather He overpowers everything. If, however, you do not do this, then you are not what you claim to be. Infact, you yourself and everybody else knows that you do not have the power to do any of this, to the extent that you are incapable of creating even a mosquito.

Ibraheem (ﷺ) thus proved to the king that he is deviant, ignorant and is telling lies in what he claimed. He then did not have

anything to answer back with. He was dumbfounded and kept his mouth shut. Allah (ﷻ) said regarding this in the Qur'an:

"Thus the one who disbelieved was dumbfounded, and Allah does not guide people who are unjust."

(*Qur'an 2: 258*)

As-Suddi said that this argument between Ibraheem (ﷺ) and Nimrod took place on the very day when he came out of the fire. They had never met before and thus this argument took place.

'Abdur-Razzâq reported from Zayd ibn Aslam that Nimrod took full control of all food and thus the people used to go to him for their food. Once Ibraheem (ﷺ) had also gone along with a group of people. They had never met before and it was at this time that the argument took place. Ibraheem (ﷺ) was not given the food but others were given. Infact, he returned with nothing at all with him.

When he approached his house, he went to a dune and filled two sacks with it. He said to himself: I will distract my family with these sacks. When he reached home, he put them aside and laid down and slept. His wife, Sârah, went to check the two sacks. What she found was that they were full of the best food, so she prepared food from them. When Ibraheem (ﷺ) woke up and saw food, he asked, 'From where did you get this?' She answered, 'From the things (sacks) you brought.' Ibraheem (ﷺ) thus learnt that it was provision that Allah, the All-High had provided them.

Zayd ibn Aslam said that Allah sent an angel to that proud king ordering him to believe in Allah. But he refused to do so. Then he invited him a second time, and again he refused. For a final time, the angel invited him and the king persisted in his refusal. He said: 'You call your gathering of people and I will call my people.'

Nimrod then gathered his army and people at sunrise. Then Allah sent upon them so many mosquitoes that they covered the

whole sun's rays. They ate the people's flesh, drank their blood and left them as mere bones. One of these mosquitoes entered into the nostril of the king and stayed therein for four hundred years. Allah punished him with that mosquito. In order to get relief from it, the king used to hit his head with a hammer. This continued till the proud king's death.

*The Migration of Ibraheem (ﷺ) to Syria,
Egypt and his stay in the blessed land*

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"Looṭ believed Ibraheem and said, 'I am migrating to my Lord. Verily, He is the Almighty, the All-Wise.' And We bestowed Ishâq [Isaac] and Ya'qoob [Jacob] to Ibraheem, and We made in his progeny Prophethood and the book, and We gave him his reward in this life, and verily in the Hereafter he will be among the righteous."

(*Qur'an 29: 26-27*)

And Allah said:

"And We rescued him [Ibraheem] and Looṭ to the land which We blessed for all beings. And We granted him Ishâq and Ya'qoob as extra gifts, and each of them We made righteous. And We made them leaders, being guided by Our order, and We inspired them the performance of good deeds, the establishing of prayer, and the paying of alms. They used to worship Us." (Qur'an 21: 71-73)

When Ibraheem (ﷺ) shunned his people and migrated for Allah's sake, without a child and with his wife who was barren, and along with them his nephew Looṭ (ﷺ) ibn Hârân ibn Azâr, Allah granted him later on pious children and made in his progeny

Prophethood and the Book. Every Prophet who was sent after him was from his progeny. Similarly every book that was revealed after him was revealed to one of his progeny. All this was an honour and favour from Allah to Ibraheem for having left his country, family and close relatives, and having migrated to a land wherein he could worship his Lord, (عَزَّوَجَلَّ), and wherein he could invite people to the worship of Allah Alone.

The land which Ibraheem (ص) intended to migrate to was Shām (Syria, Jordan, etc.) and it is this very land which Allah mentioned in the verse:

"... to the land which We have blessed for all beings.'

(Our 'gn 21; 71)

This is the opinion of Ubaiy ibn Ka'b, Qatâdah and others.

However, al-‘Awfee reported from Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that the land referred to in the verse is Makkah. The following verse was used as supporting evidence for this view:

"Indeed, the first house made for the people is the one at Makkah, blessed and a guidance for the creation."

(*Qur'an* 3: 96)

Ka'b al-Ahbâr however claimed that the land was neither this nor that, but rather in his opinion it was the land of Harân.

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) who said:

"Prophet Ibraheem (ﷺ) did not lie except three times. Two of them were for the sake of Allah. The first being when he said,

'I am sick.'

(*Qur'an* 37: 89)

And the second was when he said,

'It is the biggest of them who did it.' (*Qur'an* 21: 63)

Finally, the third time was when he passed by a tyrant ruler when he was with Sârah. It was said to the ruler that there is a man here with whom is one of the most beautiful women. That ruler ordered for Ibraheem to be brought to him and asked, ‘Who is this woman?’ Ibraheem answered, ‘She is my sister.’ Then Ibraheem went to Sârah and said, ‘Sârah, there is no one who is believer on this earth except you and I. So when this ruler asked me, I informed him that you are my sister. So belie me not.’

Then the ruler asked for Sârah to be brought. When she entered, he tried to hold her hand but instead he was seized. He said to her, ‘Pray to Allah for me and I will not harm you.’ So she prayed to Allah and the ruler was released. He then tried to hold her again in the same way or even tighter but was seized again. He said to her again, ‘Pray to Allah for me and I will not harm you.’ So she again prayed to Allah and the ruler was released. Then he called some of his guards and said to them, ‘You did not bring me a human, rather she is a *Shayâ’ûn*.’ He then gave her a slave girl called Hâger. Sârah came to Ibraheem when he was praying. He gestured to her asking, ‘What happened?’ She said, ‘Allah nullified the plan of the disbeliever (or evildoer) by his hand, and gave me Hâger (as a slave girl).’”

Abu Hurayrah said, “So she is your mother, O’ Arabs.”

Imam Ahîmad reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Ibraheem did not lie except three times. The first was when he was invited to their idols and he said, ‘I am sick.’ The second was when he said, ‘It is the biggest of them who did it.’ Finally, when he lied about Sârah and said, ‘She is my sister.’”

He said:

“Ibraheem entered a town where there was a tyrant ruler. It was said to the ruler that Ibraheem has entered the town with one of the

most beautiful women. The king asked for him to be brought to him and then asked him, ‘Who is this woman with you?’ Ibraheem said, ‘She is my sister.’ He then asked Ibraheem to bring her. So when Ibraheem went to bring her, he said to her, ‘Do not belie me what I said. I have told him that you are my sister. Verily, there is no believer on this earth apart from you and me.’ When Sârah entered, the ruler stood and moved forward to hold her. She performed ablution and then prayed to Allah saying, ‘O’ Allah, if you know that I believed in You and in Your Messenger, and I protected my private parts except with my husband, so do not let this disbeliever overpower me.’ The ruler then plunged into water and started kicking his legs.”

Abu Hurayrah (رض) said:

“Sârah then supplicated, ‘O’ Allah, if he dies, people will say: she has killed him.’ So then Allah released him. The ruler said at the third or fourth time, ‘You did not bring to me but a *Shaytân*. Take her back to Ibraheem and give her Hâger.’ She returned to Ibraheem (ﷺ) and asked him, ‘Did you realize that Allah has failed the plot of the disbelievers and also gave us a slave girl?’”⁴⁷

Ibn Abi Hâtim reported on the authority of Abu Sa‘eed (رض) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) explained the three statements of Ibraheem (ﷺ). He said:

“There is not one of them except that it was to defend something of the religion of Allah. He said, ‘I am sick.’ He also said, ‘It was the biggest one of them (idols) that did it.’ The last one was to the tyrant ruler when he wanted the wife of Ibraheem, when he said, ‘She is my sister.’”

⁴⁷ Ahmad, vol. 2, Pp. 403, 404.

Only Imam Ahmad reported this hadith with this chain of narrators. However, the report fulfills the conditions of an authentic hadith. Imam Bukhari reported a shorter version of this hadith, again on the authority of Abu Hurayrah.

Thus, when Ibraheem said, 'She is my sister,' he meant his sister in Allah's religion Islam. Similarly, when he said, 'There are no believers on this earth apart from you and me,' what he meant was a married believing couple, since Loot (ﷺ) was a Prophet and was with them.

From the moment Sârah was taken to the tyrant king, Ibraheem (ﷺ) stood in prayer to Allah asking Him to protect his wife from what the evil king wanted to do. Sârah on her part did the same. When the enemy of Allah, the tyrant king, wanted to infringe on her nobility, she performed ablution and prayed to Allah with the supplication we have quoted above. It is for this reason why Allah said:

"And seek help in patience and prayer..." (*Qur'an* 2: 45)

So Allah saved her nobility and the honour of his Prophet and Friend Ibraheem (ﷺ).

I have read in some narrations wherein it states that Allah (ﷻ), removed the curtain between Ibraheem (ﷺ) and his wife, enabling him to see whatever was taking place in the king's court. Thus he saw what took place and how Allah saved his wife. This was the case to make Ibraheem (ﷺ) certain regarding what took place so that his heart becomes at rest. Ibraheem (ﷺ) used to like her very much because of her adherence to the religion, her being from his close relatives before marriage and also due to her beauty. It is said that Sârah was the most beautiful woman since Hawwa. May Allah be pleased with her. All praise is due to Allah.

Later, Ibraheem (ﷺ) returned from Egypt to the blessed land, he happened to be. He took with him cattle, slaves and other possessions. Hâger, the slave girl, the Egyptian coptic also accompanied him on his return.

Loot (ﷺ), on orders from Ibraheem (ﷺ), then left for a town called Sudoom. It was the main town of the area at that time and its residents were evildoers, disbelievers and transgressors.

Allah inspired Ibraheem (ﷺ) and ordained to look all around him: to his left, right, east and west. He then said that all of what he sees will be given to him and to his progeny forever, and that He will increase the number of his progeny reaching the number of particles of the earth.

This glad tiding was also for this nation through Ibraheem (ﷺ). The following hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ) shows this:

“Allah shrank the land for me till I saw its east and its west. My nation will reach every corner of what was shrank for me.”

The scholars said that groups of tyrants overpowered Loot (ﷺ), took him captive, looted him of his wealth and drove away his herd. When Ibraheem (ﷺ) learnt of this news, he went to him with three hundred and eighteen men and freed Loot (ﷺ). He recovered the property, killed a large number of them, i.e., the enemies of Allah and His messenger, and defeated them. He continued the chase northwards as far as Damascus in a place called Barzah. He then returned to his country after defeating them. The kings of Palestine met him and welcomed him with generosity and humility.

The Birth of Isma'eel (ﷺ)

The people of the Book — the Jews and the Christians — said that Ibraheem (ﷺ) asked Allah for pious children. So Allah gave him the glad tidings concerning that. When Ibraheem (ﷺ) had stayed in Palestine (Jerusalem) for twenty years, Sârah told Ibraheem: “Our Lord has deprived me of children, so take this slave girl, Hâger, maybe Allah will grant you children from her.”

When Hâger was presented as gift to Ibraheem (ﷺ), he slept with her, thus resulting in her becoming pregnant. The scholars have said that when she became pregnant, she thought great of herself,

even over her owner Sârah. Sârah thus became jealous and complained to Ibraheem (ﷺ). Ibraheem replied to her: "Do what you want with her." At this, Hâger became frightened and fled and descended near a spring in the desert.

An angel came to her and said: "Do not be scared, for Allah will bring good from this child you are pregnant with." He asked her to return and told her that she would give birth to a boy and that she should name him Isma'eel. He will be a man, his hand will be against everyone, and everyone's hand against him. He will own all the land of his brothers. Upon hearing that, Hâger thanked Allah (ﷻ), for this (blessing).

This glad tiding in reality is applicable for his (Isma'eel's) son Muhammad because it was him through whom Arabs ruled and conquered all the land in the east and the west. Allah gave his nation the beneficent and profitable knowledge and righteous deeds which He did not give to any other nation before.

When Hâger returned, she gave birth to Isma'eel (ﷺ). It is said that at the time of the birth of Isma'eel, Ibraheem was eighty-six years old. This event was thirteen years before Ishâq (ﷺ) was born.

When Isma'eel (ﷺ) was born to Hâger, Allah gave Ibraheem (ﷺ) glad tidings of the birth of another son Ishâq (ﷺ) from Sârah. Upon hearing this, he fell down in prostration to Allah. Allah said to him: "I have answered your prayer concerning Isma'eel, blessed him and will increase his number. Twelve rulers will be born to him and I will make him into a great nation."

This was a great tiding in this Ummah. The twelve rulers mentioned were twelve pious leaders about whom the Prophet (ﷺ) prophesied in a hadith. This hadith has been reported by Imams Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Jâbir ibn Samurah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet said: "There will be twelve leaders."

The narrator said that he could not understand the words after it. So he asked his father, "What did the Prophet say?" His father replied that the Prophet said, "All of them will be from Quraysh."

In another narration, the words of the hadith are:

"This religion will remain firm till there are twelve rulers. All of them will be from Quraysh."

So from among these twelve leaders are the four Caliphs Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmân and 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with them all). Also from the list is 'Umar ibn 'Abdul 'Azeez. Similarly, some of the leaders will be from the 'Abbâside rulers. The hadith is not saying that all of them will come in order. Rather it is saying that that particular number will come to pass.

Similarly, the hadith is not in reference to those twelve who the Shi'ites claim. The first of them is 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib (who is in the list for sure) and the last Muhammad al-Hasan al-Askari, the awaited one in the basement of Samrâ. So the intent from the hadith is not these since there was no good from any of them except the Caliph 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib (رض), and his son Hasan who abstained from fighting and relinquished his powers to Mu'âwiyah.

Anyhow, when Hâger gave birth to Isma'eel (رض), Sârah became much jealous of her and asked Ibraheem (ﷺ) to get rid of her such that she does not have to see her face. Ibraheem (ﷺ) thereafter took Hâger and her son Isma'eel (رض) and travelled to a place known today as Makkah. It is said that Isma'eel was at that time still an infant, a baby.

When Ibraheem (ﷺ) left them and started to walk back, Hâger clinched his clothes and said, "O' Ibraheem, where are you going leaving us here without anyone to take care of us?" Ibraheem did not answer her. When she persisted with her question and did not get any answer, she asked him, "Did Allah order you to leave us here?" He replied, "Yes." She then said, "In that case, He will never

leave us to perish.”

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) who said: “The first woman to use a girdle was the mother of Isma‘eel. She used it to remove her tracks to escape from Sârah. Then Ibraheem (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) took her and Isma‘eel, while she was still breastfeeding him, and brought them to Ka‘bah near a tree on the well of Zamzam. This was the most elevated place in the mosque. At that point in history, there was no person or any water in Makkah. Ibraheem left them there (on Allah’s orders) and left with them a leather bag with some dates. He also left with them a water-skin containing some water.⁴⁸

Ibraheem (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) then started to depart. Isma‘eel’s mother followed him and said, “Where are you going leaving us behind in this valley where there is no human or anything else?” She repeated the question several times and Ibraheem did not turn towards her. Finally, she said, “Has Allah ordered you?” He replied, “Yes.” She said, “Then He will not let us perish.” After saying this, she returned and left Ibraheem (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

Ibraheem (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) kept walking till he came to a narrow pass of the mountain where he could not be seen. There he turned his face towards the Ka‘bah, raised his hands and supplicated with the following words:

“Our Lord, I have settled some of my offspring in a valley without any cultivation, by Your sacred house. Our Lord, so they may establish regular prayers. So make the hearts of people yearn towards them, and provide them with sustenance that they may be grateful.” (*Qur'an 14: 37*)

Isma‘eel’s mother continued to give suck to Isma‘eel (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and drank for herself from the water in the water skin. When all the water

⁴⁸ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Anbiyâ'*, chapter 9 and Ahmad, vol. 1, p. 347.

finished, she and her son became thirsty. She started looking at him in pain. She left him there and left in search of water because she could no longer look at him. She found the mount Safā closest to her. So she climbed up on it to see if there is anybody in sight for help. She did not see anyone. She descended from Safā until she reached the bottom of the valley, she tucked up her clothes and ran in the valley like a distressed person. She ran till she passed the valley and reached mount Marwah. There again she climbed on it and looked around, hoping to see someone. Again, she could not see anyone. She repeated this seven times.

Ibn ‘Abbas quoted the Prophet (ﷺ) saying, “The *Sa’ee* (in Hajj and ‘Umrah) is because of that.”

When she climbed Marwah, the last time, she heard a sound. It was the sound of an angel who struck the ground (at the place now known as *Zamzam* well) with his wing till water started coming out. She tried to gather the water and then when it kept coming out, she said for it to stop.

Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“May Allah have mercy upon the mother of Isma‘eel. Had she let the *Zamzam* flow or not scooped the water, its water would have been a flowing stream.” He said, “She drank from it and then suckled her baby. The angel told her, ‘Do not fear of becoming lost, for right here is house of Allah which this child of yours and his father will build. For verily Allah does not neglect His people.’”

The Ka‘bah was on an elevated ground like a hillock. When torrents came, they would take a little of its right and left corners. Hāger remained in that place by herself and her baby till once when a tribe of Jurhum passed by that area. They were coming from a place called Kadā’. When they camped in the lower part of Makkah, they saw a bird flying at a distance. They said, “This type of bird only fly’s

around water. However, we know that there is no water in this valley.” They sent one or two persons to see what was happening. They returned, informing the people about the water. So all those people also went to the place of water. They found Isma’el’s mother near the water and asked her, “Do you permit us to descend and stay with you?” She replied, “Yes, but you have no right to possess our water.” They all agreed to it.

Isma’el (ﷺ) grew up with them and learnt Arabic also. The people were fond of him and when he matured, they married one of their women with Isma’el.

Isma’el’s mother Hâger passed away. Then Ibraheem (ﷺ) returned looking for Isma’el (ﷺ) after he had married. He asked his wife where he was, to which she replied that he had gone out to fetch things for the household. Then Ibraheem (ﷺ) asked her how their living standard was. She replied, “We are humans. We are in hardship and trouble.” Thus she complained to him. He said to her, “When your husband arrives, convey to him my *Salâm* and ask him to change his door mat.”

When Isma’el (ﷺ) returned, he sensed something so he asked her, “Did anyone come here?” She replied, “Yes, an old man came. He asked me about you, so I informed him. He then asked how our life was, so I said to him we are in hardship and trouble.” Isma’el (ﷺ) asked, “Did he give any advice?” She said, “Yes, he asked me to convey to you his *salâm* and said to you to change your door mat.” Isma’el said, “That was my father, he ordered me to divorce you, so go to your house.”

Isma’el (ﷺ) then married another woman from that tribe. Ibraheem (ﷺ) stayed away from them for as long as Allah had willed. Then he returned looking for Isma’el. Again he did not find him and so asked his wife where he was, to which she replied that he had gone out to fetch things for the household. Then Ibraheem (ﷺ) asked her how their living standard was. She replied, “We are living

nicey and in comfort." She then praised Allah (ﷻ), for what He had given them. Ibraheem (ﷺ) asked her, "What is your food?" She replied, "Our food is meat." He asked her, "What is your drink?" She replied, "Our drink is water." Then Ibraheem (ﷺ) supplicated, "O' Allah, bless them in their meat and water."

Before Ibraheem (ﷺ) left, he said to her, "When your husband arrives, convey my *salām* to him and tell him to keep firm his door mat." Later on, Isma'eel (ﷺ) returned and asked his wife, "Did anyone come?" She said, "Yes, an old man in a good condition had come." She then praised Ibraheem (ﷺ) and said, "He asked me about you and I informed him that you were out. He then asked me how our living was to which I replied that we are in comfort." Isma'eel (ﷺ) then asked, "Did he advise anything?" She replied, "Yes, he conveyed *salām* to you and ordered you to keep firm your door mat." Isma'eel then informed her saying, "That was my father and you are the door mat. He ordered me to keep you (and not divorce you)."

Ibraheem (ﷺ) again stayed away for as long as Allah had willed. Then when he came, he found Isma'eel (ﷺ) under a tree. They greeted each other like a father meets his son and like a son meets his father. Ibraheem then said to his son, "O' Isma'eel, Allah has ordered me to do something." Isma'eel replied, "Then do what your Lord has ordered you to do." Ibraheem asked, "Will you help me in that?" He replied, "Yes, I will help you." So Ibraheem (ﷺ) said, "Allah ordered me to build a house here." When saying this, he pointed to an elevated piece of land.

At that point, they both raised the foundations of the house. Isma'eel (ﷺ) used to bring the stones while Ibraheem (ﷺ) used to build the house. When it became high, he brought another stone upon which Ibraheem stood and continued to build while Isma'eel brought more and more stones. While doing this, they supplicated with the following words, as mentioned in the Qur'an:

"O' our Lord, accept from us, for verily You are the All-Hearer and All-Knower." (Our'an 2: 127)

In the Bible, it says that Allah ordered Ibraheem (ﷺ) to circumcise Isma'eel (ﷺ) and everyone who lived with him, slaves and others. Thus he did as ordered. This was at a time when Ibraheem was ninety-nine years old, thus making the age of Isma'eel thirteen years. This was in order to fulfill the order of Allah (ﷻ), concerning his family. We can deduce from this that circumcision was obligatory upon him. And for this reason, the correct opinion of the scholars is that circumcision is obligatory upon men.

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Ibraheem circumcised himself when he was eighty years old using an axe."⁴⁹

The Story of the Sacrifice

Allah, the All-High said:

"And he [Ibraheem] said, 'I am going to my Lord, He will guide me. My Lord grant children from the righteous.' So We gave him glad tidings of a most forbearing son. Then when Isma'eel reached the age of work with him, Ibraheem said, 'O' my son, I see in a dream that I offer you as a sacrifice. So tell me what do you think?' He said, 'O' my father, do as you are ordered for, you will find me, if Allah wills, among those who are patient.' So when they both submitted and he laid him down on his brow, We called out to him, 'O' Ibraheem, you have fulfilled the dream you

⁴⁹ Bukhari, *Kitâb Khala al-Adam*.

saw.' Likewise, We reward those who do right. Verily, this was a manifest trial and We redeemed him with a great sacrifice. And We left for him among those to come in later times. Peace be upon Ibraheem. Likewise, We reward the righteous. Verily, he is one of Our believing slaves. And We gave him glad tidings of Ishâq, a Prophet and he was among the righteous. And We blessed him and Ishâq. And from their children, there will be righteous and some clear wrongdoers."

(Qur'an 37: 99-113)

Allah mentioned in these verses that when Ibraheem (ﷺ) migrated from the land of his people, he supplicated to Allah to grant him a pious son. Allah then answered his prayers and gave him glad tidings of a fore-bearing son called Isma'eel. He was the first child Ibraheem, when he had reached the age of eighty-six years. There is no difference on this point among the religious communities.

The part of the verse: "When Isma'eel reached the age of work with him" means that when he became a youth and started to fulfill his interests by himself like his father.

When this was the situation, Ibraheem (ﷺ) saw in a dream that he was being ordered to sacrifice him (Isma'eel). There is a hadith on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Dreams of Prophets are revelations."⁵⁰

It was a severe trial from Allah for Ibraheem (ﷺ) because he was ordered to sacrifice his only son (so far) who was born to him when he had reached an old age. Similarly, this order had come after earlier one wherein he had to settle his son and Hâger in a valley where there was no human or any vegetation. He carried out Allah's order in that and left them where he was ordered to leave them after having full faith that Allah would take care of them. Then Allah

⁵⁰ Bukhari. *Kitâb al-Wudu'*, Bâb at-Takhfeef fil-Wudu'.

saved them and gave them provisions from where they could not imagine.

Then later when he was again ordered, but this time to sacrifice his only son, he responded to his Lord's order and fulfilled it. Infact, he hastened to be obedient to Allah.

Then instead of forcing his son to comply with the order, he informed him first of what he was ordered to do and asked his son what he thought. This was to get him ready for it and it would also make it easier for his son to accept and obey. Ibraheem's gentle way of informing his son is quoted in the Qur'an:

"He said, 'O' my son, I see in a dream that I offer you in sacrifice, so tell me what you think?'" (*Qur'an 37: 102*)

And Isma'eel (ﷺ) responded with obedience, which pleased his father Ibraheem (ﷺ). Isma'eel said,

"O' my father, do as you are ordered, for you will find me, if Allah wills, among those who are patient." (*Qur'an 37: 102*)

This answer shows devote obedience to his father and to the Lord of the slaves.

Isma'eel (Ishmael) submitted to the order of Allah and Ibraheem became determined to carry out the order. Ibraheem laid him down on his brow, meaning with his face down, so that he would not have to see him when sacrificing. This was said by Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما), Mujâhid, Sa'eed ibn Jubayr, Qatâdah and Dâlhâk. It is also said by others that Ibraheem laid him down the same way as any sacrificial animal is laid. Both Ibraheem and Isma'eel submitted and said *Allâhu Akbar* (Allah is Great). As-Suddi and others said that Ibraheem tried to sacrifice him by cutting the neck with the knife, but the knife did not cut anything.

Then a call came from Allah (ﷻ), saying,

“O’ Ibraheem, you have fulfilled the dream you saw.”

(Qur'an 37: 104-105)

This meant that the purpose of the trial has been achieved which was to test you, your obedience and to see when you hasten to respond to the order of your Lord. The test was to sacrifice your only son for Allah. As Allah said,

“This was indeed a clear and apparent trial.” *(Qur'an 37: 106)*

Concerning the part of the verse,

“And We redeemed him with a great sacrifice,”

(Qur'an 37: 107)

The majority of scholars are of the opinion that the sacrifice was a white sheep with big eyes and horns.

This itself is clear evidence that the one sacrificed was Isma'eel (ﷺ) because he was the one staying in Makkah. We do not have proof that Ishâq (ﷺ) ever came to Makkah in his childhood. And Allah knows best.

This is also what is apparent from the Qur'an. In fact, it is almost as if the Qur'an specified that Isma'eel (ﷺ) was sacrificed. This is deduced from the fact that the Qur'an mentions the story of the sacrificed person and then it says,

“And We gave him glad tidings of Ishâq [Isaac], a Prophet, and among the righteous.” *(Qur'an 37: 112)*

The opinion suggesting that it was Ishâq and not Isma'eel has come from Judaic traditions and it is known that their books have been tampered with. It is mentioned in the Torah Allah commanded Ibraheem to sacrifice his only son. However, in another version of the Torah, it says that his only son was Ishâq. This of course is a lie since it is a description of Isma'eel and not Ishâq.

The driving factor behind the tampering of this particular piece of information was the hatred of the Jews towards the Arabs. Isma'eel (ع) is the father of the Arabs who lived in Hijâz, among whom is the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Ishâq (ع) however, is the father of Ya'qoob (ع), — known also as Isra'eel — from who the Jews came. So the Jews wanted to take this nobility from the Arabs by introducing this lie. In effect, what they have done is to change the Word of Allah because they have not accepted that goodness and nobility are in Allah's Hands and He gives it to whoever He wishes.

There are many Muslims who also followed this opinion and said that it was Ishâq (ع) who was sacrificed. It seems, and Allah knows best, that they took this opinion from K'ab al-Ahbâr or from the Judaic scriptures.

There is no authentic hadith from the Prophet (ﷺ) to show that it was not Isma'eel (ؑ) nor the Qur'anic text leads to this conclusion. We have the clear words of the Qur'an, which if thought over, show that the sacrificed one was Isma'eel (ؑ).

One of the most sound evidences used to show that Isma'eel (ع) was sacrificed was deduced by Ibn K'ab al-Quradhi from the part of a verse:

"And We gave her glad tidings of Ishâq, and after Ishâq,
Ya'qoob." *(Qur'an 11: 71)*

He said how could the glad tiding be about Ishâq (ﷺ) and that he will later be father of Ya'qoob (ﷺ). And then Ibraheem (ﷺ) is ordered to sacrifice Ishâq while he was not even born? It of course is not possible since it contradicts the glad tidings mentioned. And Allah knows best.

The Birth of Ishâq (ع)

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And We gave him glad tidings of Ishâq [Isaac], a Prophet, and among the righteous. And We blessed him and Ishâq, and from their descendants are the righteous and some obvious wrongdoers.” *(Our'an 37: 112-113)*

The glad tidings about Ishâq were brought to Ibraheem (ﷺ) and Sârah through angels. These angels were passing by them and on their way to punish the people of Loot, which was an order of Allah because of their disbelief and wrongdoing. The story of Loot (ﷺ) and his people will be mentioned later on by the Will of Allah, (ﷻ).

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"Our angels came to Ibraheem with glad tidings. They said, '*Salâm* [Peace].' He said, '*Salâm* [Peace].' He hastened and brought them a roasted calf. When he saw their hands not reaching towards the food, he thought it strange and became afraid of them. They said, 'Do not fear, we have been sent to the people of Loot.' And his wife, who was standing by, laughed. So We gave her glad tidings of Ishâq and from behind him Ya'qoob. She said, 'What a wonder, how will I bear a child now when I have become an old woman and my husband is an old man? Verily, this is an unusual thing.' They said, 'Do you wonder at Allah's order? May the mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you O' family of Ibraheem. Verily, He is worthy of all praise and Full of glory.'"'

(*Qur'an* II: 69-73)

Allah also said:

"And inform them about Ibraheem's guests when they visited him and said, '*Salâm* [Peace].'" He said, "We are

afraid of you.' They said, 'Do not fear. We give you glad tidings of a knowledgeable son.' He said, 'Do you give me glad tidings after I have reached an old age? So with what do you give me glad tidings?' They said, 'We have given you the glad tidings in truth, so do not be among those who despair.' He said, 'And who is there who despairs of my Lord's mercy except those who have gone stray?'"

(Qur'an 15: 51-56)

And:

"Has the story of Ibraheem's honoured guests reached you? When they came to him and said, '*Salâm* [Peace].' He said, '*Salâm* [Peace], you are a people not known to me.' Then he went to his family and brought a fat roasted calf. When he forwarded it to them [they did not eat] so he said, 'Why do you not eat?' Then he became fearful of them. They said, 'Do not fear.' Then they gave him glad tidings of a knowledgeable son. Then his wife came to them clasped her face and said, 'An old barren woman [so how can I have a son now]?' They said, 'Your Lord has said so and indeed He is the All-Wise, the All-Knowing'." *(Qur'an 51: 24-30)*

Allah informed us in the above mentioned verses that when the angels, who were Jibreel, Mikâeel and Isrâfeel, came to the Prophet Ibraheem (ﷺ), he initially thought that they were his guests. So he treated them like any guest is treated, which was by roasting for them a healthy fat calf from the best that he possessed. Then when he offered it to them, he did not see from them any interest to eat. The reason for this is that angels do not have a need for food. Ibraheem (ﷺ) thought that their behaviour was strange and,

"He became afraid of them. They said to him, 'Do not fear, we have been sent to the people of Loot.'" *(Qur'an 11: 70)*

What they meant was that they were going to destroy them. Sârah

became happy as the anger of Allah was going to descend upon them. According to the custom of the Arabs and non-Arabs alike of those days, Sârah stood near her guests. When she laughed, Allah gave her the glad tidings of Ishâq (ﷺ), as is mentioned in the verse:

“And We gave her glad tidings of Ishâq, and after Ishâq of Ya‘qoob.”
(Qur'an 11: 71)

Allah sent this glad tiding at the hands of the angels. The verse goes on:

“Then his wife came forth clasping her face.”
(Qur'an 51: 29)

This is the normal behaviour of women when they show their surprise and happiness. She then said:

“What a wonder, how will I bear a child now when I have become an old woman and my husband is an old man?”
(Qur'an 11: 72)

What she meant was how can I bear a child when I am an old as well as a barren woman. Also, my husband is very old? She was expressing her amazement at how this could be given the situation of her and her husband. For this reason, she said:

“This is an unusual thing.”
(Qur'an 11: 72)

So the angels said to her:

“They said: ‘Do you wonder at Allah’s Decree? May the mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you O’ family of Ibraheem. Verily, He is Worthy of all praise and Full of glory.’”
(Qur'an 11: 73)

Ibraheem was also surprised about the glad tiding, especially since it came when he was old. He did not express his joy but instead he asked them saying:

"He said: 'Do you give me glad tidings when I have reached an old age? So with what do you give me glad tidings?' They said: 'We give you the glad tidings in truth so do not be among those who despair.'" (*Qur'an* 15: 54-55)

They repeated their glad tidings, however this time, they emphasized their statement by saying do not be among those of despair. The glad tiding they gave was about a knowledgeable son, who was Ishâq (ﷺ), the brother of Isma'eel (ﷺ) (from step-mother).

It is mentioned in the Bible that Ibraheem offered them a roasted calf, bread, curd and milk. It is also said that the angels ate it all. However, this is not true. It is also said that they were pretending to eat and that the food was just disappearing in the air.

It is also said in the Bible that Allah said to Ibraheem: "As for Sârâ, your wife, do not call her Sârâ but call her Sârah. I will bless her and will bestow on you a son from her. I will bless him and the nations and kings to come will be from him." Upon hearing this, Ibraheem (ﷺ) fell down in prostration. He laughed and said to himself: "Will I have a son when I am a hundred years old? And will Sârâh give birth when ninety years of her life have passed." All this is what is mentioned in the Bible.

The part of the verse:

"And We gave her glad tidings of Ishâq and after Ishâq of Ya'qoob" (*Qur'an* 11: 71)

— shows that Sârah became happy with the news of the birth of her son Ishâq (ﷺ) and after him with Ya'qoob (ﷺ). In fact, it also shows that Ya'qoob (ﷺ) will also be born in their life so that they would rejoice like they rejoiced at the birth of their child Ishâq (ﷺ). If we do not accept that this is also alluded to in the verse, then there will be no benefit in the specific mention of Ya'qoob (ﷺ). So when Ya'qoob was mentioned, it shows that they both will rejoice at his birth like they will do at their own son Ishâq's birth.

The All-High said:

“And We bestowed on him Ishâq and Ya‘qoob. And both of them we guided.”
(Qur'an 6: 84)

And:

“So when he distanced himself from them and what they worshipped beside Allah, We bestowed on him Ishâq and Ya‘qoob.”
(Qur'an 19: 49)

The explanation we have just mentioned is a strong opinion and that which is apparent from the verses. It is further supported by the hadith reported on the authority of Abu Dharr (رضي الله عنه) who said:

“I asked, ‘O’ Messenger of Allah! Which mosque was built first?’ The Prophet said, ‘The *Masjid al-Haram* (in Makkah).’ I asked, ‘Then which one?’ He replied, ‘The *Masjid al-Aqsa*.’ I further asked, ‘How many years were between their construction?’ He said, ‘Forty years.’ I asked, ‘Then which one?’ He said, ‘Then wherever the time of prayers starts, pray their because all of the earth is a mosque (i.e. it’s a place where it is permissible to pray).’”⁵¹

The Bible has it that it was Ya‘qoob who built the *al-Aqsa* Mosque. This opinion is supported by what we mentioned earlier. So based on this opinion, there was a gap of forty years between the construction of the *Masjid al-Haram* by Ibraheem (ﷺ) and Isma‘eel (ﷺ) and the construction of Aqsa mosque by Ya‘qoob (ﷺ).

Both mosques were constructed after the birth of Ishâq (ﷺ) because when Ibraheem (ﷺ) supplicated, he said in it, as Allah has said:

“When Ibraheem said, ‘My Lord, make this city peaceful

⁵¹ Imams Bukhari and Muslim reported this hadith in their books of *Saheeh*.
Bukhari, Kitâb Bada’ al-Khalq; Muslim, Kitâb al-Masâjid.

and secure, and protect me and my sons from worshipping idols. My Lord, they have misled many people. So whoever follows me, he is of me, and whoever disobeys me, verily You are All-Forgiving, Most-Merciful. Our Lord, I have settled some of my offspring in a valley without cultivation near Your sacred house [Ka'bah], our Lord, so that they may establish prayers. So make the hearts of people long towards them and provide them with fruits so they may be grateful. Our Lord, verily You know what we hide and what we disclose. And nothing is hidden from Allah in the earth or in the heaven. All praise is to Allah Who bestowed on me in old age Isma'eel and Ishâq. Verily, my Lord hears [and answers] prayers. My Lord, make me establish the prayer and also from among my offspring, our Lord, and accept my supplication. Our Lord, forgive me and my parents and the believers on the Day when there will be reckoning."

(*Qur'an* 14: 35-41)

The Construction of the Ancient House (Ka'bah)

Allah said:

"And when We assigned to Ibraheem the place of the House [and said]: do not associate with Me anything. And purify My House for those who circumambulate it, those who stand to pray, and those who bow down and prostrate themselves. And announce the pilgrimage to the people, they will come to you on foot, and on every camel through deep and distant mountain highways." (*Qur'an* 22: 26-27)

And:

"Verily, the first house built for the people is the one at Bakkah [Makkah], blessed and a guidance for the creation.

In it are clear signs, the station of Ibraheem, and whoever enters it will be safe. It is an obligation upon all people towards Allah to make pilgrimage to the house [Ka'bah], whoever can make their way to it. And whoever disbelieves, then verily Allah is in no need of the worlds."

(*Qur'an* 3: 96-97)

And He (ﷻ) also said:

"And remember when Ibraheem was put to trial by his Lord with certain words, which he fulfilled. Allah said. 'I am going to appoint you as an Imam of all people.' He [Ibraheem] said, 'And also from my offspring?' Allah said, 'My Covenant does not cover the evildoers.' And [remember] when We made this house [Ka'bah] a resort for mankind and a place of security, commanding people take the station of Ibraheem as a place for prayer. And We covenanted with Ibraheem and Isma'eel that they should purify My house for those who circumambulate it, those who retire to it for devotion, and those who bow down, and prostrate. And remember when Ibraheem said, 'O' my Lord, make this a safe city and provide its people with fruits, those among them who believe in Allah and the Last Day.' He said, 'And whoever disbelieves, I will give him enjoyment for a while and then I will drive him to the punishment of the Fire, and an evil destination it is.' And remember when Ibraheem and Isma'eel raised the foundations of the house, then prayed saying, 'Our Lord, accept this from us, verily You are the All-Hearing, All-Knowing. Our Lord, make us submissive to Your Will, and raise from our offspring a nation which submits to You. And show us the place of our pilgrimage, and turn to us in mercy. Verily, You are the Relenting, the Most Merciful. Our Lord, send to them a Messenger from themselves who will recite to them Your

verses, teach them the book and the wisdom, and will purify them. Verily, You are All-Mighty, All-Wise.”

(*Qur'an* 2: 124-129)

Allah mentioned in the above verses that it was Ibraheem (ﷺ), the leader of those who worship only Allah and the father of Prophets, who built the ancient House, Ka'bah in Makkah. It was the first mosque to be built for the general public in order to worship Allah. Allah guided him and showed him the way to it.

Allah asked Ibraheem to build a house so that the people on earth could worship Allah in it just like the angels worship Allah in similar houses in the heavens. Its location was appointed for this purpose from the very day when the heavens and the earth were created. Both Bukhari and Muslim reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Allah sanctified this city the day He created the heavens and the earth. Thus it will remain sanctified like that till the Day of Judgement.”⁵²

There is no authentic hadith indicating that this house was built before Ibraheem (ﷺ). Whoever held this opinion, supported their view by the verse,

“... the place of the house.”

(*Qur'an* 22: 26)

However, this part of the verse is not conclusive to indicate what they claimed because what it means is its place is in the Allah's knowledge and ordained for this purpose. It was also glorified by Prophets since the time of Adam (ﷺ) up to the time of Ibraheem (ﷺ).

Allah said, “Verily the first house built for people is the one at Bakkah [Makkah], blessed and a guidance for the creation.” This

⁵² Bukhari, *Kitâb Jaza' as-Sâvd*, Bâb la yehillul qitâl bi Makkah; Muslim, *Kitâb al-Hajj*, Bâb Tahreem Makkah.

means that it is the first house for all mankind in general to obtain guidance and blessings. And this house is located at Bakkah, which is Makkah.

The part of the verse,

“In it are clear signs, the station of Ibraheem.”

(*Qur'an 3: 97*)

— means that it has signs to prove that Ibraheem (ﷺ) constructed it. The station of Ibraheem is referring to the stone on which he stood when building the house when its walls became above his height. So Isma'eel (ﷺ) placed for him this famous stone so that Ibraheem (ﷺ) could stand on it when the building became high.

Long time ago, this stone was placed next to the Ka'bah's wall. This was the case till the time of 'Umar ibn Khattâb (رضي الله عنه) when he moved it away from the house a little. The purpose was that those who circumambulate the Ka'bah or pray there are not disturbed. He was right in what he did for verily he had been correct in certain things before. Among these things is when 'Umar said to the Prophet (ﷺ): “If only we took the station of Ibraheem as a place for prayer.”⁵³

Allah revealed the verse:

“Take the station of Ibraheem [as a permanent] place for prayer.”

(*Qur'an 2: 125*)

The footprints of both legs could be seen on the stone till the earlier time of Islam.

Ibraheem (ﷺ) and Isma'eel (ﷺ) raised the foundations of the house solely for the sake of Allah and as an act of obedience to Him. They asked Allah to accept from them, for verily He is the All-

⁵³ Bukhari, *Kitâb at-Tafseer, Tafseer Soorah al-Baqrah*.

Hearer, the All-Knower. Their supplication is quoted in the Qur'an as:

"And when Ibraheem and Isma'eel raised the foundation of the house, they supplicated, 'Our Lord, accept from us, verily You are the All-Hearing, All-Knowing. Our Lord, make us submit to Your Will and raise from our offspring a nation which will submit to Your will, and show us the place of our rites of pilgrimage and turn to us in mercy.'"

(*Qur'an* 2: 127-128)

Anyhow, the point is that Ibraheem (ﷺ) built the noblest of mosques on the noblest spot, in a valley without cultivation. He supplicated for its inhabitants to be blessed and to be provided with fruits even though that part of the earth had very little water and no trees and plantation. Similarly, he supplicated for it to be a safe and sacred place.

All praise is to Allah who answered his prayer and gave him what he requested. Allah said:

"Have they not seen that We made a safe sanctuary, while all around it the people are snatched away." (*Qur'an* 29: 67)

And:

"Did We not establish for them a safe sanctuary, to which all kinds of fruits are brought, as a provision from Us."

(*Qur'an* 28: 57)

Ibraheem (ﷺ) also asked Allah to send a Messenger to them from among themselves who spoke their pure and eloquent language so that the people could receive the blessings of both worlds, this world and the Hereafter.

Again, Allah answered his prayer and sent to them a Messenger, and made him the seal of all His prophets and

messengers, perfected His religion and gave him from the religion what He did not give anyone else before. He made this Prophet's message general, for all people regardless of race, language and characteristics, and in every place and time till the Day of Resurrection. This was one of the specific things concerning this Prophet which no other Prophet had.

Due to the fact that Ibraheem (ﷺ) was the builder of the Ka'bah for the people on earth, he deserved the highest rank and prestige from Allah. Thus he was placed in *Bayt al-Ma'moor*, which is the Ka'bah of those who are in the seventh heaven. In this house, seventy thousand angels enter every day to worship Allah (ﷻ) and once they have entered, their turn will not come until the Day of the Judgement.

As-Suddi said: "When Allah ordered Ibraheem and Isma'eel (may peace be upon them) to build the house, they did not know the whereabouts of the location till Allah sent a wind informing them about it. This wind was called *al-Khajooj*. It had two wings and a head in the shape of a snake. It cleared the area around the Ka'bah to show them its foundations left from the first house. They followed it with their pickaxes and dug the area till they placed its foundation. This is what Allah has referred to in the verse:

"And when We assigned to Ibraheem the place of the House." (Qur'an 22: 26)

When they completed its foundations and built the corner, Ibraheem said to Isma'eel, 'O' my son, find for me the best stone which I can place it here.' Isma'eel said, 'O' my father, I am tired and lazy.' Ibraheem said, 'Go, no matter how you feel.' Then Jibreel brought him the Black Stone from India. It was white like a pearl. Adam had brought it with him from the heaven. However, due to the sins of people, it became black. Then when Isma'eel came back also with a stone, he found the Black Stone in the corner. He said, 'O' my father,

who brought the stone?' He replied, 'It was brought by one who is more active than you.' So they completed the construction while supplicating to Allah:

“Our Lord, accept from us, verily You are the All-Hearing, All-Knowing.” *(Qur'an 2: 127)*

Ka'bah remained in that form for a long time, the way Ibraheem (ﷺ) had built it until Quraysh built it again. They shortened the length of the building from the foundation of Ibraheem (ﷺ) from its north and that is how it is till today.

It is narrated on the authority of 'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها) that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

"Don't you know that when your people built the Ka'bah, they shortened it from the foundation of Ibraheem?" So I said, "O' Messenger of Allah, then why don't you return it to its original foundation of Ibraheem?" The Prophet (ﷺ) replied, "Were it not for the fact that your people are new to Islam, I would have done so."⁵⁴

In another narration, he (ﷺ) said:

"Were it not for the fact that your people recently came from *Kufr*, I would have spent the treasures of Ka'bah in the path of Allah. Also, I would have made its door to the earth and I would have put the Black Stone inside."⁵⁵

'Abdullah ibn Zubayr (may Allah have mercy upon him) built the Ka'bah in his time when he was the ruler according to what the Prophet (ﷺ) had pointed to. He was informed of this by his auntie

⁵⁴ Imams Bukhari and Muslim reported this hadith in their books of *Šaheeh*. Bukhari, *Tafseer Soorah al-Baqarah*; Muslim, *Kitāb al-Hajj*, *Bāb Naqd al-Kābah wa bina'ihā*.

⁵⁵ Imams Bukhari and Muslim also reported this narration.

‘Â’ishah (رضي الله عنها), the mother of the believers. When Hajjâj killed him in the year seventy-three Hijri, he wrote to the Ummayyad ruler of the time ‘Abdul Malik ibn Marwân. They thought that ‘Abdullah ibn Zubayr changed the foundation of the Ka’bah according to his own will. So he ordered it to be returned the way it was previously built.

They torn down its northern wall, brought the stone outside the Ka’bah, built another wall, and placed the rest of the stones back inside the Ka’bah. Its eastern door raised up and they closed western door completely as is seen today.

Later when the ruler learnt that ‘Abdullah ibn Zubayr had built it according to what ‘Â’ishah (رضي الله عنها) had informed, he regretted what he had done and felt very sad. After that, in the time of the ruler Maâdi ibn Mansoor, he consulted Imam Mâlik regarding rebuilding the Ka’bah the way ‘Abdullah ibn Zubayr had built it. Imam Mâlik said to him, “I fear that kings will take it as a toy, playing around with it.” Whenever a new king comes into power, he will build it as he wants to. So Maâdi ibn Mansoor left it as it was and consequently, it remained in that form from that day.

The Mention of Allah’s praise for His noble prophet, friend and slave

Allah, the All-High said:

“And remember when Ibraheem was put to test by his Lord with certain words which he fulfilled. Allah said, ‘I will make you an Imam to the people.’ He said, ‘And also from my offspring.’ Allah said, ‘My Covenant does not encompass the evildoers.’” *(Qur'an 2: 124)*

When Ibraheem (ﷺ) carried out what his Lord had ordered, Allah appointed him Imam to the mankind to be followed for

guidance. He asked Allah to keep this leadership in his progeny forever. Thus he was given what he had asked for and thus was given the leadership. However, Allah excluded the wrongdoers from those who will attain the leadership and singled out for this purpose the scholars who perform righteous deeds.

The All-High said:

“And we bestowed Ishâq and Ya’qoob on Ibraheem. And We made the Prophethood and the Book among his progeny, and We gave him his reward in this life. And in the Hereafter he will be among the righteous.” (*Qur'an* 29: 27)

And He said:

“And we bestowed on him Ishâq and Ya’qoob, each one We guided. And before them We guided Nooh, and of his offspring Dawood, Sulaymân, Ayyub, Yusuf, Moosa and Hâroon. Like that We reward those who perform good. And Zakariya, Yahya, ‘Eesa and Ilyâs, all are among the righteous. And Isma‘eel, al-Yasa‘, Yunus and Loot, and all of them We favoured above the worlds. And from their fathers, their offspring, and their brethren, and We chose them and We guided them to the Straight Path.”

(*Qur'an* 6: 84-87)

The pronoun in the part of the verse: “And among his offspring” is referring to Ibraheem (ﷺ) according to the opinion of the majority of scholars. As for Loot (ﷺ), he entered in the list of his progeny even though he is his nephew.

Allah said:

“And verily, We sent Nooh and Ibraheem, and We made the Prophethood and the Book in their progeny.”

(*Qur'an* 57: 26)

Thus all the books which were revealed from the heavens on any Prophet after Ibraheem were from his progeny. This was a great honour for Ibraheem (ﷺ). He had two sons: Isma'eel (Ishmael) from Hâger and Ishâq (Isaac) from Sârah. Ishâq (ﷺ) in turn had his son Ya'qoob who was known as Israel and to whom all Israelis attribute themselves to. The Prophethood was confined to them and there were so many Prophets in them that nobody knows their exact number except the One Who sent them (i.e. Allah). The last in the chain of Prophethood was 'Eesa, the son of Mary from the children of Israel.

As for Isma'eel (ﷺ), from him descended all the tribes of Arabs. We will mention more on this in its appropriate place if Allah wills. There was no Prophet among his progeny except the last and the leader of them all, the Prophet Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul Mu'talib ibn Hâshim al-Qurashi. He was born and lived in Makkah initially, then migrated to Madeenah.

Imam Muslim reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“I will attain a rank, which all mankind will desire for, even Ibraheem.”⁵⁶

The Prophet greatly praised Ibraheem (ﷺ), his fore-father, in this context. Hadiths show that Ibraheem was the best of creation after him, both in this world and the Hereafter.

Bukhari narrated on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) that,

“The Prophet (ﷺ) used to seek refuge with Allah from the *Shayṭân* for his grandsons Ḥasan and Ḥusayn. In this context, he once said to them, ‘Your father Ibraheem used to seek refuge with Allah with the following words for Isma'eel and Ishâq, ‘I seek

⁵⁶ Muslim, *Kitâb Ṣalât al-Musâfîreën, Bâb Bayân annâl-Qur'an 'ala Sab'ah ahruf..*

refuge with Allah's Perfect Words from every *Shayṭān*, evil, and every bad eye'.'"⁵⁷

Allah, the Almighty said:

"And remember when Ibraheem said, 'O' my Lord, show me how You give life to the dead.' He [Allah] said, 'Do you not believe?' He said, 'Yes I believe but to satisfy my heart.' He said, 'Then, take four birds and cut them into pieces. Then place a portion of each of them on each hill. Then call them and they will come [flying] to you in haste. And know that verily Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.'" (*Qur'an* 2: 260)

Mufassireen — the scholars of the Qur'an, have mentioned a number of reasons behind Ibraheem's question. We have mentioned these in detail in our book of *Tafsir* and analyzed them.

Allah (ﷻ), accepted the request of Ibraheem and thus ordered him to take four birds. Scholars differed regarding which birds he took. However, Ibraheem (ﷺ) was ordered to cut each of them into pieces and mix together those pieces. He was to then divide those into portions and put each portion on each mountain. Ibraheem (ﷺ) carried out this order as required. Then he was ordered to call those in the Name of their Lord. When he called out, each part of each bird started to fly to the other parts of the same bird until the body of each returned to their normal state. Ibraheem was looking at the sheer power and ability of the One (Allah) Who only needs to say to things "Be" and they are. The birds flew straight to Ibraheem so that the matter could be very clear to him when he saw them from close.

It is also said that Ibraheem (ﷺ) was ordered to take the head of each bird in his own hand and when the birds were reassembling

⁵⁷ Imam Bukhari reported this hadith in his *Saḥīḥ*. Similarly, the authors of the *Sunan* also reported this hadith through Mansoor. Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Anbiyā'*, *Bāb* 10.

(with the order from Allah), each of them came and put its body on its head. None is worthy of worship except Allah.

No doubt, Ibraheem knew with certain knowledge that Allah could bring the dead back to life. However, he wanted to witness it with his own eyes thus increasing from the level of certainty of knowledge to the level stage of the certainty of vision! So Allah answered his request and gave him more than what he hoped for.

Allah said:

“O’ people of book, why do you argue about Ibraheem when Torah and Gospel were not revealed until after him. Do you not have senses? You have argued in matters about which you have some knowledge, so now why do you argue in matters in which you have no knowledge, when the case is that Allah knows and you do not. Ibraheem was neither a Jew nor a Christian but he was a monotheist and a Muslim and he was never of the polytheists. Verily the people who are nearest to Ibraheem are those who followed him, and this Prophet and those who believed. Allah is the Guardian of the believers.”

(Qur'an 3: 65-68)

In these verses, Allah has refuted the false claim of Jews and Christians that Ibraheem (ﷺ) was a follower of their religion. So Allah disowned him from them and showed them how ignorant and senseless they were. He said, “... when Torah and Gospel were not revealed until after him.” (*cf 3: 65*) If this is the case, then how could he be on your religion when your religion came after him? For this reason, Allah said at the end of the verse, “Do you not have senses?” He also said, “Ibraheem was neither a Jew nor a Christian but he was a monotheist and a Muslim and he was never of the polytheists.” (*cf 3: 67*) So Allah explained that Ibraheem was on the monotheistic religion where worship is solely for Allah.

Allah said in another place in the Qur'an:

“And is there anyone who turns away from the religion of Ibraheem except him who fools himself? Verily, We chose him and verily, in the Hereafter he will be among the righteous. Remember when his Lord said to him, ‘Submit to Me,’ he said, ‘I have submitted to the Lord of the worlds.’ And this was the advice left by Ibraheem to his sons and also by Ya‘qoob [who both said], ‘O’ my sons, Allah has chosen the religion for you so die not except in the state of submission [i.e. as Muslims].’ Or were you witnesses when death came to Ya‘qoob when he said to his sons, ‘What will you worship after me?’ They said, ‘We will worship your God and the God of your fathers Ibraheem, Isma‘eel and Ishāq. He is One God and to Him we submit. That was a nation that passed away. They will have the fruits of what they did and you will have the fruits of what you do. And you will not be questioned concerning what they used to do. And they said, ‘Be Jews or Christians, you will be guided.’ Say of them, ‘But we follow the religion of Ibraheem, the monotheist, and he was never among the polytheists.’ Say, ‘We believe in Allah and in what He has revealed to us. And [we believe] in that which was revealed to Ibraheem, Isma‘eel, Ishāq, Ya‘qoob and the tribes. And [also we believe] in that which was given to Moosa and ‘Eesa, and in that which was given to the Prophets from their Lord. We do not make any distinction between any of them and to Him we submit.’

So if they believe in what you believed, then verily they are guided. But if they turn away, then verily it is they who are in schism. Allah will suffice you against them, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. This is the hue of Allah’s religion. And who is better in hue than Allah and we worship Him Alone. Say, ‘Do you argue with us concerning Allah while He is our Lord and your Lord? And for us are

our deeds and for you are your deeds, and we are sincere in our worship of Him Alone.'

Or do you claim that Ibraheem, Isma'eel, Ishâq, Ya'qoob and the tribes were Jews or Christians? Say, 'Are you more knowledgeable or Allah? And who is more unjust than the one who conceals the testimony they have from Allah? And Allah is not unaware of what you do. That was a nation, it has passed away. They will have the fruits of what they did and you will have the fruits of what you do. And you will not be questioned concerning what they did.'"

(Qur'an 2: 130-141)

Allah mentioned in these verses that Ibraheem (ﷺ) was not a Jew or a Christian, but rather he was a monotheist, a Muslim and that he was not among those who associate partners with Allah. The part of the verse,

"The people who are nearest to Ibraheem are those who followed him," *(Qur'an 3: 68)*

— means those who followed his way in his time, and those who adhered to it after him. The part,

"... and this Prophet," *(Qur'an 3: 68)*

— means Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). This is because Allah prescribed for him the same religion that He prescribed for Ibraheem (ﷺ). However, the difference between the two is that Allah completed the religion by our Prophet and gave him what He did not give to any Prophet before him. Allah said:

"Say, 'Verily, my Lord has guided me to the straight path, the true faith forever, the religion of Ibraheem, a man of pure faith, and he was not among those who associate partners in worship.' Say, 'Verily, my prayer, my devotion [and sacrifice], my living and my dying are all for Allah, the

Lord of the creation, Who has no partner. With this I am ordered and thus I am the first to submit.' ”

(*Qur'an* 6: 161-163)

And He said:

“And Ibraheem was a nation, devoutly obedient to Allah, of pure faith, and he was not among those who associate partners in worship. He was grateful for His favours. He [Allah] chose and guided him to the straight path. And We gave him good in this world and verily, in the Hereafter he will be among the righteous. Then We revealed to you [ordering], ‘Follow the religion of Ibraheem, a man of pure faith, who was not among those who associate partners in worship.’ ”

(*Qur'an* 16: 120-123)

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) that,

“When the Prophet (ﷺ) saw drawings in the house, he did not enter it till he ordered them to be removed and they were removed. He saw the drawings depicting Ibraheem and Isma‘eel holding arrows in their hands. So he said, ‘May Allah curse them, (for Ibraheem and Isma‘eel) never raffled with arrows.’ ”⁵⁸

In another narration, also reported by Imam Bukhari, the wording is:

“May Allah curse them, for they knew well that our father (Ibraheem) never raffled with these arrows.”⁵⁹

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And who can be better in religion than he who submits his face to Allah and performs good and follows the religion of

⁵⁸ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Anbiyâ’*.

⁵⁹ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Hajj*.

Ibraheem, a man pure in faith. Allah took Ibraheem as a friend.”

(*Qur'an* 4: 125)

Allah motivates and wants Ibraheem (ﷺ) to be followed as a role model because he was on the strong religion and straight path. He fulfilled all of what he was ordered by his Lord to perform. Allah took him as a close friend — *Khaleel*, the word is used to express peak of love, as most of the scholars opine.

Similarly, the seal of the Prophet, the leader of the Messengers, Muhammad (ﷺ) also obtained this high rank. This is mentioned in a hadith on the authority of Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) from the Prophet who said:

“O' people, verily Allah took me as His Friend (*Khaleel*).”⁶⁰

Again it is reported on the authority of Abi Sa'eed that the Prophet (ﷺ) said in the last sermon he delivered:

“O' people, if I was going to take someone as a *Khaleel* (a close friend) from the people of earth, I would have taken Abu Bakr. However, your companion (denoting himself) is the friend of Allah.”⁶¹

Allah mentioned Ibraheem (ﷺ) in the Qur'an many times, every time with praises. It is said that Ibraheem (ﷺ) is mentioned thirty-five times, of which fifteen times he is mentioned only in *Soorah al-Baqarah*.

He was one of the five greatest and steadfast Prophets who have been singled out with mention in two places in the Qur'an by their names. Allah, the Exalted said:

⁶⁰ *Sunan Ibn Mâjah*, *al-Muqaddimah*, *Bâb* 11. Imams Bukhari and Muslim also reported this hadith in their *Šaheeh* books.

⁶¹ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Fadâ'i l'as-Sâhabah*, also reported by Muslim.

“And We took from the Prophets their covenants, and from you, and from Nooh, Ibraheem, Moosa, and ‘Eesa the son of Mary. And We took from them a strong and binding covenant.”
(Qur'an 33: 7)

And in another place:

“He has ordained for you the same religion which He ordained for Nooh, and that which We have revealed to you and that which We ordained for Ibraheem, Moosa and ‘Eesa, saying, ‘Thou should establish the religion and do not differ in it’.”
(Qur'an 26: 13)

Anyhow, Ibraheem (ﷺ) is the noblest of the Prophets and in the front rank of the steadfast prophets and messengers, after our Prophet (ﷺ).

Our Prophet met Ibraheem (ﷺ) on the seventh heaven when he was reclining against *Bayt al-Ma'moor*. This is the *bayt* (house) in which seventy thousand angels enter everyday for worship and they will not come back again.

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“The noble ibn noble ibn noble ibn noble is Yusuf ibn Ya'qoob ibn Ishâq ibn Ibraheem, the *Khaleel* (bosom friend) of the All-Merciful.”⁶²

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah who said:

“O' Messenger of Allah, who is the noblest person?” The Prophet said, “The noblest of them is the one who fears Allah the most.” The Companions said, “This is not what we are asking about.” The Prophet then said, “The noblest of person was Yusuf, the

⁶² Ahmad, vol. 2, p. 332.

Prophet of Allah, son of the Prophet of Allah, who in turn was the son of the Prophet of Allah, the friend (*Khaleel*) of Allah.”

The Companions said, “This is not what we are asking about.” The Prophet then said, “Are you asking me about the great households of Arab?”

They said, “Yes.”

The Prophet said, “The best of them in *Jahiliyah* is the best of them in Islam if they understood (the spirit and essence of this religion).”⁶³

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“The noble ibn noble ibn noble ibn noble is Yusuf ibn Ya’qoob ibn Ishâq ibn Ibraheem.”

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said:

“The people will be resurrected naked and with prepuces. The first to be provided with cloth will be Ibraheem (peace be upon him).” The Prophet then recited,

“Like We began the first creation We will repeat it again.”
(*Qur'an 21: 104*)⁶⁴

The merit mentioned in this hadith, which Ibraheem will have on the Day of Judgement, does not indicate that he is the best because this merit is faced with other merits which our Prophet has. These benefits will be envied by all mankind, from the first of them to the last.

There is another hadith reported by Imam Ahmad on the authority of Anas ibn Mâlik (رضي الله عنهما) concerning the merits of Ibraheem

⁶³ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Eemân*; Ahmad, vol. 2, p. 232.

⁶⁴ Imams Bukhari and Muslim also reported this hadith on the authority of the same Companion.

(ﷺ). In it, a man says to the Prophet (ﷺ):

“O’ the best of creation.” The Prophet then said to him, “That is Ibraheem.”⁶⁵

This hadith shows the humility and regard towards his fore-father Ibraheem (ﷺ), as the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Do not raise my rank over that of other Prophets.”

These hadiths and others like them do not contradict what is authentically established that the Prophet will be the leader of the children of Adam on the Day of Judgement.

So in view of the fact that Prophet Ibraheem (ﷺ) was the greatest Prophet after Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), the one praying has been ordered to send his *Salâh* upon him. Imams Bukhari and Muslim have reported on the authority of K‘ab ibn Ujrah (ﷺ) who said:

“We asked, ‘O’ Messenger of Allah, we know how to send Our *salâm* on you, so now tell us how to send our *Salâh* on you?’ The Prophet said, ‘Say, ‘O’ Allah, send Your mercy upon Muhammad and his family as You have sent Your mercy upon Ibraheem and his family. And bless Muhammad and his family as You have blessed Ibraheem and his family. You are Worthy of praise and glory’.’”

Allah said:

“And Ibraheem who fulfilled [his duties].” (*Qur'an 53: 37*)

Ibraheem (ﷺ) fulfilled all that was upon him and carried out all that he was ordered to perform by Allah. He never neglected small matters in preference for the big or more important ones. He paid attention to all of them.

⁶⁵ Imam Muslim also reported this hadith.

Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) said with respect to the part of the verse,

“And remember when Ibraheem was put to test by his Lord with certain Words which he fulfilled,” (*Qur'an 2: 124*)

He (رضي الله عنهما) said:

“Allah tested him with *Tahârah* (cleanliness and purity): five types of *tahârah* in the head and five in the body.

The five in the head were: Trimming moustache, rinsing the mouth, using the *miswâk*, cleaning the nose by taking water in the nose, and combing the hair.

And the five types of *tahârah* in body were: Clipping the nails, shaving the pubic hair, circumcision, plucking out (or removing) the hair in the armpit, and cleaning the traces of stool or urine with water.”⁶⁶

Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Five things are from *fitrah* (natural disposition): circumcision, shaving of the hair of private parts, trimming moustache, clipping nails, plucking out (or removing) the hair in the armpit.”⁶⁷

Similarly, another hadith on the *fitrah* has been narrated by Imam Muslim and *Sunan* compilers on the authority of the mother of the believers ‘Âishah (رضي الله عنها). In it, the Prophet (ﷺ) is reported to have said:

“Ten things are from *fitrah*. They are: Trimming moustache, leaving the beard, using the *miswâk*, cleaning the nose by taking water in it, clipping nails, washing the finger joints, plucking out

⁶⁶ Ibn Abi Hâtim reported this hadith.

⁶⁷ Imams Bukhari and Muslim reported this hadith in their books of *Saheeh*. Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Libâs, Bâb Qass ash-Shârib*; Muslim, *Kitâb at-Tahârah, Bâb Khîsdâl al-Fitrah*.

(or removing) the hair of the armpit, shaving the pubic hair, cleaning oneself with water after passing stool or urinating..."

The point in mentioning these hadiths is to show how Ibraheem's sincerity and devotion in worship did not take him away from taking care of his body and from giving each organ its due care. This is the reason that the All-High has highly praised Prophet Ibraheem in the verse,

"And Ibraheem who fulfilled [his duties]." (*Qur'an* 53: 37)

The Attributes of Ibraheem (ﷺ)

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"I saw 'Eesa the son of Mary, Moosa and Ibraheem. As for 'Eesa he was red, had curly hair and had a broad chest. And as for Moosa, he was tanned and had a big body."

The Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) asked, "What about Ibraheem?" The Prophet replied,
"Look at your companion (i.e. Ibraheem was like the Prophet)."

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"As for Ibraheem, then look at your companion (i.e. Ibraheem was like the Prophet). And as for Moosa, he had curly hair and was tanned, on a red camel with a nose-band of thin string, it is as if I am looking at him descending in the valley."

Ibn Jareer mentioned in his book of history that the birth of Ibraheem (ﷺ) was during the time of Nimrod ibn Kan'ân who, it is said, ruled for about one thousand years. He was at the height of oppression and injustice.

Some of the historians have said that Nimrod was from the tribe of Râsib, where Nooh (ﷺ) was sent. Nimrod ruled over the whole world at that time. It is said that in his time, there appeared a very bright star that hid the rays of the sun and moon. This terrified the people of that time. Nimrod also became frightened. He gathered soothsayers and astrologers and sought advice regarding the situation. They said, "A person will be born among your people at whose hands will be the downfall of your power." Thus, he ordered that men should not approach their wives and that all newborns after that time should be killed. Ibraheem's birth was at that time but Allah saved and protected him from the plan of the evildoers. He grew and became a youth, after which Allah fulfilled through him what has been mentioned in the previous sections.

His birthplace was Soos. Some say he was born in Babylon or Sawâd, the suburb of Kothee, a town in Iraq those days. According to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما), Ibraheem was born in Barzah in east Damascus. After the destruction of Nimrod's kingdom at the hands of Ibraheem, he migrated to Herrân and then to Shâm — Syria, Jordan, etc. of the time and settled in a town called Seliyâ, in Jerusalem. He had two sons, Isma'eel and Ishâq. His wife Sârah passed away before him in a town near Hebron, in the land of Kan'ân. Her age at the time of death was one hundred and twenty-seven years according to the Bible. Ibraheem (ﷺ) became very sad at her death and after buying land from 'Afroon ibn Şakhr for four hundred *mithqâl*, he buried her there.

Ibraheem (ﷺ) married another woman called Qantoorah and had children from her. They were Zamrân, Yaqshân, Mâdân, Madyan, Shiyâq and Shoooh. Abul Qâsim Suhayli however names the kids as Madyan, Zamrân, Sarj, Yaqshân and Nashq and the name of the sixth son not known.

It is reported that Ibraheem (ﷺ) became ill and died at the age of one hundred and seventy-five years. It is also reported that he was one hundred and ninety-five years old when he died. His sons

Isma'eel (ﷺ) and Ishâq (ﷺ) buried him near his wife Sârah, in Hebron.

Ibn Hibbân reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) from the Prophet (ﷺ) who said:

"Ibraheem circumcised himself when he reached one hundred and twenty years. He then lived after it for another eighty years. He had circumcised himself with an axe."⁶⁸

Bukhari reported that Ibraheem (ﷺ) circumcised himself and eighty years came to him. May be it is said that he survived eighty years after circumcision. And Allah knows best.

His grave and the graves of Ishâq (ﷺ) and Ya'qoob (ﷺ) are located in the square built by Sulaymân in Hebron. It is known today as the city of *Khaleel*. This is a proven fact that his grave is in that city. This has been reported in continuity from generations after generations to our time. However, the exact place of the grave within that city is not known since we do not have anything authentically reported from the Prophet (ﷺ). Therefore, this square where he is buried, as a whole should be respected by everyone.

The first child to be born to Prophet Ibraheem (ﷺ) was Isma'eel (ﷺ) from his wife Hâger. Then he had Ishâq (ﷺ) from his wife Sârah, who was his paternal cousin. After her death, he married Qantoorah, who gave birth to six children. Then he married after her Hajoon, who gave birth to five children. They were: Kaysân, Sooraj, Omaym, Looṭân, and Nâfis. This is how it is mentioned by Abul-Qâsim Suhayli in his book titled *at-Ta'reef wa al-A'lâm*.

⁶⁸ *Al-Ihsân bi Tarteeb Saheeh Ibn Hibbân*, vol. 8, p. 29.

Chapter Seven

The Story of Prophet Loot (ﷺ)

Among the major incidents that occurred during the lifetime of Ibraheem (ﷺ) was the incident concerning the people of Loot (ﷺ) and the punishment befell them. Loot ibn Hârân ibn Tareh (who was Azar, the father of Ibraheem) was the nephew of Prophet Ibraheem (ﷺ).

Loot (Lot) (ﷺ), upon instruction from Ibraheem (ﷺ), went to the city of Sudoom (Sodom). It was the main city in that region. Its inhabitants were of the most evil, immoral, lowest and insolent nature. They took to banditry and were perverted, doing evil things openly in their clubs and gathering places, instead of forbidding each other from evil acts.

They engaged in open homosexuality — called Sodomy after the name of the city of its origin, Sodom, an act not known among human history before them. How evil acts they used to perform!

Prophet Loot (ﷺ) invited them to worship Allah Alone, Who does not have any partner. He also forbade them from their immoral practices, evil acts and disobedience of Allah's laws. However, they rejected the call and persisted in their transgressions, disbelief and rebelliousness. Thus Allah destroyed them by a punishment so severe as had not been seen before and made them examples of what can happen to a people if they persist in disobedience and disbelief. Anyone who came after them was to take a lesson from their fate. For this reason, Allah mentioned their story in a number of places in clear terms.

Allah said in *Soorah al-A'rîf*:

“And remember Loot when he said to his people, ‘Do you commit the worse sin such as none preceding you has committed in the creation? Verily, you practice your lusts on men instead of women. Nay, you are a people transgressing beyond bounds by committing great sins.’ And the answer of his people was only that they said, ‘Drive them out of your town, these are indeed men who want to be pure from sins.’ Then We saved him and his family, except his wife; she was of those who remained behind in the torment. And We rained down on them a rain of stones. Then see what was the end of those who indulged in sin and crime.”

(*Qur'an* 7: 80-84)

He also said in *Soorah Hood*:

“And verily, there came Our Messengers to Ibraheem with glad tidings. They said, ‘*Salâm* [Peace].’ He said, ‘*Salâm* [Peace].’ And he hastened to entertain them with a roasted calf. But when he saw their hands did not go towards the meal, he mistrusted them and conceived a fear of them. They said, ‘Do not fear, we have been sent against the people of Loot [Lot]. And his wife was standing there and she laughed [for being glad for the destruction of the bad people of Loot]. But We gave her glad tidings of Ishâq and after him, of Ya'qoob. She said in astonishment, ‘Woe unto me, shall I bear a child while I am an old woman, and here is my husband, an old man? Verily, this is a strange thing.’ They said, ‘Do you wonder at the Decree of Allah? The mercy of Allah and His blessings be upon you O' family of Ibraheem. Surely He is All-Praiseworthy. All-Glorious.’ Then when the fear had gone away from the mind of Ibraheem and the glad tidings had reached him, he began to

plead with Us [Our messengers] for the people of Loot. Verily, Ibraheem was without doubt forbearing, used to invoking Allah in humility and was repentant to Allah all the time, again and again. ‘O’ Ibraheem, desist from this for indeed your Lord’s command has come. Verily, there will come a torment for them which cannot be turned back.’ And when Our messengers came to Loot, he was grieved on account of them and felt himself straightened for them. He said, ‘This is a distressful day.’ And his people came rushing towards him and since aforetime, they used to commit crimes. He said, ‘O’ my people, here are my daughters [the women of the nation], they are purer for you [if you marry them lawfully]. So fear Allah and do not disgrace me with regard to my guests. Is there not among you a single right-minded man?’ They said, ‘Surely, you know that we have neither any desire nor need of your daughters, and indeed you know well what we want.’ He said, ‘Would that I had strength [men] to overpower you, or that I could betake myself to some powerful support to resist you.’ They [messengers] said, ‘O’ Loot, verily, we are the messengers from your Lord. They shall not reach you, so travel with your family in a part of the night and let not any of you look back. But your wife will remain behind. Verily, the punishment, which will afflict them, will afflict her. Indeed, morning is their appointed time. Is not the morning near?’ So when Our commandment came, We turn the town [of Sudoom — Sodom] upside down and rained on them stones of baked clay in a well arranged manner, one after another. Marked from your Lord and they are never ever far from the polytheists and evildoers.” (*Qur'an 11: 69-83*)

And Allah said in *Soorah al-Hijr*:

“And tell them about the guests [angels] of Ibraheem. When

they entered in his presence and said, ‘*Salām* [Peace].’ Ibraheem said, ‘Indeed, we are afraid of you.’ They [angels] said, ‘Do not be afraid, we give you glad tidings of a boy possessing much knowledge and wisdom.’ Ibraheem said, ‘Do you give me glad tidings of a son when old age has overtaken me? Of what then is your news?’ They [angels] said, ‘We give you glad tidings in truth, so be not of the despairing.’ Ibraheem said, ‘And who despairs from the mercy of his Lord except those who are astray?’ Ibraheem again said, ‘What then is the business on which you have come O’ messengers?’

They [angels] said, ‘We have been sent to a people who are criminals, disbelievers, sinners and polytheists. All except the family of Loot. Them all, we are surely going to save [from destruction]. Except his wife of whom We have decreed that she shall be of those who remain behind [and be destroyed].’ Then when the messengers [angels] came to the family of Loot, he said, ‘Verily, you are people unknown to me.’ They said, ‘Nay, we have come to you with that torment which they have been doubting. And we have brought you the truth [the news of destruction of your nation] and certainly, we tell the truth. Then travel in a part of the night with your family, and you go behind them in the rear, and let no one amongst you look back, but go onto where you are ordered.’

And We made known this decree to him that the root of those [sinners] was to be cut off in the early morning. And the inhabitants of the city came rejoicing [at the news of the young mens’ arrival]. Loot said, ‘Verily, these are my guests so do not shame me. And fear Allah and do not disgrace me.’ They [the people of the city] said, ‘Did we not forbid you from entertaining [or protecting] any of the people?’ Loot said, ‘These [the girls of the city] are my daughters [to

marry lawfully] if you may act so.' Verily, by your life [O' Muhammad] in their wild intoxication, they were wandering blindly. So the torment overtook them at sunrise. And We turn the town of Sudoom [Sodom] upside down and rained down on them stones of baked clay. Surely, in this are signs for those who see [or understand or learn the lessons from the signs of Allah]. And verily, they [the cities] were right on the high road [from Makkah to Syria, i.e. the place where the dead sea is now]. Surely, therein is indeed a sign for the believers." (*Qur'an* 15: 51-77)

And Allah said in *Soorah ash-Shu'arâ'*:

"The people of Loot belied the Messengers. When their brother Loot said to them, 'Will you not fear Allah and obey Him? Verily, I am a trustworthy messenger to you. So fear Allah, keep your duty to Him and obey me. I do not ask any reward for it from you. My reward is only from the Lord of the creation. Do you go to the males of the creation and leave those whom Allah has created for you to be your wives? Nay, you are a trespassing people.' They said, 'If you do not cease O' Loot, verily you will be one of those who are driven out.' He said, 'I am indeed of those who disapprove with severe anger and fury your evil action [of sodomy]. My Lord, save me and my family from what they do.' So We saved him and his family, all, except an old woman [his wife] among those who remained behind. Then afterwards, We destroyed the others. And We rained on them a rain of torment. And how evil was the rain of those who had been warned. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers. And verily, your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful."

(*Qur'an* 26: 160-175)

And in *Soorah an-Naml*:

"And remember when Loot said to his people, 'Do you commit evil acts [like sodomy] while you see [one another doing evil without any screen]? Do you practise your lusts on men instead of women? Nay, but you are a people who behave senselessly.' There was no other answer given by his people except that they said, 'Drive out the family of Loot from your city. Verily, these are men who want to be clean and pure.' So We saved him and his family, except his wife. We destined her to be one of those who remained behind. And We rained down on them a rain of stones. So evil was the rain of those who were warned." (*Qur'an* 27: 54-58)

Allah said in *Soorah al-Ankaboot*:

"And remember Loot, when he said to his people, 'You commit such indecencies [sodomy] which none has preceded you in committing it in the creation. Verily, you approach men [for sex] and rob the wayfarer. And practice wickedness in your councils.' But his people gave no answer except that they said, 'Bring Allah's torment upon us if you are one of the **truthful**.' He said, 'My Lord, give me victory over the people who commit crimes and sins.' And when Our messengers came to Ibraheem with glad tidings they said, 'Verily, we are going to destroy the people of this town; truly, its people have been wrong doers and polytheists.' Ibraheem said, 'But there is Loot in it.' They said, 'Well do we know who is there. We will verily save him and his family except his wife, she will be of those who remain behind.' And when Our messengers came to Loot, he was grieved because of them, and felt straitened on their account. They said, 'Do not fear, and do not grieve. Truly, we will save you and your family, except your wife. She will be of those who remain behind [i.e. she will be destroyed] along with those who will be destroyed]. Verily,

we are about to bring down on the people of this town a great torment from the sky, because they have been rebellious.' And indeed, We have left thereof an evident sign for a people who understand." (*Qur'an* 29: 28-35)

And in *Soorah as-Sâffât*:

"And verily, Loot was one of the Messengers, when We rescued him and his family all together. Except an old woman who was among those left behind. Then We destroyed the others. And indeed you pass by the day. And by night, will you then not understand?"

(*Qur'an* 37: 133-138)

Allah mentioned in *Soorah adh-Dhâriyât*, after the story of the guests of Ibraheem and their giving him glad tidings of a knowledgeable son, He (ﷻ) said:

"He [Ibraheem] said, 'Then for what purpose you have come, O' messengers?' They said, 'We have been sent to a people of criminals. To send down upon them stones of baked clay. Marked by your Lord for the transgressors. So we brought out from therein the believers. But We did not find there any household of Muslims except one. And We have left there a sign for those who fear the painful torment.'" (*Qur'an* 51: 31-37)

And Allah said in *Soorah al-Qamar*:

"The people of Loot belied the warnings. Verily, We sent against them a violent storm of stones [which destroyed them all], except the family of Loot, them We saved in the last hour of the night. As a favour from Us. Thus do We reward him who gives thanks. And he [Loot] indeed had warned them of Our punishment, but they did doubt the warnings. And they indeed sought to shame his guests. So

We blinded their eyes [saying], ‘Then taste My torment and My warnings.’ And verily, an abiding torment seized them early in the morning. ‘Then taste My torment and My warnings.’ And indeed, We have made the Qur'an easy to understand and remember. Then is there any that will remember [or receive admonition]?’’ (*Qur'an* 54: 33-40)

We have already spoken about these stories in their respective places in our book of *Tafseer*. Allah also mentioned the story of the people of Loot (ﷺ) in other places in the Qur'an which we have mentioned along with the story of Nooh (ﷺ), and the people of 'Ad and Thamood.

The goal here is to mention their story along with the punishment that Allah sent upon them. This will be done by mentioning the relevant verses and hadiths. And I seek help with Allah.

When Loot (ﷺ) invited his people to worship Allah Alone, Who does not have any partner, and forbade them from their immoral practices and evil acts mentioned by Allah. They did not respond to his invitation. Similarly, they did not believe in him, so much so that not even a single man believed in him. They did not desist from their actions, rather they persisted in what they used to do. They even went as far as thinking about expelling their Prophet from their lands. They tried to overpower him, mock at him and their reply to his calls were none other than what the Qur'an quotes:

“Expel the family of Loot from your town, they are people clean and pure.” (*Qur'an* 27: 56)

So they made what necessitates praise as being blameworthy, deserving of expulsion. The driving factor behind their attitude and this statement was their perversity and refusal to accept the truth and change their ways.

So Allah purified Loot (ﷺ) and his family, except his wife, and evacuated them in a perfect manner and then left the people in their dwellings forever. Allah turned their town into a sea with waves, but its water being salty.

This was their answer to him only when he forbade them from the most indecent practice, which had never been practised before by anyone on earth. For this reason, they were made an example and lesson for people to come.

Apart from this major indecent act, they used to commit other sins, such as highway robbery, betraying friends, and committing all sorts of evil acts in public places of assembly. They were a people with no shame. It is said that they were passing fart with sound openly in their assemblies without feeling any shame. They even used to perform homosexual acts in public none to forbid or advise them. In this act and others, their ways were like animals, in fact, even worse than animals. They did not desist from their prevalent practices and neither did they regret what occurred in the past. So Allah took them away with a great punishment.

They had reached such a level that when Loot (ﷺ) threatened them of the dire consequences of their evil deeds, they said to him, as quoted in the Qur'an:

“Bring us the punishment of Allah if you are among the truthful?”
(Qur'an 29: 29)

Loot supplicated to Allah against his people, which He (Allah) answered and sent His honoured and great angels to punish them. They came to Loot after passing by Ibraheem (ﷺ) and giving him glad tidings of a knowledgeable child. They also informed Ibraheem about what was going to inflict upon the people of Loot. Allah said:

“He [Ibraheem] said, ‘O’ messengers! On what matter have you been sent?’ They said, ‘We have been sent to a sinning

people, to send upon them stones of clay, marked by your Lord for the wanton.''" (*Our'an* 51: 31-34)

And He said:

"And when Our messengers came to Ibraheem with the glad tidings, they said, 'We are to destroy the people of this town, for verily its dwellers are evildoers.' He said, 'Verily, in it is Loot.' They said, 'We are fully aware of who is in there. We will save him and his family, except Loot's wife. She will be among those who stay behind.'" (Our'an 29: 31-32)

And also:

"So when the fear had passed from Ibraheem and glad tidings came to him, he began to plead with Us for the people of Loot." *(Our'an 11: 74)*

Ibraheem (ﷺ) pleaded for this because he hoped the people of Loot would accept the invitation, submit to Allah, desist from their evil ways and return to the correct path. Thus Allah (ﷻ) said:

"Verily, Ibraheem was forbearing, compassionate, penitent. 'O' Ibraheem, turn away from this, verily the order of your Lord has come, and verily a punishment that cannot be repelled is coming upon them.'" (Our'an 11: 75-76)

That is, leave this topic and speak about something else because their punishment is now binding and will befall them no matter what and they will be destroyed.

It is mentioned by Sa'eed ibn Jubayr, as-Suddi, Muhammad ibn Ishâq and Qatâdah that Ibraheem (ﷺ) started saying to them (the angels): "Will you destroy a town where there are three hundred believers?" They said, "No." He said, "What about if there were two hundred believers?" They said, "No." He said, "What about if there were forty believers?" They said, "No." He said, "What about if

there were fourteen believers?" They answered, "No." Ibn Ishâq said: "He mentioned this till it reached one believer, where he said, 'What about if there was only one believer?' They said, 'No.'

'He [Ibraheem] said, 'But Loot is therein.' They said, 'We are fully aware of who is there.'" (*Qur'an* 29: 32)⁶⁹

The version of this story in the Bible mentions that he said, "O' Lord, will You destroy them while there are fifty pious people?" Allah said, "I will not destroy them while there are fifty pious people." Then Allah reduced the number to ten pious people and said, "I will not destroy them if there were ten pious people."

Allah said:

"And when Our angels came to Loot, he was grieved and felt that he was unable to protect them. And he said, 'This is a distressful day.'" (*Qur'an* 11: 77)

The *Mufassireen* — Qur'anic exegetes, said: "When the angels, Jibreel, Mikâeel and Isrâfeel, left Ibraheem, they went till they reached the city of Sudoom (Sodom). They were in the guise of young, good looking youths, as a test from Allah in order to establish the proof against them for their punishment. Loot (ﷺ) hosted them upon their arrival, which was at sunset. Loot was fearful that if he did not provide them with a place, then his people might do evil. He initially thought they were humans. He did not know that they were angels."

Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما), Mujâhid, Qatâdah and Ibn Ishâq said that it was a great test for Loot (ﷺ) to have these guests because he knew it was difficult to protect them at night. He knew this because of his experience with other guests and also his people had already laid a condition upon him not to host anybody in his house.

⁶⁹ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, vol. 1, p. 209.

Qatâdah said that the angels came to Loot (ﷺ) when he was working on his land. They requested that he hosts them and he was embarrassed to refuse. While walking in front of them, he tried to hint to them to leave that town and to descend in another one. He said to them, "By Allah, I do not know people more indecent and corrupt on the face of this earth than the people of this town." He then continued walking for a while and after every so often, he repeated what he said earlier. He did this four times. The angels were sent with orders not to destroy them till their Prophet bears witness against them.⁷⁰

As-Suddi said that the angels left Ibraheem (ﷺ) and headed towards the town of Loot (ﷺ). They reached there at midday and at the river of Sudoom, they met the daughter of Loot, who was taking water for her family. He had two daughters: the eldest daughter was named Reetha and the youngest was Zaghratâ. The angels said to her, "O' girl, is there any place for us to stay?" She said, "Wait here and do not enter the town until I return." She feared for them so she hastened to her father and said to him, "O' my father, there are two youths at the gate of the town. I have never seen such good-looking young men so do not let them be taken by your people or be ill treated by them. His people had already told him not to keep any man as a guest. They instead said to him, "If there are men, let us host them."⁷¹

Loot (ﷺ) brought them home in secrecy such that nobody knew about them except his immediate family. But then his wife went to her people and informed them, saying, "There are men in the house of Loot. I have never seen such beautiful faces." At that, his people came rushing towards him.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

⁷⁰ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, vol. 1, p. 210.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

“And before, they used to do evil deeds. He [Loot] said, ‘O’ my people, here are my daughters, they are purer for you.’”

(*Qur'an* 11: 78)

The start of this verse indicates that they used to commit other evil acts apart from this heinous act. Loot (ﷺ) tried to make them change their minds such that they go to their wives since they are purer for them. He referred to their women as his daughters because a Prophet is as a father for his people. This is mentioned in a hadith and also, Allah said:

“The Prophet is more worthier to the believers than their own selves, and his wives are their mothers.”

(*Qur'an* 33: 6)

According to the saying of some Companions and the pious predecessors, what Loot (ﷺ) meant by his daughters in this verse, “He said, ‘O’ my people, here are my daughters, they are purer for you.’” is his own daughters. But the following verse clearly shows that what he meant was their own wives:

“Of all the creatures in the world, do you approach males and leave those who Allah has created for you as your mates? Nay, you are a transgressing people.”

(*Qur'an* 26: 165-166)

The correct opinion is that mentioned by Mujâhid, Sa'eed ibn Jubayr, Ibn Ishâq, as-Suddi and Qatâdah that he offered them their own wives since they were his daughters because of him being a Prophet.

The other opinion is taken from the Bible and is thus incorrect. It was a grave mistake to say that Loot (ﷺ) offered to them his own daughters. The Bible also mentions that there were two angels and they took their dinner with him.

Allah quoted Loot (ﷺ) as saying:

“So fear Allah and do not disgrace me in front of my guests.
Is there not a single right minded man among you?”

(*Qur'an 11: 78*)

He forbade them from committing evil and heinous acts and bore witness that there is not even one man with some good in him. Rather, all of them are foolish, transgressors, disbelievers and stupid people.

This was among the evidence that the angels sought and wanted to hear and they got this before they needed to ask Loot (ﷺ) about this.

When Loot (ﷺ) invited them to the worship of Allah and to leave the heinous acts, the people, may Allah curse them said to him:

“Verily, you know that we have no desire towards your daughters and most surely, you know what we desire.”

(*Qur'an 11: 79*)

They said to him openly and without shame that they had no desire at all in their women. Rather, what they want and desire is most surely known to Loot. They did not at all fear the punishment. So Loot (ﷺ) said, as quoted in the Qur'an:

“If I had the power to set you right, or I take some strong support for refuge.”

(*Qur'an 11: 80*)

He wished that he had the physical power or support from his family, then he would have punished them severely, as they deserved for being arrogant in what they said.

Zuhri reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“We are more susceptible to doubt than Ibraheem. May Allah have mercy upon Loot, he wanted to take some strong support. And if I had stayed in jail for the time that Yusuf did, I would have

accepted the invitation of the caller.”⁷²

In another narration on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), the Prophet (ﷺ) is reported to have said:

“May Allah have mercy upon Loot, he wished to take some powerful support (i.e. Allah). So Allah did not send a Prophet after him except that he was among the best of a people.”⁷³

Allah, the Exalted said:

“And the people of the city came in happiness. Loot said, ‘These men are my guests do not disgrace me. And fear Allah and do not put me to shame.’ They said, ‘Didn’t we forbid you from pleading the people?’ He said, ‘These are my daughters [for you to marry] if you are going to do anything.’”
(Qur'an 15: 67-71)

Prophet Loot (ﷺ) ordered them to go to their wives and warned them of the consequences if they persisted in this way. However, they were not a people who would listen or take heed. Every time he forbade them, they persisted in their demand of having sex with Loot’s guests and they had no idea what the Decree had in store for them of punishment. That is why Allah swore by His Prophet’s life and said:

“By your life [O’ Prophet], they are wandering blindly in their intoxication.”
(Qur'an 15: 72)

And said:

“And he [Loot] warned them of Our punishment but they disputed the warnings. And they even sought to make improper advances towards his guests, but We blinded their

⁷² Imam Bukhari also reported this hadith in his *Saheeh* with a different chain.

⁷³ Ahmad, vol. 2, p. 332.

eyes. So taste My punishment and My warnings. And verily, an abiding punishment seized them by the morning."

(*Qur'an* 54: 36-38)

The *Mufassireen* and others said that Prophet Loot (عليه السلام) was preventing them from entering the house while keeping the door closed. As they tried their best to enter the house, Loot (عليه السلام) was admonishing them from behind the door. When the situation became very dire and it was difficult for him to hold them back, he said, as the Qur'an quotes:

"If only I had the power to set you right, or I could find some strong support for refuge." (Our'an II: 80)

Meaning, if this were the case, I would have punished you.

The angels then said:

"O' Loot, we are Messengers of your Lord. They will never reach you." (Our'an 11; 81)

It is said that Jibreel (Gabriel) came out to them and struck them on their faces with his wing, which resulted in them becoming blind. It was such a strike that it is said their eyes disappeared completely, without any trace or its place even being there. They returned from there by taking support of the walls and threatening him.

The angels informed Loot (ﷺ) about the punishment of his evil and wretched people saying:

"Morning is the appointed time [for their destruction], is not the morning close?" (Qur'an 11: 81)

When Loot (رض) left his city with his family, which included only his two daughters, and none of their male (and / or female) followed him. It is said that his wife was with him. And Allah knows best.

When they had left and the sun rose, the punishment of Allah approached them. There was no one who could have turned it back or nothing that could prevent it from inflicting them.

"When Our command came to pass, We turned the dwellings upside down, and rained upon them stones, hard as baked clay, layer on layer. Each one assigned from your Lord, and never far from the evildoers." (*Our'an* 11: 82-83)

It is mentioned that Jibreel (Gabriel) uprooted the city and those around it with its inhabitants and animals. They were altogether seven cities. It is said that the number of inhabitants was four hundred. In another narration, the number is as high as four thousand. He lifted them so high into the sky that angels heard their cries and the barking of their dogs. He then threw the city, with all its inhabitants, upside down, making its top the bottom.

Allah said:

"And He destroyed the overthrown cities. So He covered them with that which covered. Then which of your Lord's bounties will you dispute?" (Qur'an 53: 53-55)

This means that he turned it upside down, making its top the bottom and covered it with the rain of hard stones, one after another, layer upon layer. Each stone had the name of a person on it, including those who were present at that time and those absent and travelling.

It is said that the wife of Prophet Loot stayed behind with her people. It is also said by some others that she left the city and went along with Loot (ﷺ) and her two daughters. But on the way, when she heard the sound of the blast and the falling of the city, she turned back towards her people and disobeyed the order of her Lord. She said, "O' my people." And then a stone fell on her and she was smashed into pieces and thus she joined the rest of her people (i.e. they all were destroyed) because she was on the religion of her

people. Infact, she was also a spy for her people, informing them as to who was a guest in Loot's house.

Allah said:

“Allah sets forth an example for the disbelievers the wife of Nooh and the wife of Loot. They were under two of Our righteous slaves and yet they betrayed them. So they [Nooh and Loot] did not avail them anything before Allah and it was said [to the wives of Nooh and Loot], ‘Enter both of you into the Fire along with those who enter.’”

(Qur'an 66: 10)

Their wives betrayed them in their religion and did not follow them. It does not mean at all that they were promiscuous because Allah never decrees that the wife of any Prophet be a lewd and promiscuous. As Ibn 'Abbas (رضي الله عنه) and the scholars from the pious generations and after said: “No wife of any Prophet was ever a lustful and lewd.” And thus whoever says contrary to this has made a severe error.

At the time of the incident of ‘Ijik’ (the lie), when the hypocrites slandered the mother of the believers ‘A’ishah (رضي الله عنها) bint Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq and the wife of the Messenger of Allah (صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالمات)، Allah revealed her innocence from the heavens. He (صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالمات) said:

“When you were passing it through your tongues and spoke with your mouths about which you had no knowledge. And you regarded it as to be light matter while with Allah it was a most serious thing. Why did you not, when you heard about it, say, ‘It is not for us to speak of this. Glory be to You, this is a most serious slander.’” *(Qur'an 24: 15-16)*

The end of these verses means that Allah be Glorified from making the wife of His Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وآله وسالمات) anything low like this lie.

The part of the verse,

“... and never far from the evildoers” (*Qur'an* 11: 83)

— means that this punishment is not far (i.e. will inflict) from anyone who may commit similar deeds.

For this reason, some scholars held the opinion that a homosexual is to be stoned to death, whether that person was married or not. This is the opinion of Imam Shafi'i, Ahmad and many reputed scholars.

Those who held this opinion supported it with a hadith reported by Imam Ahmad and *Sunan* compilers on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه). He narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Whoever you find committing the act of the people of Loot (i.e. homosexuality), then kill them both: the one who did it and the one with whom it was done.”⁷⁴

Imam Abu Ḥanefah held the opinion that the homosexual should be thrown from a hilltop and then to be stoned, as was done with the people of Loot.

Allah made that part of the land into a small sea, not possible for anyone to benefit from it. Similarly, the area surrounding it is also of no benefit to people. It is as a sign of Allah's Might and Greatness, and how He punishes those who disobey him, belie His messengers and follow their desires. It is also a proof of Allah's mercy towards His believing slaves since he saved Prophet Loot (عليه السلام) and his family, and He (عز وجل) took them out of darkness into light. He said:

“Verily, in this is a sign but most of them do not believe.
And indeed, your Lord is All-Mighty, All-Merciful.”

(*Qur'an* 26: 8-9)

⁷⁴ Ibn Mâjah, *Kitâb al-Hudood*, Bâb “Man 'amala qawm Loot”; Tirmidhi, *Kitâb al-Hudood*, Bâb “Hadd al-Loot” and Abu Dawood, *Kitâb al-Hudood*, Bâb, “Man 'amala qawm Loot.”

The All-High also said:

“So the torment seized them at sunrise. And We turned it [the towns of Sudoom] upside down and rained down on them stones of baked clay. Surely, in this are signs for those who understand and take lessons. And verily, they [the cities] were right on the highroad. And surely there is a sign in this for those who believe.” *(Qur'an 15: 73-77)*

This means that those who have an insight and use it, and look into things and how they were destroyed. Such a person will realize that their destruction was for a reason.

As is reported by Tirmidhi that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Beware of the acumen of the believer for verily he looks upon things with the Divine light.” He then recited the verse:

“Surely, in this are signs for those who reflect upon events.”
(Qur'an 15: 75)⁷⁵

Allah said:

“And We have left a clear sign of it for people who understand.” *(Qur'an 29: 35)*

And:

“Then We evacuated the believers who were therein, but We did not find therein any except one Muslim household. And We left therein a sign for those who fear a painful chastisement.” *(Qur'an 51: 35-37)*

That is: We left that city as a lesson and an admonition for those who fear the punishment in the Hereafter and fear the Most Merciful, even though they do not see Him. Similarly, such a person will fear his

⁷⁵ Tirmidhi, *Kitâb at-Tafseer, Tafseer Soorah al-Hijr*.

Lord by not acting upon his desires and giving up sins, and also will fear being similar to the people of Loot. This is because anyone who imitates a people is of them. If he may not be from all perspectives, but at least he will be like them from some angles.

Anyone with senses and understanding, and who fears his Lord will follow the orders of Allah (ﷻ), and accept the guidance provided by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). This includes, among other things, approaching wives who are permissible for them, or even the slave girls. Such a person will be careful so as not to follow the *Shaytān* deserving the consequences that were promised. In such a case, this person would be included in the saying of Allah:

“... it is never far from the evildoers.” (*Qur'an 11: 83*)

Chapter Eight

The Story of Shu'ayb (ﷺ)

Allah said in *Soorah al-A'râf* after the story of the people of Loot:

"And to the people of Madyan, We sent their brother Shu'ayb. He said, 'O' my people, worship Allah, you have no other God but Him. Verily, a clear proof from your Lord has come to you. So give full measure and full weight and do not wrong men in their things, and do not do mischief on the earth after it has been set in order that will be better for you if you are believers. And do not sit on every road, threatening and hindering from the path of Allah those who believe in Him, seeking to make it crooked. And remember when you were but few and He multiplied you. And see what was the end of the mischief-makers.

'And if there is a party of you who believe in that with which I have been sent and a party of who do not believe, so be patient until Allah judges between us and He is the best of judges.' The chiefs of those who were arrogant among his people said, 'We shall certainly drive you out, Shu'ayb, and those who have believed with you from our town, or else you all shall return to our religion.' He said, 'Even though we hate it! We should have invented a lie against Allah if we returned to your religion, after Allah has rescued us from it. And it is not for us to return to it unless Allah, our Lord, should will. Our Lord comprehends all things in His knowledge. In Allah Alone we put our trust. Our Lord,

judge between us and our people in truth, for You are the best of those who give judgment.' The chiefs of those who disbelieved among his people said [to their people], 'If you follow Shu'ayb, be sure then you will be the losers.' So the earthquake seized them and they lay dead, prostrate in their homes. Those who belied Shu'ayb became as if they had never dwelt there in their homes. Those who belied Shu'ayb, they were the losers. Then he [Shu'ayb] turned from them and said, 'O' my people, I have indeed conveyed my Lord's messages to you and I have given you good advice. Then how can I sorrow for the disbelieving people's destruction.'"
(Qur'an 7: 85-93)

And Allah mentioned about them in *Soorah Hood* after the story of the people of Loot:

"And to the Madyan people We sent their brother Shu'ayb. He said, 'O' my people, worship Allah, you have no other god but Him, and do not give short measure or weight. I see you in prosperity and verily I fear for you the torment of a day encompassing. And O' my people, give full measure and weight in justice and do not reduce the things that are due to the people, and do not commit mischief in the land, causing corruption. That which is left by Allah for you [after giving the rights of the people] is better for you, if you are believers. And I am not a guardian over you.' They said, 'O' Shu'ayb, does your prayer command that we give up what our fathers used to worship, or that we give up doing what we like with our property? Verily, you are the forbearer, right-minded.

He said, 'O' my people, tell me if I have clear evidence from my Lord and He has given me a good sustenance from Himself [shall I then corrupt it by mixing it with the unlawfully earned money]. I wish not, in contradiction to

you, to do that which I forbid you. I only desire to reform you to the best of my power. And my guidance cannot come except from Allah, in Him I trust and to Him I repent. And O' my people, do not let my separation and enmity cause you to suffer the fate similar to that of the people of Nooh or Hood, or Shâleh, and the people of Loot are not far from you. And ask forgiveness of your Lord and turn to Him in repentance. Verily, my Lord is Most Merciful, Most Loving.'

They said, 'O' Shu'ayb, we do not understand much of what you say, and we see you weak among us. Were it not for your family, we should certainly have stoned you and you are not powerful against us.' He said, 'O' my people, is then my family of more weight to you than Allah? And you have cast Him away behind your backs. Verily, my Lord is surrounding all that you do. And O' my people act according to your ability and way, and I am acting [on my way]. You will come to know who it is on whom descends the torment that will cover him with ignominy, and who is a liar. And watch you, verily, I too am watching with you.' And when Our order came, We saved Shu'ayb and those who believed with him by a mercy from Us. The torment seized the wrong doers, and they lay dead prostrate in their homes, as if they had never lived there. So away with Madyan as away with Thamood.' (*Qur'an 11: 84-95*)

And Allah said in *Soorah al-Hijr* after the story of the people of Loot:

"And the dwellers in the wood — al-Aikah — [the people of Madyan] were [also polytheists and] wrong doers. So We took vengeance on them, and they are both on an open highway, plain to see." (*Qur'an 15: 78-79*)

And He (ﷺ), said in *Soorah ash-Shu'ara'* after the story of the people of Loot:

"The dwellers of al-Aikah [wood] belied the messengers. When Shu'ayb said to them, 'Will you not fear Allah? I am a trustworthy messenger to you. So fear Allah, keep your duty to Him and obey me. I do not seek from you any reward for it, my reward is only from the Lord of the creation. Give full measure and do not cause loss [to others]. And weigh with the true and straight balance. And do not defraud people by reducing their things, nor do evil, making corruption and mischief in the land. And fear Him Who created you and the generations before you.'

They said, 'You are only one of those bewitched. You are but a human being like us and verily, we think that you are one of the liars. So cause a piece of the heaven to fall on us, if you are of the truthful.' He said, 'My Lord is the best Knower of what you do.' But they belied him, so the torment of the day of shadow seized them. Indeed, that was the torment of a great day. Verily, in this is indeed a sign, yet most of them are not believers. And verily, your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful."

(Qur'an 26: 176-191)

The people of Madyan were Arabs who lived in a city called Madyan, which was close to Syria and not far from the Dead Sea. The people of Madyan came after the people of Looṭ by a relatively short time. They were the sons of Madyan ibn Madyān ibn Ibraheem (ﷺ).

Ibn Ḥibbān reported on the authority of Abu Dharr (ﷺ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Four Prophets were Arabs: Hood, Ṣâleh, Shu'ayb and your Prophet, O' Abu Dharr."

Some predecessors call Shu'ayb (ﷺ) as 'the preacher among the Prophets' because he was eloquent in his language.

Ibn Ishāq reported on the authority of ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) that whenever the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned Shu‘ayb (شعيوب), he said: “He was the preacher (*Khatib*) among the Prophets.”

The people of Madyan were disbelievers. They were engaged in highway robbery, frightening the wayfarers. They worshipped al-Aikah, a tree. They were people of evil behaviour, and cheated in their measurement and weight. When they dealt with people regarding themselves, they measured in excess, and when they sold something, they did so with deficiency.

So Allah sent to them a man as a Prophet from among themselves called Shu‘ayb (شعيوب). He invited them to the worship of Allah Alone, Who has no partners. He forbade them from the evil practices, such as cheating people in their measurements and weights. Similarly, he forbade from frightening or robbing people of their merchandise while going on highways.

Only some people believed in him while the majority rejected him. So Allah inflicted upon them a severe punishment.

As Allah said:

“And to the people of Madyan Allah sent their brother Shu‘ayb. He said, ‘O’ my people, worship Allah, you have no god other than Him. There has now come to you a clear sign from your Lord.’” *(Qur'an 7: 85)*

These signs were clear cut and apparent and showed the truthfulness of Shu‘ayb (شعيوب) and what he called towards. Allah gave him miracles as signs, but we do not have details of them. However, what we do know is that he did have miracles, as is indicated by the above quoted verse.

Allah said:

“Therefore give full measure and weight, and do not withhold the things from the people, and do not work any

corruption on the earth after it has been set right.”

(Qur'an 7: 85)

In this verse, Allah ordered them to be just and forbade them from wrongdoing. He promised them good if they obey Him, by saying:

“This is better for you if you are believers. And do not sit on every path threatening,”

(Qur'an 7: 85-86)

This means not to threaten the travellers in order to take their property, or rob them of their merchandise or to kill them.

As-Suddi said regarding this that they used to forcibly take ten percent from those who passed by that high way.

A similar explanation has been reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbás (رضي الله عنهما). He said that they were an evil and tyrant people who used to wait on the highway and when someone passed by, take one tenth from them. These people introduced this evil practice for the first time.

The verse,

“... and hindering from the way of Allah those who believe in Him, and you seek to make it crooked,”

(Qur'an 7: 86)

— means that Shu'ayb (ﷺ) forbade them from hindering people from the way. This is referring to both the types of ways, the worldly and the spiritual.

Allah said:

“And remember when you were few, then He multiplied you, and look now how was the end of the corrupts.”

(Qur'an 7: 86)

In this verse, Allah reminded them of His blessings upon them that He multiplied them after they were few. Similarly, He warned them of the consequences if they do not desist from their bad practices. As

Allah said in another verse:

“Do not reduce the measure and weight. Verily, I see you in prosperity and verily, I fear for you the punishment of an encompassing day.”
(Qur'an 11: 84)

That is not to persist in what they were doing, otherwise Allah will take away His blessings from them. He will make them poor after taking away their richness. All this is in addition to the punishment of the hereafter. And whoever was (and is) punished in this world and in the Hereafter, then surely such a one is the loser.

Allah said regarding what Shu'ayb (ﷺ) said:

“And O' my people, fill the measure and balance justly and do not withhold from people their dues and do not commit evil in the land. What Allah has is better for you if you are believers, and I am not a keeper over you.”

(Qur'an 11: 85-86)

'Abdullah ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) and Hasan al-Basri (may Allah be Merciful to him) said regarding the words, “what Allah has is better for you”, it refers to the provision of Allah and that it is better than taking the people's property. And Ibn Jareer said: “The profit earned after being just in the measure and weight is better than what you take from people by cheating them in balances.”

This explanation is good and similar to the saying of Allah:

“Say, ‘The impure and pure are not equal even though the abundance of impure may allure you much...’.”

(Qur'an 4: 100)

That is, the *halâl* earnings, even if they are little, are better than abundant *harâm* earnings from unlawful means. This is because the *halâl* is blessed even if it is little while the *harâm* is deprived even if it is abundant, as Allah (ﷻ) said:

“Allah deprives usury of all blessings and gives increase for deeds of charity.”
(Qur'an 2: 276)

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“The destination of usury, even if it is abundant, is to deficiency.”⁷⁶

He (ﷺ) also said:

“The buyer and seller have the option (to cancel the transaction) before they separate. If they were truthful and explained (defects if there were any), then their transaction will be blessed. But if they concealed the defects or lied, the blessings will be taken away.”⁷⁷

Anyhow, the point is that the *halâl* earnings are blessed even if they appear little while the *harâm* are not even if they appear plentiful. For this reason, the Prophet of Allah Shu'ayb (ﷺ) said to his people: “What Allah has is better for you if you are believers. And I am not a keeper over you.” That means: do what I have ordered you to carry out, seeking Allah's pleasure and hoping for His reward, and not to show off to me or anyone else.

Allah said:

“They said, ‘O’ Shu'ayb, does your prayer command you that we should forsake what our fathers worshipped or that we should not do as we please with our property? You are such forbearing, right-minded.’”
(Qur'an 11: 87)

By saying, “You are such forbearing, right-minded” they really mocked and scorned him. They really said that sarcastically.

⁷⁶ Imam Ahmad reported this hadith in his book *Musnad*, vol. 1, Pp. 395, 424.

⁷⁷ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Buyu'* and Muslim, *Kitâb al-Buyu'*.

Is it your prayer, which you offer that orders you to shun us until we do not worship except your God? And should we leave what our forefathers used to worship? Or should we not deal except in such a way that pleases you and leave what you do not want us to do even if that pleases us?

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“He [Shu‘ayb] said, ‘O’ my people, have you considered whether I have a clear sign from my Lord and He has provided me with a good sustenance. And I do not wish to contradict you in what I forbid you to do. I only want to reform you as far as I am able to. My success is not with anyone except from Allah, in Him I trust, and to Him I return.’”

(*Qur'an* 11: 88)

Shu‘ayb spoke to them in a polite manner and then in the clearest of expressions.

This is the great characteristic and its opposite is blameworthy and rejected. The Jewish rabbis neglected this attribute of following what they preached. Thus Allah, the Almighty said about them in the Qur'an:

“Do you enjoin right conduct upon people and forget to practice it yourselves, and yet you study the Scripture? Will you not understand?!”

(*Qur'an* 2: 44)

It is mentioned in an authentic hadith recorded by Bukhari that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“A man will be brought and thrown in the Fire. His intestines will spill out of his stomach resulting in him spinning around them as the donkey spins in the mill. The people of Hell will gather and say, ‘O’ so and so, what happened to you? Did not you enjoin good and forbid wrong?’ He will say, ‘Yes, I enjoined good but

did not practice it myself and I forbade wrong but I practised it myself.”⁷⁸

This is the character of the people who reject the Messengers and go against them from among the evil doers and miserable people. As for people of noble characters and wisdom from among the scholars who fear their Lord, even though they do not see Him, their situation is as described by Shu'ayb (ﷺ). He said, as mentioned in the Qur'an:

“And I do not wish to contradict you in what I forbid you to do. I only desire to reform you as far as I am able.”

(*Qur'an 11: 88*)

All I want from what I order you to do is to reform you.

The Qur'an quotes Shu'ayb saying: “My [i.e. Shu'ayb] success can only come from Allah, in Him I trust, and to Him I return.” That is: I depend on Him in all my affairs and to Him is my return in all matters. He said this to his people to motivate them.

Then Shu'ayb (ﷺ) changed his angle of speech and reminded them of the consequences if they reject. He said, as Allah quoted:

“And O' people, let not the breach with me move you, so that you are smitten by the like of that which smote the people of Nooh, Hood, Shâleh, and the people of Loot are not far away from you.”

(*Qur'an 11: 89*)

He said to them, “Do not let your differences with me and your hatred of what I brought make you persist in your wrongdoing, transgression and ignorance. If you do, then Allah will inflict upon you the punishment similar to what befell those who did similar to what you do.” This includes the likes of the people of Nooh (ﷺ), Hood and Shâleh (ﷺ) who belied and rejected.

⁷⁸ Bukhari, *Kitâb Bada' al-Khalq, Bâb Sifat an-Nâr*.

Regarding,

“And the people of Loot are not far from you.”

(*Qur'an 11: 89*)

It is said that it refers to the time between the two. Shu'ayb (ﷺ) reminded his people of the end of the people of Loot (ﷺ) and how close it was when they rejected their Prophet. A second opinion suggests that it is the place, physical distance that is meant here. To some others the similarity is in behaviours, attributes and actions, such as highway robbery, cheating people secretly and openly using a number of tricks.

All of these sayings may be combined because these people were not far from the people of Loot (ﷺ), in time, place, or in characteristics and behaviour.

Shu'ayb mixed motivation and explanation of consequences if they desist from their evil practices of cheating in measurements and threatening wayfarers. He said, as Allah quoted him:

“And ask for forgiveness from your Lord, and repent to Him. Indeed my Lord is Most Merciful, All-Loving.”

(*Qur'an 11: 90*)

Meaning if you leave what you are doing and turn to Him in repentance, then He will accept your pleas for forgiveness because He is merciful with His slaves. In fact, He is more merciful with His slaves than a mother is with her child.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“They said, ‘O’ Shu'ayb, we do not understand much of what you say, and surely we see you weak among us. Were it not for your tribe, we would certainly have stoned you because we do not see that you have any strength among us.’”

(*Qur'an 11: 91*)

This was a sample from their extreme disbelief and obstinacy. Their despicable reply was,

“We do not understand much of what you say.”

(*Qur'an 11: 91*)

This means that we can not make any sense of your call and cannot understand it because we do not desire or want it and there is no motivation for us in either accepting it or coming close to it.

This response was similar to what the Quraysh (the Makkans disbelievers) said to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). They said, as Allah said in the Qur'an:

“And they say, ‘Our hearts are veiled from what you invite us to and in our ears is deafness. And there is a barrier between you and us. So do as you please, we too are so doing.’”

(*Qur'an 41: 5*)

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“He [Shu'ayb] said, ‘O' my people, is my tribe more fearful to you than Allah? You cast Him totally away behind your back?’”

(*Qur'an 11: 39*)

What he meant was, do you fear my tribe, relatives and you do not fear the punishment of Allah? You do not fear me even though I am a Prophet? Thus, to you, my people are more fearful than Allah. The meaning of,

“My Lord indeed encompasses all that you do”

(*Qur'an 11: 92*)

— is that Allah is aware of what you are performing and He will take you to account for every deed and reward you for every good deed.

Allah quoted Shu'ayb saying:

“And O' my people, do whatever you can, I too will do.

Soon you will know to whom the degrading chastisement will come and who is the liar. And await, I will be waiting with you.”

(*Qur'an* 11: 93)

This was a severe and emphasized warning to them that if they continue on their evil ways, then they will come to know the consequences of their actions and what the punishment in store for them will be.

“And who is the liar” (*cf* 11: 93), means whether the liar will be me or you in what I have informed you of warnings (if persisting in evil) and glad tidings (if desisting from evil actions).

And the meaning of, “And await, I will be waiting with you” (*cf* 11: 93), is as has been mentioned in the verse:

“And if there is a party of you who believed in what I have been sent with and a party who do not believe, then have patience until Allah passes His Judgement between us. He is the Best of judges.”

(*Qur'an* 7: 87)

Allah said:

“The chiefs of those who behaved arrogantly among his people said, ‘We will expel you, O’ Shu’ayb, and those who believe with you, from our town, unless you return to our religion.’ He said, ‘[You want us to return to it] even though we detest it? It would be forging a lie against Allah if we return to your religion after Allah has saved us from it. Nor can we return to it unless Allah, our Lord, wills so. Our Lord encompasses all things in knowledge. In Allah we have placed our trust. Our Lord, judge between us and our people in truth, for You are the Best of judges.’”

(*Qur'an* 7: 88-89)

The people demanded those who believed with Shu’ayb to return to their religion. Shu’ayb (ﷺ) confronted them with the

argument, “even though we detest it.” They will not return to your religion by their own choice, rather if they return, it will be due to external force and without their will. The reason for this is that when *Eemân* enters into the heart and gets rooted, no one can take it out and none will apostate from it.

The verse, “O’ Lord, judge between us and our people in truth, for You are the Best of judges” means that Shu'ayb (ﷺ) supplicated to Allah against his people to bring forth their punishment that they deserved for their evil practice. Allah does not reject the prayers of His Messengers if they seek His help against those who deny and disbelieve in Allah. Despite this supplication against them, they persisted in what they were upon and said to the others:

“And the chiefs from among his people said, ‘If you follow Shu'ayb, then verily you will be the losers.’” (*Qur'an* 7: 90)

In *Soorah al-A'râf*, it is mentioned that these people were taken away by an earthquake. It was so severe and with such a force that their souls came out of their bodies immediately and they fell down, becoming lifeless like objects with no senses, movements and souls.

Allah inflicted upon them a number of types of punishments and trials. Because they had some very evil characteristics, Allah seized them with a powerful earthquake which stopped all movements and the blast was so tremendous that overshadowed all other sounds. All this brought upon them a shower of ashes and cinder.

When Allah informed about their practices and punishments in various chapters, He mentioned what is appropriate according to its context and rhythm. For example, in *Soorah al-A'râf*, Allah mentioned that they were seized by earthquake. Also, his people threatened Shu'ayb (ﷺ) and the believers with him with expulsion from their town if they do not return to their previous religion. In this

context, Allah said:

“So an earthquake seized them and they fell lifeless in their abodes.”
(Qur'an 7: 91)

But in *Soorah Hood*, due to the context the mocking of Shu'ayb (ﷺ) and his companions were mentioned, Allah mentioned what his people said:

“O' Shu'ayb, does your prayer command you that we should forsake what our fathers worshipped, or that we should not do as we please with our property? You are such a forbearing, right-minded.”
(Qur'an 11: 87)

So in this context, the blast was mentioned due to their arrogance and mocking.

However, the punishment mentioned in *Soorah ash-Shu'arâ'* is that they were taken by an overshadowing gloom. This was appropriate for its context, which was their saying,

“You are nothing but one who is enchanted, you are nothing but a human like us. And indeed, we think you are among the liars. So make a piece of the sky to fall on us if you are truthful. He said, ‘My Lord is well aware of what you are doing.’ But they belied him, so they were taken by the punishment of a day of overshadowing gloom. Verily, it was the torment of a great day.”
(Qur'an 26: 185-188)

The *Mufassireen* — the Qur'anic exegetes — have mentioned that a severe heat punished them and at the same time, Allah stopped the wind from blowing for seven days. In that situation, no water or shade provided them relief from the heat. Then when they left, running out into open places, a cloud came and they gathered underneath it to take its shade. At that point, Allah sent sparks from that cloud, which showered on them ashes and cinders. The earth was

shaken, and a blast came from the sky, due to which they all fell down lifeless.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"And they fell lifeless in their abodes. Those who belied Shu‘ayb, it was as if they had never dwelt there. It was they who were the losers." (Our'an 7; 91-92)

Allah saved Shu'ayb (عليه السلام) and those who believed in him, as He said:

"And when Our order came, We rescued Shu'ayb and those who believed with him by mercy from Us. And those who were evildoers were seized by the thunderous blast and they fell lifeless in their habitations, as if they never dwelt there. So away with Madyan as Thamood were destroyed before [them]."
(Our'an 11: 94-95)

Then Allah (ﷻ), mentioned that Shu'ayb (ﷺ) addressed them after their destruction and said to them:

"So he left them saying, 'O' my people, verily I did convey to you the messages of my Lord, and I advised you sincerely. Then how should I lament over a people who refused to believe.'"
(Our'an 7: 93)

What this means is that Shu‘ayb (ﷺ) said to them, “I fulfilled what was obligatory upon me of delivering the message and giving sincere advises. I tried hard with whatever my ability was for your guidance but none of this benefit you. So now after this I do not have any remorse or pity because you did not want to accept advice and you did not fear the punishment. “How should I [Shu‘ayb] lament over a people who refused to believe.” (*cf* 7: 93), “A people who refused to believe” here means who did not accept or return to the truth, and in fact, did not even turn towards it. Thus the punishment of Allah inflicted them, a punishment that can neither be reversed nor stopped.

Chapter Nine

The Children of Prophet Ibraheem

We have already mentioned the story of Prophet Ibraheem (Abraham) (ﷺ) with his people and what happened to them. Similarly, we also mentioned what else happened in this time with the people of Loot (ﷺ). After that we followed it by the story of the people of Madyan, to who Shu'ayb (ﷺ) was sent. We did all of this because these stories are often mentioned in the Qur'an together and follow this order. For example, we find that the story of the people of Loot is followed by the story of the people of Shu'ayb, who were also called the people of al-Aikah according to the most correct opinion of the scholars. Thus we mentioned all these in this order so as to stick to the pattern of the Qur'an.

Now we will mention details regarding the children of Ibraheem (ﷺ) because Allah made the book and Prophethood in his progeny. So all the Prophets sent after him were from his children.

The Story of Isma'eel (ﷺ)

As we have already mentioned, Prophet Ibraheem (ﷺ) had many sons. However, only two of them became famous because they were great Prophets and Messengers. The eldest of them was Isma'eel (Ishmael) (ﷺ), the one sacrificed, from his wife Hâger.

Whoever said that the one sacrificed was Ishâq (ﷺ) has in fact obtained his information from the Jewish traditions, which have been changed and modified, and the people have re-interpreted the Torah and the Gospel — the Bible.

Regardless of what anyone says, there are clear proofs that the one sacrificed was Isma'eel. According to what is mentioned in the Bible, Isma'eel was born when Ibraheem was eighty-six years old and Ishâq was born when he had passed the age of hundred. So, without doubt, Isma'eel was the first-born and eldest of them, and he was the one who went through this sacrifice because he was the only son at that time.

Isma'eel (ﷺ) was more than thirteen years old at the time of the sacrifice and he was the one who migrated with his mother Hâger. At that time, he was only an infant and Ibraheem (ﷺ) left them around the mountains of Makkah. They did not have any provisions except a little water and food. Ibraheem (ﷺ) left them after putting his trust in Allah Who is the Best Protector.

Allah (ﷻ), praised him by describing him as forbearing, patient, and being truthful in fulfilling promises and establishing his prayers. Along with praying himself, he enjoined it upon his family in order to save them from the punishment.

Allah said:

"So We gave him glad tidings of a forbearing boy. And when the boy reached the age of work with him, he said, 'O' my son, I see in a dream that I offer you in sacrifice, so tell me what is your view?' He said, 'O' my father, do as you are ordered for you will find me, if Allah wills, one of the patient.'" *(Qur'an 37: 101-102)*

Isma'eel (ع) obeyed his father in what he wanted to do and promised him that he will be patient. He then fulfilled all that he promised.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"And mention in the book the story of Isma'el, verily he was true to his promise. And he was a Messenger and a

Prophet. And he enjoined upon his family the prayer and alms-giving, and he was the one with whom his Lord was well-pleased.”
(Qur'an 19: 54-55)

Allah also said:

“And mention Our slaves Ibraheem, Ishâq and Ya‘qoob, they possessed power and insight. Surely, We chose them for a special purpose so that they remember the Hereafter. And surely, they are with Us the chosen and the best. And mention Isma‘eel, al-Yasa‘ and Dhul-Kifl. All of them from among the best.”
(Qur'an 38: 45-48)

And Allah said:

“And remember Isma‘eel, Idris and Dhul-Kifl, all of them were among those who had patience. And We admitted them to Our mercy. Verily, they were of the righteous.”
(Qur'an 21: 85-86)

And Allah said:

“Indeed We have revealed to you, as We revealed to Nooh, and the Prophets after him. And We revealed to Ibraheem, Isma‘eel, Ishâq, Ya‘qoob and the tribes...”
(Qur'an 4: 163)

Allah said:

“Say, ‘We believe in Allah, and in what He has revealed to us, and in that which was revealed to Ibraheem, Isma‘eel, Ishâq, Ya‘qoob and the tribes...’”
(Qur'an 2: 136)

And other similar ones in various *Soorahs*, like:

“Or do you say that Ibraheem, Isma‘eel, Ishâq, Ya‘qoob, and the tribes were Jews or Christians? Say, ‘Do you know better or Allah?’”
(Qur'an 2: 140)

Allah mentioned in these verses and others, the beautiful characteristics of Isma'eel (Ishmael) (ﷺ) and that He made him His Prophet and Messenger. Whatever false things the deviant and ignorant people had attributed to him, Allah freed him of those and ordered the believers to believe in him.

Genealogists and historians said that he was the first to ride a horse prior to that a horse was seen as a wild animal. He tamed them and mounted on them. It is said that Isma'eel (ﷺ) was the first to speak eloquent Arabic which he learnt from the Arab tribes of Jurhum, and others — the 'Amâleeq and people from Yemen who descended Makkah and belonged to the Arab people in the pre-Ibraheem period. He was only fourteen years old at that time.

We have already mentioned that he married a woman from the tribe of 'Amâleeq. But then when his father ordered him to divorce her, he divorced her. Al-Umawi said that her name was 'Amârah bint S'ad ibn Usâmah ibn Ukayl al-'Amâleeqi. Isma'eel (ﷺ) then married another woman, who his father asked him to continue with her and not to divorce her. Her name was Sayyidah bint Muâd ibn 'Amr al-Jurhumi. It is said that this wife, who remained with him, was actually his third wife. She gave birth to twelve male children. Ibn Ishâq (may Allah have mercy upon him) mentioned these names as: Nâbit, Qeedhar, Izbil, Mcshee, Masma', Mash, Dawshâ, Arar, Yafoor, Nabsh, Teema, and Qeedhmâ. These names are also mentioned in the Bible.

Isma'eel (ﷺ) was a Messenger to his people and those in the surrounding areas, from among the tribes of Jurhum, 'Amâleeq and the people of Yemen. When death approached, he advised his brother Ishâq (ﷺ) and also got his daughter Nasmah married to his nephew al-'Ays, the son of Ishâq (Isaac).

Isma'eel (ﷺ) was buried beside his mother near al-Hijr. At the time of his death, he was one hundred and thirty-seven years old.

It is narrated on the authority of 'Umar ibn 'Abdul 'Azeez that Isma'eel (ﷺ) complained to Allah about the extreme heat of Makkah. So Allah revealed to him: "I will open for you a door from the Paradise to the place where you will be buried. Your soul will come to you till the Day of Resurrection."

The lineage of all the Arabs from Hijaz traces back to his two sons: Nâbet and Qeedhâr.

The Story of Ishâq (ﷺ)

We have already mentioned that Ibraheem (ﷺ) was one hundred years old when he had his second son Ishâq (Isaac) (ﷺ). His mother, Sârah, was ninety years old when she gave birth to him. Also, he was born after the birth of Isma'eel (ﷺ) by fourteen years.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"And we gave him [Ibraheem] glad tidings of Ishâq, a Prophet and among the righteous. And We blessed him and Ishâq. And from their descendants are the righteous and those who clearly wrong themselves." (*Qur'an* 37: 112-113)

Allah has praised Ishâq (ﷺ) in numerous verses of the Noble Qur'an. We have quoted earlier the hadith on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رض) in which the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned the lineage. He said:

"The noble ibn noble ibn noble ibn noble is Yusuf ibn Ya'qoob ibn Ishâq ibn Ibraheem (peace be upon them all)." ⁷⁹

The Jews and Christians mentioned that Ishâq (ﷺ) was forty years old when he married Rîfqâ, the daughter of Betâyeel in the

⁷⁹ Imam Ahmad reported this hadith in his *Musnad*, vol. 4, p. 101.

lifetime of his father. When Ishâq found out that she was barren, he supplicated to Allah for her, thus she became pregnant and gave birth to twin boys. The first child was named ‘Eeş, whom the Arabs call al-‘Ays, the father of the Romans. When the second son was born, he was holding onto the first son. The name of this second child was Ya‘qoob, whom the Israelis trace back to.

They (the Jews and the Christians) mentioned that Ishâq loved ‘Eeş more than Ya‘qoob (peace be upon them) because he was the first-born. However, his wife loved Ya‘qoob more than ‘Eeş because he was the younger of the two.

They also mentioned that when Ishâq grew old and his eyesight became weak, he told his son ‘Eeş that he desired food and asked him to go and hunt, and then cook it for him so that he could give him his blessings and pray for him. ‘Eeş was a hunter, so he went out to bring that back.

However, Riqqâ overheard what Ishâq said, she informed Ya‘qoob what his father said to ‘Eeş and asked him to go out to the flock and bring her two of the best young goats in order to prepare food as desired by his father. He was to do this before his brother comes back from his hunt. So Ya‘qoob (ﷺ) went and quickly brought back a goat, slaughtered it and then brought it to his mother. She prepared the meal the way her husband desired, then she clothed Ya‘qoob (ﷺ) with the best clothes of ‘Eeş, who had hairy skin unlike Ya‘qoob. To disguise this, she covered his hands and his neck with the goatskin.

Then when Ya‘qoob (ﷺ) brought the food to his father, he asked him, “Who are you?” He replied, “Your son.” So he hugged him in joy and said, “As for the voice, it is that of Ya‘qoob. But the body and clothes are that of ‘Eeş. After eating the food, he supplicated for him to be higher in level than his brothers and also that his authority should extend over all nations. He also supplicated

for him to get abundance of provision.

When Ya'qoob (ﷺ) left his father, 'Eeş came in after preparing the food that his father had desired. His father asked him, "What is this, my son?" 'Eeş replied, "This is the food you desired." The father said, "Didn't you come to me a short time back with the food and I ate from it, then supplicated for you?" 'Eeş said, "By Allah, no." At that, 'Eeş knew that his brother was the one who came first and as a result, held a grudge against his brother and threatened to kill him after their father passes away. 'Ees requested his father to make another supplication for him, that his dwelling will be away from the earth's richness and to give them abundance of provisions.

When their mother came to know about the threat of 'Eeş to Ya'qoob (ﷺ), she asked him to leave and go to her brother Lâbân in Harran and to stay there until his brother becomes calm. She also asked him to marry one of his daughters and asked her husband Ishâq (ﷺ) to also order him to do as she suggested, to give him appropriate advises and to make supplication for him. So he did.

Towards the end of that day, Ya'qoob (ﷺ) left his family and when he reached a place, he stopped for the night. He took one of the stones as a pillow and laid down to sleep. He then saw in a dream in which he saw a staircase going from the earth to the heaven. Angels were ascending and descending. He also saw that the Lord is addressing him and saying, "I will bless you and increase the number of your children, and give you the land on which you are on now."

When Ya'qoob woke up, he rejoiced at what he saw in his dream. He then vowed that if he returned safely to his family, he would build a house to worship Allah at that place and also that whatever Allah provides him of provisions, he will give away one-tenth of it for Him. He then marked that stone with some painting so that he could recognize later on. That place he named as "*Bayt ayl*", which means the house of Allah. It is the same place where *Bayt al-Maqdis* is

situated today. He built it later on, as will be mentioned soon.⁸⁰

When Ya'qoob (ﷺ) arrived in Harran, where his maternal uncle lived, he found that his uncle had two daughters. The elder was Leah and the younger was Râheel, the more beautiful and lovely of the two. So Ya'qoob (ﷺ) asked his uncle if he could marry her, to which he agreed but with a condition that Ya'qoob should work for him on the farm for seven years. When the time passed, Lâbân gathered the people and gave a feast. At night, Lâbân took his elder daughter Leah, who had weak eyes and was ugly, and gave her to him. Then when morning came, Ya'qoob (ﷺ) saw that it was Leah. So he said to Lâbân, "Why did you deceive me?" His uncle replied, "It is not from our culture to marry off the younger daughter before the elder one. If you want Râheel, then work for another seven years, and I will give her to you in marriage."

Ya'qoob (ﷺ) worked for another seven years and then married Râheel. Marrying two sisters at one time was allowed in their religion, but was later abrogated by the Torah. This itself is enough proof that abrogation occurred later because the action of Ya'qoob (ﷺ) shows that it was permitted. Lâbân gave to each of his daughters a slave girl. To Leah, he gave one called Zilfa and to Râheel he gave one called Bilha.⁸¹

It is also said by the Jews and the Christians that Allah (ﷻ), gave Leah many children to make up for her sub-standard looks. Ya'qoob (ﷺ) had sons from her called Roobeel, Sham'oon, Lâvee and Yahoodha. When Râheel saw that she could not bear any children for Ya'qoob, she became jealous of her sister and offered her slave girl Bilha to Ya'qoob (ﷺ) so that he can sleep with her and have children. Bilha gave birth to a son who she named Dân. She conceived again and after birth called that son Nayftâlî.

⁸⁰ *Târeekh at-Tabari*, vol. 1, p. 224.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, p. 225.

Then Leah also gave her slave girl Zilpa to Ya'qoob (ﷺ), who then had sons from her called Jâd and Asheer. Then Leah conceived again and gave birth to a fifth son called 'Eesâkhar. After that a sixth son called Zâbaloon. After some time later, she gave birth to a daughter called Deena. Thus altogether, Leah had seven children from Ya'qoob (ﷺ).

Râheel then supplicated to Allah (ﷻ), to grant her a son from Ya'qoob, the Prophet. Allah answered her prayer and gave birth to a handsome son, who she named Yusuf. All these children were born to Ya'qoob when he was still in Hârân. He continued to work on his uncle's farm even after the term to marry Lâbân's daughter had long passed. In fact, he stayed with there for twenty years.

Ya'qoob (ﷺ) then asked Lâbân, his maternal uncle, permission to go back to his family. His uncle said, "I have been blessed because of you, so ask me anything you want of my property." Ya'qoob (ﷺ) said, "Give me every spotted lamb born this year, and every spotted dark coloured goat." Lâbân agreed to the request. Then Lâbân's sons removed all the male goats that were spotted, and all the spotted female goats, and all the dark coloured lambs. They travelled with the flocks to a distance of three days journey from their uncle's farm.

Upon noticing this, Ya'qoob (ﷺ), devised a plan. He took freshly cut branches from certain types of trees and made white stripes on them by peeling the bark and exposing the white inner wood of the branches. He then placed these branches in the watering troughs so that they would be directly in front of the flocks when they come to drink. When the flocks came to drink, they mated in front of the branches, and they bore young that were spotted.

Ya'qoob's flocks multiplied until he had plenty of goats, cattle and slaves. His uncle Lâbân and his sons became jealous of him. Then Allah (ﷻ), revealed to Ya'qoob to go back to the land of his

father and people, and He promised him that He would be with him. He spoke to his wives regarding this matter and they agreed in obedience to him without delay. He took with him all the property he had accumulated and Râheel stole the idols of her father.

When Lâbân came to know about it, he and his people followed Ya'qoob (ﷺ). When they caught up with him, Lâbân became angry with him as to why he left without informing. If he was informed, then he could have bade farewell to his daughters. And he also asked why they took with them his idols?

Ya'qoob (ﷺ) did not know that his idols were with them and so he denied that. So Lâbân went into the tents of his daughters in order to search for the idols but did not find anything. Râheel, who had stolen the idols, hid them under the camel's saddle and sat on them. When asked to move, in order for her father to search under where she was sitting, she said to him that she couldn't stand as she is menstruating. So her father did not search that area.

Lâbân said to Ya'qoob to make a covenant that he will not mistreat his daughters, will not take wives besides them and that each of them will not pass this Rabiah, that is, the hill (a certain place) — the territory of the other. Then Lâbân and Ya'qoob (ﷺ) prepared meals and invited the people to a feast from which they all ate. Then bade each other farewell and returned to their homes.

When Ya'qoob (ﷺ) approached the land of Sâ'eer, the angels welcomed him to his homeland. He sent messengers to his brother 'Ees in order to lay the grounds for a warm meeting, without problems. When the messengers came back, they told him that 'Ees is coming to meet him, with four hundred men.

Ya'qoob (ﷺ) became frightened of that and prayed to Allah for help, reminding Him of His promise to him. He asked Allah to prevent the evil of his brother from reaching him. He prepared a great gift for his brother, which was: two hundred goats, twenty he-goats,

two hundred ewes, and twenty rams, thirty female camels, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. He then handed them over to his servants and ordered that they should guide each herd by itself. They were to walk in such a way as to leave some space between the herds and when they meet 'Eeş, Ya'qoob's brother, if he asks them, "Who are you and to who do you belong?" The slaves are to reply, "They belong to your servant Ya'qoob and they are a gift sent to my lord 'Eeş." Each and every one of the servants was instructed to say this upon meeting 'Eeş.

Ya'qoob (ﷺ) stayed behind them by two nights with his two wives, two slave girls, and eleven of his children. During his journey, he used to travel at night and hide during day. When it was dawn on the second night, an angel came to him in the guise of a man. So Ya'qoob (ﷺ) thought that he was a normal man and wrestled with him to overpower him. When Ya'qoob (ﷺ) was overpowering him, he flipped Ya'qoob (ﷺ). Soon after, when daylight broke, the angel asked Ya'qoob (ﷺ), "What is your name?" He replied, "Ya'qoob." The angel said, "It is not befitting that you be called Ya'qoob after today, and from now your name will be Israel." Ya'qoob asked him, "Who are you and what is your name?" However, before answering, the man disappeared. Thus he knew that the man was an angel. Due to the wrestle, Ya'qoob (ﷺ) started limping.

Then Ya'qoob (ﷺ) looked up and saw his brother 'Eeş coming with his four hundred men. He went on ahead of his family and when he saw his brother 'Eeş, he bowed down seven times. This behaviour was the greeting of people at that time and it was allowed for them, as the angels did earlier to Adam (ﷺ) and also as Yusuf's parents and brothers bowed to him.

When 'Eeş saw Ya'qoob (ﷺ), he hastened to meet him. He embraced and kissed him. 'Eeş then looked up and saw women and children who had come with Ya'qoob (ﷺ) and asked, "Who are these people with you?" Ya'qoob said, "They are the children who

Allah bestowed on your servant.” Then the slave girls and their children approached ‘Eeş and bowed down. After them, Leah and her children came and bowed down. Lastly, Râheel and her son Yusuf came closer and bowed down. Ya‘qoob offered his gifts to ‘Eeş and insisted that he accept that from him, and so he accepted them.

On the way back to the hill Sâ‘cer, ‘Eeş came back before Ya‘qoob (ﷺ) who went with his family, cattle and servants.

When they passed by Sâhoor, built a house for himself and a shade for the animals. He then passed by Yarusalem (Jerusalem), a land owned by Shakeem. He descended before the village and purchased the land — farm of Shakeem ibn Jamoor for one hundred sheep and set an altar there to remember Allah in it. He named it ‘Eel. It is known now as *Bayt al-Maqdis*, which was re-built later by Sulaymân, the son of Dawood (peace be upon them). This place is the same where the stone which was marked by Ya‘qoob when he had his dream.

Râheel became pregnant again and gave birth to a boy called Benyameen. But due to the great difficulty she had during childbirth, she died afterwards. Ya‘qoob buried her in Bethlehem and placed a stone over her grave. This stone is still there to our time.

Ya‘qoob (ﷺ) had twelve sons. From Leah, he had Roobeel, Sham‘oon, Lâvee, Yahoodha, ‘Eesâkhar, and Zâbloon. Similarly, from Râheel, he had Yusuf and Benyameen. From the slave girl of Râheel, he had sons Dân and Naftâli. And from Zilpa, the slave girl of Leah, he had Jâd and Asheer.⁸²

Ya‘qoob came to his father Ishâq (ﷺ) in Hebron in Kan‘ân where Ibraheem (ﷺ) had lived. After some time, Ishâq became ill and died at the age of one hundred and eighty years. His two sons ‘Eeş and Ya‘qoob buried him alongside with his father Ibraheem, peace be upon all of them.

⁸² *Târeekh at-Tabari*, vol. 1, p. 225.

Chapter Ten

The Story of Yusuf (ﷺ)

Allah revealed a complete *Soorah* in the Qur'an in his [Prophet Yusuf (Joseph)] name regarding his matter and what happened with him in order that people contemplate on what it contains of wisdom, admonitions and manners.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"*Alif-Lâm-Râ*. These are the verses of the clear book. Verily, We have revealed this Qur'an in Arabic that you may understand. We narrate to you the most beautiful of stories in that which We revealed to you in this Qur'an. Verily, you were unaware of it before." *(Our'an 12: 1-3)*

Allah praised His great book which He revealed to His slave and Messenger in the perfect Arabic language, and which is understood by everyone with senses and intellect. It is the most sublime and honourable book revealed from the heaven, which was brought down by the most honoured angel on the best of creation in the most noble time and place, with the most perfect language and most apparent meanings.

Wherever in the Qur'an the context is about history or future events, it mentions that in the most beautiful way, with apparent meanings so that the truth and lessons becomes clear and the falsehood is refuted. Similarly, when the context is about orders and prohibitions, then we have the most just Shari'ah, the clearest path, the most apparent wisdom and the most just rulings. So it is as mentioned in the Qur'an:

"And the words of your Lord have been perfected in truth and justice." (*Our 'an* 6: 115)

This means true in the reports of the past and future, and just in the orders and prohibitions. That is why Allah said:

"We narrate to you the most beautiful of stories in that which We reveal to you in this Qur'an. Verily, you were unaware of it before." *(Qur'an 12: 3)*

This means that you were unaware of what was revealed to you in it.

Allah (ﷻ) also said:

"And likewise We have sent to you a revelation by Our order. You did not know what was the book and what was the faith, but We made it a light by which We guide whoever We please of Our slaves. And verily you guide towards the straight path. The way of Allah to Whom belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth. Indeed, to Allah all things return." *(Our'an 26: 52-53)*

Also:

"Likewise We relate to you the news of what [and who] has gone before you. And verily We have given you from Us the Qur'an. Whoever turns away from it [Qur'an], on the Day of Resurrection he will bear a burden, abiding therein forever. And that burden will be evil for them on the Day of Resurrection." *(Our'an 20: 99-101)*

That is, whoever turns from this Qur'an and follows other books for guidance, such a person will deserve this threat. A hadith on this topic is reported on the authority of 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Whoever seeks guidance in other than the Qur'an, Allah, the

Exalted will lead them astray.”⁸³

Imam Ahmād reported a hadith on the authority of Jābir (رضي الله عنه). It said that one day ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) obtained a book from the Jews and came to the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) with it. He then read that book to the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم), which made him (Prophet) angry. He said:

“Are you in bewilderment O’ Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb? By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, verily I have brought to you a religion white and pure. Do not ask them (the Jews and the Christians) about anything. If you do, they may tell you something correct and you may deny it. Or they may tell you something false and you may believe it. By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, if Moosa was alive, it wouldn’t have been allowed for him except to follow me.”⁸⁴

In another hadith reported by Imam Ahmād on the authority of ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه), the words are:

“By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, if Moosa were among you and you followed him and left me, you would have gone astray. Verily, you are my share from the nations and I am your share from the Prophets.”⁸⁵

This hadith was narrated through many chains and with different words. In some narrations, it says that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) addressed the people and said:

“O’ people, I have been given *Jawamey’ al-Kalim* (i.e. few words but vast meanings). And I came to you with a religion white and pure. So do not go in bewilderment and do not let those who have bewildered themselves to deceive you.”

Then the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) ordered that book to be erased letter by letter.

⁸³ Ahmād and Tirmidhi reported this hadith in their books *Musnad* and *Sunan*.

⁸⁴ Ahmad, vol. 3, p. 387. The chain of narrators of this hadith is authentic.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 371.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“When Yusuf said to his father, ‘O’ my father, verily I saw eleven stars and the sun and the moon, I saw them prostrating to me.’ He [Ya‘qoob] said, ‘My son, do not relate your dream to your brothers, for they might devise a plan against you, verily *Shaytân* is to mankind a clear enemy. And like that, your Lord will choose you and will teach you the interpretation of dreams. And He will complete His favours upon you and upon the family of Ya‘qoob as He completed it before on your fathers Ibraheem and Ishâq. Verily, your Lord is All-knowing, All-Wise.’”

(Qur'an 12: 4-6)

We have already mentioned that Ya‘qoob (ﷺ) had twelve male children and what their names were. It is these children to whom all Jewish tribes trace back their origins. Among them all, Yusuf (ﷺ) was the noblest, greatest and most honoured.

A group of scholars held the opinion that there were no Prophets from among the brothers of Yusuf (ﷺ) except him and that no other brother received any revelation. Judging by the apparent behaviours and sayings of his brothers, it seems to support this opinion.

Whocver held the other opinion, that there were prophets from among his brothers, used the following verse as evidence:

“Say, ‘We believed in Allah, and what was revealed to us, and what was revealed to Ibraheem, and Isma‘eel, and Ishâq, and Ya‘qoob, and to Tribes.’”

(Qur'an 3: 84)

These people thought that the word *Ashât* in the verse (translated as the tribes) actually refers to the brothers of Yusuf (ﷺ). However, this deduction from the verse is not strong because what is meant by the word *Ashât* is the tribes of the children of Israel and the Prophets who were sent to them who received revelation from the heaven. And

Allah knows best.

Similarly, another evidence to support that only Yusuf (ﷺ) was chosen for Prophethood is the fact that there is no mention of any of the brothers except him. This also indicates the correct opinion we have mentioned.

Supporting evidence from hadiths is a report on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“The noble ibn noble ibn noble ibn noble is Yusuf ibn Ya‘qoob ibn Ishâq ibn Ibraheem (peace be upon them all).”⁸⁶

The Qur’anic exegetes said that Yusuf (ﷺ) had a dream in his childhood that eleven stars and the sun and the moon bowed down to him. The eleven stars represented his brothers while the sun and the moon represented his parents. Yusuf (ﷺ) was awed by this dream so when he woke up, he related this dream to his father. His father then knew that his son would get a high rank in this world and the Hereafter to the extent that even his parents and brothers will bow down to him. So Ya‘qoob (ﷺ) asked him to conceal his dream and to not relate it to his brothers so that they do not become jealous of him and subsequently, devise a plot against him.

This again, shows what we mentioned earlier that his brothers were not prophets.

For this reason, it is mentioned in some *Athâr* (reports from any Companions of the last Prophet):

“Seek help in fulfilling your needs by concealing them because every person to whom a blessing is given is envied.”⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Imam Bukhari reported this hadith in his book *Ṣaheeh*.

⁸⁷ *Al-Jamey' as-Sagheer*, hadith no. 985; *al-Maqâṣid al-Ijasanah*, hadith no. 103; *Tamyeez at-Teeb*, hadith no. 125; *Kashf al-Khifâ*, hadith no. 432; *Ṣaheeh al-Jamey'*, hadith no. 95; *ad-Durar*, hadith no. 18 and *Maudoo'ât*, vol. 2, p. 165.

It is mentioned in the books of the Jews and the Christians that Yusuf (ﷺ) mentioned his dream to his father and brothers simultaneously. This is incorrect information made up by them.

The part of the verse, "And thus your Lord will choose you," means that just as your Lord showed you this great dream, He will choose you for other bounties and mercies if you conceal this dream.

The part of the verse, "And will teach you the interpretation of dreams," means that Allah will make you understand the interpretation of dreams and meanings which others will not be able to understand.

The part of the verse, "And will complete His favour upon you" means by sending down revelations to you. And the part, "And upon the family of Ya'qoob" means because of you, they will obtain the goodness of this world and the Hereafter. The next part, "As He completed it before on your fathers Ibraheem and Ishâq" means that He will be good with you and bless you with Prophethood as He granted it to your father Ya'qoob, to your grandfather Ishâq, and to your great grandfather Ibraheem (peace be upon them all). The last part of this verse, "Verily, your Lord is All-Knowing, All-Wise," is as Allah said in another place:

"Allah knows better where to place His Message."

(*Qur'an 6: 124*)

That is why the Prophet (ﷺ) said when he was asked:

"Who was the noblest of people?" He replied, "Yusuf the Prophet of Allah, the son of the Prophet of Allah, the son of the Prophet of Allah, the son of the Friend of Allah (peace be upon them all)."

Allah said:

"Verily, in Yusuf and his brother are signs for those who seek truth. When they [his brothers] said, 'Verily, Yusuf and

his brother are more loved by our father than we, although we are a group, no doubt our father is clearly deluded. Kill Yusuf or cast him away into some land so that your father's regard may be for you only and then afterwards you can become righteous people.' One of them said, 'Do not kill Yusuf but cast him into the bottom of the well and he will be picked up by some passing caravan, if you are going to do something.'" *(Our'an 12: 7-10)*

Allah is drawing attention to what this story contains of wisdom, admonitions and signs. He then mentioned jealousy that the brothers of Yusuf had towards him because of their father's love for him and his brother more than them. This brother was Benyameen, his brother from the same mother. They said that they were a group and as such, should be more deserving of love than they both do. So according to them, their father was in plain error by preferring Yusuf (ﷺ) over them. That is why they said, "Verily, our father is clearly deluded."

They then got together and held a meeting to decide what action to take. They discussed options of whether to kill him or to expel him away to a far off land such that he cannot return from there. They wanted to do all this in order to get all the attention and love of their father. Also, they decided that they would repent for their sin afterwards.

When they reached consensus that Yusuf be kept far away from father, one of them said, "Do not kill Yusuf but cast him into the bottom of the well and he will be picked up by some passing caravan, if you are going to do anything." Mujâhid said that this person who suggested this was Sham'oon, whereas as-Suddi said it was Yahoodhâ. But Qatâdah and Muhammad ibn Ishâq said that it was the eldest of them, called Roobeel. What the eldest one meant was if you are going to do something to him and have decided on this fact, then do what I have suggested instead of killing or expelling him.

All agreed to this proposal and then,

"They said, 'Our father! Why do you not trust us with Yusuf while we are sincere for his well-being? Send him with us tomorrow so that he may frolic and play, verily we will take care of him.' He said, 'It grieves me that you should take him away with you, and I fear that the wolf may eat him while you are not paying attention to him.' They said, 'If the wolf were to eat him while we are a group, then verily we will be useless people'." *(Our'an 12: 11-14)*

(*Qur'an* 12: 11-14)

In these verses, Allah is telling how they asked their father to send their brother Yusuf with them, all the while pretending that they want to play with him and they concealed their real intention, which only Allah knew.

Ya'qoob (ﷺ) answered to them by saying, "My sons, it is difficult for me to separate from him for even a short period of time during the day. Along with this, I also fear that your playing and other things may distract you and a wolf may eat him. He is too young to be able to fight off a wolf and you will be too busy to notice what is happening." They said, "If the wolf were to eat him while we are a group, then verily we will be useless people." This means that if the wolf attacked him and ate him in our presence, or if we get distracted from him to such an extent that thing could happen, while we are a big and strong group, then we are really weak and destroyed people.

It is mentioned in the books of the Jews and the Christians that Ya'qoob (ﷺ) sent him after his brothers had left and it was then that he (Yusuf) became lost and then a man showed him the way to his brothers. This also is a mistake in their books because verily Ya'qoob (ﷺ) was refusing to send him with them in a group, how then, could he send him alone.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"So when they had went with him and had agreed to cast him into the bottom of the well, We inspired to him, 'You will certainly tell them of this act of theirs when they will not perceive.' And they came to their father in the evening, weeping. They said, 'Our father! We went for running races and left Yusuf behind with our belongings, so the wolf came and ate him. You will not believe us even though we tell you the truth.' And they brought his shirt, stained with fake blood. He said, 'Nay, your evil souls have tempted you to do something. So patience is beautiful. Allah is the One sought for help from what you are describing'." (*Qur'an* 12: 15-18)

They had persisted in their requests to their father to send him with them, till finally he had sent him. As soon as they departed from their father, they started humiliating, swearing and abusing him with actions and words. They agreed to throw him into the depth of a well.

When they threw him into the well, Allah inspired to him that he will surely have a way out of this hardship he is in and also that he will one day inform his brothers of what they did. In fact, he will do this at a time when he is strong and powerful, and they are scared and in need of you. They will come to know about it when they least expect it.

Mujâhid and Qatâdah said they would not perceive the inspiration of Allah to Yusuf (ﷺ). Ibn Jareer narrated from Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) that he said, it means you will tell them about their actions at a time when they will not know you.

After they had thrown him in the well and returned, they took his shirt and dipped it into blood, which they took back to their father at night crying, weeping as if for what happened to their brother. For this reason, some scholars said that a person should not be deceived by the cry of another because it could be that the evildoer is acting with his crying.

According to the Qur'an, "They said, 'Our father! We went running races and left Yusuf behind with our belongings, so the wolf came and ate him. But you will not believe us, even though we tell you the truth.'" They said that they left Yusuf behind to look after their clothes but then a wolf came while they were absent. They also said to their father that you will not believe us in what we say regarding Yusuf being eaten by the wolf even if we had always been good in your sight. So how will it be when you have never trusted us? You feared that a wolf might eat him, so we guaranteed you that it was not possible because of our large number being around him. And now we have become those not to be trusted in yours sight, so you have a reason not to believe us.

The verse, "And they brought his shirt stained with fake blood" means that they brought blood that was not of Yusuf. Infact, that blood was from a goat, which they had slaughtered. They wanted to make their father think that a wolf ate him. It is said that while devising this plan, they forgot to tear the clothes. So their forgetfulness proved their lie, thus they were unable to convince their father about their claims. Ya'qoob (ﷺ) was well aware of the enmity of the step-brothers towards Yusuf. It was due to their jealousy of his love for him, which was because of his greatness and good behaviour apparent in him from his childhood. He also knew that Allah had chosen him to be his Prophet. They were so eager to harm him that as soon as they persuaded their father to send Yusuf with them, they got rid of him and took him away from their father's eyes. After that, they came back from their trip crying and pretending that they were really upset by what happened. For this reason, their father said to them:

"Nay, your evil souls have tempted you to do something.
Thus patience is beautiful. Allah is the One Who is sought
for help from what you are describing." (*Qur'an 12: 18*)

Allah said:

"And there came travellers who sent their water drawers to the well and he lowered his bucket into the well. He said, 'Glad tidings, here is a boy.' So they concealed him as if merchandise, and Allah knew well what they were doing. And they sold him for a small price, only a few dirhams, and they showed such a low estimation for him. The one who purchased him from Egypt said to his wife, 'Treat him honourably, it may be that he will be useful to us, or we may take him as our son.' Thus did We establish Yusuf in the land so that We might teach him the interpretation of dreams. And Allah has full power over His affairs but most of the people do not know. And when he attained his maturity, We gave him wisdom and knowledge. And thus We do reward the righteous." (*Qur'an 12: 19-22*)

In these verses Allah informs about the story of Yusuf (ﷺ) after he was thrown in the well. Yusuf waited there for Allah's help and mercy to come, and thus a caravan came. The people of the book said that their belongings were camels loaded with spices, and balm, and they were on their way to Egypt from Shâm (Syria, Jordan and the adjoining areas). They sent some people from the group to bring back some water from that well. When one of them lowered his bucket, Yusuf (ﷺ) clung onto it.

When the water bearer saw him, "He said, 'Glad tidings, here is a boy.' So they concealed him as if merchandise and Allah knew well what they were doing." When they sold him, they gave the impression that Yusuf was part of their merchandise. "And Allah knew well what they were doing." This means that Allah knew what his brothers did to him and also what the people of the caravan were doing. Despite this, Allah did not change the situation because He knows the wisdom behind it, the predestined divine decree and that he would be a mercy for the people of Egypt. Allah made him enter Egypt as a slave but thereafter He made him take control of all the

affairs and thus He made the people benefit from him both in this world and in the Hereafter without limit and indescribably.

Then when Yusuf's brothers came to know that he was taken by the caravan, they went to them and said, "He is our slave who fled from us." So the people of the caravan bought him from them for a negligible price. Allah said in this regard, "And they sold him for small price, only a few dirhams, and they showed such a low estimation for him. And the one who bought him from Egypt said to his wife, 'Treat him honourably, it may be that he will be useful to us, or we may take him as our son.'"

The people of the book said that the one who purchased him from Egypt was one of the Pharaoh's ministers, the one in charge of the treasury.

The part of the verse, "Thus did We establish Yusuf in the land" means: by providing him that minister and his wife who paid attention and took good care of him. The part of the verse, "That We might teach him the interpretation of dreams and Allah has full power over His affairs but most of the people do not know" means that if He wants something to happen, He creates means for that and then guides the slaves to them.

The following part of the verse, "And when he attained his maturity, We gave him wisdom and knowledge. And thus We do reward the righteous," shows that all that had happened before Yusuf (ﷺ) reached the age of wisdom and maturity. This age is forty years at which Allah reveals to His Prophets.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

"And she, in whose house he was, sought to seduce him, and closed the doors on him, and she said, 'Come, take me.' He said, 'I seek refuge with Allah. Surely, he is my lord, he has given me a good lodging. Indeed the wrongdoers do not

succeed.' And she moved towards him, and he would have moved towards her, had he not seen the sign from his Lord. Thus did We turn away from him the evil and indecency, verily he was one of Our sincere slaves. So they raced towards the door and she tore his shirt from the back. They met her husband at the door. She said, 'What is the punishment for one who intends evil to your wife except that he should either be imprisoned or be given a painful punishment.' Yusuf said, 'It was she who tried to seduce me.' And a witness from her own family said, 'If his shirt is torn from the front, she has spoken truly and he is among the liars. But if his shirt is torn from the back, then she has lied and he is among the truthful.' So when they saw his shirt torn from the back, he [her husband] said, 'Verily it is among your plots, certainly your plot is great. O' Yusuf, turn away and forget this matter. And you [O' woman], seek forgiveness for your sin, verily you were among the wrongdoers.'" (Our'an 12: 23-29)

Allah mentioned in the verses the seduction of Yusuf (ﷺ) by the minister's wife. She sought from him which was not befitting his personality and position. She was beautiful, possessed great wealth, had a high status in society and was young. Along with that, she shut the doors on them, wore her most best and most expensive clothes. She did all this despite the fact that she was the minister's wife.

She was attracted to him because he was young and very handsome. However, since he was a Prophet and from a line of Prophets, his Lord saved him from lasciviousness and protected him from the evil plots of women. Because of what he did of resisting her advances, he would be from one of those seven groups of people who are mentioned in a hadith reported by Imams Bukhari and Muslim. In this hadith, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Allah will shade in His shelter seven types of people on the Day

of Judgment, when there will be no other shelter except His shelter. The first is a just ruler. The second is a man who remembered Allah when he was by himself, and his eyes overflowing with tears. The third is a man whose heart is always attached to the mosque, from the time he goes out of it till he returns. The fourth is two people who love each other only for the sake of Allah, they come together for Him and they depart each other for Him. The fifth is a man who gave in charity so secretly that his left hand did not know what his right hand has given. The sixth is a youth who spent his life in Allah's devotion. The seventh and final one is a man who is seduced by a beautiful woman of high status but he refuses and says, 'I fear Allah.'⁸⁸

The point is that the minister's wife seduced Yusuf (ﷺ) with all that she could, but he said, "I seek refuge with Allah, verily he is my lord," meaning her husband, the owner of the house and his master. The meaning of "He has given me good lodging" is that he has done good to me and treated me well.

Most of what the exegetes mentioned regarding this have been taken from the books of the Jews and the Christians and thus it is better to avoid mentioning them. However, what is obligatory for us to believe is that Allah saved him from that lascivious and shameful act, purified him and protected him from the woman. For this reason, Allah said, "Thus did We turn away from him the evil and lewdness, indeed he was one of Our sincere slaves." (*cf. 12: 24*)

The meaning of "So they raced towards the door" is that Yusuf (ﷺ) ran away from her towards the door to escape, but she followed him. Allah said, "They encountered her husband at the door. And she said, 'What is the punishment for one who intends evil towards your wife except to be imprisoned or face a painful punishment?'" This shows that as soon as she found her husband at the door, she changed

⁸⁸ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Adhâن* and Muslim, *Kitâb az-Zakâh*.

her tone and behaviour. She accused him while she was the guilty one. She tried to show her innocence and chastity. That is why Yusuf (ﷺ) said, "It was she who tried to seduce me." He had to speak the truth regarding her when it became necessary.

It is said that the witness mentioned in the verse, "And a witness from his own family said" was a young child. Some others opine that he was her husband's friend. While some others say that he was her relative. This witness said, "If the shirt is torn from the front, she has spoken truly and he is among the liars." This is because if he tried to seduce her, then while resisting him, she tore the front of his shirt. The witness went on and said, "But if his shirt is torn from the back, then she has lied and he is among the truthful." That is, if he was innocent and running away from her, then she would grab him from the back, thus tearing his shirt also from the back. And this is how the shirt was. For this reason, Allah said, "So when they saw his shirt torn from the back, he (her husband) said, 'Indeed it is a plot of you women, verily your plot is great.'" Her husband said to her that what occurred was due to her plot and it was she who seduced him and then accused him of falsehood.

Her husband then tried to control the situation and ignore what happened. Thus he said, "O' Yusuf, turn away and forget this matter." What he meant was do not mention it to anyone because concealing such affairs is more befitting and better than to reveal them. He then ordered her to seek forgiveness for the sin she committed and to repent to Allah from it. This is because if a slave repents to Allah, then Allah accepts his repentance.

Even though the people of Egypt worshipped idols, they still knew that the One Who forgives sins or punish for their sins is Allah, Alone, Who has no partner with Him in that. For this reason, her husband told her to seek forgiveness from Allah and excused her for some things because she could not control her desire when she saw what she could not control. However, Yusuf (ﷺ) was chaste, pure

and dignified. Thus her husband said to her, “And you woman, seek forgiveness for your sin, verily you are one of the wrongdoers.”

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And the women in the city said, ‘The minister’s wife is seeking to seduce her [slave] young man, indeed she loves him violently. Verily, we see her in plain error.’ So when she heard of their accusation, she sent for them and prepared a banquet for them. She gave each of them a knife [to cut the foodstuff] and she said [to Yusuf], ‘Come out before them.’ And when they saw him, they exalted him [at his beauty] and [in their astonishment] cut their hands. They said, ‘How perfect is Allah, this is no man, this is none other than a noble angel.’ She said, ‘This is he [the young man] about whom you did blame me, and I did seek to seduce him, but he refused. And now if he refuses to obey my order, he shall certainly be cast into prison, and will be one of those who are disgraced.’ He said, ‘O’ my Lord, prison is dearer to me than that to which they invite me. Unless You turn away their plot from me, I will feel inclined towards them and be one [of those who commit sin and deserve blame or those who do deeds] of the ignorant.’ So his Lord answered his invocation and turned away from him their plot. Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.” (*Qur'an 12: 30-34*)

In these verses, Allah (ﷻ), mentioned how the women of that city spread rumours and accusations. These women were the wives of ministers and the daughters of high status people. They disgraced her and showed their disapproval in her falling in love with her own slave, which was not normal for people of her class. That is why they said, “We see her in plain error.”

The part of the verse, “When she heard of their accusations” is referring to their condemnation of her action and them always talking

about her pointing out her faults. They accused her of seducing a mere slave, whereas he was not a normal slave. Thus she wanted to show who this different slave was and how different personality he had which was not like other slaves known to the people of the city. She sent for all of them and gathered them in her house and prepared a huge feast. Along with the normal things of the feast, she also provided them things that could be cut with knives, such as desserts and the like. She then gave each of them a knife. She had already prepared Yusuf (ﷺ) for the occasion by making him wear the best clothes. Yusuf was in his prime youth at that time, which further suited the purpose of the minister's wife. She then asked him to come out in front of them and so he did. He looked better than the full moon and there's no doubt in that.

The part of the verse, "So when they saw him, they exalted him" means that they exalted him in admiration and stood in awe. They never thought that a man could be so handsome. They were so preoccupied by what they felt that they lost consciousness of where they actually were. As a result, they started cutting their hands with the knives without feeling any pain and said, "Allah forbid, this is not a human, this is not except a noble angel."

In a hadith concerning the ascending of the Prophet (ﷺ) to the heavens, he said: "Then I passed by Yusuf, and he was given half of the beauty."

As-Suhaili and others said that it means Yusuf (ﷺ) was given half of the beauty of what Adam was given. This is because Allah had created Adam by His Hand and then breathed into him the soul, which He created for him. Thus he was of outstanding human beauty. It is for this reason that when the people of Paradise enter Paradise, they will enter with Adam's height and beauty. And Yusuf (ﷺ) had half of Adam's beauty and there was no one given this in between them two. Similarly among the womenfolk nobody resembled Eve more than Sârah, the wife of Ibraheem (ﷺ).

Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) said:

"The face of Yusuf was like the lightning. Whenever a woman came to him for any request, he used to cover his face."

Others said that Yusuf (ﷺ) used to cover his face most of the time so that people could not see him. For this reason, the women cut their hands and were in awe because he used to be covered before and at that time, he was told to uncover. And then happened what happened at that occasion.

Allah quoted her as saying, "She said, 'This is he for whom you blamed me.'" After this, she praised him, saying that he was chaste and said, "I already seduced him but he resisted and unless he does what I order him, he will be imprisoned and be one of the abject."

When all the other women saw him, they exerted him to listen and obey what the minister's wife wanted from him. He plainly refused and rejected their suggestions because he was from the Prophets. He supplicated and said in it to the Lord of the worlds, "My Lord, I prefer imprisonment than that which they invite me to. If You do not turn their plot away from me, I may fall in their plot and become one of the ignorant." What he meant was if You leave me to myself, then I do not have the ability to resist just like I do not possess benefit or harm for myself except what Allah wills. I am weak unless You save and protect me with Your might and power.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"So his Lord accepted his prayer and turned away from him their plot. Verily, He is the Hearer, the All-Knower. Then it occurred to them after they had seen the signs that they should imprison him for a time. And there entered the prison with him two youths. One of them said, 'I had a dream wherein I was pressing wine.' And the other said, 'I

had a dream wherein I was carrying bread on my head, from which the birds were eating. Tell us their interpretations, for we see that you are among the righteous.' He said, 'Before the meal comes to you, I will inform you of its interpretation. This information is from what my Lord has taught me. Verily I left the religion of a people who do not believe in Allah and they also do not believe in the Hereafter. And I have followed the religion of my forefathers, Ibraheem, Ishâq, and Ya'qoob. It is for us not to associate anything with Allah. This is from the blessings of Allah upon us and upon the people, yet most of the people are not grateful. O' my two fellow prisoners, are many lords better [to have for worship] than Allah, the One, the Dominant? You are not worshipping other than Him except names which you have made up, you and your fathers, for which Allah did not send down any authority. Verily, the command is for none but for Allah. He ordered that you do not worship anyone except Him. This is the True Religion but most people do not know. O' my two fellow prisoners, as for one of you, he will pour wine for his master. And as for the other, he will be crucified and the birds will eat from his head. The matter concerning what you enquired is decreed."

(Qur'an 12: 34-41)

Allah (ﷻ), mentioned in these verses that it occurred to the minister and his wife that they should imprison him for a while which would reduce the talk of the people on the matter. This was despite the fact that they both knew Yusuf was innocent. Yet, they wanted to make it look to the people that Yusuf tried to seduce her, thus he was imprisoned, even though he was imprisoned unjustly and in retaliation.

However, that was something that Allah had already decreed and was from among the ways that Allah protected Yusuf (ﷻ) from

their evil since due to him being imprisoned, he was away from being and mixing with them.

Allah said, "And there entered the prison with him two youths." It is said that one of them used to pour the king wine. His name was Nabwâ. The other youth was his baker. His name was Majlath. The king had accused them of committing offences on some matters and thus they were imprisoned. When they met Yusuf (ﷺ) in the prison, they were impressed by his manners, righteousness, actions, speech, the prayers he offered often and his kind treatment to others. Each one of them saw a dream related to their lives and both wanted its interpretations.

The exegetes said that both of the youths had their dreams on the same night. As for the one who used to pour wine to the king, he saw three vines laden with ripe grapes. He took them and pressed them into the king's cup and provided him the drink. As for the baker, he saw three baskets of breads on his head and wild birds were eating from the top of the basket.

They both narrated their dreams to Yusuf (ﷺ) and sought an interpretation of them from him. They said, "We see you are among the righteous." Yusuf (ﷺ) then informed them that he knew their interpretations. "He (Yusuf) said, 'Before the meal comes to you, I will certainly inform you their interpretations.'" It was said that the meaning of this is I can interpret whatever dreams you have before they happen and it will come true as I inform. Others said it means I can inform you of your meal before it comes to you, whether it is sweet or sour. This is similar to the saying of 'Eesa (ﷺ) when he said:

"And I inform you of what you eat and of what you store in your houses."
(Qur'an 3: 49)

He said to them, "This is what Allah has taught me because I believe in Him and I do not associate any partner with Him. I follow

the religion of my noble forefathers Ibraheem, Ishâq and Ya'qoob (peace be upon them all)."

Yusuf (ﷺ) then called them to *Tawheed*, that is to worship Allah Alone and to leave the worship of anything else besides Allah, (ﷻ). He pointed out to them the deficiencies of their idols and made them look useless as they are. Thus he said to them, "O' my two fellow prisoners, are many gods better [to worship] than Allah, the One, the Dominant? You are not worshipping other than Him except names which you have made up, you and your fathers, for which Allah did not send down any authority. Verily the command is for none but for Allah. He ordered that you do not worship anyone except Him. This is the True Religion but most people do not know." The meaning of the command being for Allah is that all the power belongs to Allah and thus He does what He wills. He guides whomever He wills and misguides whomever He wills. The meaning of the true religion is that it is the straight path. The end of the verse is referring to how most of the people will not find guidance, despite its clarity.

The invitation used by Yusuf (ﷺ) to call them to Islam was perfect in terms of time and wisdom. This is because they admired him and were ready to listen and accept whatever he tells them. So it was appropriate to invite them to what contains more benefit for them than the information they sought and the interpretation they desired.

After he had fulfilled his duty of inviting them to the worship of Allah, he gave them the interpretations of their dreams and said, "O' my two fellow prisoners, as for one of you, he will pour wine for his master." This is referring to the one who poured wine for the king. He went on saying, "As for the other, he will be crucified and the birds will eat from his head." This is referring to the baker and his dream. Then he said, "The matter concerning which you enquired is decreed." The meaning of this is whatever I informed you just now will happen, without doubt. That is why it is said in a hadith:

"The dream hovers around the person who saw it. Then if it is interpreted, it occurs."⁸⁹

Then Allah informs us that Yusuf (ﷺ) said to the wine pourer, who was going to survive out of the two, "Mention me to your master." This means that he asked the person to inform the king about him and how he was imprisoned for something he did not commit. In this is a proof that it is permitted for a person to strive and take steps to achieve things and that it does not negate the *tawakkul* (reliance) upon Allah. The meaning of the part of the verse, "But *Shayṭān* made him forget the remembrance of his lord" is that the *Shayṭān* made the wine pourer forget the mentioning of Yusuf (ﷺ) in front of the king. This was the opinion of Mujāhid, Muhammad ibn Ishāq and others, and it is the correct opinion. It is also the opinion mentioned in the books of the Jews and the Christians.

"And he remained in prison for several more years." (*cf.* 12: 42) refers to Yusuf (ﷺ) remaining in the prison for another several years. The word *Bid'* (translated as 'several') refers to numbers three to nine. To some others it refers to from three to seven or three to five. It is said, however that it is less than ten.

The pronoun "his" in the part of the verse, "But *Shayṭān* made him forget the remembrance of his lord," referring to Yusuf (ﷺ) is an error and it is not the correct opinion, even though it is reported from Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) and 'Ikrimah. The hadith reported by Ibn Jareer on this matter, where it says that it was Yusuf, these hadiths are weak.⁹⁰

Allah (ﷻ) said:

⁸⁹ Ahmad, vol. 4, p. 10 and Ibn Mājah, *Kitāb ar-Rū'iya*.

⁹⁰ This hadith is weak from a number of angles, a narrator Ibraheem ibn Yazeed al-Khoori is rated as *matrook*, that is, his statement regarding hadith is not to be accepted. Reports of Hasan and Qatādah are also weak. Here "his" refers to the wine server.

"And the king said, 'I saw [in a dream] seven fat cows and seven lean cows were eating them. And I saw seven green ears of corn and seven withered ones. O' chiefs, explain to me my dream if you can interpret it.' They said, 'These are just confused dreams and we are not knowledgeable regarding the interpretation of dreams.' Then the one who had survived from the two of them, who remembered after a long time, said, 'I will inform you of its interpretation, so send me forth.'

O' the truthful one, Yusuf, explain to us [the interpretation of the dream of] seven fat cows which seven lean ones ate and seven green ears and seven other dry, so that I might return to the people that they may know.' He said, 'For seven years you will sow continuously, then what you reap of the harvest, leave it on the ear, except a little from which you eat. Then thereafter, there will come on you seven hard years in which you will devour all that you have reserved for them, except a little you keep in store. Then there will come after that a year in which the people have rain, and in which they will press [wine and oil].'" (*Qur'an* 12: 43-49)

This interpretation of the king's dream was among the main reasons for Yusuf (ﷺ) to come out of the prison, honoured and dignified.

The version of this dream mentioned by the people of the book is that the king had a dream that while he was standing by a river, seven fat cows came out of it and grazed among the reeds. After those seven weak cows came out of the river and when they were all together, they ate the fat cows. The king then woke up and became terrified. Then again when he slept, he had the second dream. He saw seven green ears of corn on a single stalk. After them, seven thin ears of corn swallowed them. Again, he woke up and became terrified.

When the king narrated his dream to his people, there was no one who could interpret it. Infact, they said, "These are just confused

dreams.” What they meant by this is that these are confused dreams and thus it is possible that they do not have an interpretation. No matter what the case, we do not have knowledge of the interpretation of dreams. Allah quoted them as saying, “And we do not know anything of the interpretation of dreams.”

When the king mentioned his dream, the one who was freed and became the cup-bearer of the king, remembered Yusuf and his request to mention him in front of the king which he had forgotten. This incident was from Allah’s decree and He had wisdom in the man forgetting. When he heard the king mention his dream and saw that nobody could interpret it, he remembered Yusuf. That is why he said, “Then the one who had been released and who remembered after a long time said, ‘I will inform you of its interpretation, so send me. O’ truthful Yusuf, explain to us [the interpretation of the dream of] seven fat cows which seven lean ones ate and seven green ears and seven others dry, so that I might return to the people that they may know.’” (*cf. 12: 45-46*)

Yusuf (ﷺ) immediately informed the person about the interpretation without laying any condition or delay or asking to be released from prison quickly. Rather, he informed them of what they desired and interpreted the dream. What he said was that there will be seven years of good and healthy harvest. These will be followed by seven years of drought and famine. “Then there will come after that a year in which the people will have rain and in which they will press wine.” (*cf. 12: 49*)

So he gave the interpretation and also showed what to do. He guided them as to what they should do in the two extreme situations, of good conditions and famine. He advised them to store up all the grains of first seven years of abundance in their ears, except what they need to eat. Similarly, he advised them to reduce the amount they sow in the second seven years of hardship because of the most likely situation is that they would not grow. All this shows the perfect

knowledge and understanding of Yusuf (ﷺ) which Allah granted him.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“And the king said, ‘Bring him to me.’ So when the [king’s] messenger came to him [Yusuf], he said, ‘Go back to your master and ask him what was the case of women who cut their hands? Verily, my Lord is All-Knowing of their plot.’ The king said, ‘What was your [O’ women] affair when you seduced Yusuf?’ They said, ‘Allah forbid, we did not know any evil from him.’ The minister’s wife said, ‘Now the truth has come to light, I seduced him, and verily he is among the truthful.’ Thus he should know that I did not betray him in his absence. And Allah does not guide the plot of the treacherous. Yet I do not claim that my soul was innocent, certainly the soul inclines to evil, unless my Lord bestows His mercy. Verily my Lord is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.”

(*Qur'an 12: 50-53*)

When the king became aware of the vast knowledge of Yusuf (ﷺ), his understanding and intellect, he ordered for him to be brought to him so that he could be among the king’s close and selected group of people. When the messenger of the king came to him with the order, Yusuf preferred not to come out of prison till the people know that he was imprisoned unjustly and out of enmity. He also wanted them to know that he was innocent of the lewdness which the women and others accused him of. That is why Yusuf (ﷺ) said to the king’s messenger, “He said, ‘Go back to your master and ask him what was the case of women who cut their hands? Verily my Lord is All-Knowing of their plot.’” It is said that the meaning of ‘my lord’ is referring to the minister and that he knows of my innocence from what I am accused of. So he ordered the man to go and tell the king to ask the women how I strongly resisted their seduction and their incitement for me to commit lasciviousness?

Thereafter when the women were asked, they confessed to the evil they did and what Yusuf (ﷺ) did that was praiseworthy. Allah quoted them as saying, “Allah forbid, we did not know any evil from him.”

At that point, the minister’s wife, whose name was Zulaykha, spoke and said, “Now the truth has come to light, I seduced him and verily he is among the truthful.” This is referring to him being truthful and innocent, and that the minister’s wife tried to seduce him and that he was imprisoned unjustly and out of enmity.

Allah quotes Yusuf saying:

“[I asked for this enquiry] in order that he may know that I did not betray him in his absence.’ And verily Allah does not guide the plot of the betrayers.” (*Qur'an 12: 52*)

It is said that Yusuf was the one who said this, meaning that I requested this inquiry so that the minister knows that I did not betray him in his absence. Some others are of the opinion that it is the continuation of the minister’s wife saying, meaning I have confessed regarding this so my husband should know that I did not betray him since the seduction did not eventuate in any action of adultery. This second opinion was preferred by many of the later scholars. However, Ibn Jareer and Ibn Abu Ḥātim only mentioned the first opinion.

Regarding the verse, “Yet I do not claim that my soul was innocent, indeed the soul inclines to evil, unless my Lord bestows His mercy. Verily my Lord is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful,” it is said that it is the speech of Yusuf (ﷺ). Others said it is the speech of the minister’s wife. This difference of opinion sprang from the difference in the previous matter. However, what seems more apparent and stronger is that this is from the speech of Zulaykha. And Allah knows best.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And the king said, ‘Bring him to me that I may attach him to my person.’ Then when he spoke to him, he said, ‘Verily, this day, you are with us high in rank and fully trusted.’ Yusuf said, ‘Set me over the store-houses of the land, I will indeed guard them with full knowledge.’ Thus did We give full authority to Yusuf in the land, to take possession therein, when or where he likes. We bestow Our mercy on whom We will, and We do not make the reward of the good doers to be lost. And verily, the reward of the Hereafter is better for those who believe and use to fear Allah and keep their duty to Him.”

(*Qur'an 12: 54-57*)

When the chastity and innocence of Yusuf (ﷺ) became clear to the king, he said, “Bring him to me that I may attach him to my person.” What he meant was I will make him one of my special, close people, from among the notables and high status men. Then when he spoke to Yusuf and heard what he had to say, he became impressed and said, “Verily, this day you are with us high in rank and fully trusted.”

The Qur'an quotes Yusuf saying, “He [Yusuf] said, ‘Set me over the store-houses of the land, I will indeed guard them with full knowledge.’” Yusuf (ﷺ) requested the king to appoint him in charge of the country's store houses, wherein food is stored. He sought this because he feared that others might not be able to handle the famine properly. He wanted to take care of it according to what will please Allah (ﷻ), of kindness to people and being careful to them. Yusuf described himself to the king as being good at managing and administrating of what is in his hands.

This verse is evidence showing the permissibility of seeking power and control by the one who knows himself to be trustworthy and competent.

The people of the book — the Jews and the Christians — said regarding this that the king admired Yusuf (ﷺ) and thus put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt. He also gave him his ring, made him wear silk, put a gold chain around his neck and took him around in his other means of transport. His people yelled out in front of him, ‘You are our master (king).’ The king said to Yusuf, ‘I am not greater than you except in terms of the throne.’

They said that Yusuf (ﷺ) at that time was thirty years old and the king married him with a woman of high status and rank.

It is said that when the minister died, the king married him his wife Zulaykha and she happened to be a virgin because her former husband was impotent. She gave birth to two sons, called Afrâyem and Mansâ. Yusuf (ﷺ) ruled the people of Egypt with justice, and the people — men and women — loved him.

It is said that when Yusuf (ﷺ) met the king, he was only thirty years old. The king then addressed him using seventy languages and Yusuf replied to each one. This impressed the king greatly, especially since Prophet Yusuf (ﷺ) was so young.

Allah said, “And thus We firmly established Yusuf in the land with authority to do therein as he pleased.” This refers to the stage after coming out of the prison, hardship and trials. He then became virtually the ruler of Egypt, wherever he went, he was honoured. Allah said, “We bestow Our mercy on whomever We please and We leave not to waste the reward of the good doers. And surely the reward of the Hereafter is better for those who believe and are always pious.”

Muhammad ibn Ishâq said that the king of Egypt, Waleed ibn Rayyan, accepted Islam on the hand of Yusuf. And Allah knows best. Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And the brothers of Yusuf came and met him. He

recognized them but they did not know him. And when he had given them with their provisions, he said, 'Bring to me the brother you have from your father. Do you not see how I give full measure and I am the best of hosts. But if you do not bring him to me, you will not get any provision from me and you will come near me.' They said, 'We will try to get permission from his father, and verily we will do it.' And Yusuf told his servants to put the money into their bags, so that they may know it when they return to their family, so that they come back." *(Our'an 12: 58-62)*

In these verses, Allah informs that the brothers of Yusuf (ﷺ) came to him when the famine came and spread to everyone. This was at a time when Yusuf (ﷺ) was the ruler of Egypt, both for religious and worldly affairs. When they (Yusuf's brothers) entered, he recognized them but they did not recognize him because it never occurred to them that Yusuf could be in such a position of high status and power.

The part of the verse, "And when he had given them their provisions," means when he gave each of them a camel load, as was customary in those days. As regards the part, "He [Yusuf] said, 'Bring to me the brother you have from your father,'" shows that he had already enquired about them and how many siblings there were? They replied that they were twelve brothers in total, one had gone while another is still remaining with the father. So Yusuf (ﷺ) asked them to bring to him that last remaining brother when they come back next year for more food.

As regards the part, "Do you not see how I give full measure and I am the best of hosts," means do you not see how I was good to you and provided you what you wanted. This was to motivate them to come back the following year. He then changed the tone of his speech and warned them of the consequences if they do not do as asked, and said, "But if you do not bring him to me, you will not have any provision from me and you will not come near me." What he meant

by this is that in such a case, I will not give you what you want and I will not be good to you. Rather, he will be the opposite of how he was to them this first time.

They then said they will try hard to bring their brother with them next year and said, "We will try to get permission from his father, and surely we will do it."

Yusuf (ﷺ) then ordered his servants to return their money and merchandise which they had brought to buy their food and to put them secretly back in their luggage. He said, "So that they may know it when they go back to their family, in order that they come back." There are numerous explanations for his action of putting the money back secretly. It is said that he did this in case if they did not want to come back, then they might at least come back to return the money. A second opinion says that he feared they may not have enough money to come back next year. In a third opinion, it says that he felt ashamed to take money from his brothers for their food.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"So when they returned to their father, they said, 'O' our father, no more measure of grain will we get [unless we take our brother]. So send our brother with us, and we will get our measure and truly we will guard him.' He [Ya'qoob] said, 'Can I entrust him to you except as I entrusted his brother [Yusuf] to you aforetime? But Allah is the Best to guard, and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.' And when they opened their bags, they found their money had been returned to them. They said, 'O' our father, what more can we desire? This is our money, it has been returned to us, so we will get more food for our family, and we will guard our brother, and add one more measure of a camel's load. That will be an easy provision.' He [Ya'qoob] said, 'I will not send him with you until you wear a solemn

oath to me in Allah's name, that you will bring him back to me unless you are yourselves surrounded [by enemies].’ And when they had sworn their solemn oath, he said, ‘Allah is the witness to what we have said.’ And he [Ya‘qoob] said, ‘O’ my sons do not enter by one gate, but enter by different gates, and I cannot avail you against Allah at all. Verily, the decision rests only with Allah. In Him I put my trust and let all those who trust put their trust in Him.’ And when they entered according to their father’s advice, it did not avail them in the least against [the will of] Allah. It was only a need of Ya‘qoob’s inner-self, which he discharged. And verily, he was endowed with knowledge because We had taught him, but most men do not know.” (*Qur'an* 12: 63-68)

In these verses, Allah mentioned what happened when they returned back to their father. They said that they would be deprived of any further provisions from next year if their father does not send their brother with them. So if he sent their brother, they will not be deprived.

Allah said, “And when they opened their bags, they found their money had been returned to them. They said, ‘Our father, what [more] can we desire?’” What they meant was we got our food and we also got our money returned to us. There is no reason why we should not go there with our brother. “We will get [more] food for our family, we will take care of our brother, and add one more camel’s load, that will be an easy provision.” What they meant was that just by letting our brother go with us, we will increase the amount of food we bring back since we will get an extra camel load for him too.

After the disappearance of Yusuf, his father Ya‘qoob (peace be upon them) did not use to let Benyameen go out because he used to smell the fragrance of Yusuf (ﷺ) in him and get comfort from him. He became more precious due to the absence of Yusuf. For this reason, he (Ya‘qoob) said to them, “I will not send him with you until

you swear a solemn oath to me in Allah's name that you will bring him back to me unless you are yourselves surrounded [by enemies].” The only exception he gave them was if they all were unable to come back. The verse goes on, “And when they had sworn their solemn oath, he [Ya'qoob] said, ‘Allah is the witness to what we have said.’”

Ya'qoob (ﷺ) made the covenant he took from his sons stronger by making them swear an oath and then made Allah a witness to what they said. However, no amount of precaution and warnings can avail from the decree. If the people in that area and his family were not in need for food, he would never have sent his son with them. However, Allah's decrees have wisdom, and He decrees what He wills and chooses what He wants. He also rules as He wishes, and He is the All-Wise, the All-Knowing.

Ya'qoob (ﷺ) then ordered his sons to not enter the city through one gate but instead to divide themselves and enter through various gates. It is said that he did not want any of them to be inflicted by the evil eye. This is because they were handsome and had good appearance. This opinion was expressed by Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما), Muhammad ibn K‘ab, Qatâdah, as-Suddî and ad-Dâhhâk. According to others, he wanted his sons to spread out, hoping that they might get news of Yusuf (ﷺ). This is the opinion of Ibraheem an-Nakha‘ee. However, the first opinion seems to be stronger and more apparent because he said, “And I cannot avail you against Allah at all.”

Allah said, “And when they entered according to their father's advice, it did not avail them in the least against [the will of] Allah. It was only a need of Ya'qoob's inner-self, which he discharged. And verily he was endowed with knowledge because We had taught him but most men do not know.”

It is mentioned in the books of the Jews and the Christians that Ya'qoob (ﷺ) sent with his sons some gifts for the king in the form of pistachio nuts, almonds, spices, honey and balm. They also took with

them the money that was returned the first time as well as other things.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And when they went in before Yusuf, he took his brother to himself and said, ‘Verily, I am your brother, so do not grieve for what they used to do.’ So when he had furnished them with their provisions, he put the bowl in his brother’s bag. Then a crier called out, ‘O’ you in the caravan, you are surely thieves.’ They turned towards him and said, ‘What is it that you have lost?’ They said, ‘We have lost the bowl of the king, whoever produces it will have a reward of a camel load and I will be bound by it.’

They [the brothers] said, ‘By Allah, verily you know that we did not come to make mischief in the land and we are not thieves.’ They [Yusuf’s servants] said, ‘What then will be the penalty of him if you are proved liars?’ They [the brothers] said, ‘His penalty should be that he, in whose bag it is found, should be held for the punishment [of the crime]. Thus We punish the wrongdoers.’ So he [Yusuf] began [the search] in their bags before the bag of his brother. Then he brought it out from his brother’s bag. Thus did We plan for Yusuf. He could not take his brother by the law of the king, except that Allah willed it. We raise to degrees whom We will, but over all those who are endowed with knowledge is the All-Knowing [Allah].

They [the brothers] said, ‘If he steals, there was a brother of his who did steal before.’ But Yusuf kept these things within himself, not revealing the secrets to them. He said [within himself], ‘You are in worse case and Allah is Best Knower of that which you describe.’ They said, ‘O’ ruler of the land, he has an old father [who will grieve for him], so take one of us in his place. Indeed, we think that you are among of

righteous.' He said, 'Allah forbid that we should take but him with whom we found our property. Indeed [if we did so], we should be unjust.'" (*Our'an* 12: 69-79)

In these verses, Allah mentioned what happened when the brothers went to Yusuf (ﷺ) with his brother Benyameen. Yusuf (ﷺ) took his brother aside and told him that he was his brother. He asked him to conceal this news and also asked him what ill treatment he faced at the hands of his brothers in the past years.

Then Yusuf (ﷺ) devised a plan to keep Benyameen in Egypt with him and stop him from going back with his brothers. He ordered his servants to place his cup into the sack of Benyameen. He used that cup for drinking and also for measuring the amount of food to give to people. Then Yusuf (ﷺ) sent some of his people to tell the brothers that the king's cup was stolen and promised to give the reward of a camel load to whoever produced it. The brothers questioned the king's servants regarding what the problem was and then informed them that they did not come to Egypt, here, to make mischief. They said, "By Allah, you know that we did not come to make mischief in the land and we are not thieves." What they meant was that you all are well-aware that we are not what you are accusing us of, which is the crime of stealing.

Allah then quoted the king's servants as saying, " 'What then shall be the penalty of him, if you are proved to be liars?' They [the brothers] said, 'The penalty should be that he, in whose bag it is found, should be held for the punishment. Thus we punish the wrongdoers.' " This was the way according to their Shari'ah wherein the thief is to be handed over to the one who he stole from.

Allah, the Almighty, All-High then said, "So he [Yusuf] began the search in their bags, before the bag of his brother. Then he brought it out from his brother's bag." He began from the bags of his brothers first because it would have dispelled any suspicion of pre-

planning to frame them. Allah then said, "Thus did We plan for Yusuf. He could not take his brother by the law of the king." If the brothers had not said that the penalty of the thief should be to keep the thief back, then Yusuf (ﷺ) would not have been able to keep Benyameen from travelling back with them. However, Allah had willed for him otherwise and thus said, "Unless that Allah had willed it. We raise to degrees whom We will." This is referring to raising in knowledge. The verse finishes off as, "But every possessor of knowledge there is one more knowing." (*c/f 12: 76*) This is referring to how Yusuf was more knowledgeable and wiser. However, he did what he did (in order to keep his brother) because of the order from Allah since it had a greater goal to it, which was the arrival of his father and family, along with all the people.

When the brothers saw with their own eyes that the cup was in the bags of Benyameen, "They said, 'If he steals, there was a brother of his who did steal before'." They were talking about Yusuf because it is said that he stole the idols of his maternal grandfather and broke it. To some others, it is suggested that he used to take food from his house and feed the poor.

Allah, the Exalted, the Almighty said, "But Yusuf kept these things within himself, not revealing the secrets to them." The thing that he hid within himself and did not reveal to his brothers this is mentioned in the next part of the verse, "You are in worse case, and Allah is best Knower of that which you describe." He did not say it openly because he wanted to show courtesy and forgiveness. At that, the brothers started begging for consideration and said, "'O' ruler of the land, verily he has an old father [who will grieve for him], so take one of us in his place. Indeed, we think that you are among the righteous.' He [Yusuf] said, 'Allah forbid that we should take anyone but him with whom we found our property. Indeed [if we did so], we should be among the wrong doers.'" What he meant was we will be among the wrong doers if we take the innocent into custody and

release the guilty. This is something we do not do and thus we will only take the person in whose bag we found our cup.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“So when they despaired of him, they held a conference in private. The eldest among them said, ‘Do not you all know that your father did take an oath from you in Allah’s Name, and before this you did fail in your duty with Yusuf? Therefore I will not leave this land until my father permits me, or Allah decides my case, and He is the best of the judges. Return to your father and say, ‘O’ our father, verily your son [Benyameen] has stolen and we testify not except according to what we know, and we could not know the unseen. And ask the people of the town where we have been and the caravan in which we returned; and indeed we are telling you the truth.’ He [Ya‘qoob] said, ‘No, but your own-selves have beguiled you into something. So patience is most fitting [for me]. May Allah bring them back all to me. Truly, He Only is the All-Knowing, All-Wise.’ And he turned away from them and said, ‘Alas, my grief for Yusuf.’ And he lost his sight because of the sorrow that he was suppressing. They said, ‘By Allah, you will never cease remembering Yusuf until you become weak with old age, or until you be of the dead.’ He said, ‘I only complain of my grief and sorrow to Allah and I know from Allah that which you do not. O’ my sons go and enquire about Yusuf and his brother and never give up hope of Allah’s mercy. Certainly, no one despairs of Allah’s mercy except the people who disbelieve.’”

(Qur'an 12: 80-87)

Allah informs us in these verses that when the brothers despaired of taking their brother back with them, they got together in private and talked about what step should be taken next. The eldest brother Roobeel said, ‘Don’t you know that your father did take an oath from

you in Allah's Name." What he meant was that this oath was to bring him back to their father at all costs unless they become helpless themselves. So now you are unable to fulfill this oath. You have been negligent with this brother as you were with Yusuf (ﷺ). Thus I cannot face my father. Therefore I will not leave this land until my father permits me or Allah decides my case and He is the Best of the judges." What he meant was I will not go back to our father until he tells me to come back or if Allah enables me to bring back my brother to his father.

He then asked them to go back and inform their father of what occurred and what they saw. He said to them, "Return to your father and say, 'O' our father, your son has stolen and we testify not except according to what we know and we could not know the unseen. And ask the people of the town where we have been and the caravan in which we returned; and indeed we are telling the truth.'" The meaning of this is that the story we have told you is known and famous story in Egypt now, so you can ask them or ask the caravan in which we returned back, since they all know. We are truthful in what we are saying.

However, Ya'qoob (ﷺ) did not believe them because stealing is not from the nature of Benyameen nor is it something that suits his good characteristics. So he said, "No, but your own-selves have beguiled you into something. So patience is most fitting for me." Then he continued and said, "May be Allah will bring them all back to me" referring to Yusuf (ﷺ), Benyameen and Roobeel. "Truly, He Only is All-Knowing, All-Wise" meaning only He is knowledgeable concerning my situation and what I am feeling being away from my beloved. And He is the All-Wise in whatever He decrees and does, and He has great wisdom and reasons behind whatever He does.

"And he turned away from them and said, 'Alas my grief for Yusuf.'" What he meant what my new grief for Yusuf has added to and brought back my previous grief. Due to the crying that he used to

do often, he lost his eyesight. He used to suppress his grief and sorrow at the situation and how much he missed Yusuf.

When his sons saw the suffering and pain of their father due to his separation from some of his children, they said, "By Allah, you will never cease remembering Yusuf until you become weak with old age or until you become among the dead." They said this to their father out of mercy and care for him. What they meant was you will keep remembering Yusuf (ﷺ) until you become old and weak. So if you cease to do that, it will be better for you and your body. But his reply to them was that he was not complaining of anything to them or to any other person, rather he complained to Allah, (ﷻ).

The Qur'an quotes: "He [Ya'qoob] said, 'I only complain of my sorrow and grief to Allah and I know from Allah that which you do not.'" What he meant by this is that Allah will open a door for me. I also know that the dream of Yusuf (ﷺ) has to come true and that I and you all will have to bow to him according to what he saw in his dream.

He then tried to motivate his brothers into searching for Yusuf and his brother and to find out what is the situation with both of them. Thus he said to them, "O' my sons, go and enquire about Yusuf and his brother, and never give up hope of Allah's mercy. Certainly, no one despairs of Allah's mercy except the people who disbelieve." That is do not despair of the mercy of Allah because only the disbelievers despair of Allah's mercy and that Allah takes a person out of hardship.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"Then when they went to him [Yusuf], they [the brothers] said, 'O' ruler of the land, a hard time has hit us and our family, and we have brought but poor capital, so pay us full measure and be charitable to us. Truly, Allah does reward the charitable.' He [Yusuf] said, 'Do you know what you

did with Yusuf and his brother, when you were ignorant?’ They said, ‘Are you indeed Yusuf?’ He said, ‘I am Yusuf and this is my brother [Benyameen]. Allah has indeed been gracious to us. Verily, he who fears Allah with obedience to Him and is patient, then surely, Allah makes not the reward of the good doers to be lost.’ They said, ‘By Allah, indeed Allah has preferred you above us and we certainly have been sinners.’ He said, ‘No reproach on you this day; may Allah forgive you and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy. Go with this shirt of mine and cast it over the face of my father, he will become clear sighted and bring me all your family.’”

(*Qur'an* 12: 88-93)

In these verses, Allah informs us about the arrival of the brothers to Egypt and their desire to obtain some merchandise from him. They also wanted to request him to release their brother Benyameen. They began by explaining the difficult situation they were in by saying, “O’ ruler of the land, a hard time has hit us and our family.” This is due to famine, hardship and a large family. They went on saying, “And we have brought but poor capital.” What they meant was they brought things with them that are generally not accepted unless you overlook that. It is said that they had with them poor quality silver coins or very little in number. Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) held the opinion that they brought old useless ropes and seeds of balms. Then they said, “So pay us full measure and be charitable to us. Truly, Allah rewards the charitable.” As-Suddi said that the charity they referred to was to give back their brother.

When Yusuf (رضي الله عنه) saw the hardships they were in and their severe need for provisions, he informed them who he was and was kind to them also. He said, “Do you know what you did with Yusuf and his brother when you were ignorant?” They were very surprised at that because they never expected this, especially after having come back to him so many times. Thus they said, “Are you indeed Yusuf?”

Yusuf's reply was, "I am Yusuf and this is my brother." What he meant was yes, I am the same Yusuf with whom you did what you did. He emphasized this by also saying, "this is my brother" because the brothers had jealousy towards both of them and now when the two being together, they know what the brothers were upto. He then said, "Allah has been gracious to us." What he meant was He was kind and merciful to us, and gave us an abode. It was because of our obedience to Him and our patience over the hardships that inflicted us. Similarly, we were obedient to our parents and his strong love and care for us. He further said, "Verily, he who fears Allah and is patient, then surely, Allah makes not the reward of the good doers to be lost."

They said in response, "They said, 'By Allah, indeed Allah has preferred you above us,'" which means that certainly Allah preferred you and gave you what He did not give us. Then they confessed their sin to him and said, "And we certainly have been sinners." Yusuf (ﷺ) met this confession with compassion and said, "He said, 'No reproach on you this day; may Allah forgive you, and He is the most merciful of those who show mercy.'"

Yusuf (ﷺ) then ordered them to take his shirt back with them to their father and put it on the eyes of his father because that will bring back his sight by the will of Allah, after it had gone. This was one of the extraordinary events and of those that show his Prophethood. He further instructed them to bring all of their family to Egypt, where they could have goodness and be together after having been separated.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

"And when the caravan departed, their father said, 'Indeed I find the smell of Yusuf, if only you do not think me a dotard.' They said, 'By Allah, certainly you are still in your old error.' Then when the bearer of glad tidings arrived, he cast the shirt on his face and he became clear sighted. He

said, ‘Did I not say to you that I know from Allah what you do not know?’ They said, ‘O’ our father, ask forgiveness from Allah for our sins, indeed we have been sinner.’ He said, ‘I will ask my Lord for forgiveness for you, verily He, only He is the Oft-Forgiving, the Most-Merciful.’”

(*Qur'an* 12: 94-98)

Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said that when the caravan departed, a wind blew and thus Ya‘qoob smelt the shirt of Yusuf (peace be upon them both) when the caravan was still at a distance of three days.

Allah says, “Then when the bearer of glad tidings arrived, he cast the shirt on his face and he became clear sighted.” That is, as soon as he came and put the shirt of Yusuf on his eyes, Ya‘qoob (رضي الله عنه) became clear sighted. Then he said to his sons, “Did I not say to you that I know from Allah what you do not know?” meaning, I knew Allah will bring Yusuf to me and gather us together, thus giving my eyes their comfort.

At that, the sons said, “O’ our father, ask forgiveness from Allah for our sins, indeed we have been sinners.” They sought from their father the seeking of forgiveness from Allah for what they had done to him and Yusuf (peace be upon them). Because they had the intention of repenting before they committed their crimes, Allah guided them to seek forgiveness. Their father replied to their request saying, “I will ask my Lord for forgiveness for you, verily He, only He is the Oft-Forgiving, the Most-Merciful.”

Allah (عز وجل)، said:

“So when they went to Yusuf, he provided a home for his parents with himself and said, ‘Enter Egypt, if Allah pleases, in safety.’ And he raised his parents on the throne and they fell down in prostration before him. He said, ‘O’ my father, this is the interpretation of my previous dream, verily my Lord made it come true. Verily, He was good to

me when He took me out of the prison and when He brought you [all here] out of the desert after *Shayṭān* had sown enmity between me and my brothers. Verily, my Lord is the Most Gracious and Kind to whom He wills. Truly, He, only He is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. My Lord, you have indeed bestowed upon me of the sovereignty and taught me of the interpretation of dreams. You are the creator of the heavens and the earth. You are my protector in this world and in the Hereafter. Cause me to die as a Muslim and join me with the righteous.''" *(Our'an 12: 99-101)*

(*Qur'an* 12: 99-101)

In these verses, Allah mentioned about the condition of His slaves who reunited after a long separation. "And he raised his parents on the throne and they fell down in prostration before him." According to what is mentioned in the Bible, his mother had already died. However, some of the scholars of the Qur'an said that maybe Allah (ﷻ), brought her back to life. Others said that instead of his mother, it was his *Khálah* (mother's sister) Leeā since the *Khálah* is like the mother.

Ibn Jareer and others said that what the Qur'an clearly indicates is that his mother was alive by that time and so we should not refer to the books of the people of the Book, especially in what contradicts the Qur'an. This opinion is very strong and Allah knows best.

When the parents of Yusuf (ﷺ) came, he took them on the throne and made them sit down along with him there and then they all, his parents and his eleven brothers, bowed down before him as a demonstration of his greatness and nobleness. This act was permitted to them and it continued in all the Shari'ah after them. However, when Islam came, it forbade the act of prostrating to others.⁹¹

⁹¹ *Tafseer at-Tabari*, vol. 3, p. 43.

"He [Yusuf] said, 'O' my father, this is the interpretation of my previous dream.'" means that this is the fulfilment of the dream which I had narrated to you earlier. It was the dream when I saw the sun, moon and eleven stars bowing down to me, and you had ordered me to conceal it from my brothers. "My Lord has made it come true. He was good to me when He took me out of the prison." He took me out after all my sufferings and hardships and made me the ruler of Egypt where by whatever I order is carried out in the land of Egypt. "And when He brought you [all here] out of the desert, after *Shaytān* had sown enmity between me and my brothers." This is referring to them coming out of their desert and their bedouin life and after such a long time when the *Shaytān* had caused the things which happened between me and my brothers, the details of which have already been mentioned.

"My Lord is the Most Gracious and Kind to whom He wills. Truly He, only He is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise." This means that if Allah wants to do something, He prepares its means and causes. With His mercy and kindness, He makes things easy for His slaves, things that the slaves would not be able to do themselves. And He is the One who knows everything and He is Wise in what He creates, decrees and lays down as laws.

So when Yusuf saw that the favours of Allah had completed upon him and he had been united with his family, he knew that this world is a temporary abode and that everything must perish because once something completes, it starts to decrease. At this realization, he praised Allah with the best praises and glorified Him. He supplicated to Him regarding the two best things to ask for. Firstly to be caused to die in a state of Islam and to be united to the pious and righteous. Similarly, a Muslim should also make such a supplication and say, 'O' Allah, make us born as Muslims and cause us to die as Muslims.'

It is possible that he prayed for this at the time of his death just like our Prophet (ﷺ) asked at the time of his death.

It is also possible that Yusuf (ﷺ) asked this when he was quite healthy because it may have been permitted to them in their Shari'ah. Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) said, "No Prophet ever desired death before Yusuf."

As for our Shari'ah, it is not permitted to pray for death except at the times of *fitnah*. This can be seen in a narration reported on the authority of Mu'adh (رضي الله عنه). In it, the Prophet (ﷺ) is reported to have supplicated:

"... and when You put a people to trial, take us to You (i.e. cause us to die) without being put to trial."⁹²

In another similar hadith, the words are: "O' son of Adam, death is better for you than *Fitnah*."⁹³

Also, Maryam (peace be upon her) said, as quoted in the Qur'an:

"Would that I had died before this and had become forgotten and out of sight." (Our'an 19; 23)

Also, 'Ali ibn Tâlib (رضي الله عنه) desired death during his time as the ruler when the *fitnah* became severe and the people started fighting and killing each other. And Imam Bukhari, the compiler of the authentic hadiths, also desired death when things became very difficult for him and his opponents gave him a tough time.

However, in times of ease it is not permissible because of a hadith narrated on the authority of Anas ibn Mâlik (رضي الله عنه) wherein the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) gave instructions concerning this. He said:

"No one should desire for death for a harm that inflicts him, because if the person was a good doer, then maybe he will

⁹² Imam Ahmad reported this hadith. Also Tirmidhi in his *Sunan*, *Kitâb at-Tafsîr*, *Tafsîr Soorah Sâd*, in the words: "And when you desired to put your slave to trial take me to You without trial."

⁹³ Ahmad, vol. 5, p. 427.

increase. And if he was an evil doer, then maybe he may repent. However, one should say, ‘O’ Allah, keep me alive as long as life is better for me and make me die if death is better for me.’”⁹⁴

It should be noted here that the meaning of harm in this hadith is illnesses and diseases that affect the body and not anything concerning the religion.

The apparent meaning to be taken from the situation of Yusuf (ﷺ) is that he made that supplication either at the time of his death or before that.

Allah (ﷻ), said in His Noble Book:

“Or were you witness when death came to Ya‘qoob, when he said to his sons, ‘What will you worship after me?’ They said, ‘We shall worship your God and the God of your fathers Ibraheem, Isma‘eel, and Ishāq. One God and to Him we submit.’” *(Qur'an 2: 133)*

Prophet Ya‘qoob (ﷺ) advised his children to follow the religion of Islam with which Allah sent all the Messengers.

It is mentioned in the Bible that Ya‘qoob (ﷺ) advised his children one by one and he gave his son Yahoodha the glad tidings of a great Prophet coming from his progeny who will be followed by many nations. This Prophet was said to be ‘Eesa (Jesus) (ﷺ). And Allah knows best.

It is also said by the people of the Book — the Jews and the Christians, that when Ya‘qoob (ﷺ) died, the people of Egypt mourned over him for seventy days. Yusuf (ﷺ) ordered the doctors to embalm his father, which itself took forty days. After that, Yusuf asked the Egyptian king permission to take the body of his father and

⁹⁴ Bukhari, *Kitâb ad-Dâ‘wât, Bâb ad-Duâ‘ bil mawt wal-Hayât* and Muslim, *Kitâb adh-Dhikr Bâb karâhah tamanna al-mawt li-Darr Nazala bihi*.

bury him with the rest of the family. The king granted permission and so Yusuf left with the high ranked officials and dignitaries of Egypt. When they reached Hebron, they buried him in the cave which Ibraheem (ﷺ) had bought from ‘Ifroon ibn Sakhr al-Haythi. The people there then mourned over him for seven days.

It is further said by them that the people then returned to Egypt, Yusuf (ﷺ) together with his brothers. They were good to him and thus he was also good to them and they all stayed together in Egypt.

Then death approached Yusuf (ﷺ) who had advised to be taken from Egypt and buried along with his forefathers. They embalmed him and put his body in a coffin. It remained in Egypt till the time of Moosa (Moses) (ﷺ) who then took him out of Egypt and buried him along with his forefathers. The people of the book also said that he died at the age of one hundred and ten years.

Chapter Eleven

The Story of Ayyub (Job) (ﷺ)

Ibn Ishâq said that Prophet Ayyub (Job) was Roman. His lineage was Ayyub ibn Moos ibn Râzîh ibn ‘Eeş ibn Ishâq ibn Ibraheem (peace be upon them all).

However, others said that his lineage was Ayyub ibn Moos ibn Ra’ooeel ibn ‘Eeş ibn Ishâq ibn Ya’qoob (peace be upon them all).

Ibn Asâkir reported that his mother was the daughter of Loot (ﷺ). It is said that his father was among those who believed in Ibraheem (ﷺ) on the day he was thrown in the fire and was to be burnt but survived.

However, of all these opinions, the first opinion is the most popular because he was from the progeny of Ibraheem (ﷺ). This is seen in the saying of Allah:

“... and from his offspring Dawood, Sulaymân, Ayyub, Yusuf, Moosa and Hâroon...” *(Qur'an 6: 84)*

In this verse, the pronoun ‘his’ is referring to Ibraheem and not Nooh (peace be upon them all).

He is one of those Prophets who are mentioned specially that they received revelations. This is seen in *Soorah an-Nisâ’*:

“Indeed We have revealed to you as We revealed to Nooh and the Prophets after him. And We revealed to Ibraheem, Isma‘eel, Ishâq, Ya’qoob, the tribes, ‘Eesa and Ayyub...”
(Qur'an 4: 163)

So the correct opinion is that he is from the progeny of ‘Ees ibn Ishāq. As regards his wife’s name, it is said she was Leeā bint Ya’qoob (ﷺ). Some others say that her name was Rahmah bint Ifrātheem. Yet some others claim that she was Leeā bint Mansā ibn Ya’qoob (ﷺ). This is the most popular opinion, and we have mentioned it here.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And Ayyub, when he called to his Lord, saying, ‘Harm has inflicted me and You are the Most Merciful.’ So We answered him and removed his affliction and We gave him his family and the like of them with them, as a mercy from Us and a reminder to worshippers.”” (*Qur'an 21: 83-84*)

And in *Soorah Sâd*:

“And mention Our slave Ayyub when he called his Lord, ‘The Shaytân has afflicted me with distress and torment.’ [Allah said], ‘Strike with your foot, this is [a spring of] water to wash in, cool and a [refreshing] drink.’ And We gave him his family and the like of thereof, as a mercy from Us and a reminder to those who understand.’ And take in your hand a bundle of thin grass and strike therewith and do not break your oath.’ Truly, We found him patient. How excellent a slave. Verily, he was ever oft-returning in repentance.”” (*Qur'an 38: 41-44*)

Qur'anic exegetes, historians and others said that Ayyub (ﷺ) was a wealthy man who owned all kinds of wealth, such as cattle, sheep and servants, and vast property in a place called Hoorân. He also had many children and large family.

Then all of this was taken away from him. His body was inflicted with different kinds of diseases to such an extent that there was no part of his body that was healthy except his heart and tongue with which he remembered Allah. All throughout this, he remained

patient and remembered Allah all the time, during the night and day, and in the morning and the evening.

His illnesses prolonged for such a long time that even his friends deserted him and his relatives stayed away from him. He was expelled from his town and thrown upon a dunghill. Everybody left him except his wife who fulfilled her duties. She did this because of the many good times she had with him and due to her compassion for him. She used to come to him and help him out in his necessities. It came to such an extent that she became weak and her money almost finished. She was in such a difficult situation that she started working to earn wages in order to provide for her husband. May Allah be pleased with her. She remained patient with him even through hard times that hit them when they were inflicted with loss of money, children and her husband became very ill.

It is established in an authentic hadith that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“The most severely tried among the people are the Prophets. Then after them the righteous and then the likes and so on.”

And said:

“And man is put to trial according to the strength of his religion thus if his religion was strong, his trial increased.”⁹⁵

Mujâhid is reported to have said that Prophet Ayyub (Job) (ﷺ) was the first to be afflicted by smallpox.

Historians and scholars differed as regards the period of time he was inflicted with the trials. Wahb ibn Munâbbih said that he suffered for three years, not more nor less. Anas on the other hand said that he suffered for about seven years and a few months. Humayd said that the period was eighteen years. The severity of the disease has been described by as-Suddi that it was so severe, that his flesh dropped from his body and nothing remained on him except his

⁹⁵ Ahmad, vol. 1, p. 172.

bones and muscles. His wife used to bring ashes and spread it under his body. When the trial went for long, she said, "O' Ayyub, if you pray to your Lord, He will free you from this suffering." He answered, "I have lived for seventy years as a healthy person, so can I not be patient for Allah for another seventy years?" She worked for people to earn money in order to feed Ayyub (ﷺ).⁹⁶

However, the people then started to be cautious of her and did not employ her because they knew that she was the wife of Ayyub (ﷺ) and because of that, they too might get infected by the same illnesses or be put to the same trial. So when she did not find anybody to give work, she went to some of the daughters of high society and sold one of her plait in return for plenty of good food. When she came to Ayyub (ﷺ) with food, he asked her where did she get the food from. He showed his disapproval but she said, "I worked for the people." Then when it was the following day and again she did not find anyone who give her work, she sold the other plait in return for food. She then brought it to Ayyub (ﷺ). This time Ayyub (ﷺ) swore that he would not eat the food till she tells him from where she has got it. At that, she removed her headscarf. When Ayyub saw her head has been shaved, he supplicated to Allah:

"And Ayyub when he called his Lord [saying], 'Harm has inflicted me and You are the Most Merciful.'"

(Qur'an 21: 83)

Ibn Abi Hâtim reported on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Ubayd ibn 'Umayr who said: "Ayyub had two brothers. One day, they came to him but they could not go near him because of the bad smell which came from his body. So they stood at a distance and one of them said to another, 'If Allah knew any good in Ayyub, He would not have put him to this trial.' This grieved Ayyub (ﷺ) so much that

⁹⁶ *Tafseer at-Tabari*, vol. 23, p. 107.

he never got such grief before. He supplicated, ‘O’ Allah, if You know that I never spent a night with a full stomach if I knew someone hungry in that night, then prove me true.’ So he was proved true and a voice came from the heaven confirming his truth that was heard by the two brothers. He then supplicated further, ‘O’ Allah, if You know that I never had two shirts if I knew that someone did not have clothes, then prove me true.’ Again, he was proved true from the heavens while the brothers were listening. Finally, he supplicated, ‘O’ Allah, I seek help from Your Honour.’ When saying that, he fell down in prostration and said, ‘O’ Allah, by Your Honour, I will never lift my head till You cure me from my suffering.’ Then he did not lift his head till he was cured.”

Ibn Abi Hâtim reported on the authority of ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) who said: “Allah dressed Ayyub (رضي الله عنه) with a dress from Paradise, then he went aside and sat in a corner. His wife came and did not recognize him. So she asked, ‘O’ slave of Allah, where did the afflicted person go who was here? I am afraid that dogs or wolves have eaten him.’ She kept speaking to him for some time and then he finally said to her, ‘What is wrong with you, I am Ayyub.’ She said, ‘Are you mocking me?’ He said, ‘I am Ayyub, Allah has indeed returned to me my body.’”

Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) said: “Allah returned to him his wealth and children, and others twice as many as them.”

Ibn Abi Hâtim reported that Wahb ibn Munabbih said: “Allah revealed to him, ‘I returned to you your family and your wealth, and the like of them along with them. So take a bath from this water, for there is a cure for you in it and offer sacrifice on behalf of your companions and seek forgiveness for them for verily they disobeyed Me concerning you.’”

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

"When Allah cured Ayyub He rained on him golden locusts. Ayyub began collecting them with his hands and putting them in his clothes. It was said to him, 'O' Ayyub, are you not satisfied and full?' He said, 'O' Lord, who will feel full from Your mercy?'"⁹⁷

In another narration on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"While Ayyub was bathing naked, golden locusts dropped on him, so he began collecting them in his clothes. So his Lord called him, 'O' Ayyub, did I not give you enough, so what do you do?' Ayyub said, 'Yes my Lord but there is no sparing from Your blessings for me.'"⁹⁸

"Strike with your foot" was the divine order. So Ayyub (ﷺ) did as ordained and struck the earth with his leg. Allah then caused a cold spring of water to gush forth and ordered him to take bath and drink from it. Allah then removed his suffering and pain, his illnesses and diseases that were both visible and hidden on his body and replaced all that with a healthy body, both visible and hidden. He (ﷻ) also made him handsome and gave him abundant wealth, to the extent that golden locusts rained on him.

Allah also returned him his family as He said, "We gave to him his family, and the like of them with them." (*cf* 21: 84) It is said that Allah brought his children back to life. Some others said that Allah gave him other people in place of those who had died, wherein in the Hereafter, Allah will gather them all together. As regards the part of the verse, "A mercy from Us," (*cf* 21: 84) it means that We removed his hardships and cured him from whatever he had as a mercy and

⁹⁷ Ibn Abi Ḥātim reported this hadith and also Ahmad, vol. 2, p. 511.

⁹⁸ Imams Bukhari and Ahmad reported this hadith through different chains. Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Ghusl*, *Bāb man iqtasala 'uriyanan* and Ahmad.

grace from Us. The end of the verse, "And a reminder to worshippers" means that what happened to Ayyub (ﷺ) is a reminder and a lesson for all those who are put to trial concerning their bodies, wealth, and family. All such people should take the example of the Prophet of Allah, Ayyub, who was tried by Allah with something that was greater than what others would be inflicted with and despite that, he was patient and had hope that Allah would cure him from that.

Ayyub (ﷺ) lived in the Roman land for a further seventy years after his affliction. He preached to them the religion of Monotheism, One God. However, they later changed the religion of Ibraheem (ﷺ) after his death.

Allah said:

"And take in your hand a bundle of reeds and strike with it, and do not break your oath. And We found him patient, a good slave, verily he was penitent." (*Qur'an* 38: 44)

This speaks about His mercy upon Ayyub (ﷺ), when Ayyub had sworn that he would whip his wife one hundred lashes. It is said that he made the oath because she sold her plaits. It is also said that *Shaytan* came to her disguised as a doctor (physician) and described to her some medicines for Ayyub (ﷺ). When she came and informed Ayyub (ﷺ), he knew it was *Shaytan* and subsequently swore that he would whip her one hundred lashes. When Allah cured him, He told him to take a bundle of reeds, bunch them together as one and then to hit her only once. This one hit was considered one hundred, thus he could fulfill his oath this way.

This was a way out and relief for the one who feared Allah and obeyed Him, especially with respect to his wife who bore his illness patiently and had hope. She was a pious, righteous and rightly guided woman. May Allah be pleased with her.

Ibn Jareer and others mentioned that when Ayyub (عليه السلام) died, he was ninety-three years old. Some others said that he lived longer than that.

Before he passed away, he entrusted his mission to his son Hawmal and after him to his other son Bishr. Many people claim that he was Dhul Kifl. And Allah knows best. These same people also claim that he was a Prophet, who died at the age of ninety-five.

Chapter Twelve

The Story of Dhul Kifl (ﷺ)

Allah said in *Soorah al-Anbiyâ'* after the story of Ayyub (Job):

“And Isma‘eel, Idris, and Dhul Kifl, all of them were among the patient ones. And We admitted them to Our mercy, verily they were among the righteous.” (*Qur'an* 21: 85-86)

And in *Soorah Sâd* after the story of Ayyub:

“And mention Our slaves Ibraheem, Ishâq, and Ya‘qoob, they all were owners of strength and of righteous understanding. Verily, We did choose them by granting them [a good thing], the remembrance of the home [in the Hereafter]. And they are with Us, verily of the chosen and the best. And remember Isma‘eel, Alyasa, and Dhul Kifl, all are among the best.” (*Qur'an* 38: 45-48)

The fact that he is praised in the verses mentioned above and that his name came alongside the names of other great Prophets shows that he too was a Prophet. May the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him. This is the popular opinion among the scholars.

Some others, however, claim that he was not a Prophet, he was rather only a pious, just and wise man. Ibn Jareer did not give his opinion on this issue. And Allah knows best.

Ibn Jareer and Abu Nujayh reported from Mujâhid that he was not a Prophet, he was rather a pious man. He had volunteered to be the people's guide and judge between them with justice. This was the reason that he was called by the name Dhul Kifl.

Ibn Jareer and Ibn Abi Hâtim reported from Mujâhid that: “When Alyasa‘ became old, he said, ‘I wish I could appoint a person who could look after the people in my life, so that I can observe how he fulfils his duty.’ So he gathered his people and said, ‘Whoever fulfils three conditions from me, I will appoint him my successor. The three conditions are that he should fast during the day, pray in the night and should not get angry.’ So a man stood up and said, ‘I (will do that).’ He said, ‘Do you fast during the day, pray in the night and do not get angry?’ He replied, ‘Yes (I do).’ He turned him back that day and then on the following day, he repeated the same. Everybody kept quite except that same man who again said, ‘I (will do).’ At that, Alyasa‘ appointed him as his successor.

Iblees thereafter ordered his Satans saying, ‘Go after that man.’ However, the Satans were unable to mislead him. So *Iblees* then said to them, ‘Leave him to me.’ He then came to him in the guise of a poor old man at the time of siesta when he has gone for it. He used not to sleep in the day or at night except that particular occasion. So *Iblees* knocked at his door and the man asked, ‘Who is at the door?’ *Iblees* replied, ‘An oppressed old man.’ So he got up and when he opened the door, *Iblees* started telling him a story, saying, ‘There is a problem between me and my people, for verily they have wronged me and did with me what they did.’ He intentionally prolonged his story so much that the time for siesta passed and afternoon approached. The man said, ‘When I do, I will take your rights.’ Then he went to his work-place and searched for that old man but could not find him. On the next day, when he was judging between people in their matters, he waited for him but he again could not see him. Then again when it was time for siesta, he went home and just when he was about to sleep, the same man turned up and knocked the door. He asked, ‘Who is it at the door?’ The man replied, ‘The oppressed old man.’ He opened the door and said, ‘Did I not tell you that when I go to my court to judge that you should come to me?’ The old man said, ‘My people are the worst. When they came to know

that you are sitting in the court to judge between us, they said to me, 'We will give you your rights. But then when you left, they again started refusing to give me my rights.' He said, 'Go now and when I am in my court, come to me.'

So he was again unable to have his siesta. He then went to his court and waited for the old man but he did not turn up again. He felt very drowsy and so said to one of his household, 'Do not let anyone come to this door so I can get some sleep because I am feeling very sleepy.' Then when that time of the day came, the old man came. The watchman at the door said to him, 'Go back, go back.' The old man said, 'I came to him yesterday and informed him of my story.' The man at the door replied, 'By Allah, we have been ordered not to let anyone come close.' Then when he felt that he could not get past the watchman, he looked up and found that there was an opening from which he could get inside the house. Thus he did that and then knocked the door from inside, waking the man up. He said to the watchman, 'Did I not tell you not to let anyone in?' The watchman replied, 'He did not enter the house from where I was watching, so ask him where he got in.' He then recognized the old man, who was inside by that time. He asked him, 'Are you an enemy of Allah?' He replied, 'Yes and you outwitted me in everything, so I did this to make you angry.' Thus Allah named him Dhul Kifl because he took responsibility of something and then fulfilled it."

Ibn Abi Ḥātim reported that Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari said while standing on the *minbar*: "Dhul Kifl was not a Prophet. Rather he was a pious man who prayed one hundred prayers every day. After that he took it up as his duty to pray one hundred prayers daily and thus he was named Dhul Kifl."

Chapter Thirteen

Stories of the Destroyed Nations

These nations were destroyed before the time of Moosa (ﷺ). This can be clearly seen in the verse:

“And We gave Moosa the Book after We had destroyed the former generations.” *(Qur'an 28: 43)*

Ibn Jareer and Ibn Abi Hâtim reported that Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri (رضي الله عنه) said: “Allah did not destroy any nation by a punishment from the heaven or from the earth after the Torah was revealed, except the town of the people who were turned into monkeys.” Then he recited the verse, “And We gave Moosa the Book after We had destroyed the former generations.” *(cf 28: 43)*

The People of ar-Rass

Allah (ﷻ), said in *Soorah al-Furqân*:

“And ‘Âd, Thamood, the people of ar-Rass and many generations between them. For every one We set a similitude and each We destroyed utterly.”

(Qur'an 25: 38-39)

And in *Soorah Qâf*:

“Before them, the people of Nooh rejected, and the people of ar-Rass and Thamood. And ‘Âd and Pharaoh and the brethren of Lot. And the dwellers of the al-Aikah and the

people of Tubba. Each one rejected the Messengers and so
 My threat was fulfilled.” *(Qur'an 50: 12-14)*

All these verses show that all these nations were destroyed and annihilated. Ibn Jareer reported that Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said that the people of ar-Rass were from one of the towns of Thamood.⁹⁹

Ibn Asâkir mentioned in the beginning of his book of history along with the mention of the building of Damascus, that Allah sent a Prophet to the people of ar-Rass called Ḥandhalah ibn Ṣafwân. The people belied and killed him. So ‘Âd ibn Aws ibn Eram ibn Sâm ibn Nooh and his son left ar-Rass and descended in al-Aḥqâf. After that, Allah destroyed the people of ar-Rass and the descendants of these other people spread all over Yemen and other parts of Earth. Then Jabroon ibn Sa‘d ibn ‘Âd ibn Aws ibn Eram ibn Sâm ibn Nooh went to Damascus and built a city there, which he named Jabroon. This is the same city which is referred to in the Qur'an as “Eram of the pillars”. Then Allah sent Hood ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Rabâh ibn Khâlid ibn Jalood ibn ‘Âd to the people of ‘Âd. This is referred to the descendants of ‘Âd, who had descendants in al-Aḥqâf. They had subsequently rejected and belied him and so Allah destroyed them.¹⁰⁰ All this prove that the people of ar-Rass came before the people of ‘Âd by many generations. And Allah knows best.

Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Hasan an-Naqqâsh said that the people of ar-Rass had a well from where they collected water for their needs and also irrigated their lands from it. Those people had a king over them who was just and kind. When he passed away, they mourned over him greatly and mourned for a long time. After some days, *Shaytân* approached them in the guise of that king and said, “I did not die but only disappeared so that I could watch what you do after me.” The people became very happy. He then ordered them to

⁹⁹ *Tafsîr at-Tabârî*, vol. 25, p. 97.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

erect a barrier between him and them and said that he will never die. Most of the people believed him, and then became a *fitnah* for them. They then started worshipping him. So Allah sent to them a Prophet who informed them that the one speaking to them from behind the barrier was actually *Shayṭān*. He forbade them from worshipping him and ordered them to worship Allah Alone, Who has no partner.

As-Suhaili said that the Prophet used to receive revelations during his sleep and that his name was Handhalah ibn Ṣafwān. However, his people became his enemy and subsequently killed him and threw him in a well. The water of that well then dried up, thus the people became short of water to irrigate their lands or to drink from. Trees were thus ruined and there were no fruits either to eat from. Their town started ruining slowly to such an extent that after sometime, they were destroyed completely, with no one remaining alive.

The People of Yâseen

Among the people who were destroyed by Allah are the people of Yâseen. Allah said about them:

“And set for them a similitude of the people of the town; when the Messengers came to it. And We sent to them two but they disbelieved in them. So We strengthened them with a third. They said, ‘Verily, we are Messengers to you.’ They said, ‘You are only humans like us and the Most Gracious has not sent anything down. You are not except lying.’ They said, ‘Our Lord knows that we have been sent to you and nothing is upon us except to convey.’ They said, ‘We see an evil omen from you. So if you do not desist, we will surely stone you and a painful torment will afflict you from us.’ They [the messengers] said, ‘Your evil omens are with

yourselves. [Do you call it] evil omen because you are admonished? Nay, you are a transgressing people.' And there a man came running from the farthest part of the town. He said, 'O' my people, obey the Messengers. Obey those who do not ask any wages of you and who are rightly guided. And why should I not worship Him [Allah] Who created me and to Whom you shall be returned. Shall I take besides Him gods? If the Most Gracious intends any harm to me, their intercession will not avail me nor can save me? Then verily, I should be in open error. Verily, I believed in your Lord, so listen to me.'

It was said [to him when the disbelievers killed him], ‘Enter Paradise.’ He said, ‘Would that my people knew, that my Lord has forgiven me and made me of the honoured ones.’ And We sent not against his people after him a host from the heaven, nor was it needful for Us to send [such a thing]. It was but a single mighty blast, and they all were silent and still [i.e. dead]’. ” *(Our'an 36: 13-29)*

(Qur'an 36: 13-29)

Many scholars, past and present, opine that this town was Antâkiya (Antioch). It had a king, by the name Anṭeekhas ibn Anṭeekhas, who used to worship idols. So Allah sent to them three Prophets, who were Şâdiq, Maṣdooq and Shaloom. But the people rejected all of them. It is quite apparent that they all were Prophets from Allah, (ع).

Later on, Prophet 'Eesa (ﷺ) sent three of his disciples to Antâkiya and subsequently it became the first town to believe in him at that time. Because of this, Antâkiya was one of the four cities from where the Christian Patriarchs were chosen. These cities are Antâkiya, Quds, Iskandariyah (Alexandria) and Rome and later Qustuntiniyah (Constantinople).

The inhabitants of Antâkiya (Antioch) to whom the three Messengers of Allah were sent long before were destroyed after the

murder of the person who openly believed in the messengers. This is mentioned in the Qur'an as, "It was no more than a single mighty blast and they were silent and still [i.e. dead]." Those three Messengers were sent to the town of Antakiya long back and when they rejected the truth, Allah destroyed them. Then after that, that place was re-inhabited and when 'Eesa (Jesus) (ﷺ) sent to them his disciples, they believed in him. And Allah knows best.

Allah said, "And set for them a similitude of the people of the town." This is an address to the Prophet (ﷺ) to inform his people about the story of those people. "When the Messengers came to it, and We sent to them two [Messengers] but they disbelieved in them, so We strengthened them with a third." The people rebutted the Messengers by saying that they were none other than mere humans like themselves. This is the same argument posed by the nations who passed before them to their respective Messengers. They responded to the people's arguments by saying that verily Allah knows that they are Messengers and if they were liars, then Allah would certainly take them to account severely. They also said that their job is only to deliver the message and it was Allah Who guides whoever He wants and misguides who He wants. "They [the people of the town] said, 'For us, we see an evil omen from you. So if you do not desist, we will stone you, and a painful torment will touch you from us.'" It was said that they threatened them with severe consequences with words and with actions.

The Messengers replied, "Your evil omens are with yourselves. Do you threaten us because we admonish you? Truly, you are a transgressing people." What they meant is that do you threaten us because we call you to His worship and remind you of His religion? You are a people who do not accept the truth and in fact also do not want the truth.

"A man came running from the farthest part of the town" (*cf* 36: 20) means that a person came to support the Messengers and to

show that he had believed in them also. "He said, 'O' my people, obey the Messengers. Obey those who do not ask any reward of you and who are guided.'" That is, they invite you to the clear truth without seeking any wages or rewards from you.

He then invited them to the worship of Allah Alone, Who does not have any partner. He also forbade them from worshipping others beside Him, one who cannot benefit anything in this world and in the Hereafter. "Then verily I will be in plain error." What he meant by this is that I will be in error if I leave the worship of Allah and instead worship others besides Him.

He then said to the Messengers, "Verily I have believed in your Lord, so listen to me." There are a number of interpretations as to what this means. The first is that he said to the Messengers to listen to what he says and be witnesses in front of Allah that he has believed. The second opinion is that he said to his people to listen to him accepting the Messenger's call openly. At that point, his people killed him. It is said that they killed him either with a stick, or by stoning him to death or by treading on him till he died. It was said that the name of the man declaring his belief in the messenger's call was Habeeb an-Najjār.

'Abdullah ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) said: "Habeeb an-Najjār was afflicted with leprosy. He was a very charitable man but his people killed him. For this reason, Allah said to him, 'Enter the Paradise.' Allah entered him into Paradise the moment his people had killed him and then when he saw what Allah had provided for him therein of pleasures, 'He said, 'I wish that my people knew that my Lord has forgiven me, and placed me among the honoured.'" He meant that I wish my people knew that Allah had forgiven me and that they believe in what I have believed, thus obtaining the same reward."

Ibn Abi Hātim reported that Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) said that the man had admonished his people twice: "Once in his life when he said, 'O'

my people, obey the Messengers.' And the second time, after his death when he said, 'I wish that my people knew that my Lord has forgiven me and placed me among the honoured.'"

Qatâdah said that you will not find a believer except that he will be a sincere adviser and you will not find him a cheat.

Allah said, "And We sent not against his people after him a host from the heaven nor was it needful for Us to send [such a thing]," meaning, there was no need to send angels from the heavens to punish these people, rather a single blast destroyed them. "It was no more than single mighty blast and they were silent and still [dead]."

The scholars who explained the Qur'an — *Mufassireen* — said that Allah sent the angel Jibreel (Gabriel) (ﷺ) to them. He uprooted the main gate of their town and then let out a cry that destroyed them.

All these facts, along with others, are clear proofs that this town was not the town of Antâkiya (Antioch) because they were destroyed due to their rejection of Allah's Messengers. On the other hand, the people of Antâkiya believed and followed the disciples of Prophet 'Eesa (ﷺ). That is why it is said regarding the town of Antâkiya that it was the first to believe in 'Eesa.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Antioch might have been destroyed much earlier for rejecting the Messengers of Allah. People who believed in 'Eesa (Jesus) (peace be upon him) and at the hands of his deputies are much later people rehabilitated after its destruction (Editor).

Chapter Fourteen

The Story of Prophet Yunus (ﷺ)

Allah (ﷻ), said in *Soorah Yunus*:

“Was there any town that believed [after seeing the punishment] and its faith [at that time] saved it [from the punishment], except the people of Yunus [Jonah]. When they believed, We removed from them the torment of disgrace in the life of this world, and permitted them to enjoy for a time.” *(Qur'an 10: 98)*

And in *Soorah al-Anbiyā'*:

“And remember Dhun-Noon [Yunus] when he went off in anger, and imagined that We shall not punish him. But he cried through the darkness [saying], ‘There is none worthy of worship except You. Glory be to You, truly I have been among the wrong doers.’ So We answered his call and delivered him from distress, and thus do We deliver the believers.” *(Qur'an 21: 87-88)*

And in *Soorah as-Sâffât*:

“And Yunus was also one of the Messengers, when he ran to the laden ship. He [agreed to] cast lots and he was among the losers. Then a whale swallowed him as he had done an act worthy of blame. Had he not been of those who glorify Allah, he would have indeed remained inside its belly till the Day of Resurrection. But We cast him forth on the bare shore while he was sick. And We caused a plant of gourd to

grow over him. And We sent him to a hundred thousand or more, and they believed. So We gave them enjoyment for a while.”

(*Qur'an* 37: 139-148)

And in *Soorah al-Qalam*:

“So wait with patience for the decision of your Lord and do not be like the companion of the fish [Yunus], when he cried out [to Us] when he was in deep sorrow. Were it not for the Grace of his Lord reaching him, he would indeed have been [left in the fish, but We forgave him]. So he was cast out onto the barren shore while he was to be blamed. Then his Lord chose him and made him of the righteous.”

(*Qur'an* 68: 48-50)

The Qur'anic exegetes said that Allah sent Yunus (ﷺ) to the people of Ninevah in the land of Moşul. He invited them to the worship of Allah (ﷻ), but they belied him and became firm upon their disbelief. When this situation continued for a long time, he left them and promised them that the punishment will inflict them after three days.

Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه), Mujâhid, Qatâdah and many others said that when he left them and his people became sure of the punishment befalling them, Allah guided them to repentance of their sins. They regretted the way they dealt with their Prophet. They wore special clothes and took their cattle in order to separate the elder from their calves. Then they started imploring Allah for His Mercy while lowering themselves. Everybody cried, including the men, women, sons, daughters and mothers. It was a special moment.

Allah with His mercy and kindness removed from them their punishment, which was going to befall them. For this reason, Allah said, “Was there any town that believed [after seeing the punishment] and its faith [at that moment] saved it [from the punishment.]” (*cf* 10: 98) This shows that never in human history has it happened that a

town, with all its inhabitants, believed in their Prophet.

In this context, Allah said,

“And We never sent to any town a warner except the wealthy among them said, ‘We disbelieve in what you have been sent with.’”
(Qur'an 34: 34)

Then Allah said regarding the people of Yunus (ﷺ), where all of them believed:

“Except the people of Yunus when they believed, We removed from them the punishment of disgrace in the life of this world and We gave them enjoyment for a time.”
(Qur'an 10: 98)

The Qur'anic exegetes differed as to whether this belief will benefit them in the Hereafter, thus saving them from the punishment there as it saved them from the punishment of this world. However the most apparent opinion seems to be that, yes, it will save them from the punishment in the Hereafter. And Allah knows best. This deduction is on the basis of what Allah said, “... when they believed” and also:

“And We sent him to a hundred thousand or more, and they believed, so We gave them enjoyment for a time.”

(Qur'an 37: 147-148)

So this enjoyment given to them in this world does not necessitate that their punishment in the Hereafter will not be raised. And Allah knows best.

When Yunus (ﷺ) left his people in anger, he went and boarded a ship. However, after this ship set sail, it started swaying severely with them due to the huge waves. It was to such an extent, that according to many exegetes, it was on the verge of sinking.

The passengers on board gathered and discussed the action to be taken. They decided to cast lots, with the names of all the travellers and whoever's name is withdrawn will be thrown overboard, thus lightening their loads.

When they drew the lots, the name of Yunus (ﷺ) came out. However, the people did not want to throw him overboard (because of what they knew of him). So they repeated the draw a second time and again his name was drawn. He volunteered to throw himself, to which they refused. Again, they repeated the lots a third time and once again his name came. This was because it was already decreed for him by Allah to be overthrown for the great reason that He wanted. And so he was thrown into the sea.

The All-High said:

“And verily Yunus was among the Messengers. When he ran to the laden ship. He [agreed to] cast lots and he was among the losers. Then the whale swallowed him as he did an act worthy of blame.” *(Qur'an 37: 139-142)*

So when his name was drawn a third time, he was thrown in the sea. Then Allah sent a huge whale to swallow him up. Allah ordered the whale not to eat his flesh or his bones and that there he was not the food for the whale. So the whale took him and went around and around in the sea with him. It is said that that whale was in fact swallowed by another larger whale.

When settled down, in the belly of the whale, Yunus (ﷺ) thought that he was dead. He tried to move his limbs and they moved and thus knew he was alive. So he prostrated to Allah and said, “O' my Lord, I have taken as a place of prayer where no body else has ever worshipped You.”

When Allah made that whale go around and around in the depth of the sea, Yunus (ﷺ) heard the glorification of the All-

Merciful by the two whales therein. He even heard the pebbles glorifying Allah. At that, he started glorifying Allah himself, which is recorded in the Qur'an as:

"And remember Dhun-Noon [Yunus] when he went off in anger and imagined that We shall not punish him, then he called out in the darkness, 'There is no God worthy of worship except You. Glory be to You, verily I was among the wrong doers.' So We responded to his call, and rescued him from distress, thus do We rescue the believers."

(*Qur'an 21: 87-88*)

"Then he called out in the darkness" means, according to Ibn Mas'ood, Ibn 'Abbâs, Ibn Maymoon, Ibn Jubayr and others, the darkness of being inside the whale, the darkness of the sea and the darkness of the night. Sâlim ibn Abi Ja'd said that the whale was swallowed by a larger whale and thus the darkness increased from that of one whale to two along with the darkness of the sea.

"Had he not been of those who glorify Allah, he would have surely stayed in its belly until the Day of Resurrection." (*cf 37: 143, 144*) It is said that it means had he not glorified Allah therein, and said what he said, and confessed his sins accompanied with repentance, he would have remained therein till the Day of Resurrection and been resurrected from the belly of the whale.

To some others: "Had he not been..." is referring to the period before the whale swallowed him. And, "Of those who glorify Allah" means being obedient to Allah and among those who remembered Him and offered prayers frequently.

This opinion is supported by a hadith reported by Imam Ahmad on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"O' young boy, I will teach you some words. Guard the duties of Allah and Allah will guard you. Also, guard the duties of Allah

and you will find Him beside you. When you remember know Allah in good times, He will remember you when you are in hardship.”¹⁰²

Ibn Jareer reported in his book of *Tafseer* on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رض) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“When Allah wanted to keep Yunus in the belly of the whale, He revealed to it. He said, ‘Take him inside but do not eat his flesh nor break his bones.’ When the whale went down to the depths of the sea, Yunus heard a voice. He said to himself, ‘What is this?’ Then Allah revealed to him, while he was inside the whale’s belly, that it was the glorification of sea animals. Then, while in that state, Yunus also glorified Allah, which was heard by the angels. They then said, ‘O’ our Lord, we hear a very weak voice coming from a very unusual land.’ Allah said, ‘That is My slave Yunus. He disobeyed me, so I detained him inside a whale in the sea.’ They said, ‘Is he the pious slave from whom good deeds ascended to you every day and night?’ Allah replied, ‘Yes.’ So the angels then pleaded on his behalf, so Allah ordered the whale to throw him out on the shore.”

Ibn Abi Hâtim has mentioned in his *Tafseer* on the authority of Anas ibn Mâlik (رض) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“When Yunus, the Prophet, was in the belly of the whale, he said, ‘O’ Allah, there is none worthy of worship except You, You are glorified. Indeed I was among the wrongdoers.’ This prayer appeared from beneath the Throne. The angels asked, ‘O’ Lord, we hear a very weak and familiar voice coming from a strange land.’ Allah said, ‘Don’t you know who it is?’ They replied, ‘No, our Lord, who is he?’ Allah said, ‘It is My slave Yunus.’ The

¹⁰² Ahmad, vol. 1, p. 293 and Tirmidhi, chapter 59 and he rated it as *hasan saheeh*.

angels said, ‘Is it Your slave Yunus from whom accepted prayers and deeds used to ascend to You?’ They said, ‘O’ Lord, why don’t You bestow Your Mercy upon him for what he did during times of comfort and thus free him from this trial?’ So Allah said, ‘Yes.’ He then ordered the whale and it threw him out on the shore.”

Allah said, “So We cast him upon the bare shore.” The Arabic word *Ara* (translated as ‘bare shore’) means a barren land where there are no trees or plants. “... and in a state of sickness” means that he was very weak in terms of bodily strength.

“And We caused to grow over him a marrow plant.” Some scholars said that there was wisdom in the marrow plant growing over his body. They explained it by saying that its leaves are very soft, plentiful, provide shadow and flies do not come to it. Also, its fruits can be eaten from its emergence on the tree right up till it ripens, both in a cooked or uncooked form, and even with its skin and seeds. It also contains benefits for the brain and other parts of the body.

Ibn Jareer reported on the authority of Sa‘d ibn Abi Waqâs (رضي الله عنه) a hadith. He said, “I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say:

‘If a supplication is made by the Name of Allah, it will be answered and if something is asked it will be granted, this is the supplication made by Yunus.’ I said, ‘O’ Messenger of Allah, is this supplication special to Yunus only or can any Muslim supplicate with it?’ The Prophet said, ‘It was special in the case of Yunus, however, it is also general for all Muslims if they supplicate with it. Didn’t you hear the saying of Allah, ‘Then he called out in the darkness, ‘There is none worthy of worship except You. Glory be to You, verily I was among the wrong doers.’ So We responded to his call, and rescued him from distress, thus do We rescue the believers.’” (*cf* 21: 87, 88)

In another report from Sa‘d ibn Abi Waqâs, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Whoever supplicates using the supplication of Yunus will be answered."

Imam Ahmad also reported a similar hadith, again on the authority of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqâs (رضي الله عنه). In that, he said, "I passed by 'Uthmân ibn Affân (رضي الله عنه) while he was in the mosque and I offered my greeting. He turned his eyes and he did not respond. So I went to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (رضي الله عنه) and said, 'O' 'Ameer al-Mu'mineen! Has any new thing happened in Islam?' He said, 'No, why do you ask that?' I said, 'No reason except that I just now passed by 'Uthmân in the mosque. I greeted him, but he turned his eyes and he did not respond.' 'Umar then sent someone to ask 'Uthmân to come to him. When he came, 'Umar asked him, 'What prevented you from replying to the greeting of your brother?' 'Uthmân said, 'I did not do such a thing (i.e. I do not recall not responding to the greeting).' Sa'd said, 'But just now you did it (i.e. you did not respond to my greeting).' 'Uthmân swore that he did and I swore that he did not. Then 'Uthmân remembered the incident and said, 'Yes (I recall now), I seek forgiveness from Allah and repent to Him. You just now passed by me while I was speaking to myself the words I heard from the Prophet (ﷺ). Whenever I recalled those words, my eyes and heart become covered.' Sa'd said, 'I will remind you about them. The Prophet (ﷺ) began to mention to us concerning the first prayer when a bedouin came and made the Prophet (ﷺ) busy with something else. Then later when the Prophet stood up, I followed him. When I feared that the Prophet (ﷺ) might reach his house and enter it before I catch him up, I stamped my feet hard on the ground in order to draw his attention. The Prophet (ﷺ) turned and said, 'Who is there? Is it Abu Ishâq?' I said, 'Yes O' Messenger of Allah!' He said, 'What do you want?' I said, 'Nothing except that when you began to mention to us the first supplication, a bedouin came, thus distracting you.' The Prophet said,

"Yes, it was the supplication of Yunus when he was in the belly of

the whale. He said, ‘There is none worthy of worship except You. Glory be to You, verily I was among the wrong doers.’ There is no Muslim who makes a supplication with this concerning any matter except that Allah will answer his supplication.”¹⁰³

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And Yunus was among the Messengers.” (*Qur'an* 37: 139)

Allah mentioned him along with the other noble Prophets in the two *Soorahs*, *an-Nisâ'* and *al-An'âm*.

Imam Ahmād reported on the authority of ‘Abdullah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“It is not befitting for anybody to say that I am better than Yunus.”¹⁰⁴

Imam Bukhari reported another hadith on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“It is not befitting for anybody to say that I am better than Yunus.”

Imams Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) the story of the Muslim who slapped a Jew when he said:

“By He Who has chosen Moosa (ﷺ) upon all the worlds.”

Imam Bukhari said at the end of this hadith: “I do not say that anyone is better than Yunus.”

This narration strengthens the previous one where it is saying that it is not befitting anybody to think that he (ﷺ) was better than Yunus.

¹⁰³ Ahmād, vol. 1, p. 170. Imam Tirmidhi and Nasâ'i also reported this hadith.

¹⁰⁴ Imam Bukhari also reported this through Sufiyân ath-Thawri.

As regards the narration wherein the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Do not prefer me over other Prophets, not even over Yunus.”

This hadith is by the way of humbleness of the Prophet (ﷺ), wherein we see his respect for other Prophets. May blessings and peace be upon them all.

Chapter Fifteen

The Story of Moosa (Moses) (ﷺ)

His full name is Moosa ibn ‘Imrân ibn Qâhith ibn ‘Âzîr ibn Lâvy ibn Ya‘qoob ibn Ishâq ibn Ibraheem (peace be upon them all). Allah (ﷻ) said:

“And mention in the Book Moosa, verily he was chosen and he was a Messenger and a Prophet. And We called him from the right side of Mount Toor and We drew him near to Us for a conversation in secret. And We granted him, by Our mercy, his brother Hâroon, a Prophet.” (*Qur'an 19: 51-53*)

Allah mentioned the story of Moosa (Moses) (ﷺ) in numerous chapters of the Qur'an. In some instances, He mentioned it in detail, while in others, it is presented in short. We have already spoken about these in their respective places in our book of *Tafseer*. Here we will mention the complete story, from its start to the end, based on the Qur'an and hadiths. Also, we will mention the reports from the books of the Jews and Christians, which the pious predecessors and other scholars have reported, with the Will of Allah.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“*Ta-Seen-Meem*. These are the Verses of the Manifest Book. We narrate to you the story of Moosa [Moses] and Fir‘awn [Pharaoh] in truth for people who believe. Verily, Pharaoh elated himself in the land and divided its people into sections, oppressing one of them by killing their sons and sparing their women. Indeed he was a corrupter. And We

wish to be gracious to those who were oppressed in land and make them leaders and make them inheritors. And to establish them in the land and to show Pharaoh, Hâmân and their soldiers what they were dreading.” (*Qur'an* 28: 1-6)

Allah mentions the story in a summary form and then expands on it after that. Thus He mentioned that He will narrate to His Messenger (ﷺ) the story of Moosa and Pharaoh in truth. The phrase in the verse *bi al-haq* (translated as ‘in truth’) means that it will be narrated in such a way that it is as if the listener was witnessing the incidents.

“Verily Fir‘awn [Pharaoh] elated himself in the land and divided its people into sections.” The meaning is that he became arrogant, transgressed and was haughty. He preferred the life of this world to the Hereafter and turned away from the obedience of the Most High, the Lord. He also divided his people into sections. Of these sections, he suppressed one group, the tribes of Israel, the descendants of Ya‘qoob ibn Ishâq ibn Ibraheem (peace be upon them all). These people were the best on earth of their time. Pharaoh had overpowered them and was an unjust, disbelieving and evil king. He treated the people as slaves and used them to work in low and demeaning jobs. Along with all this, Allah said about him, “Killing their sons and sparing their women, indeed he was a corrupter.”

The reason, which led Fir‘awn (Pharaoh) to behave brutally with them, was that the Israelites used to believe that there would be a child from the progeny of Ibraheem (Abraham) (ﷺ), at whose hands will be the destruction of the Pharaoh. This was due to, and Allah knows best, the incident that occurred with Sârah, the wife of Ibraheem, when the king of Egypt (the Pharaoh of the time) tried to take advantage with her. However, Allah saved her and also gave her glad tidings concerning this child and what he will do. Thus this glad tiding was famous among Israelites. The people of Egypt used to talk about it, so much so that some of the ministers informed Pharaoh. So, fearing this child, he ordered that all newborns of the Israelites should

be killed. However, no amount of taking precautions can save someone if Allah has already decreed something to occur.

As-Suddi narrated on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs, Ibn Mas‘ood and other Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) that Fir‘awn (Pharaoh) saw in a dream that a fire came from the direction of Jerusalem and it burnt all the Coptic people and their dwellings, but did not harm the Israelites. When he woke up, he gathered all the priests, soothsayers, and sorcerers, and asked them the interpretation of this dream. They said, “A boy from these people will be born, at whose hands will be the destruction of Egyptian people.” For this reason, Pharaoh ordered the killing of all newborn baby boys and left the women.¹⁰⁵

For this reason, Allah said, “And We wish to be gracious to those who were oppressed in the land.” The people referred to in the verse who were oppressed were the Israelites. He then said, “And to make them leaders, and to make them inheritors.” This is referring to them taking charge of the affairs of Egypt. “And to establish them in the land, and to show Pharaoh and Hâmân and their soldiers what they were dreading from.” What this means is that We will make the weak strong, the oppressed the oppressor, the disgraced the powerful. All of this actually happened with the Israelites, as Allah said:

“And We gave heritage to those who had been abased and kept low, the eastern parts and the western parts of the land which We blessed. And your Lord’s perfect words were fulfilled upon the children of Israel due to that which they endured patiently.”
(Qur'an 7: 137)

And:

“So We expelled them from gardens and springs, and

¹⁰⁵ *Tafseer at-Tabari, Tafseer Soorah al-Baqrah*, vol. 1, Pp. 272-273.

treasures and fine dwellings. So it was and We made the children of Israel to inherit them." (Our'an 26: 57-59)

Anyhow, the point here is that Pharaoh took all measures to make sure that Moosa (ﷺ) could not be born. He appointed people and midwives to go around and check pregnant women to know the time of their delivery. So there was no woman who gave birth to a baby boy except that the people of Pharaoh slaughtered him at that instance.

The Jews and Christians have a different version written in their books. It says that Pharaoh ordered to kill the newborn boys only to weaken the Israelites so they can never oppose him when he oppresses or kills them.

This version of the story is not true, in fact, it is totally incorrect. What they have mentioned is with respect to two boys who were born after Moosa (عليه السلام) was sent as Prophets. Allah said:

"So when he brought them the truth from Us, they said,
'Kill the sons of those who believe with him and spare their
women'." *(Our'an 40: 25)*

That is why the children of Israel said to Moosa (عليه السلام):

"We were hurt before you came to us and after you came to us." *(Our'an 7: 129)*

So the correct version of the story is that Fir'awn (Pharaoh) ordered the newborn boys to be killed immediately, fearing the existence of Moosa (Moses).

However, the divine predestination said: "O' arrogant king, you are deluded by your many soldiers, power and vast kingdom. However the One Who is the Greatest, Who is never overpowered or prevented from what He wants to do, has written the fates. He has written that this boy who you are trying to ensure does not exist and

in turn have killed numerous innocent boys, will be born and his upbringing will not be except in your own palace. He will be given food and drink only from your palace and will stay with you. Then your destruction will be at the hands of this same boy because you will reject the truth that he will bring. You will belie him when he says that the Lord of the heavens and the earth is the Lord Who does whatever He wills. He is the Almighty, the possessor of punishment and Mighty. Whatever He wills can never be opposed.

A number of Qur'anic exegetes said that the Coptic people complained to Pharaoh the reducing numbers of the Israelites due to the killing of their boys. So they feared that the race would end with the death of the old and the killing of the young. Thus if this happens, then they will be forced to carry out the tasks which they used to do. So Pharaoh decided to kill the newborn boys one year and then spare those born the following year, and so on. It is mentioned that Hâroon (Aaron) (عليه السلام) was born in the year of pardon when the children were not killed and that Moosa was born in the year when the boys were being killed. Moosa's mother concealed the signs of her pregnancy, thus it did not show on her. Then when she gave birth, it was inspired to her to take a piece of wood and make it like a chest and tie it with a rope. Her house used to be on the bank of the Nile River. She should feed him and whenever she feared that someone may come, she placed him in that piece of wood and untied the rope and let it go in the river, keeping it under control by the other end of the rope. Then when the person went away, she would pull it back to her.

The All-High said:

"And We inspired the mother of Moosa, 'Suckle the child and when you fear for him [that someone may kill him], throw him in the river and do not fear nor grieve, verily We will return him to you and We will make him among the Messengers.' Then the family of Pharaoh picked him up [from the river] that [Moosa] should be an enemy and a

sorrow for them. Verily, Pharaoh, Hâmân and their soldiers were sinners. And Pharaoh's wife said, 'He will be a comfort to my eye and yours. Do not kill him, for he might benefit us or we might take him as a son.' And they did not perceive." *(Our'an 28: 7-9)*

(*Qur'an* 28: 7-9)

The ‘inspiration’ — *wahy* — mentioned in these verses is similar to that which is mentioned concerning the bees, as Allah (ﷻ), said:

"And your Lord inspired the bees, 'Take from the mountains places of dwelling, and from the tree and trellises. Then eat of all fruit and tread the ways of your Lord in humbleness.'" (Our'an 16: 68-69)

(*Qur'an* 16: 68-69)

So this ‘inspiration’ (to the mother of Moosa) was not as revelation to a Prophet, as claimed by Ibn Hazm and some of the scholastic scholars. Rather, the correct opinion is the first one, that it was mere inspiration and not revelation, as has been reported by Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari from the *Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*.

As-Suhayli said: "The name of Moosa's mother was Ayârikha. Anyway, the point is that she was inspired to do what we have just mentioned and it was also inspired to her not to fear or be sorrowful because even if he goes, Allah will return him to you and make him a Prophet and Messenger. Whatever he says will be superior in this world and in the Hereafter. She used to do what was ordered. One day, she forgot to tie the other end of the rope to the house and when she let the chest go, it sailed in the Nile river and passed by the Pharaoh's palace. So, "The family of Pharaoh picked him up, that [Moosa] should be an enemy and a sorrow for them. Verily, Pharaoh, Hâmân, and their soldiers were sinners."

The Qur'anic exegetes mentioned that the Pharaoh's slave-girls picked him up from the river from a closed chest. Unable to open it, they brought it to the wife of Pharaoh, *Āsiyah bint Muzāhīm* ibn 'Ubayd ibn ar-Raiyan ibn al-Waleed, who was the Pharaoh

during the time of Yusuf (ﷺ). It is said that she was from the Israelites, from the same clan as that of Moosa (ﷺ). A third opinion says that she was his aunt. And Allah knows best.

We will mention her virtues and attributes later on when we mention the story of Maryam bint ‘Imrân and that both of them will be from among the wives of the Prophet (ﷺ) in Paradise.

When Âsiyah opened the chest, she saw his bright face, lit by the light of Prophethood. Right from the first instant, she loved him immensely. Then when Pharaoh came, he asked her, “What is this?” He ordered for the boy to be killed. However, she asked Pharaoh to give the boy as a gift to her and said that he will be “a comfort to my eye and yours.” Pharaoh replied, “He may be a comfort for you, but as for me, no.” What he meant was that I do not have a need for him.

She said, “He may be of benefit to us.” Allah gave her what she hoped in both worlds. As for this world, Allah guided her through him. And in the Hereafter, Allah will make her dwell in Paradise because of Moosa (ﷺ). “Or we might take him as a son.” She wanted this since she did not have any children from the Pharaoh. “And they did not perceive.” This means that they were unaware of what Allah had hidden from them, where that very boy was going to destroy the kingdom of Pharaoh and his army.

The Almighty said:

“And the heart of Moosa’s mother became void and she almost disclosed his case had We not strengthened her heart so that she may be of the believers. And she said to his sister, ‘Follow him.’ So she watched him from far away while they did not perceive. And We had decreed that he [Moosa] would refuse to suck from any foster mother. So she said, ‘Should I show you a family who will look after him for you and be sincere to him.’ So We returned him to his mother so that her eye may be comforted and so that she

does not grieve, and so that she knows that the promise of Allah is true. However most of them do not know.”

(*Qur'an* 28: 10-13)

Ibn ‘Abbâs, Mujâhid and others said regarding the part of the verse: “And the heart of Moosa’s mother became void”, means that it became void from everything of this world except Moosa (ﷺ). “And she almost disclosed his case” means that she was about to disclose to the people that he was her son and ask them where he was. “Had We not strengthened her” means had we not made her patient and firm at that point. “And she said to his sister” is referring to her eldest daughter. “Follow him” means for his traces wherever he was going and seek for me his news.

When Moosa (ﷺ) was taken inside Pharaoh’s palace, they wanted to feed him by giving him to a foster mother. However, he did not accept any foster mother and he did not eat any other food. They tried all they could to somehow feed him but he did not accept. Allah said, “And We had ordained that he would refuse to suck any foster mother.” So they sent him with midwives and other women to the market in order to see if they can find someone to feed him. So while they were waiting there amidst the onlookers, Moosa’s sister saw him. She did not give away that she was his sister. Rather, she said, “Should I show you a family who will look after him for you and be sincere.” Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said: “When she said this, they asked her, ‘How do you know that they will be sincere to him?’ She replied, ‘They want to please the Pharaoh and benefit him!’”¹⁰⁶

They went with her to her house and when she put him to her breast, he started suckling immediately. They became very happy and sent a person to inform Âsiyah. She asked her to come to the palace and offered her to stay in the palace. However, she did not accept her offer. She said, “I have an old husband and children and so I am

¹⁰⁶ *Tafseer at-Tabari*, vol. 20, p. 23.

unable to stay here to give suck to the baby unless you send him with me. So Asiyah sent the boy with her and decided to give her wages and pay for all her expenses.

Concerning this, Allah (ﷻ) said, "Thus We returned him to his mother that her eye may be comforted and she is not grieved, and that she knows that the promise of Allah is true. But most of them do not know." The promise referred to in the verse is when Allah promised her that He would return the boy to her.

Later on, during the life of Moosa (Moses), Allah mentioned this to him when He spoke. He said:

"And indeed We did a favour on you another time. When We inspired to your mother, 'Put him in the chest and throw it into the river, the river will throw him up upon the bank. And he will be picked up by an enemy of Mine and his.' And I bestowed upon you love from Me that you may be brought up under My Eye." *(Our'an 20: 37-39)*

As regards the bestowment of love, it is said that anyone who saw Moosa (ﷺ) loved him. And with regards to being ‘brought up under My Eye’, Qatâdah and others said that he was to be dressed with the best clothes and fed from the best food. All this is due to Allah’s protection for him and what He decreed for him.

"When your sister walked [up to them] and said, 'Should I direct you to one who will take care of him?' So We returned you to your mother, that her eye may be comforted and she is not grieved. And you killed a soul, so We rescued you from grief and We tried you with many trials."

(Qur'an 20: 40)

appropriate place.

"And when he reached his full age and was firmly established, We gave him wisdom and knowledge. And thus do We reward the good doers. And he entered the city when its people were at noon rest and he found two people fighting. One of them was from his tribe and the other from his enemy. The one from his tribe asked him to help him against his enemy. So Moosa struck him with his fist and killed him. He [Moosa] said, 'This is the work of *Shayṭân*, verily he is a plain and misleading enemy.' He prayed, 'O' my Lord, I have wronged myself, so forgive me.' So He forgave him. Verily, He is All-Forgiving, the All-Merciful. He said, 'My Lord, for that with which You have favoured upon me, I will never be a help to those who sin.'"

(Qur'an 28: 14-17)

Allah (ﷻ), began by mentioning His favours upon Moosa's mother when He returned him to her and favoured her. He then started to mention the story of Moosa (ﷺ) after he matured. At that, Allah gave him wisdom and knowledge, denoting Prophethood and the divine message, which He had given glad tidings of to his mother previously. Allah said regarding this to his mother:

"We will return him to you and We will make him one of the Messengers."

(Qur'an 28: 7)

Then Allah mentioned the reason why Moosa (ﷺ) left Egypt and went to Madyan and stayed there for a time, during which he spoke to Allah. The details of this will follow.

He entered the city of Madyan at midday. He found two men fighting, one from his tribe, meaning from the Israelites, and the other from his enemy, meaning the Coptic people. The one who was from his tribe sought help from him against his enemy. Moosa (ﷺ) had free access and power in Egypt due to his relation to Pharaoh wherein he was adopted and raised by him. On the other hand, the Israelites

also felt proud because he had in fact grown up with them, thus they being his foster uncles. So when the Israeli sought help from Moosa (Moses) against the Coptic man, Moosa went to him and “struck him with his fist and he was killed.”

That Coptic man was a disbeliever, who used to associate partners with Allah. Moosa (ﷺ) did not intend to kill him, rather he only wanted to scare him. Despite that, Moosa (ﷺ) said, “This is the work of *Shaytān*. Verily, he is a clear and misleading enemy. He said, ‘O’ my Lord, I have wronged myself, so forgive me.’ So He forgave him, verily He is All-Forgiving, the All-Merciful. He said, ‘My Lord, for that You have favoured upon me, I will never be a help to those who sin.’” (*cf* 28: 16-17) As regards what Allah has favoured upon him, is referred to the power and status that he possessed.

Allah said:

“So he became afraid, looking about in the city, and behold, the man who sought his help the day before, sought his help again. Moosa said to him, ‘Verily, you are a plain misleader.’ Then when he decided to seize the man who was an enemy to them both, the man said, ‘O’ Moosa, is it your intention to kill me as you killed a man yesterday? Your aim is nothing but to be a tyrant in the land, and not to be one of those who do right.’ And there came a man running, from the farthest part of the city. He said, ‘O’ Moosa, verily the chiefs are taking counsel to kill you, so escape. Truly, I am one of the good advisors.’ He therefore got away therefrom, looking about, in a state of fear. He prayed, ‘O’ my Lord! Save me from people given to wrong doing,’ ”

(*Qur'an* 28: 18-20)

Allah informs us in these verses that Moosa (ﷺ) became frightened in Egypt from Pharaoh and his people. He was afraid that they might know that the Coptic who was killed was actually killed by him when

he tried to help one of the Israelites. If they came to know about this, it would aid their doubts that Moosa actually belonged to them.

So in the morning, Moosa (ﷺ) was fearful and worried, and kept turning to his sides. At that, he saw the same Israeli man fighting with a different Coptic and again sought his help. However, this time Moosa rebuked the Israeli and did not help him for he again became involved in fighting. He said (to the man), "Verily, you are a plain misleader." Then when he wanted to hit the Coptic, he said, "O' Moosa, is it your intention to kill me as you killed a man yesterday? Your aim is nothing but to become a tyrant in the land, and not to be of those who do right." (*cf* 28: 19)

The news somehow reached the Pharaoh that it was Moosa (ﷺ) who killed that man yesterday. So he sent his men to catch him. Before they were able to reach him, another man, who was a sincere friend to Moosa, brought the news of the approaching of the men.

So he left Egypt at once, not knowing where to go and in which direction.

Allah said,

"So he departed from there in fear and with caution. He said, 'My Lord, save me from these evildoers.' And when he set off in the direction of Madyan, he said, 'I hope that my Lord will guide me to the right path.' And when he reached the wells of Madyan, he found a group of men watering and he found besides them two women who were keeping back. He said, 'What is the matter with you?' The two women said, 'We cannot water until the shepherds take, and our father is a very old man.' So he watered for them, then he went to sit in the shade and said. 'My Lord, I am in need of any good that You may send to me.'"

(*Qur'an* 28: 21-24)

In these verses, Allah informs us about the departure of Moosa (ﷺ) from Egypt in fear of someone from the Pharaoh's men catching up with him. He did not have any idea of where he was going because he had never left Egypt before.

"And when he set off towards Madyan. He said, 'I hope that my Lord will guide me to the right path.'" What he meant was that I hope this path leads me to something good for me. And it happened as he had hoped. Madyan was the city in which Allah destroyed the people of al-Aikah, who were the people of the Prophet Shu'ayb.

The version in the Bible says that the women were seven sisters who had come to water. However, this is another example of their incorrectness. May be that they were seven sisters in all but only two of them went to the well for water. But this is something we cannot confirm as nothing is preserved. Apparently they were two sisters as the Qur'anic verse informs us. "He [Moosa] said, 'What is the matter with you?' The two women said, 'We cannot draw water until the shepherds have gone away, and our father is a very old man.'" We are unable to draw water until the shepherds draw theirs since we are weak. And the reason why we have to come for water is that our father is an old man. At that, Allah mentioned, "So he [Moosa] drew water for them."

The Qur'anic exegetes said that after the shepherds finished taking their water, they used to put a huge stone on the opening of the well. The two women would come and get their sheep drunk from the left over water as they could not move the stone for being very heavy. On that particular day, Moosa (ﷺ) came and removed the stone by himself. He took out the water for them and then put the stone back as it was. Caliph 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) said: "That stone was so large and heavy that it could only be lifted by ten men."

Moosa had drawn only one bucket of water, and that was enough for both of the women.

Then he went and sat in the shade of a tree and said, "My Lord, I am in need of any good that You may send to me." (*cf* 28: 24)¹⁰⁷

Ibn ‘Abbás (رضي الله عنه) said: "Moosa (ﷺ) went from Egypt to Madyan with only plants and leaves to eat on the way. He was barefooted and when he became tired, he took rest in the shade. His stomach was stuck to his back due to hunger, desperately needing even a piece of date."

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"Then one of the two women came to him, walking shyly. She said, 'My father invites you so that he may reward you for drawing water for us.' And when he came to him and related the story, he said, 'Do not be afraid, you escaped from the evildoers.' One of the two women said, 'O' my father, employ him on wages, verily the best of those you can employ is one who is strong and trustworthy.' He said, 'I want to give you one of these daughters of mine in marriage if you work for me for eight years. Then if you complete ten years, that will be [grace] from you. I do not want to place burden on you. If Allah wills, you will find me of the righteous.' He said, 'Be that between me and you, then which ever of the two terms I fulfill, there will be no injustice to me; and Allah is Witness to what we say.'" (*Qur'an* 28: 25-28)

When Moosa (Moses) sat under the shade (of a tree) he said, "My Lord, I am in need of any good that You may send to me." (*cf* 28: 24) The two ladies heard him what he said.

When the women went back home and related their story to their father, he asked one of them to go and bring him. "Then one of the two women came to him, walking shyly. She said, 'My father

¹⁰⁷ *Tafseer at-Tabari*, vol. 20, Pp. 35-37.

invites you that he may reward you for drawing water for us.’” She clearly explained to Moosa (ﷺ) why she wanted him to go to her house, which was to meet her father who wanted to give him something as reward. This was due to her excellent quality of chastity and protecting herself from evil. When Moosa arrived, he related to him the story. “And [when he] related to him his story, he said, ‘Do not be afraid, you have escaped from the evildoers.’”

The woman then asked her father to employ Moosa (ﷺ) and praised him as being strong and trustworthy. Regarding this, ‘Umar and Ibn ‘Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with them) and others said: “When she said that, the father asked, ‘How do you know that? (i.e., that he is strong and trustworthy)’ She said, ‘He lifted a stone that cannot be lifted except by ten people. And when I brought him home, I walked in front of him. But he said, ‘Stay behind me and when you need to change tracks, just throw a stone in that direction and I will know.’”¹⁰⁸

The Qur'an informs us: “He [the old man] said, ‘I want to give you one of my daughters in marriage provided you work for me for eight years. If you complete ten years, that will be [grace] from you. I do not want to burden you. If Allah wills, you will surely find me among the righteous.’”

“Be that between you and me. Then which ever of the two terms I fulfill, there will be no injustice to me and Allah is Witness to that we say.” What Moosa said to him was that we will do as you have mentioned wherein no matter which of the two terms he serves, there will be no injustice upon him. Moosa (ﷺ), however, completed the full term of ten years.

Imam Bukhari reported that Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr said: “A Jew from Heera asked me, ‘Which of the terms did Moosa complete?’ I

¹⁰⁸ *Tafseer at-Tabari*, vol. 20, p. 41.

said, 'I do not know.' I then went to Ibn 'Abbās and asked him about it. He said, 'He completed the longer and the better of the two, since if a Messenger of Allah says something, he does it.'"

Allah, the All-High, informs us:

"When Moosa had completed the term and departed with his family, he perceived a fire on the side of Mount Toor. He said to his family, 'Stay here, verily I saw a fire, I hope I may bring you from it some information or bring you some burning fire from it so that you may warm yourselves.' When he came to it, he was called from the right side of the valley from a tree in the blessed place, 'O' Moosa, verily I am Allah, Lord of the worlds. And throw your staff.' Then when he saw it quivering like a snake, he ran away and did not look back. 'O' Moosa, come near and do not fear, for you are of those who are secure. And put your hand into your pocket and it will come out shining white without stain [disease]. And draw your hand close to your side to be free from fear. These are two proofs from your Lord to Pharaoh and his chiefs, for verily they are a wicked people.'"

(Qur'an 28: 29-32)

After Moosa (ﷺ) had completed the term of ten years, he departed with his family towards Egypt since it is said that he was keen to see his family. It happened that this journey occurred on a dark and cold night, when they lost their way and could not see anything. While he was going about, he saw a fire at a distance in the direction of Mount Toor. "He said to his family, 'Stay here, verily I see a fire. I hope I may bring you from it some information or bring you some burning fire from it so that you may warm yourselves.' As regards the 'information', what he meant was concerning the direction and path that they had deviated from.

This verse also serves as evidence that they had lost their way on a cold and dark night since he wanted to bring information regarding path or bring back burning fire to warm themselves up with. This is also clear in another verse:

“And have you heard the story of Moosa? When he saw a fire and said to his family, ‘Stay here, verily I saw a fire, I hope I may bring you a burning brand from it or I may find at the fire a guide.’”
(Qur'an 20: 9-10)

It is also mentioned in *Soorah an-Naml*:

“When Moosa said to his family, ‘Verily, I perceived a fire, I will bring you some information or I may bring you a burning brand of fire so that you may warm yourselves’.”
(Qur'an 27: 7)

So Moosa (ﷺ) brought them from it information and how great an information it was! He found there guidance and how great a guidance it was!

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“Then when he came to the fire, he was called from the right side of the valley from a tree in the blessed place, ‘O’ Moosa, verily I am Allah, Lord of the worlds.’”
(Qur'an 28: 30)

And in another place:

“So when he came to it, he was called out, ‘Blessed is He Who is in the fire and the one who is around it, and glory be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. O’ Moosa, verily I am Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise’.”
(Qur'an 27: 8-9)

In *Soorah Tâ' hâ*:

“So when he came to it, he was called, ‘O’ Moosa, verily I

am your Lord, take off your shoes, you are in the sacred valley of Tuwa. And I chose you, so listen to what is revealed. Indeed I am Allah, there is none worthy of worship but Me, so worship Me, and establish the prayer for My remembrance. Surely, the Hour is coming. I have almost concealed it so that every person may be rewarded for that which it strives. Therefore do not let him who disbelieves in it and follows his own lusts divert you from it, lest you perish.''"

(Qur'an 20: 11-16)

A number of Qur'anic exegetes said that when Moosa (ﷺ) went towards the fire he perceived and then actually went to it, he found it burning in a green thorny tree. Its brightness was increasing and its greenery was also increasing. Upon seeing this, Moosa (ﷺ) stood and watched in amazement. Moosa (ﷺ) was in a valley called Tuwa, standing and facing the *Qiblah*. That tree was on his right side from the west direction. Then his Lord called out to him in the blessed valley of Tuwa. He first ordered him to take off his shoes to show his respect to that blessed place.

The version in the Bible says that Moosa (Moses) put his hands on his face to protect himself from the brightness of that light, fearing his eyes.

Then Allah spoke to Moosa (ﷺ) saying whatever He wishes, "Verily I am Allah, the Lord of the worlds." (cf 28: 44) Also, He said, "Indeed I am Allah, there is none worthy of worship except Me, therefore worship Me, and establish prayer for My remembrance." (cf 28: 30)

Then Allah informed him that this world is not for ever. The everlasting world is only the Hereafter, which is going to occur. The purpose of this world is, "...so that every soul may be recompensed for its deeds." Thus anything of good or evil will be recompensed. Allah ordered Moosa (ﷺ) to perform good deeds and to avoid the

company of those who do not believe in the Hereafter, disobey Him and follow their desires.

Then Allah said:

“And O’ Moosa, what is that in your right hand?”

(*Qur'an* 20: 17)

Allah asked him about his staff which he had since a long time and which he was sure that it was only a wooden staff.

Moosa (ﷺ) said:

“This is my staff, I lean upon it, I beat down leaves with it to feed my sheep, and in it I find other uses too.”

(*Qur'an* 20: 18)

His reply was that yes, this is my staff which I know and I am sure of what it is.

“Allah said, ‘Throw it down O’ Moosa.’ So he threw it down and it turned into a snake slithering.”

(*Qur'an* 20: 19-20)

This incident was a great miracle and a conclusive proof that the One Who spoke to Moosa (ﷺ) was the One Who created everything and does what He wants.

The version in the Bible says that Moosa asked Allah for a proof which he could use to verify his claim when he returns to Egypt. So Allah said, “What is that in your hand?” He replies, “A staff.” He said, “Throw it on the ground.” And when he threw it down, it turned into a snake. Moosa (ﷺ) began to flee from there but his Lord ordered him to stretch out his hand and to take it by its tail. So when he took hold of it, it returned back into a staff in his hand.

Allah says in another verse of the Qur'an concerning the same incident, “And cast down your staff. So when he saw it quivering like

a snake, he ran away and did not turn back." (*cf* 28: 31) His staff immediately turned into a large snake with a big jaw and moving very fast. At that, Moosa (ﷺ) ran away and did not turn back. This is the result of human nature where they flee from something they fear. However, his Lord called out to him saying, "O' Moosa, come back and do not fear, for you are among those who are secure."

And when Moosa returned, Allah ordered him to hold it. He said:

"Take it and do not fear, We shall return it to its former state." (Our 'an 20: 21)

The next thing that Allah ordered him to do was to put his hand into his pocket and then asked him to take it out. When he did that, it came out white, shining like a moon, without any stain, that is, any disease. That is why He said to Moosa:

"And put your hand into your pocket and it will come out shining white without stain [any disease], and draw your hand close to your side to be free from fear." (*Our'an* 28: 32)

It is also said that the meaning of this is if you are feeling fearful, then just put your hand on your heart and you will be relieved.

This act, even though it is in reference to Moosa (ؑ), the blessing of being a true believer may make it possible for one to benefit from this kind of thing.

Allah said in *Soorah an-Naml*:

"And place your hand in your armpit [or pocket], it will come out shining white without any stains [or disease]; among nine signs to Pharaoh and his people, indeed they are a wicked people." *(Qur'an 27: 12)*

This means that these are two signs from the nine signs which Moosa (عليه السلام) was given, as Allah said in another place:

"Those are the two proofs from your Lord to Pharaoh and his chiefs, for indeed they are a wicked people."

(*Qur'an* 28: 32)

The two signs referred to are in addition to the seven extra, thus totalling nine signs, as is indicated to in *Soorah al-Isrâ'*:

"And We gave Moosa nine clear signs, so ask the Children of Israel when Moosa came to them and Pharaoh said to him, 'I think you are enchanted.' He said, 'Indeed, you know that none sent these down except the Lord of the heavens and the earth, as clear proof, and I think you, O' Pharaoh, to be destroyed'." (*Qur'an* 17: 101-102)

All these nine signs are detailed in *Soorah al-A'râf*.

"And verily We seized Pharaoh's people with years of scarcity, and diminution of fruit, that they might be mindful. So when good came to them, they said, 'This is our due,' but if evil afflicted them, they would ascribe it to Moosa and those with him. Whereas their misfortune was in the Hand of Allah, but most of them do not know. And they said, 'Whatever signs you may bring to us to enchant us, we will not believe in you.' So We let loose upon them the flood, the locusts, the lice, the frogs, and the blood, as clear signs, but they were arrogant and were a sinful people."

(*Qur'an* 7: 130-133)

However, it should be noted that these nine signs are different from the Ten Commandments. The nine signs refer to the decree — the miracles whereas the Ten Commandments refer to the specific laws given to the Israelites. They are not the same as some people have said.

When Allah commanded Moosa (Moses) (ﷺ) to go to Fir'awn (Pharaoh), he said:

“My Lord, I have killed one of them, and I fear that they will kill me. And my brother Hâroon is more eloquent in speech than I. So send him with me so he may support me, verily, I fear they will belie me.’ He [Allah] said, ‘We will certainly strengthen your arm with your brother and We shall give you both such an authority that they will not be able to harm you. So by Our Signs, you and whoever follows you, shall be the victors’.”

(Qur'an 28: 33-35)

In these verses, Allah informs us how Moosa (ﷺ) reacted when told of his mission. He spelled out his fear and mentioned to Him what he had done in the past, that he had killed a Coptic before, and thus if he returns, they might take revenge for that and kill him. “My Lord, I have killed one of them and I fear that they will kill me. And my brother Hâroon (Aaron) is more eloquent in speech than I. So send him with me so that he may support me, verily, I fear they will belie me.” (*cf 28: 33-34*) What this shows is that Moosa (ﷺ) asked Allah to appoint his brother Hâroon (ﷺ) as his helper and minister, who will help him to convey the Message since his brother was more eloquent in speech.

Allah said, in His response to what Moosa sought, “We will certainly strengthen your arm with your brother and We shall give you both such an authority that they will not be able to harm you. So by Our Signs, you and whoever follows you, shall be the victors.” Meaning that no harm or disliked thing will happen to you as a result of you carrying out Our order.

Allah said in *Soorah Tâ hâ:*

“‘Go to Fir‘awn [Pharaoh], for he is an insolent tyrant.’ He said, ‘O’ my Lord, expand for me my breast and make my task easier for me. And remove the impediment from my speech so they may understand what I say’.”

(Qur'an 20: 24-28)

Hasan al-Basri said that the Messengers only ask Allah according to their need, that is why some impediment remained. For this reason, when Moosa (ﷺ) went to Fir'awn (Pharaoh), he denounced him as being unclear and said:

“And who can scarcely express himself clearly.”

(*Qur'an* 43: 52)

Prophet Moosa (ﷺ) further asked:

“And appoint for me a minister from my family, Hâroon, my brother. Strengthen me through him and make him share my task so that we glorify You frequently and remember You frequently. Verily, You are All-Seeing of us.’ He [Allah] said, ‘Verily you are granted your request, O’ Moosa.’”

(*Qur'an* 20: 29-36)

That is, We have answered all your requests and given you everything you had sought. All this was due to the rank which Moosa (ﷺ) held before Allah, (ﷻ). He asked Allah to make his brother Hâroon (ﷺ) a Prophet, and he was given what he asked, as Allah said about him:

“And he was honourable before Allah.” (*Qur'an* 33: 69)

He (ﷻ) also said:

“And out of Our Mercy, We gave him his brother Hâroon as a Prophet.”

(*Qur'an* 19: 53)

There was an incident what the mother of the believers, 'Âishah (رضي الله عنها) heard a man saying to people while on their way to Hajj, “Has any brother trusted his brother?” Upon hearing that the people were silent, 'Âishah said to those who were around her *howdaj* (the thing placed on a camel to carry and screen a woman from others), “He was Moosa ibn 'Imrân when he interceded to Allah to make his brother Hâroon a Messenger, and thus Allah answered

his request.” Allah (ﷻ) said:

“And We gave him out of Our Mercy his brother Hâroon as Prophet.”
(Qur'an 19: 53)

Allah said in *Soorah ash-Shu'ara'*:

“And when your Lord called to Moosa, ‘Go to the transgressing people, the people of Pharaoh, that they might fear Allah.’ He said, ‘My Lord, I fear that they will belie me and my breast will be narrowed and my tongue will be tied, so send Hâroon with me [as a Prophet]. And they have a charge against me, so I fear that they might kill me.’ He [Allah] said, ‘No, indeed, go, both of you, with Our Signs. We will be with you listening. So go to Pharaoh and say, ‘We are the Messengers of the Lord of the worlds. Send the Children of Israel with us.’ He [Pharaoh] said, ‘Did we not raise you among us as a child and you stayed among us for many years of your life? And then you did that deed which you did, and you are of the ungrateful.’”
(Qur'an 26: 10-19)

Thus Moosa and Hâroon (peace be upon both of them) went to Pharaoh and conveyed to him what they were sent with, which was to invite him to the worship of Allah, Alone, Who does not have any partner. He also ordered him to release the children of Israel so that they may worship Allah.

However, Pharaoh became arrogant and said to Moosa (ﷺ) in order to degrade and demean him, “Did we not raise you up among us as a child and you stayed among us for many years of your life? And then you did that deed which you did and you are of the ungrateful.” That is, are you not the one who we raised in our household and we were good and graceful to you? And you killed a person, thus you ran away from us and denied our graces upon you.

This shows that this Pharaoh was the same Pharaoh from who Moosa (ﷺ) fled. The version mentioned in the Bible is contradictory to this, since it says in it that the Pharaoh, Moosa fled from, died when he was in Madyan and that the Pharaoh he was sent to as a Prophet was another Pharaoh.

The reply given by Moosa (ﷺ) to him for this was:

“I did it then when I was in error, then I fled from you when I feared you. But my Lord gave me wisdom and made me one of the Messengers.” (*Qur'an* 26: 20-21)

Then he replied to Pharaoh for showing his favour upon him and raising him up saying:

“And that favour with which you reproach me is that you have enslaved the Children of Israel.” (*Qur'an* 26: 22)

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“Fir‘awn [Pharaoh] asked, ‘And who is the Lord of the worlds?’ He [Moosa] replied, ‘The Lord of the heavens and the earth, and what is between them, if you could have a firm belief.’ He said to those around him, ‘Did you hear that?’ He [Moosa] said, ‘Your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers.’ Pharaoh said, ‘Verily your Messenger who has been sent to you is insane.’ Moosa said, ‘The Lord of the east and the west and what is between them, if you have understanding’.” (*Qur'an* 26: 23-28)

Allah (ﷻ) mentioned in these verses the argument and debate that occurred between Moosa (ﷺ) and Pharaoh, along with the evidences he presented to prove that God exists. This was because Pharaoh, may Allah curse him, had denied the very existence of the Creator and in fact, he claimed that for himself. Allah (ﷻ) said:

“Then he gathered his people and called out saying, ‘I am

your lord, most high.''" *(Qur'an 79: 23-24)*

"And Fir'awn [Pharaoh] said, 'O' chiefs, I do not know of any god for you but myself'." *(Qur'an 28: 38)*

Even though Pharaoh denied the existence of the Creator, he knew very well that he was a mere slave and that Allah is the Creator and the One Who shaped all things, and the true God. As Allah informs us:

"And they denied them [the signs] wrongfully and out of pride, even though their souls acknowledged them. So see what was the end of those who acted corruptly."

(Qur'an 27: 14)

It was for this reason that Pharaoh rejected the message which Moosa brought and said there was no Lord other than him. He said, "And who is the Lord of the worlds." This was his reply when the two Messengers, Moosa and his brother Hâroon (peace be upon them), said to him, "We are the Messengers of the Lord of the worlds."

Moosa answered by saying, "The Lord of the heavens and the earth, and what is between them, if you could have a firm belief." What he meant was He is the Lord of the worlds, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and all that is in between these two, such as clouds, rain, vegetation, animals and wind. Everybody knows that these things did not come into existence by themselves and as such, there has to be a Creator. And that Creator is Allah, besides whom there is no god worthy of worship.

Pharaoh then wanted to degrade and demean Moosa (ﷺ), so he turned towards his ministers, dignitaries, and other people in his court and said to them, "Did you hear that?" At that, Moosa (ﷺ) said, "Your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers." That is, Allah is the One who created you and also your forefathers. Each one of you knows that they did not create themselves. Rather, a Creator has

created them, who is the Creator of everything and everyone.

All these arguments could not make Pharaoh come to his senses. He persisted in his rebellion and disbelief. Allah quoted him as saying, "Verily, your Messenger who has been sent to you is insane." He [Moosa] said, 'The Lord of the east and the west and what is between them, if you have understanding,'" meaning that He is the One who subjected all these stars in the sky, created light and darkness, the Lord of the earth and heavens, the Lord of the past and present, the Lord of the sun and the moon.

Then when Fir‘awn (Pharaoh) became cornered by all the evidences which Moosa (ﷺ) provided, he changed tone and started using his authority and power to compel Moosa by saying:

"If you take a god other than me, I will surely imprison you." He [Moosa] said, 'Even if I bring you a clear proof?' He [Pharaoh] said, 'Then bring it, if you are among the truthful.' So he threw down his staff and it became a serpent. And he drew out his hand, and it was shining white for the onlookers." *(Qur'an 26: 29-33)*

These were two signs with which Allah helped Moosa. The first was the staff and the second was the miracle of the hand. Both of these great miracles dazzled the eyes and minds. It is said that Pharaoh became very fearful upon seeing these signs, so much so that he suffered from diarrhoea. He started going to the toilet forty times a day, whereas before this, he used to go to the toilet once in every forty days.

Despite all this, Fir‘awn (Pharaoh) did not benefit anything nor change his way. He persisted in transgression and disbelief, and claimed that all these miracles which Moosa (ﷺ) had showed were nothing but magic. He then decided to counter this with the magic of the sorcerers and sent for all magicians in his kingdom to come to him. We will mention the details of this in its appropriate place.

Allah said in *Soorah Tâ hâ:*

"And then you stayed with the people of Madyan for many years, then you came here, O' Moosa as decreed. And I chose you for My Message. Go, you and your brother, with My Signs and do not slacken in My remembrance. Go, both of you, to Pharaoh, for he is an insolent tyrant. Then speak to him gently so that he may be mindful or maybe he might fear. Both said, 'Our Lord, we fear that he may exceed in insolence against us.' He [Allah] said, 'Do not fear, for I am with you, I hear and see.'" *(Our'an 20: 40-46)*

In these verses, Allah mentions what He said to Moosa on the night when He spoke to him. What the All-High said was, "I was watching you when you were in Pharaoh's palace. Even then, you were under My Protection and Guardianship. Then I took you out from Egypt to the land of Madyan according to what I had decreed and planned. Then you stayed there for some years, "... then you came here, O' Moosa, as decreed", i.e. everything occurred according to My plan and with My help. I chose you for My Message."

"Go, you and your brother, with My Signs and do not slacken in My remembrance." That is, when you go to Pharaoh, do not forget My remembrance since it will help you when speaking to him and delivering your message. Then Allah (ﷻ), said, "Go, you both, to Pharaoh, for he is an insolent tyrant. Then speak to him gently so that he may be mindful or maybe he might fear." This shows Allah's mercy and forbearance with His slaves. He ordered this even though He knew that Pharaoh would disbelieve, show arrogance and pride. Infact, Pharaoh was the worst of Allah's creation at that time. And He sent to him the best of His creation of that time. He advised them to address Pharaoh with gentleness and kindness so that he may remember or fear Allah.

This is similar to that with which Allah advised his Prophet saying:

"Invite all to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching, and reason with them in ways that are best and most gracious." (Our'an 16: 125)

(*Qur'an* 16: 125)

And:

"And do not dispute with the people of earlier scriptures except in a good manner, except with those of them who do wrong." *(Our'an 29: 46)*

(*Qur'an* 29: 46)

"Both said, 'Our Lord, we fear that he may exceed in insolence against us.'" They said this because Pharaoh was a brutal dictator who extended his authority all over Egypt with his large army and police. So, as humans feel, they too felt frightened that he might transgress against them. So Allah strengthened them by saying, "Fear not, for I am with you, I hear and see." In another verse, He said, "We will be with you hearing." (cf 26: 15)

Allah (ﷻ) said,

"So go, you both, to Fir'awn [Pharaoh] and say, 'We are Messengers of your Lord, therefore send the Children of Israel with us, and do not punish them. We have come to you with a sign from your Lord. And peace be upon all those who follow guidance. Verily, it has been revealed to us that the punishment will befall one who belies and turns away'." *(Our'an 20: 47-48)*

(Qur'an 20: 47-48)

Allah mentioned in these verses that He ordered both of them to go to Pharaoh and invite him to the worship of Allah Alone, who does not have any partner. They also had to order him to free the Children of Israel from captivity and subservience. "We have come to you with a sign from your Lord." This sign was the clear evidence in the miracles of the staff and hand. They further warned Pharaoh of the consequences of rejecting by saying, "Verily, it has been revealed to us that the punishment will befall one who belies and turns away."

That is, one who belies the truth with his heart and turns away from acting upon it with his deeds.

Allah (ﷻ) said,

“He [Pharaoh] said, ‘And who is your Lord, O’ Moosa?’ He said, ‘Our Lord is He Who created everything and then guided it.’ He [Pharaoh] said, ‘So what about the former generations?’ He said, ‘The knowledge of them is with my Lord, in a Book, my Lord never errs, nor forgets. The One Who has made for you the earth as cradle, and inserted roads for you therein, and sent down water from the sky.’ Thereby We brought forth pairs of plants, each separate from other. Eat and pasture your cattle, verily, in this are signs for those who possess reason. Out of the earth We created you and We will return you to it, and from it We will bring you forth a second time.” *(Qur'an 20: 49-55)*

Allah (ﷻ) informs us that Pharaoh rejected the notion of a Creator, saying, “And who is your Lord, O’ Moosa?” Moosa (ﷺ) replied that He is the One Who created all the creatures and decreed for them their actions, provision, ages, and wrote all this in the Book. Then He guided every creature to what He had written for it. So a human’s actions are in accordance with what has been written. This is similar to what is in another verse:

“Glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most High, the One Who creates in due proportion and order, the One Who measured and granted guidance.” *(Qur'an 87: 1-3)*

Pharaoh replied, “So what about the former generations?” He said that if the situation is as you have mentioned, that Allah is the Creator and the One Who guides his creation, then why did the previous generations worship gods other than Him? They associated with Him stars and idols about which you know. So why is it that

those generations did not receive this guidance? Moosa (ﷺ) replied, "The knowledge of them is with my Lord, in a Book, my Lord never errs, nor forgets." That is, whatever they did is not evidence for you, nor does it go against what I tell you. This is because they were ignorant just like you and everything they did and said, whether big or small, are written in a Book. Based on this, they will be treated accordingly by Allah in the Hereafter and He is unjust to none.

Then Moosa reminded Fir‘awn (Pharaoh) of the greatness of power of Allah and that He created the earth as a bed for us, and the sky as a roof over us. He said, "Eat and pasture your cattle, verily, in this are signs for those who possess reason."

The All-High said in *Soorah al-Baqarah*:

"O' people, worship your Lord Who created you and those before you, that you may be pious. The One Who has made the earth your couch and the heavens an edifice. And sent down water from the sky and He brought forth with it fruits for your sustenance. So do not join equals with Allah when you know the truth." *(Qur'an 2: 21-22)*

After mentioning the earth being brought back to life with rain and how the vegetation came from it, Allah draws our attention to the resurrection by saying, "Out of the earth We created you and We will return you to it and from it We will bring you forth a second time." He (ﷺ) said in another place:

"Such as He created you in the beginning, so will you return." *(Qur'an 7: 29)*

And:

"It is He Who begins the creation, then repeats it. And for Him it is easy. To Him belongs the loftiest similitude in the heavens and the earth, He is Exalted in might, Full of Wisdom." *(Qur'an 30: 27)*

Then Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And We showed him [Pharaoh] all Our Signs but he belied them and refused to believe. He [Pharaoh] said, ‘O’ Moosa, did you come to drive us out of our land by your magic? We will also bring you magic similar to your magic. So appoint a time between us which we will not fail to keep nor you, in an open wide place where both will have equal and just opportunity.’ He [Moosa] said, ‘The time will be the day of the festival of adornment and let the people be assembled at high noon.’” *(Qur'an 20: 56-59)*

In these verses, Allah informs us about the ignorance and stubbornness of Pharaoh's rejection of the truth. He called the miracles presented by Moosa (ﷺ) as magic and said that he will encounter it with similar magic. He then asked Moosa to make an appointment, day and time, for this purpose.

This very thing was exactly what Moosa (ﷺ) wanted, wherein he could show the signs of Allah openly, in front of everyone. That is why he chose the most appropriate day, the day of the festival of adornment, which was to be attended by all. He said, “Let the encounter be on the day of the festival of adornment and let the people be assembled at high noon.” He also appointed the time as high noon so that people could observe the miracles clearly and the truth will become apparent to them. This shows how Moosa was so sure that Allah would help him and will make His message and *Deen* apparent.¹⁰⁹

Allah (ﷻ) says:

“So Fir'awn [Pharaoh] withdrew, and gathered his plot, and then came back. Moosa said to them, ‘Woe to you, do not

¹⁰⁹ *Tareekh at-Tabari*, vol. 1, p. 287.

forge falsehood against Allah lest He destroy you with a punishment. Verily, the one who forges falsehood must perish.' So they disputed among themselves about the issue and they consulted secretly. They said, 'These two men are magicians and they want to expel you from your land by their magic and to do away with your exemplary ways. So gather your guile and assemble in ranks. Whoever has the upper hand today will surely prosper.' " (Our'an 20: 60-64)

Here Allah informs us how Fir'awn (Pharaoh) gathered all the magicians of his kingdom. Egypt at that time was a land full of magicians who mastered this practice. They gathered from everywhere, becoming a very large number, i.e., eighty thousand people to witness the scene. It is said on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs that there were seventy magicians.

Fir‘awn (Pharaoh) ordered his ministers, dignitaries and everybody to attend and so nobody dared to remain behind. They came to the gathering saying:

"Perhaps we may follow the magicians if they are victorious." (Our'an 26: 40)

At that time, before they began, Moosa (ﷺ) came to the magicians and warned them against using magic against Allah's signs. He said, "Woe to you, do not forge falsehood against Allah lest He destroy you with a punishment. The one who forge falsehood must perish."

"So they disputed among themselves about the issue." It is said that this means they started disputing among themselves whether to go ahead with it or not. Some people said that a Prophet said this and not the magicians. And Allah knows best.

They said, "These two men are magicians and they want to expel you from your land by their magic and to do away with your

exemplary ways." They were told that Moosa and Hâroon (peace be upon them) are great magicians, who know their art very well, and who only want to expel you from this land. They urged the magicians saying, "So gather your guile and assemble in ranks, whoever has the upper hand today will surely prosper." That is, make every effort to produce what you could of a great guile to defeat them and come together, united, in ranks. They were to use whatever they knew of tricks, betraying and magic.

"They said, 'O' Moosa, will you throw first or should we be those who throw first?' He said, 'No, you throw first.' So it appeared to him by their magic that their ropes and staff were moving. So Moosa became fearful within him. We said, 'Do not fear, surely you have the upper hand. And throw down what is in your right hand, it will devour all they have done. What they have done is only a magician's guile and the magician will never succeed, wherever he goes.'" *(Qur'an 20: 65-69)*

When the magicians came together and stood in ranks, Moosa and Hâroon (peace be upon them) were standing in front of them. They asked Moosa (ﷺ) if he would like to throw first or should they go ahead. Moosa (ﷺ) said to them to throw first. They had ropes and staffs to use for magic. So when they threw and cast their spells, the ropes and staffs seemed to the onlooker to be moving. They threw while saying:

"By the might of Fir'awn [Pharaoh], verily we are certainly the victors." *(Qur'an 26: 44)*

Allah said:

"So when they threw, they bewitched the eyes of the people and struck fear into them, and brought a manifest magic."

(Qur'an 7: 116)

"And so it appeared to him by their magic that their ropes and staff were moving. So Moosa (ﷺ) became fearful within himself." Moosa did not fear for himself but rather, he was fearful that the people might be bewitched by their spell before he gets a chance to throw his staff. This is because he does not do a thing except by the permission from Allah. Then Allah revealed to him, "Do not fear, certainly you have the upper hand. And throw down what is in your right hand, and it shall devour all they have done, for they have done only a magician's guile and the magician will never succeed, wherever he goes." At that, Moosa (ﷺ) threw down his staff and said:

"What you have brought is sorcery. Verily Allah will render it vain. Allah does not give success to the works of those who do corruption. And Allah, by His Words, establishes the truth even though the sinners may detest it."

(*Qur'an* 10: 81-82)

Allah said:

"And We revealed to Moosa to throw down his staff, then it devoured their false magic. So the truth was established and what they had done was rendered in vain. So they vanquished there and they returned humiliated. And the magicians fell down in prostration. They said, 'We believe in the Lord of the worlds, the Lord of Moosa and Hâroon.'"

(*Qur'an* 7: 177-122)

What happened was that when Moosa (ﷺ) cast his staff, it turned into a huge snake. People became fearful and started fleeing from there and watching from a distance. This snake then devoured the ropes and staffs of the magicians, one by one, in a swift manner. The onlookers were amazed, while the magicians came to know of some-thing which they could not think of before and could not produce the like of it themselves. Due to their knowledge of the art of

magic, they knew that this was something different, neither magic nor any trick. They realized that it was the truth with which this person (Moosa) was sent. Allah removed from their hearts the covering of ignorance and neglect, and gave them the light of guidance. They immediately turned to their Lord and fell down in prostration to Him. They announced openly to the onlookers, without fearing any punishment, saying, "We believe in the Lord of Hâroon and Moosa."

Allah (ﷻ) mentioned the scene, saying:

"So the magicians fell down prostrating and said, 'We believe in the Lord of Hâroon and Moosa.' He [Pharaoh] said, 'You believed in him before I gave you permission. Surely he is your chief who taught you the magic. Certainly, I will cut off your hands and legs from opposite sides, and I will crucify you on trunks of palm trees. And you will know most surely which of us is more severe in punishment and more lasting.' They said, 'Never will we prefer you to what has come to us of clear signs and above is He Who created us. So decree whatever you desire to decree, for you only decree concerning the life of this world. Verily we have believed in our Lord so He may forgive us our sins and the magic which you have compelled us to practice, for Allah's reward is best and everlasting.' Surely whoever comes to his Lord as a sinner, then verily for him is Hell wherein he will neither die nor will he live. And whoever comes to Him as a believer, having done righteous deeds, for them are the most sublime ranks; gardens of Eden, beneath which flow rivers, to dwell therein forever. And this is the reward of those who purify themselves.'" *(Our'an 20: 70-76)*

Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr, ‘Ikrimah and Awzâ‘ee and others said: “When the magicians fell in prostration, they saw palaces and houses in paradise being prepared and decorated for them. That is why they

were not frightened by Pharaoh's threats."

When Pharaoh saw that the magicians believed in Moosa (ﷺ) and made his message and that of Hâroon even more famous to the people, he became worried that the people may soon follow. He wanted to stop them from this, so in the presence of people, Pharaoh asked them, "You believed in him before I gave you permission." That is, you did not even consult me as regards believing. "Surely, he is your chief who taught you the magic."

What Fir'awn (Pharaoh) accused Moosa (Moses) (ﷺ) and the magicians of was something that everyone with senses knew was plain disbelief and rejection. This is something not expected even from children. The people knew well that Moosa (ﷺ) had never met the magicians before, so how is it possible that he is their chief who taught them magic? Furthermore, it was not Moosa who gathered them here, but rather it was Pharaoh himself who invited them.

Allah (ﷻ) said in *Soorah al-A'râf*:

"Then We sent Moosa after them, with Our Signs, to Fir'awn [Pharaoh] and his chiefs. But they rejected them, so see what was the end of those who are mischievous. And Moosa said, 'O' Pharaoh, verily I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds. It is compulsory upon me to say nothing about Allah except the truth. I have come to you with a clear proof from your Lord, so send with me the Children of Israel.' Pharaoh said, 'If you have come with a sign, so bring it if you are truthful?' So he threw his staff and it became a manifest serpent. And he drew out his hand and it was shining bright to the onlookers. The chiefs of Pharaoh's people said, 'Indeed this man is a knowledgeable magician. He intends to expel you from your land, so what do you propose?'

They said, 'Let him and his brother wait, and send to the

cities men to gather and they will bring to you every expert magician.' So the magicians came to the Pharaoh saying, 'Of course we will have a reward if we win?' He said, 'Yes, and you will certainly be of those who are near to me.' They said, 'O' Moosa, either you throw first or should we be the first to throw?' He [Moosa] said, 'You throw first.' So when they threw, they bewitched the eyes of the people, and struck terror into them, and they displayed a great magic. And we revealed to Moosa, 'Throw your stick.' And behold, it swallowed up straight away all the falsehood which they showed. Thus truth was confirmed, and all that they did was made of no effect.

So they were defeated there and returned disgraced. And the sorcerers fell down prostrate. They said, 'We believe in the Lord of the creation. The Lord of Moosa and Hâroon.' Fir'awn [Pharaoh] said, 'You have believed in him before I give you permission. Surely, this is a plot that you have plotted in the city to drive out its people, but you will come to know. Surely, I will cut off your hands and your feet from opposite sides, then I will crucify you all.'

They said, 'Verily, we are returning to our Lord. And you take vengeance on us only because we believed in the proofs of our Lord when they reached us. Our Lord, pour out on us patience and cause us to die as Muslims.'"

1

(Qur'an 7: 103-126)

And in *Soorah Yunus*:

"Then We sent after them Moosa and Hâroon to Pharaoh and his chiefs with Our Signs. But they were arrogant and were a sinful people. When the truth came to them from Us, they said, 'Verily, this is plain magic.' Moosa said, 'Do you say to the truth when it has come to you that this is magic? However, the sorcerers will never succeed.' They said,

'Have you come to us to turn us away from what we found our fathers following and that you may dominate over the land? And we will not believe in you.'

And Pharaoh said, 'Bring to me every expert sorcerer.' So when the sorcerers came, Moosa said them, 'Throw down what you have to throw down.' So when they threw down, Moosa said, 'What you have brought is sorcery, verily Allah will render it vain. Verily Allah does not amend the works of those who do corruption.' And Allah's decree is fulfilled in truth even though the sinners may desist it.'"

(*Qur'an 10: 75-82*)

And the Exalted said in *Soorah ash-Shu'arā'*:

"He [Pharaoh] said, 'If you take a god other than me, I will surely imprison you.' Moosa said, 'Even if I bring you a clear proof?' He [Pharaoh] said, 'Then bring it if you are truthful.' So he cast his staff and it became a serpent. And he drew out his hand and it was shining white for the onlookers. He [Pharaoh] said to his chiefs around him, 'Verily this man is a skilled magician. He wants to expel you from your land by means of his magic, then what do you counsel?'

They said, 'Let him and his brother wait for a while, and send, to the cities those who will gather every skilled magician to you.' So the magicians were gathered for the appointed time and day. And the people were asked, 'Will you assemble at the gathering? Maybe we will follow the magicians if they are victorious.' Then when the magicians came, they said to Fir'awn [Pharaoh], 'Will we have a reward if we are the victors?' He said, 'Yes, indeed, and you will be of those nearest to me.' Moosa said to them, 'Throw down what you have to throw.' They threw down their ropes and staffs and said, 'By the might of Pharaoh, we will

be victorious.'

Then Moosa threw his staff and it swallowed up all their fake falsehood. At this, the magicians fell down prostrating themselves. They said, 'We believe in the Lord of the worlds, the Lord of Moosa and Hâroon.' He [Pharaoh] said, 'You believe in him before I give you permission, verily he is your leader who has taught you this magic, but you will soon know. I will cut off your hands and legs on opposite sides and then I will crucify you all together.' They said, 'We do not care, verily we will return to our Lord. We hope that our Lord will forgive us our sins since and we are the first to believe.'

(Qur'an 26: 30-51)

The point to note from all these verses is that Pharaoh belied, rejected and disbelieved. In fact, when he said, "Surely he is your leader, who has taught you this magic," everybody knew that it was untrue and was meant to detract the people's attention. Pharaoh wanted to punish them severely in order to deter all those who may become inclined to believe.

The magicians, however, did not care about the threats made by Firawn (Pharaoh) because they had found the truth and its signs. They said, "Never will we prefer you to what has come to us of the clear signs and above is He Who created us." They then asked him to do whatever he likes to them since he can only do something in this world. When they move to the next world, they will be under the One Who they have believed in and followed His Messengers. They wanted the everlasting reward, which was better than what Pharaoh has promised them.

They said, "Do you take vengeance on us because we have believed in the signs of our Lord when they came to us?" They meant that 'our only sin with you is that we have believed in what the Messengers brought and that we followed the signs of our Lord.' They further said, "Our Lord, pour out upon us patience and cause us

to die as Muslims." They asked Allah to make them firm in order to face the trial they were inflicted with in the form of the tyrant Pharaoh.

The magicians also admonished and threatened Pharaoh of the punishment of Allah. They said:

"Verily, whoever comes to his Lord as a sinner, for him is Hell. He will neither die therein nor live. And whoever comes to his Lord as a believer and has done righteous deed, they will have the highest ranks; the Garden of Eden, bencath which rivers flow, to live therein forever. And this is the reward of those who purify themselves."

(*Qur'an* 20: 74-76)

They told Pharaoh to be from among those who come to their Lord as believers.

It seems from the context that Pharaoh punished the magicians and then crucified them. ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbás (رضي الله عنه) and ‘Ubayd ibn ‘Umayr said: “They were magicians in the first part of the day and pious martyrs in the last part of the day.” Allah (عز وجله)، said:

"And the chiefs of Fir‘awn's [Pharaoh's] people said, 'Will you leave Moosa and his people to cause corruption in the land and to forsake you and your gods?' He said, 'We will kill their sons and spare their women, and verily we have a strong hold over them.' Moosa said to his people, 'Seek help from Allah and be patient. Verily the earth belongs to Allah and He bequeaths it to who He pleases from His slaves. And the end is for the righteous.' They said, 'We were harmed before you came to us and after you came to us.' He said, 'It may be that your Lord will destroy your enemy and make you inheritors in the land, then He will see how you are going to act.'" (Our'an 44: 127-129)

In these verses, Allah informs us about the leaders of Pharaoh's people who incited him to harm the Messenger of Allah, Moosa (ﷺ). They said, "Will you leave Moosa and his people to cause corruption in the land and to forsake you and your gods?" What these people meant by corruption was the invitation to worship Allah Alone, without associating any partners with Him. This was considered corruption according to their false beliefs.

Pharaoh said, "We will kill their sons and spare their women, and verily we have a strong hold over them." He wanted to do this so as to reduce the number of his oppositions.

Then Moosa (عليه السلام) advised his people to be patient and seek help from their Lord.

They said to him, "We were harmed before you came to us and after you came to us." What they meant was that their children were killed before Moosa came to them and even after Moosa came to them. So Moosa (ﷺ) comforted them saying, "It may be that your Lord will destroy your enemy and make you inheritors in the land, then He will see how you are going to act."

Allah said in *Soorah Ghâfir*:

"And We sent Moosa with Our Signs and a clear authority to Pharaoh, Hâmân and Qâroon but they said, 'A lying magician.'"
(*Our'an* 40: 23-24)

Fir'awn (Pharaoh) was the king and Hâmân was his minister. On the other hand, Qâroon was originally an Israeli from the people of Moosa (ع) but later followed the religion of Pharaoh and his chiefs. He was very wealthy, as we will mention his story later in this chapter Allah willing.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"So when he brought them the truth from Us, they said,

'Kill the sons of those who believed with him and spare their women.' However, the plot of disbelievers ends in nothing but in perdition." (Qur'an 40: 25)

This killing of children was intended to humiliate them and to reduce their number so that they will not have power and numbers to resist.

"And Fir‘awn [Pharaoh] said, 'Let me kill Moosa and let him call on his Lord. I fear he will change your religion or spread mischief in the land.' " *(Qur'an 40: 26)*

Pharaoh was trying to make himself a preacher of religion since he feared that Moosa (ﷺ) might ‘mislead’ the people.

Then Allah said:

"And Moosa said, 'I take refuge with my Lord and your Lord from every arrogant one, who does not believe in the Day of Judgment.' " *(Qur'an 40: 27)*

Allah informed us,

"And a believer from among the Pharaoh's people who concealed his faith said, 'Will you kill a man because he says my Lord is Allah? And verily he brought to you clear signs from your Lord. And if he is a liar, then on him will be his lie, and if he is truthful, then some of what he threatens will befall you. Indeed Allah does not guide any excessive liar. O' my people, you have the sovereignty today, [and] you have the upper hand in the land. But who will help us from the punishment of Allah if it inflicts us?' Pharaoh said, 'I do not but point you to that which I see myself and I only guide you to the right path.' " *(Our'an 40: 28-29)*

This man who said all this was Pharaoh's cousin. He used to conceal his faith in Moosa (عليه السلام) because he feared for himself. Some people have claimed that he was an Israeli. However, this is far from the truth.

truth since it goes against the context of the verse.¹¹⁰

When Fir‘awn (Pharaoh) discussed with his chiefs and decided to kill Moosa (ﷺ), the man feared for Moosa’s life and thus tried to persuade Pharaoh by speaking to him gently. In his speech, he incited Pharaoh to believe and also warned him of the consequences if he did not.

It is established in a hadith from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said:

“The best of Jihad is to speak about justice in the presence of a tyrant ruler.”¹¹¹

This was thus the highest form of jihad since there was no one more tyrant than Fir‘awn (Pharaoh) and also there was no better speech than what he said in the court.

The man said, “Will you kill a man because he says my Lord is Allah?” That is, you want to kill him just because he said that his Lord is Allah. If this is the reason, then it should not be met with his killing. It should be met with honour rather than with revenge. Because, “... indeed he has brought to you clear signs from your Lord.” He brought with him miracles that show his honesty and truth. He then explained further, “If he is a liar, then on him will be his lie.” Meaning, if he is a liar in what he says and claims, then it will not harm you at all. However, “If he is truthful, then some of what he threatens you will befall you.” Meaning that if this happens, then how will your situation be? The manner in which this man said this is one of the gentlest ways of speaking and advising and appealing to the common sense of someone.

“O’ my people, you have sovereignty today, [and] you have the upper hand in the land.” The intention behind this was that

¹¹⁰ *Tareekh at-Tabari*, vol. 23, p. 38.

¹¹¹ Ahmad, vol. 3, p. 19.

whatever you have will be taken away if you try to counter the religion since no kingdom has tried to counter it except that they were humiliated after living dignified.

What this man warned of was exactly what occurred to Pharaoh and his people. Due to their persistence in doubts and conflicts, Allah took away from them their land, property and palaces. They were then drowned in the sea, humiliated. Their souls were taken from high ranks to the lowest of the low ranks.

Pharaoh then said, "I do not point out to you except that which I see myself and I only guide you to the right path." In both of these statements, Pharaoh was a liar. He knew deep down in his heart that whatever Moosa (ﷺ) brought was from Allah. He only opposed him due to arrogance, disbelief and enmity.

Allah (ﷻ) informs us about Prophet Moosa (ﷺ) in the verse below:

"Verily you know that none sent down these except the Lord of the heavens and the earth, as clear proof, and I deem you, O' Fir'awn [Pharaoh], to be destroyed. So he resolved to remove them from the land, but We drowned him and those with him all together. And We said to the Children of Israel after him, 'Dwell in the land, and when the last of the warnings come, We will gather you all in a mingled crowd.'" *(Our'an 17: 102-104)*

As regards Pharaoh's claim that he was showing them the right path, it was nothing but a lie. He was in error and in fact, he was the first of them to worship the idols and then he called his people to that way. They then believed him and thus followed him in whatever he claimed, such as his claim that he was god.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"And Fir'awn [Pharaoh] announced to his people, 'O' my people, do I not possess the kingdom of Egypt and these

rivers which flow beneath me? Do you not see? Am I not better than this, who is despicable and who can hardly express himself? If only gold bracelets were bestowed upon him or angels came with him as companions?" Then he fooled his people and they obeyed him. Indeed they were a wicked people. Then when they angered Us, We punished them and drowned them all. And We made them a people of the past and an example for later generations."

(Qur'an 43: 51-56)

And:

"So he showed him the manifest signs. But he [Pharaoh] belied and disobeyed. Then he turned away, striving hard. Then he gathered all his people and proclaimed to them, 'I am your supreme lord.' So Allah seized him with the punishment of the Hereafter and the life of this world. Verily in this is a lesson for those who fear." *(Qur'an 79: 20-26)*

And in *Soorah Hood*:

"And We sent Moosa with Our Signs and clear proof to Fir'awn [Pharaoh] and his chiefs. However, they followed Pharaoh's bidding and Pharaoh's bidding was not rightly guided. He will go before his people on the Day of Judgment and will lead them into the fire. And evil indeed is the place to which they are led. They are pursued by a curse in this life and on the Day of Judgment. Evil indeed is the gift which will be given to them." *(Qur'an 11: 96-99)*

The All-High said:

"And the one who believed said, 'O' my people, I fear for you something like the day of the Confederates; like the fate of the people of Nooh, 'Ad, Thamood, and those after them. And Allah does not want to wrong His slaves. And O' my

people, I fear for you the Day of Calling. A Day when you will turn away fleeing, there will be none to protect you from Allah. And whomever Allah leaves astray, then there is no guide for him. And Yusuf had come to you before with clear signs but you persisted in doubt concerning what he came to you with. Until when he perished, you said, ‘Allah will never send a Messenger after him.’ Likewise Allah leaves astray the one who is an excessive doubter. Those who dispute concerning the Signs of Allah without any proof having come to them, most disgusting and hateful is this to Allah and to the believers. Thus Allah sets a seal over the heart of every arrogant tyrant.” (*Qur'an* 40: 30-35)

In these verses, we see how this believer warns his people against belying the Messenger of Allah, Moosa (ﷺ), since that will bring about punishment like it did to the nations earlier. He gave examples of the people of Nooh (ﷺ), ‘Ad, Thamood and others who came after them till his time.

This Day of Calling mentioned in the verse can mean two things: either it could refer to the Day of the Judgment or to the Day when the punishment of Allah befalls them in this world.

The man then reminded them about Prophet Yusuf (ﷺ) and how he ruled the land of Egypt with kindness. He also called to the worship of Allah Alone and not to associate any partners with Him.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“And Pharaoh said, ‘O’ Hâmân, build for me a tower that I may arrive at the ways. The ways of the heavens and I may look upon the God of Moosa, and verily I think he is a liar.’ And thus the evil of Pharaoh’s deeds was beautified for him and he was barred from the Way. And the plot of Pharaoh led only to ruin.” (*Qur'an* 40: 36-37)

Pharaoh rejected the message of Moosa (ﷺ) and that he was sent by Allah. He misguided his people by claiming that there is no god other than himself. He said:

“I do not know for you any god other than myself. So, O’ Hâmân, burn for me bricks of clay and build for me a tower that I may climb up to the God of Moosa for I consider him to be a liar.”

(Qur'an 28: 38)

Pharaoh’s intent by this talk was to prevent the people from believing in Moosa (ﷺ) and also to incite them into belying him. “Thus the evil of Pharaoh’s deeds was beautified to him and he was barred from the Way. And the plot of Pharaoh led only to ruin.” The meaning of this is that he was not able to achieve any of what he wanted. Some exegetes said that the palace which his minister Hâmân built for him was one of its kind at that time in its construction and height.

Now we will return to the believer’s speech and admonition. Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And the one who believed said, ‘O’ my people, follow me and I will guide you to the Right Way. O’ my people, the life of this world is nothing but an enjoyment and surely the Hereafter is the everlasting home. Whoever does an evil deed will be recompensed only with the like of it. And whoever does righteous deeds whether, male or female, and is a believer, they will enter paradise. Therein they will be provided without reckoning.’”

(Qur'an 40: 38-40)

This believer called them to the path of truth, which was to follow the Messenger of Allah, Moosa (ﷺ), in whatever he brought from his Lord. He told them how valueless this world is and motivated them to gain rewards from Allah. From His justice is that He does not punish for a bad deed except the like of it.

The believer then explained to them the falsehood of their beliefs and practices and their consequences. Allah quoted him as saying:

“ ‘O’ my people, how is it that I call you to safety and you call me to the Fire? You call me to disbelief in Allah and to associate with Him that of which I have no knowledge, while I call you to the Almighty, the Forgiver. No doubt that what you call me to cannot be called in this world or in the Hereafter. And our return is to Allah and the transgressors are the inhabitants of the fire. You will soon remember what I say to you and I entrust my matter to Allah. Verily, Allah is Ever-Seeing of His slaves.’ So Allah protected him from the evil of their plotting, while an evil torment encompassed Pharaoh’s people. The fire, they are exposed to it, morning and afternoon. And on the Day when the hour comes [it will be said to the angels], ‘Cast Pharaoh’s people into the severest chastisement.’”

(Qur'an 40: 41-46)

The believer used to call them to worship the Lord of the heavens and the earth, Who creates things by just saying “Be” and it is. They, on the other hand, called him to worship Pharaoh, the cursed transgressor and ignorant. That is why he said, “How is it that I call you to safety and you call me to the Fire? You call me to disbelief in Allah and to associate with Him that of which I have no knowledge, and I call you to the Almighty, the Forgiver.”

He then explained to them the falseness of what they were upon in their worship of idols and statues rather than worshipping Allah. He said that these things do not possess benefit to them nor harm. As for Allah, He brought the slaves to life, gave them provisions, causes them to die and will raise them from their graves. Then whoever was obedient will be entered into Paradise, while the disobedient will be in the Fire.

He then warned them of the consequences if they persisted in their falsehood by saying, “You will soon remember what I say to you and to Allah I entrust my affair. Verily, Allah is Ever-Seeing of His slaves.”

Then Allah informs how the fire will be exposed to Pharaoh’s people every morning and afternoon, and how they will be cast into the severest punishment. As regards the details of these verses, we have spoken at length in our book of *Tafseer, al-Hamdulillah*.

The point to note here is that Allah did not destroy them till after the proof was established over them, including the sending of a Messenger to them. Similarly, Allah also gave them other signs. As He (ﷻ) said:

“And certainly We seized Pharaoh’s people with years of scarcity, and diminution of fruits, that they might be mindful. So when good came to them, they said, ‘This is our due’, but if evil afflicted them, they ascribed it to Moosa and those with him. Whereas surely their misfortune was in the Hand of Allah but most of them do not know. And they said, ‘Whatever sign you bring to us to enchant us, we will not believe in you.’ So We sent on them the flood, the locusts, the lice, the frogs, and the blood, detailed signs, but they became arrogant and were a sinful people.”

(Qur'an 7: 130-133)

The locusts did not come across any of their crops and fruits but ate them. As regards lice, Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said that they are the same insects which are found in wheat.

As regards the frogs, they used to be everywhere, even in their food and dishes. It is said that even when one of them opened his mouth to take a bite or to drink water, a frog jumped would appear and land in it.

As regards the blood, it is said that it was mixed with water. So even when they drew water from the Nile, it came out mixed with blood. The same was the situation no matter where they drew their water from.

All these trials only affected the Egyptians, while the Israelites did not suffer anything. This itself is another miracle and proves that Moosa (ﷺ) was a Messenger.

When they had too much of this and could not bear it any longer, they said:

“O’ Moosa, pray for us to your Lord in the name of the covenant He has made with you, that if you remove the punishment from us, we will definitely believe in you and we will send the Children of Israel with you.”

(*Qur'an* 7: 134)

So Moosa (ﷺ) prayed to his Lord and He removed their suffering. However, when they did not fulfill their promise, they were inflicted by locusts that ate their crops, plants and trees as well. Then they repeated the same plea to Moosa. He again supplicated to Allah, Who then removed their affliction. Once again they did not fulfil their promise and so they were afflicted by lice this time. I am told that Moosa (ﷺ) was ordered to go to a dune where they were and to hit it with his staff. When he did so, they scattered everywhere, so much so that they came in their houses and foods, and deprived them of their sleep.

Once they could not handle that anymore, they repeated the plea to Moosa (ﷺ) and he prayed to Allah Who removed their trial. Then again when they did not fulfill their promise, Allah sent frogs on them, which also filled their houses, food and dishes. It was to such an extent that when one of them uncovered clothes or food, they found therein a frog.

Again they pleaded to Moosa (ﷺ) who supplicated to Allah Who then relieved them of their suffering. Yet again, they did not fulfill their promise, and so Allah sent upon them blood. All Their water turned into blood. They could not draw water from anywhere. Whenever they did, it turned into blood.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"And when the punishment befell them, they said, 'O' Moosa, pray for us to your Lord in the name of the covenant He has made with you, if you remove the punishment from us, we will surely believe in you and we will send the Children of Israel with you.' But when We removed the punishment from them until a fixed time which they had to fulfill, they broke their promise. So We took retribution from them and drowned them in the sea because they had disbelieved in Our Signs and were heedless of them."

(*Qur'an* 7: 134-136)

In these verses, Allah informs us about their disbelief and their persistence in deviation and transgression. They showed pride towards the signs of Allah and His Messenger, even though he had so many miracles to support his claims. Every time a sign came, they promised that they would believe if Moosa supplicated to Allah and the punishment gets removed. They also said that they would release the Children of Israel. And when the punishment was removed, they did not fulfill their promise. So they were inflicted with another, more severe form of punishment.

Allah left them for a long time and gave them every opportunity to believe and accept. But when they did not and the proof was established against them, He seized them with a punishment.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"And certainly We sent Moosa with Our Signs to Fir'awn [Pharaoh] and his chiefs, and he said, 'Indeed, I am a Messenger of the Lord of the worlds.' But when he came to them with Our Signs, they laughed at them. And We did not show them a sign but it was greater than its fellow and We seized them with the punishment that they may return. And they said, 'O' magician, pray to your Lord for us by the covenant He has made with you. Verily we will be rightly guided.' Then when We removed from them the punishment, they broke the pledge. And Pharaoh announced among his people, 'O' my people, do I not possess the kingdom of Egypt and these rivers which flow beneath me? Do you then not see? Am I not better than this, who is despicable and who can hardly express himself? If only gold bracelets were bestowed upon him or angels came with him as companions?' Thus he fooled his people and they obeyed him. Indeed they were a wicked people. When they had angered Us, We took retribution from them and We drowned all of them. And We made them a people of the past and an example for later generations." (*Qur'an* 43: 46-56)

In these verses, Allah informs us how He sent His Messenger and aided him with clear miracles, after which one cannot deny. The people were asked to leave their ways and return to the straight path. However, despite all this, they laughed and mocked, and even prevented others from following the path of Allah. So He sent to them signs and miracles, one after another. Each one was greater than its preceding one. "Then We seized them with the punishment that they may return. They said, 'O' magician, pray to your Lord for us by the covenant He has made with you. Verily we will be rightly guided.'" In the sight of those people, being a magician was not blameworthy or shameful because their scholars were magicians. That is why they approached Moosa (ﷺ) every time they wanted ease in their infliction.

Fir‘awn (Pharaoh) then became arrogant and mentioned that he is the king of Egypt and that rivers flowed under his feet. He tried to degrade Moosa (ﷺ) by saying that he even could not express himself properly. This was due to what he had in his speech. However, it was not to a large extent since he was able to convey the divine message and Allah (ﷻ) spoke to him, and revealed Torah to him.

Pharaoh then tried to fool his people and after sometime of trying, they accepted his claim of being god. Allah then punished them with a punishment, which was humiliation and drowning, after they were dignified and had enjoyed high ranks.

Allah said in *Soorah al-Qasas*:

“And he [Pharaoh] and his soldiers were arrogant in the land without justification and they thought they would never return to Us. So We seized him and his soldiers, and We threw them in the sea. So see how was the end of the evildoers. And We made them leaders inviting to the fire and on the Day of Judgment, they will not be helped. And We made a curse to follow them in this world and on the Day of Judgment, they will be despised.” (*Qur'an* 28: 39-42)

Here Allah informs us that when their arrogance against following the truth had increased, and when their king had claimed falsehood, they believed him, Allah's anger increased. He punished them severely and drowned Pharaoh and his army, and none were spared.

When the Coptic people persisted in their disbelief and stubbornness, and followed their king in the disobedience of Allah's Messenger and Prophet, Moosa (ﷺ), Allah established proof against them and showed them miracles which bewildered and amazed the minds. Despite that, they did not amend their ways. Only a few of them believed.

Then Moosa (ﷺ) said to his people:

“O’ my people, if you do believe in Allah, then put your trust in Him, if you are Muslims [i.e. have submitted your will to the Will of God]. So they said, ‘In Allah we trust. Our Lord, do not make us a trial for those who are oppressors. And rescue us by Your Mercy from the disbelievers.’”
(Qur'an 11: 84-86)

Moosa ordered them to put their trust in Allah and to seek help from Him only. At that, Allah helped them and gave them a way out.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“And we inspired Moosa and his brother to make separate dwelling for your people in Egypt and make your dwellings places of worship [*Qiblah*] and establish prayer. And give glad tidings to the believers.”
(Qur'an 11: 87)

Allah revealed to Moosa and Hâroon (peace be upon them) to make the houses of their people distinct from the houses of Coptic Egyptians, such that it becomes easy for everyone to contact each other in case they are ordered to depart from Egypt.

It is said that they were unable to disclose their belief or to offer their prayers openly. So they were ordered to pray in their houses as a compensation for what they had missed of their worship and devotion. However, the other opinion is that, they were ordered to make their houses as places of worship seems to be more positive, although the first does not contradict it.

Allah, the All-High informed us:

“Moosa said, ‘Our Lord, You gave Pharaoh and his chiefs the beauty and wealth of this worldly life. Our Lord, they misled people from Your way. Our Lord, obliterated their wealth and harden their hearts so they will not believe till

they see the painful punishment.' He [Allah] said, 'Your prayer is answered, so be steadfast and do not follow the way of those who have no knowledge.'" (*Qur'an* 11: 88-89)

This is a great prayer made by Moosa (ﷺ) against the enemy of Allah, Pharaoh. It was a result of his anger due to Pharaoh's arrogance and not following the truth. He persuaded others also not to follow Moosa and himself continued in his falsehood. The glitter he referred is the clothes, palaces, houses, food and animals to ride on.

As regards the hardening of the hearts in the verse, "And harden their hearts so they will not believe until they see the painful punishment," Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) said it means to put a seal on them.

Allah accepted the prayer of Moosa as He had previously accepted from Nūh (peace be upon them) when he supplicated against his people saying:

"My Lord, do not leave even one of the disbelievers upon the earth. Verily, if You leave them, they will lead astray Your slaves and will not beget any but wicked ungrateful ones." (*Qur'an* 71: 26-27)

That is why, Allah said, "Your prayer is answered, so be steadfast and do not follow the way of those who have no knowledge."

Allah, the Almighty said:

"And We revealed to Moosa, 'Depart with My slaves by night, for you will be pursued.' Then Pharaoh sent heralds to all the cities, 'These are only a small band and they have surely enraged us, and we surely are cautiously on our guard.' And so We expelled them from gardens and springs, and from treasures and fine dwelling. Thus We bequeathed them upon the Children of Israel. So they pursued them at sunrise. And when the two groups saw each other, the

people of Moosa said, ‘Surely we are overtaken.’ He said, ‘No, indeed my Lord is with me, He will guide me.’ So We revealed to Moosa, ‘Strike the sea with your staff.’ And it parted and each separate part became like a mountain. Then We brought near the others [Pharaoh and his people] to that place. And We saved Moosa and all those with him. Then We drowned the others. Verily, there is a sign in this, yet most of them are not believers. And verily your Lord is the All-Mighty, the All-Merciful.” (*Qur'an* 26: 52-68)

The scholars of the Qur'an said that when Fir'awn (Pharaoh) set out in pursuit of the Israelites, he took a huge army with him. It is said that the number of his horse riders exceeded one hundred thousand. Similarly, it is said that his army exceeded a million and a half (Thousand thousand and six hundred thousand). As regards the number of Israelite fighters, it is said that they were half a million (six hundred thousand), not including the non-fighters. Their total stay in Egypt from the time Israel (i.e. Ya'qoob) brought them there to the time they left with Moosa (ﷺ), was for four hundred and twenty-six sun (solar) years.

Anyhow, the point is that Pharaoh reached them with his army in the morning, at sunrise. When they saw each other, each thought that there is nothing left except to fight the other. That is why the companions of Moosa said, “Surely, we are overtaken.” This is because in front of them was the sea and Pharaoh was behind them with his army. They complained to Moosa (ﷺ), so he said with all confidence, “No, indeed my Lord is with me, He will guide me.”

At that time, Moosa was not at the front of his people. So he came to the front and looked at the sea with its huge waves. He said, “I have been ordered here.” The other people with him were his brother Hâroon (ﷺ) and Yoosha' ibn Noon, who was one of the Israeli leaders, a scholar and a pious person. As we will discuss later, he too was made a Prophet after Moosa and Hâroon. Also with them

was the believer from the people of Pharaoh. He tried to see whether he could cross the sea with his horse, but when he could not, he said to Moosa, "O' Messenger of Allah, were you ordered to come here?" Moosa replied, "Yes."

At that dire situation, Allah revealed to Moosa, "Strike the sea with your staff." So he struck it and it split. "And it parted, each part like a huge mountain." It is said that it parted into twelve paths, each path for a tribe of Israelites. The water stood on either side of them, like a mountain, being held back by the Might of Allah. He ordered the easterly wind to blow, which dried the paths to make it easy for the horses and animals to cross through it.

Allah the All-High says:

"And We revealed to Moosa, 'Depart with My slaves by night and strike a dry path for them through the sea. And do not fear from being overcome or anything else.' And Pharaoh pursued them with his soldiers, but the sea overwhelmed them. And Pharaoh led his people astray, and he was no guide for them." *(Qur'an 20: 77-79)*

When the sea split in this way, leaving a dry path to pass through, Moosa (ﷺ) was ordered to take his people through it. Once the last of them had passed through it, Pharaoh and his army entered it.

At that time, Moosa (ﷺ) wanted to again strike the sea to block the way for Pharaoh. But Allah ordered him to leave it as it was, allowing Pharaoh and his army to enter.

Allah, the Exalted says:

"And indeed We tried before them Pharaoh's people when a noble Messenger came to them saying, 'Send with me the slaves of Allah, indeed I am a Messenger most worthy of trust. And do not exalt yourselves against Allah. Truly I have come to you with a manifest authority. And truly I seek

refuge with my Lord and your Lord, lest you should stone me. But if you do not believe in me, then keep away from me and leave me alone.' Then he called to his Lord saying, 'These are indeed a people who are sinners.' [Allah said], 'Depart with My slaves by night. Surely you will be pursued. And leave the sea as it is, surely they are a host to be drowned.'" *(Our 'an 44: 17-24)*

(*Qur'an* 44: 17-24)

The meaning of, "And leave the sea as it is," means to leave it in its state and do not change its state.

When the sea was left in its state and Pharaoh saw it, he became frightened and confirmed within himself what he already knew from before, that it was from the Lord of the Throne. He became regretful, however, his regret at that time would not benefit him. He displayed a contrary feeling to his army than what he was feeling and said to them, "Look how the sea split apart for me so that I could catch these servants who fled from me." He did not have any intention to go with his army in that passage.

It is said that the angel Jibreel (ﷺ) came there in the guise of a cavalier on a horse. When he passed by Pharaoh's horse, he neighed to it. Then Jibreel entered the sea and Pharaoh's horse, which was out of his control by then, also followed him. When his army saw him entering the sea, they all entered behind him also. Then when all of them had entered, Allah ordered Moosa (ﷺ) to strike the sea with his staff. When he struck it, the sea returned to its former state and no one of Pharaoh's army survived.

Allah (ﷻ) says:

"And We saved Moosa and all those who were with him, then We drowned others. Verily there is a sign in this but most of them are not believers. Indeed, your Lord, He is All-Mighty, the All-Merciful." *(Qur'an 26: 65-68)*

By His Mercy, he saved Moosa (ﷺ) and all of his people, and none of them drowned. Similarly, all His enemies drowned, without any exception. This is a great sign of Allah's Might and the truthfulness of the claim made by His Messenger.

The All-High says:

"And We took the Children of Israel through the sea. Then Pharaoh and his soldiers followed them in insolence and hostility, until when he was about to drown, he said, 'I believe that there is no god worthy of worship except in whom the Children of Israel believed, and I am of those who submit themselves to Him.' [It was said to him], 'Now you believe while you refused to believe before and you were one of the evildoers. Today We will save you in your body so that you may be a sign for those who come after you.' But verily many from the mankind are heedless of Our signs." *(Qur'an 11: 90-92)*

In these verses, Allah informs us how Pharaoh drowned. All the Israelites were looking with their naked eyes how his body was being swept high and low with the waves. When Pharaoh realized that he was helpless and about to die, he announced his belief in Allah and repented. However, his belief and repentance came at a time when believing cannot help any soul. As Allah said in another verse:

"But when they saw Our punishment, they said, 'We believe in Allah Alone, and we disbelieve in what we were associating with Him.' However, their belief, when they saw Our punishment, could not avail them. Like this has been the way of Allah with His slaves. And there the disbelievers lost utterly." *(Qur'an 40: 84-85)*

Moosa (ﷺ) supplicated against Fir'awn (Pharaoh) and his people that may Allah destroy their wealth and harden their hearts, so they could not believe till they faced the painful punishment.

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"When Pharaoh said, 'I believe that there is no god worthy of worship except in whom the Children of Israel believed,' Jibreel said to me, 'If you could have seen me when I took the mud from the sea and shoved it into his mouth, fearing that mercy might save him.'"¹¹²

"[It was said to him], 'Now you believe while you refused to believe before and you were one of the evildoers.'" Allah rejected Pharaoh's announcement of belief when he saw death because were he to be returned to this world, he would have returned to the same acts. And Allah knows best. Similarly, Allah informed us about other disbelievers who, when they see the Fire, will say:

"Would that we were sent back. Then we would not deny the signs and revelations of our Lord, and we would be of the believers." *(Qur'an 6: 27)*

And:

"Rather it appeared to them which they concealed before and even if they were returned, they would commit again the very thing they were prohibited, surely they are liars."

(Qur'an 6: 28)

"This day We shall save you in your body so that you may be a sign for those who come after you." (*cf 10: 92*) Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) and others said: "Some Israelites doubted Pharaoh's death, to the extent that some said that he could never die. So Allah ordered the sea to raise his body high on top of the water. He still had on his armour with which he was recognized and then they believed in his death."

¹¹² Ahmad, vol. 1, p. 245 and *Tafsîr at-Tabârî*, vol. 11, p. 163.

The destruction of Pharaoh and his army was on the Day of ‘Ashoorâ — tenth of Muharram. Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) who said:

“When the Prophet (ﷺ) came to Madeenah, he found the Jews fasting on the day of ‘Ashoorâ — tenth of Muharram. He asked them, ‘What is it this day you fast?’ They replied, ‘This is a day when Moosa gained victory over Pharaoh.’ So the Prophet said to his Companions, ‘You are more deserving of Moosa than them, so fast.’”¹¹³

*What happened with the Israelites
after the destruction of Pharaoh*

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“So We took Our revenge on them and drowned them in the sea because they had disbelieved in Our signs and were heedless of them. And We made the people who were considered weak to inherit the eastern parts of the land and the western parts thereof which We have blessed. And the fair Word of your Lord was fulfilled for the Children of Israel, because of their endurance. And We destroyed completely all the great works and buildings which Pharaoh and his people erected. And We brought the Children of Israel across the sea, and they came upon a people devoted to some of their idols. They said, ‘O’ Moosa, make for us a god as they have gods.’ He said, ‘Verily, you are a people who do not know. Verily, these people will be destroyed for

¹¹³ Bukhari, *Kitâb at-Tafseer*, *Soorah Tâhâ* and Muslim, *Kitâb aṣ-Siyâm*, *Bâb Sawm yawm ‘Ashoorâ*.

that which they are engaged in. And all that they are doing is in vain.'

He said, 'Should I seek for you a god other than Allah, while He has given you superiority over the worlds?' And remember when We rescued you from Pharaoh's people, who were afflicting you with the worst torment, killing your sons and letting your women live. And in that was a great trial from your Lord." *(Qur'an 7: 136-141)*

In these verses, Allah mentions the fate of Pharaoh and his people wherein they were drowned. He also mentions how He took away from them their power, property and souls and bequeathed their wealth and property upon the Israelites. Allah (ﷻ) said:

"So it was and We bequeathed them upon the Children of Israel." *(Qur'an 26: 59)*

He (ﷻ) also said:

"And We want to bestow favour upon those who have been oppressed and to make them leaders and to make them inheritors." *(Qur'an 28: 5)*

Similarly, Allah (ﷻ) mentioned this in the verses quoted above saying:

"And We made the people who were considered weak to inherit the eastern parts of the land and the western parts thereof which We have blessed. And the fair Word of your Lord was fulfilled for the Children of Israel, because of their endurance. And We destroyed completely all the great works and buildings which Fir'awn [Pharaoh] and his people erected." *(Qur'an 7: 137)*

Then Allah mentioned how these people demanded that Moosa (ﷺ) should make for them a god. Allah (ﷻ) said:

"And We brought the Children of Israel across the sea and they came upon a people devoted to some of their idols. They said, 'O' Moosa, make for us a god as they have gods.' He said, 'Verily, you are a people who do not know. Verily, these people will be destroyed for that which they are engaged in. And all that they are doing is in vain.'"

(Qur'an 7: 138-139)

It so happened that once they passed by a people who were worshipping idols. It is said that the idol was in a shape of calf. It is as if they asked them why they worshipped those idols. They probably replied that they benefit and harm them, and that they seek their provisions from them when needed. So some ignorant people from the Israelites may have believed them and so asked their Prophet Moosa (ﷺ) to make for them a god similar to their gods. Moosa rebuked them by saying that they did not have senses and were misguided. He said, "Verily, that which they are engaged upon shall be shattered and false is that they have been doing."

Moosa (ﷺ) then reminded them of Allah's favours upon them wherein He chose them over all people of their time with knowledge and the sending of the Messenger to them. He also reminded them how Allah saved them from their life of slavery and how He drowned Pharaoh right before their eyes. He then made them inherit their properties and wealth. He further explained that acts of worship should not be offered to anyone but Allah Alone, Who does not have any partner with Him. This question to make a god for them was not asked by every Israelite, but some of them.

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Abu Wâqid al-Laythi (رضي الله عنه) who said:

"We went with the Prophet (ﷺ) towards Hunayn. On the way, when we passed by a tree of berry, we said, 'O' Messenger of Allah, make for us a hanging place as the disbelievers have their

hanging place.' The disbelievers used to hang their swords on a berry tree and then sit down around it in devotion. So the Prophet said, '*Allāhu Akbar*. This is just like what the Children of Israel said to Moosa, 'Make for us a god as they have gods.' Verily, you will follow the way of the people before you'."

Then Moosa (ﷺ) left the land of Egypt and travelled in the direction of *Bayt al-Maqdis* (Jerusalem). On the way, he met people from the tribes of the Kan‘ān, Fazāri and others. They were transgressors, oppressors and wrongdoers. Moosa ordered the Israelites to enter their cities, fight them and expel them from the land of *Bayt al-Maqdis* because Allah had promised this land to them through their father Ibraheem (Abraham) and then through Moosa (Moses) (may peace be upon them). However, they were frightened and refused to fight them and as a punishment, Allah left them wandering around where they were for a period of forty years, with no destination.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"And remember when Moosa said to his people, 'O' my people, remember the favour of Allah upon you when He made Prophets among you, made you kings and gave you what He did not give to any of the worlds. O' my people, enter the Holy Land which Allah has assigned for you and do not turn back [in fight], for then you will be losers.' They said, 'O' Moosa, there are a people of great strength in that land and we will never enter it until they leave it; when they leave, then we will enter.'

Two men of those who feared [Allah], whom Allah had bestowed His grace said, 'Assault them through the gate, for when you are in, victory will be yours and put your trust in Allah if you are indeed believers.' They said, 'O' Moosa, we will never enter it as long as they are there. So go, you and your Lord, and fight, we will be sitting right here.'

Moosa said, 'My Lord, I have power only over myself and my brother, so separate us from the people who are rebellious.' He [Allah] said, 'Therefore it [holy land] will be forbidden to them for forty years; in distraction, they will wander through the land. So do not be sorrowful over the people who are rebellious.'" *(Our 'an 5; 20-26)*

(Qur'an 5: 20-26)

The Prophet of Allah, Moosa (عليه السلام), reminded his people of the favours of Allah upon them, both with respect to this world and the Hereafter. He also ordered them to fight the rebellious people in the way of Allah. He said, “Enter the sacred land which Allah has prescribed for you and do not turn back [in fight], for then you will be losers.”

They responded with disobedience due to their disbelief and stubbornness. They became cowardly to face these rebellious people when in the past, they had faced Fir'awn (Pharaoh), who was the greatest of oppressors. This shows that they were blameworthy in what they said. They said, "O' Moosa, there are a people of great strength in that land and we will never enter it until they leave it, and when they leave it, we will enter."

"Two men of those who feared [Allah], whom Allah had bestowed His grace." The names of these two people were Yoosha' ibn Noon and Kâlib ibn Yoofana. And the part about Allah's grace is referred to how He guided them to Islam, obedience and bravery. They said, "Assault them through the gate, for when you are in, victory will be yours. And put your trust in Allah if you are indeed believers."

"They said, 'O' Moosa, we will never enter it as long as they are there. So go, you and your Lord, and fight, we are sitting right here.'" It is said that when Yoosha' and Kâlib heard this, they tore their clothes, and Moosa and Hâroon fell in prostration to Allah. They were very angry about the statement for the sake of Allah.

Allah then quoted Moosa (ﷺ) as saying, “ ‘My Lord, I have power only over myself and my brother, so separate us from the people who are rebellious.’ And in response thereof He [Allah] said, ‘Therefore it will be forbidden to them for forty years; in distraction they will wander through the land. So do not be sorrowful over the people who are rebellious.’ ” They were punished for being cowardly and disobedient. They were made to wander without any destination or goal, day and night, morning and evening. It is said that all of those who disobeyed the Prophet went wandering around and did not survive. They died in the period of forty years. The survivors were their offspring and the two obedient persons Yoosha' and Kâlib.

The Companions of the Messenger of Allah — Muhammad (ﷺ), on the Day of Badr did not answer like this. Instead, when the Prophet consulted them whether to pursue the Qurayshi army, Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) spoke and gave his best opinion. Likewise, other *Muhâjiroon* (the emigrants) said something similar. The Prophet (ﷺ) kept repeating,

“Give me your counsel.”

Then Sa‘d ibn Mu‘âdh said,

“Perhaps you mean us, O’ Messenger of Allah. By He Who has sent you in truth, if you take us and enter this sea, we will enter it with you. None of us will remain behind. And we do not dislike that you take us to fight our enemy tomorrow. We are patient in war and sincere in fighting. Perhaps Allah may show you from us what may delight your eyes. Then take us with the Blessing of Allah.”

The Prophet (ﷺ) was very happy with what Sa‘d (رضي الله عنه) had said.

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of al-Miqdâd (رضي الله عنه) that he said to the Prophet (ﷺ) on the Day of Badr:

“O’ Messenger of Allah, we will not say to you as the Children of

Israel said to Moosa, ‘Go, you and your Lord, and fight, we are sitting right here.’ Rather, we will say that go, you and you Lord, and fight, and we will fight with you together.”¹¹⁴

We have just seen how Israelites refused to fight the tyrants and because of that, Allah punished them by making them wander around in a land for forty years. This fact, however, is not mentioned in the Bible at all.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“O’ Children of Israel, verily We rescued you from your enemy and We made appointment with you on the right side of Mount Toor. And We sent down *Manna* and *Salwa*. Eat of the good things We have provided you and do not exceed therein which will bring My anger upon you. And on whoever My anger comes will certainly perish. And indeed I am Most Forgiving to one who repents, believes and does righteous deeds and then follows a straight path.”

(*Qur'an* 20: 80-82)

In these verses, Allah informs us of His favours upon the Children of Israel. He rescued them from their enemy and freed them from their slavery. Also, He promised them the companionship of their Prophet Moosa (ﷺ), who He had ordered to come to Mount Toor. The purpose was that Moosa could receive injunctions and teachings which would benefit them in this life and the Hereafter. Similarly, He mentions how He sent down for them *Manna* and *Salwa*, which they were in need of as a result of being in a land where there was no water and no crops. When they woke up in the morning, they found it everywhere. They would take whatever they needed for that day. Whoever took extra, found that it had rotted by the next day. And whoever took a little bit from it, found it sufficed their needs.

¹¹⁴ Ahmad, vol. 4, p. 314.

During summer and at hot times when the sun was scorching, Allah sent clouds, which provided them shades. Allah said in *Soorah al-Baqarah*:

“O’ Children of Israel, remember My favour which I bestowed upon you and fulfill your covenant with Me so that I fulfill My covenant with you. And only Me should you fear. And believe in what I revealed as it confirms the revealed Scriptures you already possess. And do not be the first to reject. And do not buy with My revelation a small worldly price and fear Me Alone.” (*Qur'an* 2: 40-41)

And later in the same *Soorah*:

“And remember when We saved you from the people of Pharaoh who inflicted you with a dreadful punishment, slaughtering your sons and sparing your women. And in that was a tremendous trial for you from your Lord. And remember when We separated the sea for you and rescued you, and drowned the people of Pharaoh while you were looking. And remember when We appointed forty nights for Moosa you took the calf for worship in his absence and you were evildoers. Then after that We pardoned you so that you might be grateful. And We gave Moosa the Scriptures and the Criterion that you might be guided.

And when Moosa said to his people, ‘O’ my people, verily you have wronged yourselves by your taking the calf for worship, so repent to your Creator and kill the evildoers among you. This will be better for you with your Creator.’ Then He accepted your repentance. Indeed He is the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful. And when you said, ‘O’ Moosa, we will not believe in you until we see Allah openly.’ But you were seized by the thunderbolt while you were looking. Then We raised you after your death so

that you might be grateful. And We shaded you with the clouds and sent down on you *Manna* and *Salwa*, ‘Eat of the good lawful things We have provided for you.’ And they did not harm Us but they only harmed themselves.”

(*Qur'an* 2: 49-57)

Again, later in the same *Soorah*:

“And remember Moosa asked for water for his people, We said, ‘Strike the stone with your stick.’ Then twelve springs gushed forth. Each group of people knew its own place for water. ‘Eat and drink of that which Allah has provided and do not act corruptly, making mischief on the earth.’ And remember when you said, ‘O’ Moosa, we cannot endure one kind of food, so pray to your Lord for us to bring forth what the earth grows, its herbs, cucumbers, garlic, lentils and onions.’ He said, ‘Will you exchange that which is better for that which is worse? Go down to any town and you will find what you want.’ And they were covered with humiliation and misery, and they drew on themselves the Wrath of Allah. That was because they used to disbelieve the Signs of Allah and killed the Prophets wrongly. That was because they disobeyed and used to transgress the bounds.”

(*Qur'an* 2: 60-61)

In these verses, Allah mentions His favours and bounties of sending down *Manna* and *Salwa*, which were two kinds of food and they used to obtain them without any effort. In fact, Allah used to send the *Manna* in the morning and *Salwa* birds in the evening. Similarly, He caused the springs to gush forth for them. Moosa (ﷺ) stroke a rock with his staff (as commanded by Allah), and twelve springs gushed out, one for each of their tribes. Allah also provided clouds to give them cool shades from the scorching heat.

All these were great favours and bounties from Allah. However, they did not appreciate them nor thank Allah for them or worship Him as He should be. They asked for this food to be exchanged for what the earth produces, such as herbs, onions, garlic, cucumbers and lentils. Moosa (ﷺ) rebuked them for this desire by saying, "Will you exchange that which is better for that which is worse?" That is, you want to exchange the best for things that are available to every one, young or old. Moosa did not fulfill their demand, however, he said to them to go to a certain place and they will find what they wanted.

All these characteristics mentioned about the Israelites show that they did not desist from what they were forbidden from doing. As Allah (ﷻ) said:

"And do not exceed therein or My anger will come upon you. And on whoever My anger comes will indeed perish. And indeed I am Most Forgiving to him who repents, believes and does righteous deeds, and then follows a straight path."

(*Qur'an* 20: 81-82)

Allah, the All-High said,

"And We appointed for Moosa thirty nights and added to them ten, thus he completed the term appointed by his Lord of forty nights. And Moosa said to his brother Hâroon, 'Take my place among my people and do right, and do not follow the way of those who do corruption.' When Moosa came at Our appointed time and his Lord spoke to him, he said, 'My Lord, show to me so I may look upon You.' Allah said, 'You cannot see Me but look upon the mountain, if it remains firm in its place then you can see Me.' When his Lord manifested Himself to the mountain, it crumbled to fine dust and Moosa fell down in shock. When he regained his consciousness, he said, 'Glory be to You, I repent to You'

and I am the first of the believers.'

He [Allah] said, 'O' Moosa, I have chosen you above all people for My Messages and to speak with Me, so take what I have given you and be among the grateful.' And We inscribed for him on the Tablets the admonitions and explanation of all things [and said], 'Take them with strong will and command your people to follow it according to their best sense. Soon I will show you the abode of the wicked people.'

I will turn away from My Signs those who behave arrogantly without a right on the earth and even if they see every sign, they will not believe in it. And if they see the way of the right conduct, they do not adopt it as the way. But if they see the way of error, they take it as a way. That is because they rejected Our signs and were heedless of them. And those who disbelieve in Our Signs and the meeting in the Hereafter, all their deeds will be in vain. Will they be recompensed except according to what they have done.'"

(Qur'an 7: 142-147)

Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما), Masrooq, Mujâhid and others said: "The thirty nights referred to in the verses are the nights of the month of *Dhul-Qa'dah* and they were completed to forty with the first ten days of *Dhul-Hijjah*."¹¹⁵

So based on this, Allah spoke to Moosa (ﷺ) on the day of 'Eid of sacrifice. And it was the same day when Allah completed His religion of Islam for his Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and established His favours and signs.

Anyhow, the point is that when Moosa completed the term of thirty days, he was fasting. And it is said that he did not need any food in that time. When the end of the month came, he took a leaf of a

¹¹⁵ *Tafseer at-Tabari*, vol. 9, Pp. 32-33.

tree in his mouth and chewed it so his mouth may get a fresh smell. So Allah ordered him to withhold for another ten days, which made it forty days. It is for this reason that we find in a hadith that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“The smell from a fasting person’s mouth is more pleasing with Allah than the fragrance of musk.”

When Moosa (ﷺ) decided to leave for the appointed place, he put his brother Hâroon in charge of the affairs of the Israelites since he was his minister and partner in his mission.

Allah said, “And when Moosa came to Our appointed time,” that is, the time that he was ordered to arrive there. “And his Lord spoke to him.” Allah spoke to him from behind a curtain. However, He made Moosa hear His speech. When it was time for Moosa (ﷺ) to speak, he asked for the curtain to be lifted so he could see Him. “He [Moosa] said, ‘My Lord, show me that I may look upon You.’”

So Allah replied to him saying that he will not be able to withstand if He manifests Himself. He said, “You cannot see Me.” Even though the mountain is stronger and firmer than humans, it is still unable to endure it. That is why He said to Moosa, “But look upon the mountain, if it remains firm in its place then you can see Me.”

Imam Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Moosa (ﷺ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “His curtain is light.”

In another narration, the words are:

“His curtain is fire, had He disclosed it, the light of His Face would burn everything it came upon.”¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ Ahmad, vol. 4, Pp. 401, 405 and Ibn Mâjah in the preface of his *Sunan*.

“When his Lord manifested Himself to the mountain, it crumbled to fine dust and Moosa fell down in shock. When he regained his consciousness, he said, ‘Glory be to You, I repent to You and I am the first of the believers’.”

We have mentioned in the *tafseer* of this a hadith reported by Imam Ahmad and Tirmidhi on the authority of Anas (رضي الله عنه). In it, he says that the Prophet (ﷺ) recited the verse:

“When his Lord manifested Himself to the mountain, it crumbled to fine dust.” And then the Prophet showed this by putting his thumb on the top joint of his little finger and then the mountain crumbled.

As-Suddi narrated from ‘Ikrimah who in turn narrated from Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) who said: “Allah did not manifest except the amount of a little finger, at which the mountain crumbled and became dust. Moosa fell down and became unconscious. After that, Moosa asked for forgiveness for his desire of seeing Him.”

Imams Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Abu Sa‘eed al-Khudri (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Do not prefer me from among the Prophets. Verily, the people will lose their consciousness on the Day of Judgment and I will be first to gain the consciousness. However, I will find Moosa holding one of the legs of the Throne. So I do not know whether he gained consciousness before me or he did not lose his consciousness due to the unconsciousness he already had on Mount Toor?”¹¹⁷

However, this hadith is due to the Prophet’s humbleness or perhaps he may have forbade this while in a state of anger and revenge. It is

¹¹⁷ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Khušoomât*, *Bâb Mâ yadhkaro fî al-Ashkhâṣ*.... and Muslim, *Kitâb al-Fadâ'il Moosa*.

also possible that what he meant was it is not for anyone but Allah to raise some over others in ranks. However, there is no doubt that our Prophet was the best of all mankind.

There are authentically established narrations wherein the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“I will be the leader of the children of Adam on the Day of Judgment, and I show no pride.”

Then the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned the grand privilege which will be given to him on that Day. It will be something that all humans, including the Prophets and Messengers, would have desired, even Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus son of Mary.¹¹⁸

The hadith wherein the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned that perhaps Moosa (ﷺ) did not become unconscious shows the great honour for Moosa. However, at the same time, the hadith is not proof that Moosa was the best in all respects.

Allah said, “O’ Moosa, I have chosen you above all people for My Messages and to speak with Me.” However, this is obviously meant for that specific period of time only and not before or after that. As regards before him, Prophet Ibraheem (ﷺ) was of more privilege than him. And with respect to after him, our Prophet (ﷺ) was higher in rank than both of them. This is clearly seen in the hadith concerning the night of *Isrâ* and *Mi'râj*. In fact, the Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

“I will be given a position that is envied by everyone, even Ibraheem.”¹¹⁹

“So take what I have given you and be among the grateful.” What this means is take what I have given you of Prophethood and

¹¹⁸ Ibn Mâjah, *Kitâb az-Zuhd*, Bâb Dhikr ash-Shifâ'ah.

¹¹⁹ Muslim, *Kitâb al-Musâfi'reen*.

My speech, do not ask extra things and be among those who thank and are grateful.

Allah said, "And We inscribed for him on the Tablets the admonitions and explanation of all things." Those Tablets were made from a very beautiful substance. It is authentically reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Allah wrote the Torah with His Hand. In it were admonitions and details of everything that is needed of *Halâl* and *Harâm*."

Allah said, "I will turn away from My Signs..." This means that He will not give them the correct understanding or the right interpretation in order to ponder. "... those who behave arrogantly without a right on the earth. And even if they see every sign they will not believe it." Even if they witnessed all the miracles and signs, they will not follow the truth.

Allah, the Exalted said,

"And the people of Moosa, in his absence, made a calf out of their ornaments. It had a sound. Did they not see that it could not speak to them nor guide them to a way? Yet they took it for worship and were evildoers. And when they regretted and saw that they had gone astray, they said, 'If our Lord does not have mercy on us and does not forgive us, we will surely be among the losers. And when Moosa returned to his people, angry and grieved, he said, 'What an evil thing is that which you have done in my absence. Did you hasten and go ahead as regards the matter of your Lord?' And he threw down the Tablets and took seize of his brother by his head and dragged him towards him. Hâroon said, 'O' son of my mother, indeed the people judged me weak and were about to kill me. So do not make enemies rejoice over me, nor put me amongst the people who are evildoers.'

Moosa prayed, ‘O’ my Lord, forgive me and my brother, and admit us to Your Mercy, for You are the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.’ Indeed, those who took the calf [for worship], Wrath from their Lord and humiliation will come upon them in the life of this world. Thus do We recompense those who invent lies. But those who committed evil deeds and repented thereafter and believed, surely your Lord after all that is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Merciful. And when the anger of Moosa was calmed down, he took up the Tablets; and in their inscription was guidance and mercy for those who fear their Lord.” (*Qur'an* 7: 148-154)

And the All-High said:

“ And what made you hasten from your people, O’ Moosa?” He said, ‘They are close on my footsteps, and I hastened to You, O’ my Lord, that you might be pleased.’ He [Allah] said, ‘Verily We have tried your people in your absence and the Sâmîri has led them astray.’ Then Moosa returned to his people in a state of anger and sorrow. He said, ‘O’ my people, did not your Lord promise you a fair promise? Did then the promise seem to you long in coming? Or did you desire that wrath should descend from your Lord on you, that you broke your promise to me?’ They said, ‘We did not break your promise to you of our own will, but we were made to carry the weight of the ornaments of the people, then we threw them [into the fire], and that was what the Sâmîri suggested.’

Then he took out for them a calf which seemed to low. They said, ‘This is your god and the god of Moosa, but he has forgotten [his god].’ Did they not see that it could not return them a word and that it had no power either to harm them or to do them good? And Hâroon indeed had said to them before, ‘O’ my people, you are being tried in this, and verily

your Lord is the Most Gracious, so follow me and obey my order.' They said, 'We will not stop worshipping it until Moosa returns to us.' He [Moosa] said, 'O' Hâroon, what prevented you when you saw them going astray; that you did not follow me? Have you then disobeyed me?'

He [Hâroon] replied, 'O' son of my mother, do not seize me by my beard nor my head. Verily I feared lest you should say, 'You have caused a division among the Children of Israel, or you have not respected my word.' He [Moosa] said, 'What then is the matter with you, O' Sâmîri?' He replied, 'I saw what the people did not see, so I took a handful of dust from the track of the messenger and threw it into the fire. Thus my inner self suggested to me.' Moosa said, 'Then go away, and verily your punishment in this life will be that you will say, 'Touch me not.' And surely for a future torment, you have a promise that will not fail. Look at your god to which you have been devoted. We will surely burn it and scatter its ashes into the sea.' Your god is only Allah, none has the right to be worshipped except He. He has full knowledge of all things." *(Qur'an 20: 83-98)*

In these verses, Allah informs us what happened when Moosa (ﷺ) went to the mount Toor for the appointment with his Lord. Moosa remained there in devotion.

A man from among the Israelites whose name was Hâroon as-Sâmîri, took all the jewellery which had been borrowed from Egyptians and moulded it into a calf. Then he took a handful of dust from the footstep of the horse of angel Jibreel (ﷺ) and threw it into it. He had taken this dust when he saw him on the day Allah, the Exalted, the Almighty, drowned Fir'awn (Pharaoh). When he threw the dust into it, it mooed as real calf does. It is said that when the wind entered it from its back and came out from its mouth, it mooed like a cow moos and they would dance and sing around it.

"They said, 'This is your god and the god of Moosa, who he has forgotten.'" That is, Moosa forgot that his Lord is here and thus he went looking for Him elsewhere.

Allah explained the falsehood of what they were upon by saying, "Did they not see that it could not return to them a word, nor had the power to harm or to benefit them?" He also said, "Did they not see that it could neither speak to them, nor guide them to a way? Yet they took it for worship and they were evildoers."

He mentioned that this animal could not even speak or give them an answer. Similarly, it could not benefit or harm them, and could not guide them either. They knew inside themselves that what they were doing was falsehood.

"And when they regretted and saw that they had gone astray, they said, 'If our Lord does not have mercy on us and does not forgive us, we will be among the losers.'"

(*Qur'an* 7: 149)

When Moosa (ﷺ) returned to his people and saw what they were doing of calf worship, he threw down the Tablets from his hands. It says in the Bible that when he did this, they broke into pieces and then Allah later replaced them. However, there is no indication of this in the Qur'an, except that he threw them when he saw what he saw from them.

According to the version in the Bible, there were two Tablets. But in the Qur'an it appears that there were several tablets.

When Moosa (ﷺ) rebuked them and condemned their evil act, they apologized to him with a vain excuse and said, "We were made to bear the burdens of the ornaments of the people and we threw them [into the fire] as the Sâmîri had suggested." (*cf* 20: 87) They felt ashamed of having with them the jewellery of Pharaoh's people. However, they were not ashamed of their ignorance and their

insanity when they worshipped a calf that mooed.

Moosa (ﷺ) then came to his brother Hâroon saying, "O' Hâroon, what prevented you when you saw them going astray? Why did you not follow me?" He meant, why did you not come and inform me when you saw them doing this? Hâroon replied, "I feared lest you should say, 'You have caused division among the Children of Israel.'" He meant, I feared you might say that you left them when I had put you in charge of them in my absence.

"Moosa said, 'O' my Lord, forgive me and my brother, and admit us to Your Mercy, You are the Most-Merciful of those who show mercy.'" Hâroon has prohibited them from committing such an evil act.

Then Moosa (ﷺ) turned to Sâmîri and asked him, "What then is your case, O' Sâmîri?" Meaning, what prompted you to do something like this? He replied, "I saw what the people did not see." What he was referring to was the horse of Jibreel (ﷺ) which others could not see. He took some dust from its footprints and afterwards when he made a calf from gold, he threw this dust into it. So Moosa said, 'Go you, verily for you it will be in this life to say, 'Touch me not.'" This was a supplication against him that no one should touch him in this life, as punishment for his act. Then there was to be another punishment for him in the Hereafter. "And surely there is a threat for you which you cannot fail."

After that, Moosa (ﷺ) turned to the calf and burnt it. Then he said to his people, "Your god is only Allah, none has the right to be worshipped except He. He has full knowledge of all things."

It is said that one morning those who did not worship the calf took out their swords in their hands. Allah had made that morning foggy, thus no one could recognize others. Then they started killing those who had worshipped the calf. It is further suggested that they killed that morning seventy thousand people.

Allah (ﷻ) said,

“And Moosa chose seventy of his people for the appointed time with Us. Then when they were seized with severe trembling, He [Moosa] said, ‘O’ my Lord, if You had willed, You could have destroyed them and me before this. Will You destroy us for what the foolish ones among us have done? This is no more than Your trial by which You leave astray who You please and guide who You please. You are our Guardian, so forgive us and have Mercy upon us, for You are the Best of those who forgive. And ordain for us good in this world and in the Hereafter. We have turned to You.’ He [Allah] said, ‘I afflict My chastisement on who I will and My Mercy encompass all things. So I will ordain it for those who are pious and pay the alms, and those who believe in Our Revelation.’

Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, who they find written of in their own Scriptures, the *Torah* and the *Injeel*. He enjoins on them what is good and forbids them what is wrong, and he makes the pure things lawful to them and forbids them from the impure, and he relieves them from their burdens, and frees them from the fetters which were upon them. So those who believe in him, support and help him, and follow the light which has been revealed to him, verily those are the successful.”

(*Qur'an* 7: 155-157)

As-Suddi, Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) and others said that these seventy people were among their scholars. Along with them were Moosa, Hâroon (peace be upon them), Yoosha‘, Nâdhâb and Abeehu. They all went with Moosa (Moses) (رضي الله عنه) in order to apologize on behalf of the Israelites who worshipped the calf. They were ordered to clean themselves, take a bath and apply perfume. When they approached the Mountain, it was covered with a thick cloud. So only Prophet

Moosa (ﷺ) climbed it.

Muhammad ibn Ishâq said: "Moosa chose seventy people from among the Israelites, who were the best of them, and asked them to go to Allah and seek His forgiveness for the misdeeds of the people who they left behind them. He also asked them to fast and to clean themselves and their clothes."

So Moosa went with them to the mount Toor for the appointment which his Lord had set. He would never go there except when he was granted permission by Allah. The seventy people asked Moosa (ﷺ) if they could hear Allah's speech, and so Moosa said he would.

When Moosa (ﷺ) approached the Mountain, it was covered by clouds. He went closer and after entering the cloud, he said to his people, "Come closer." Whenever Allah spoke to Moosa, he had a bright light on his forehead which no human could look at. The people came even closer and then when they entered the cloud, they fell in prostration. There, they heard Allah speaking to Moosa (ﷺ) and giving him orders. When Allah had finished revealing His Commands to Moosa (ﷺ) and the clouds dispersed, he came to his people. They said:

"O' Moosa, we will not believe in you until we see Allah openly."

(*Qur'an* 2: 55)

As soon as they demanded that, a thunderbolt seized them and they all fell dead. Moosa (ﷺ) then stood in front of his Lord and prayed to Him, "My Lord, if you had willed, You could have destroyed them and me before this. Would You destroy us for what the foolish ones among us have done?" That is, do not punish us for what our ignorant ones have done when they practised the calf-worship, for verily we disown ourselves from their act.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ *Tafseer at-Tabari*, vol. 9, p. 52.

Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما), Mujâhid, Qatâdah and others said: “The thunderbolt seized them because they did not forbid their people from worshipping the calf.”

“This is no more than Your trial.” A number of pious predecessors said that it means: You had ordained this and created the calf so that you could put them to trial in their belief. This is like what Hâroon said when he forbade them saying, “O’ my people, you have been tested by this thing.”

And that is why he said, “You leave astray who You please and guide who You please. You are our Guardian, so forgive us and have Mercy upon us, for You are the Best of those who forgive. And ordain for us good in this world and in the Hereafter. We have turned to You.”

“He [Allah] said, ‘I afflict My punishment on who I will and My Mercy encompasses all things.’” That is, I punish those who I want to with whatever punishment I want from whatever I have created and decreed.

As regards the mercy, it is established that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“When Allah completed the creation of the heavens and the earth, He wrote in a Book, which is put above the Throne, saying, ‘My Mercy overcomes My Wrath.’”¹²¹

“And so I will ordain it [My Mercy] for those who are pious and pay the alms, and those who believe in Our Revelation; those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet.” That is, I will ordain of whomever characterizes himself with these characteristics.¹²².

Qatâdah said that: “Moosa said, ‘My Lord, I find in the Tablets a mention of an Ummah which is the best of Ummah for the guidance

¹²¹ Imams Bukhari and Muslim reported this hadith.

¹²² Bukhari, *Kitâb at-Tawheed* and Muslim, *Kitâb at-Tawbah*.

of mankind. They enjoin good and forbid evil. My Lord, make them my Ummah.' Allah said, 'They are Ummah of Ahmad.'

Then Moosa said, 'My Lord, I find in the Tablets the mention of an Ummah who will be the last of people in coming to life and first of those who enter the Paradise. My Lord, make them my Ummah.' Allah said, 'They are the Ummah of Ahmad.'

Moosa further said, 'My Lord, I find in the Tablets the mention of an Ummah whose Scriptures are in their chest, which they recite. Those before them used to read their Book by looking at them and when they closed their Book, they could not memorize any of it. And Allah has given them the capability of memorizing it which no people of past was given. My Lord, make them my Ummah.' Allah said, 'They are the Ummah of Ahmad.'

Moosa said, 'My Lord, I find in the Tablets the mention of an Ummah who believe in the past Books and in the last Book. They fight the erroneous way, and they even fight the greatest liar of one eyc (*Dajjal* — Pseudo-Christ). My Lord, make them my Ummah.' Allah said, 'They are the Ummah of Ahmad.'

Moosa said, 'My Lord, I find in the Tablets a mention of an Ummah who could eat their charity and still can be rewarded. However, before them, when other people gave something in charity and it was accepted, Allah sent a fire that consumed it. And if it was left, predators and wild birds ate it. And Allah took their charity from their rich and gave it to the poor. My Lord, make them my Ummah.' Allah said, 'They are the Ummah of Ahmad.'

Moosa said, 'My Lord, I find in the Tablets the mention of an Ummah, if one of them had only intended to do good but then could not do it, he will still get the rewards of ten to seven hundred fold. My Lord, make them my Ummah.' Allah said, 'They are the Ummah of Ahmad.'

Moosa said, 'My Lord, I find in the Tablets the mention of an Ummah who could intercede and for whom intercession had been made. My Lord, make them my Ummah.' Allah said, 'They are the Ummah of Ahmad.'"

Qatâdah said: "Then Moosa (ﷺ) threw down the Tablets and said, 'O' Allah, make me from the Ummah of Ahmad.'"

Many people have mentioned numerous narrations in books of what Moosa (عليه السلام) spoke to Allah. All these contain things that have absolutely no basis whatsoever.

Allah, the Exalted said:

"And when We took your covenant and caused Mount Toor to be raised above you, saying, 'Hold fast to that which We have given you and remember that which is therein that you may fear.' But you turned away after that. And if it had not been for the Grace of Allah and His Mercy, you would have surely been among the losers." (Our'an 2: 63-64)

He also said:

"And when we caused the mountain to be raised over them, as if it were a canopy, and they thought it was going to fall upon them; [We said], 'Hold firmly to what We have given you and keep in mind what it contained that you may become pious.' " *(Our'an 7: 171)*

Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) and others said: "When Moosa (عليه السلام) came to them with the Tablets which contained the Torah, he ordered them to accept it with firmness and good will. However they said, 'Show them to us and if its injunctions and teachings are easy, we will take it.' Moosa said, 'No, accept it with all that it contains.' They repeated the same argument several times until Allah ordered the angels to raise the mountain over their heads till it looked like an umbrella. It was then said to them, 'Accept it otherwise this mountain will fall.'

upon you.' So they accepted it and were ordered to prostrate; so they prostrated. This is still known among the Jews today. They say, 'There is no prostration greater than that which removed from us the punishment.'"

Allah said, "But you turned away after that." Even after they had witness this great experience and solid covenant, they broke their pledge and covenant. "And if it had not been for the Grace of Allah and His Mercy on you, you would have surely been among the losers."

The Story of the Cow

Allah (ﷻ) said,

"And remember when Moosa said to his people, 'Allah orders you to slaughter a cow.' They said, 'Do you mean to mock us?' He said, 'I seek refuge in Allah from being among the ignorant.' They said, 'Ask your Lord for us to make clear to us of what kind it should be.' He [Moosa] said, 'He [Allah] says that the cow should neither be too old nor too young, but in between the two. So do what you are ordered.' They said, 'Ask your Lord for us to make clear to us what its colour should be.' He [Moosa] said, 'He [Allah] says it should be a yellow cow, deep and bright in colour as to delight the beholders.'

They said, 'Ask your Lord for us to make clear to us which cow it is, for cows are much alike to us. And if Allah wills, we may be directed to it.' He [Moosa] said, 'He [Allah] says it is a cow unyoked, which has not ploughed the soil nor watered the fields, sound without blemish.' They said, 'Now you have told us the truth.' So they slaughtered it, though they scarcely did it. And remember when you killed

a soul and fell into dispute about it. And Allah brought out what you concealed. So We said, ‘Strike the killed one with a part of the cow.’ Thus Allah brings the dead to life and shows you His signs that you may understand.”

(*Qur'an* 2: 67-73)

Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما), Mujâhid, as-Suddi and others said: “There was among the Israelites a very wealthy man who was old. He had nephews who wished that he died in order to inherit his wealth. One of them killed him one night and threw his body in the middle of the way. In another narration, it says that they threw him on the door of a man from among their people.

In the morning, the people started disputing about him and who his killer was. The nephew of the dead man came and stated crying loudly. Some of them said, ‘Why are you disputing here and do not go to the Prophet of Allah?’ So his nephew went to Moosa (رضي الله عنهما) and complained to him about the murder of his uncle. Moosa said, ‘I ask each one of you in the Name of Allah, that if he has any knowledge about this, he should inform us.’ However, none of them knew anything. So the people asked Moosa to ask his Lord in this matter. When Moosa asked Allah about this matter, He ordered them to slaughter a cow. “And remember when Moosa said to his people, ‘Verily, Allah orders you to slaughter a cow.’ They said, ‘Do you mean to mock us?’” They thought it was a joke because they asked about something and were told to do something seemingly different. Moosa said regarding their reply, ‘I seek refuge in Allah from being among the ignorant.’ That is, I seek refuge in Allah from conveying something on His behalf that He did not reveal to me.”

Ibn ‘Abbâs, Mujâhid, as-Suddi and others said: “If they had slaughtered any cow, it would have been sufficient. However, they kept going into details and thus it was made difficult for them. They then enquired about the characteristics of the cow to be slaughtered. Then they asked about its colour and finally about its age. When

Moosa gave them the answers to all their questions regarding its description, they said, ‘Now you have told us the truth.’”

It is said that they did not find a cow with those descriptions except with a man who was obedient to his parents. When they asked him to sell that cow to them, he refused. They kept on alluring him by increasing the price till he agreed to sell it. As-Suddi mentioned that they even offered to pay for it its weight in gold. But the man refused. Then he finally sold it to them when he was offered a price ten times the weight of its gold.

So when Moosa asked them to slaughter it, they slaughtered it with hesitation. Then Moosa ordered them to hit the dead man with some of its meat. When they did that, Allah brought him back to life. When he stood up, Moosa (ﷺ) asked him regarding his killer? He said, “My nephew killed me.” Then he died again.

Allah said, “Thus Allah brings the dead to life and shows you His signs so that you may understand,” meaning that this is just like you have seen how Allah brought this person back to life from after his death, similarly He will bring back His slaves to life on the Day of Judgment.

The Story of Moosa and Khidr

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“And remember when Moosa said to his attendant, ‘I will not give up until I reach the junction of the two seas or until I spend years and years in travelling.’ But when they reached the junction of the two seas, they forgot their fish and it took its way through the sea as in a tunnel. So when they had passed further on beyond that fixed place, Moosa said to his attendant, ‘Bring us our lunch; truly, we have suffered much fatigue in this, our journey.’ He said, ‘Do you

remember when we betook ourselves to the rock? I indeed forgot the fish; none but *Shayṭān* made me forget to remember it. It took its course into the sea in a strange way.' He [Moosa] said, 'That is what we have been seeking.' So they went back retracing their footsteps. There they found one of Our slaves, on whom We had bestowed mercy from Us and whom We had taught knowledge from Us. Moosa said to him, 'May I follow you so that you may teach me something of that knowledge which you have been taught?' He [Khiḍr] said, 'Verily, you will not be able to have patience with me. And how can you have patience about a thing which you know not?' Moosa said, 'If Allah wills, you will find me patient, and I will not disobey you in any matter.' He said, 'Then if you follow me, do not ask me about anything till I myself mention of it to you.'

So they both proceeded till when they embarked the ship, he [Khiḍr] scuttled it. Moosa said, 'Have you scuttled it in order to drown its people? Verily, you have committed an evil act.' He said, 'Did I not tell you that you would not be able to have patience with me?' Moosa said, 'Do not call me to account for what I forgot and be not hard upon me for my affair.' Then they both proceeded till they met a boy and he [Khiḍr] killed him. Moosa said, 'Have you killed an innocent person who had killed none? Verily, you have committed a prohibited act.' He [Khiḍr] said, 'Did I not tell you that you cannot have patience with me?' Moosa said, 'If I ask you anything after this, do not keep me in your company, you have received an excuse from me.'

Then they both proceeded till when they came to the people of a town, they asked them for food but they refused to entertain them. Then they found therein a wall about to collapse and he [Khiḍr] set it up straight. Moosa said, 'If you had willed, surely you could have taken wages for it.'

Khidr said, ‘This is the parting between me and you, I will tell you the interpretation of things over which you were unable to hold patience. As for the ship, it belonged to the poor people working in the sea. So I wished to make a defective damage in it, as there was a king behind them who seized every ship by force. And as for the boy, his parents were believers, and we feared lest he should oppress them by rebellion and disbelief. So we intended that their Lord should change him for them for one better in righteousness and nearer to mercy. And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the town. And there was under it a treasure belonging to them and their father was a righteous man, and your Lord intended that they should attain their age of full strength and take out their treasure as a mercy from your Lord. And I did not do them of my own accord. That is the interpretation of those things over which you could not hold patience.’”

(Qur'an 18: 60-82)

Some Jewish scholars said that Moosa (ﷺ) went to Khidr (ﷺ) and the incident occurred with him is not the Prophet Moosa but rather someone else called Moosa ibn Mansâ ibn Yusuf ibn Ya'qoob ibn Ishâq ibn Ibraheem. Some Muslim scholars also held this opinion. However, the correct view supported by the clear texts of the Qur'an and Hadith is that he was Moosa ibn 'Imrân (ﷺ), the Prophet, sent to the Children of Israel.

Imam Bukhari reported Sa'eed ibn Jubayr saying, “I said to Ibn 'Abbâs (ﷺ) that Nauf al-Bikâli claims that Moosa (ﷺ) who met Khidr (ﷺ) is not the Moosa who was sent to the Children of Israel.” Ibn 'Abbâs said, “The enemy of Allah has lied. Ubaiy ibn K'ab said to me that he had heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say:

‘Moosa delivered a speech to the Israelites and was asked, ‘Who is the most knowledgeable person?’ Moosa said, ‘I am.’ So Allah reprimanded him, as he did not attribute it to Allah. So Allah

revealed to him, 'I have a slave at the junction of the sea who is more knowledgeable than you.' Moosa said, 'My Lord, how can I find him?' He said, 'Take a fish with you in a water-filled vessel and wherever you lose the fish, the man will be there.'

So Moosa took a fish and put it into a water-filled vessel. He set out and took with him his attendant Yoosha' ibn Noon. When they reached the rock, they lay down on it and fell asleep. At that time, the fish wriggled its way out of the vessel and fell in the sea. When they woke up, his attendant forgot to tell him that the fish has gone. They then continued their journey for the rest of that day and night.

Next day Moosa said to his attendant, 'Bring us our meal, surely we have suffered much fatigue on this journey of ours.' Moosa did not feel tired or sleepy until they passed by the rock. His attendant said, 'Did you see when we betook ourselves to the rock, I forgot the fish, and nothing made me forget it but the *Shayṭān* and it took its way into the sea in a strange way.' Moosa then said, 'This is what we were seeking. And so they returned retracing their footsteps.'

They retraced their footsteps and when they reached the rock, they found a man. Moosa greeted him and said, 'I am Moosa.' He (Khidr) said, 'Moosa son of Israel?' He said, 'Yes and I came to you in order that you teach me from what you have been taught.' He said, 'Surely you will not be able to bear with me patiently.' That is, O' Moosa, I have knowledge from Allah which you do not have and you have what I do not have. Moosa said, 'If Allah wills, you will find me patient and I will not disobey you in any matter.'

Khidr said, 'Then if you follow me, do not question me on anything until I myself mention of it to you. And so they both departed.' They left walking alongside the sea. Then when a ship passed by them, they asked its people to take them aboard. The crew knew Khidr and thus took them on board with no charges.

When they boarded the ship, Khidr took an axe and took out a plant of the ship. Moosa said to him that they took us on board with no charge and you did this to it ... so as to drown those in it? Verily, you have done an evil thing.' He (Khidr) said, 'Did I not tell you that you would not be able to bear with me patiently?' Moosa said, 'Do not take me to account for what I forgot and do not make it difficult for me.'"

The Prophet (ﷺ) said that this was the interruption by Moosa due to his forgetfulness. He added:

"Then a sparrow came and after sitting down on the edge of the ship, dipped its beak once or twice in the sea. Khidr said to Moosa, 'My knowledge and your knowledge when compared to the knowledge of Allah are like what the sparrow took out from the sea with its beak.'

Then they disembarked the ship and started walking along the seashore. At that, Khidr spotted a boy who was playing with other children. He held his head in his hand and plucked it out from his body, thus killing him. So Moosa said, 'Have you killed an innocent soul who did not kill any soul? Verily, you have done a prohibited thing.' Khidr said, 'Did I not say to you that you would not be able to bear with me patiently?' Moosa said, 'If I ask you about any thing after this, then keep me no more in your company; you have received an excuse from me.'

So they both departed, until when they reached the people of a town, they asked them for food, but they refused to entertain them. There they found a wall about to collapse and so he (Khidr) set it up straight.' Moosa said that it was these very people who we requested for food and they refused. And now you set their wall straight. If you wanted, you could have taken payment for that. At that, Khidr said, 'This is the parting between me and you. Now I will tell you the interpretation of that which you could not bear patiently.'"

The Prophet (ﷺ) said after narrating this story:

“We wish Moosa could have been patient so that Allah may have told us more of their story.”

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And when Allah took the covenant of the Prophets, saying, ‘Take whatever I gave you from the Book and the Wisdom, and afterwards there will come to you a Messenger [Muhammad] confirming what is with you. You must then believe in him and help him.’ Allah said, ‘Do you agree to it and will you take up My covenant?’ They said, ‘We agree.’ He [Allah] said, ‘Then bear witness and I am with you among the witnesses.’” *(Qur'an 3: 81)*

We see in this verse that Allah took a covenant from every Prophet that he will believe in all Prophets who come after him and that he will help them. This necessitates that they should believe in Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) because he was the seal of all the Prophets. So every Prophet who might have found him would have had to believe in him and to help him. So for example, if Khiḍr were to be alive in his [Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)] time, he would not have had a choice except to believe in Muhammad (ﷺ), to follow him and to help him. He would have been among the Companions who fought in the battle of Badr. And thus would have been under the command of our Prophet (ﷺ), as Jibreel and other angels were under him.

It is said that Khiḍr (peace be upon him) was a Prophet. This is the right opinion. Or perhaps he may have been a Messenger. Some have suggested that he may have been an angel. Whatever the case may be, Jibreel is the leader of angels and Moosa (ﷺ) is more eminent than Khiḍr. And had he were to be alive, he would have had to believe in Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), and to help him. So how about, as some say, that Khiḍr was a *Wali* (the friend of Allah)? If that were the case, then it would be more appropriate that Khiḍr may be

counted among Prophets and Messengers. There is neither an authentic Hadith nor a weak one which shows that Khiḍr had ever come to the Prophet (ﷺ), and met him.

The Story of Qâroon

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"Verily, Qâroon [Korah] was of Moosa's people but he misbehaved arrogantly towards them. And We gave him of the treasures, that of which the keys would have been a burden to a body of strong men. Remember when his people said to him, 'Do not exult, verily Allah does not like those who exult. But seek, with that wealth which Allah bestowed on you, the home of the Hereafter, and do not forget your portion of lawful enjoyment in this world; and do good as Allah has been good to you, and do not seek mischief in the land. Verily Allah does not like those who are corrupt.' He said, 'This has been given to me only because of the knowledge I possess.' Did he not know that Allah had destroyed before him generations, men who were mightier than him in strength and greater in riches they had collected. Will not criminals be asked about their offences? So he went out before his people in all his glitter. Those who desired the life of this world said, 'If only we had the like that Qâroon has been given. Verily, he is an owner of a great fortune.' But those who had been given knowledge said, 'Woe to you, the reward of Allah is better for those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and this none shall attain it except those who are steadfast.'

So We caused the earth to swallow him and his dwelling place. Then he had no group or party to help him against Allah, nor was he one of those who could save themselves.

And those who had desired his position the day before began to say, 'Do you not know that it is Allah who enlarges the provision and restricts it to whoever He pleases of His slaves. Had it not been that Allah was Gracious to us, He could have caused the earth to swallow us up. Do you not know that the disbelievers will never be successful.' That home of the Hereafter, We shall assign it to those who do not seek pride on the earth, nor wish to make corruption. And the good end is for the pious." (*Qur'an* 28: 76-83)

A 'mash reported from Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that Qâroon (Korah) was the cousin of Moosa (رسول الله). Ibn Jareer said that this was the opinion of most scholars that Qâroon was the son of his uncle.

Allah, the Exalted, mentioned the abundance of his treasures, to the extent that even the keys of those treasures could not be carried except by a group of strong men. It is said that those keys were made of skin and were so many that sixty mules were needed to transport them.¹²³

Good and sincere people had admonished him not to become arrogant. They said, "Do not exult." That is, do not have pride for what you have been given over others. "Verily Allah does not like those who exult. But seek, in that Allah has given you, the home of the Hereafter." They advised him to put his effort and spend wealth in the path of Allah and to obtain rewards from Him in the Hereafter because that is better and everlasting. However, they also said to him, "Do not forget the portion of this life," that is, take all the enjoyment which are allowed for you in this life. "And do good as Allah has been good to you." They advised that he should be good towards the less fortunate people just like Allah was good to him. "And do not seek corruption in the land." He was further advised not to be haughty towards them and not to cause corruption. If he does such a

¹²³ Compare *Tafseer at-Tabari*, vol. 20, Pp. 68, 69.

thing, then whatever he was given would be taken away. This is because, "Verily Allah does not like those who cause corruption."

Despite all this sincere advice, the only thing Qâroon said was, "All that I have is due to a knowledge I possess." He meant that, I do not need to hear all this or what you are directing me to since Allah gave me all this because He knows that I deserve it. If I were not beloved to Him, He would not have given this to me.

Allah rejected his argument by saying, "Did he not know that Allah had destroyed before him generations, men who were stronger than him in might and greater in riches they had collected. Will not the criminals be asked about their offences?" Allah reminded him that He has destroyed many nations in the past due to their sins who were mightier than Qâroon and who possessed more wealth than he did. Thus if he were correct in what he said, Allah would not have punished them and destroyed them. Similarly, being wealthy and powerful is no proof of Allah's mercy. Allah said in this regard:

"It is not your wealth nor your sons that will bring you nearer to Us, but those who believe and do righteous deeds."

(Qur'an 34: 37)

Allah (عز وجل) also said:

"Do they think that in wealth and children with which We enlarge them We hasten to them with good things? Nay, it is a trial but they do not perceive."

(Qur'an 23: 55-56)

Many Qur'anic exegetes said that Qâroon (Korah) came out displaying all the glitter and his wealth, in the form of good clothes, great animals to ride upon and many servants. Among the people were those who longed for the pleasures of this life and wished that they had the same. When some religious scholars around them heard them and what they longed for, they said, "Woe to you, the reward of Allah is better for those who believe and do righteous good deeds,

and none shall attain it except the steadfast." That is, Allah's reward in the Hereafter is better and everlasting. However, only those who Allah guided and made their hearts firm accept this advice.

Allah said, "So We caused the earth to swallow him and his dwelling place. Then he had not any group or party to help him against Allah, nor was he one of those who could save themselves." (*cf 28: 81*) This was the punishment that Allah gave Qâroon when he came out showing arrogance and pride over his people. Imam Bukhari reported from Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنهما) that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

"When a man was walking, dragging his clothes with pride, Allah caused him to be swallowed by earth. Thus he will be sinking into the earth until the Day of Judgment."

Imam Bukhari also reported that Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) and as-Suddî said:

"Qâroon gave some money to a prostitute and asked her to say to Moosa (رضي الله عنهما) in front of everyone, 'You have done with me such and such a thing.' So the woman did as told. When Moosa heard this, he was shaken and became fearful. He prayed two *Rak'ahs*, then came to her and asked her to swear upon her claim. He also asked her why she did such a thing. She informed him that it was Qâroon who asked her to do that. She then sought forgiveness from Allah and repented to Him from her sin. At that, Moosa fell in prostration and invoked Allah's curse upon Qâroon. Allah revealed to him saying, 'I have ordered the earth to obey you in this matter.' So Moosa ordered the earth to swallow him and his house. And thus it happened. And Allah knows best."¹²⁴

It is narrated that when Qâroon (Korah) came out with all his glitter and pride, he passed by a gathering in which Moosa (رضي الله عنهما) was addressing his people. When people saw him, they turned towards

¹²⁴ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Libâs Bâb man jarra thawbahu...*

Qâroon. Moosa asked Qâroon what led him to do such a thing. He said, "O' Moosa, if you have been favoured with Prophethood, then I have been favoured with wealth. And if you wish, we can go to a particular place and you invoke curse upon me and I do the same against you."

So Moosa and Qâroon went with their people. Moosa asked him, "Will you invoke first or should I start?" Qâroon said, "I will invoke first." When he invoked the curse, it was not accepted against Moosa (ﷺ). Then Moosa asked him, "Should I now invoke?" Qâroon said, "Yes." Moosa said, "O' Allah, order the earth to obey me today." Allah revealed to him that He has done so. Moosa said, "O' earth, take them." So the earth sank them up to their feet. Then again he said, "Take them." Then it took them up to their knees. Then up to their shoulders. Then Moosa (ﷺ) said, "Bring their wealth and treasures." So the earth brought them up till they could see it. Then Moosa (ﷺ) said, gesturing with his hand, "Swallow these up." And so they were sunk into it.

When the people who desired similar to what Qâroon had, saw this horrific scene, they said, "Had it not been that Allah was Gracious to us, He could have caused the earth to swallow us up. Do you not know that the disbelievers will never be successful."

Then Allah informed that the life of the Hereafter is the everlasting life which, "We shall assign it to those who do not seek pride on the earth, nor wish to make corruption. And the good end is for the pious."

It is possible that this incident concerning Qâroon may have occurred in Egypt before they left it. Similarly, it could have even happened when they were wandering in desert.

Allah mentioned Qâroon in a number of verses of the Qur'an:

"And We sent Moosa with Our signs and clear authority to

Pharaoh, Hâmân and Qâroon, but they said, ‘A lying magician.’”
(Qur'an 40: 23-24)

Allah also mentioned this in *Soorah al-'Ankaboot* after the story of 'Âd and Thamood:

“And Qâroon, Pharaoh and Hâmân, when Moosa [Moses] came to them with signs but they were arrogant on the earth. But they could not avoid Our punishment. So each of them We seized for his sin. So against some, We sent a rain of stones, and some We seized by the Thunderous Cry, and some We caused the earth to swallow, and some We drowned. And Allah would never wrong them but they wronged themselves.”
(Qur'an 29: 39-40)

Imam Aḥmad reported on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned one day the excellence of the prayer. He said:

“Whoever guards his prayer, it will be a light and salvation for him on the Day of Judgment. And whoever does not guard it, he will not have any light and salvation. And on the Day of Judgment, he will be raised with Qâroon, Pharaoh, Hâmân and Ubaiy ibn Khalaf.”¹²⁵

The Excellence of Moosa (ﷺ)

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And mention in the Book Moosa [Moses], verily he was sincere and he was a Messenger and Prophet. And We called him from the right side of Mount Toor¹²⁶ and We

¹²⁵ Aḥmad, vol. 2, p. 169.

¹²⁶ Mount Sinai, as in the Bible.

drew him nearer to Us in speaking. And We granted to him from Our Mercy his brother Hâroon, a Prophet.”

(*Qur'an* 19: 51-53)

And in *Soorah al-A'râf* it is said:

“He [Allah] said, ‘O’ Moosa, I have chosen you above all people for my Messages and to speak with Me, so take what I have given you and be among those who are grateful.’”

(*Qur'an* 7: 144)

We have already mentioned a hadith from Bukhari and Muslim wherein the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Prefer me not over, for verily the people of Moosa will lose their consciousness on the Day of Judgment and I will be first to regain consciousness. But suddenly I will find Moosa holding one of the legs of the Throne. I do not know whether he gained consciousness before me or he did not lose his consciousness as recompense for his unconsciousness on Toor?”

We also mentioned that it was out of the Prophet's humility that he said this since otherwise, as he himself said, he is the leader of the progeny of Adam (ﷺ) in this world and in the Hereafter.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“Indeed We revealed to you as We revealed to Nooh and the Prophets after him. And We revealed to Ibraheem, Isma'eel, Ishâq, Ya'qoob, the tribes, Jesus, Ayyub, Yunus, Hâroon, and Sulaymân. And We gave Dawood the *Zaboor*. And some Messengers We have narrated to you before and some Messenger We have not narrated to you. And Allah spoke to Moosa directly.”

(*Qur'an* 4: 163-164)

And the All-High said:

“O’ believers, do not be as those who hurt Moosa, then

Allah freed him of what they said of him. And he was highly honoured before Allah.” (*Qur'an 33: 69*)

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

“Moosa was a very shy person, he would cover himself in a way that no skin could be seen. Then some of his people hurt him and said, ‘It seems that Moosa only hides his body because he has some illness on his skin, like leprosy or scrotal hernia or some other defect.’ So Allah wanted to clear Moosa from their claims. One day Moosa went to take a bath and took off his clothes and put them on a stone. When he had finished and came to take his clothes, the stone started running with his clothes. Moosa took his staff and ran after that stone, shouting, ‘My clothes O’ stone, my clothes O’ stone.’ He kept running till he came to a gathering of Israelites. They saw him naked and saw that he possessed the best human body that Allah had created. Thus, Allah cleared him of their claims. The stone stopped and Moosa started hitting the stone with his staff. By Allah, the stone cried with the pain of being hit, for three times, or four times, or five times.”

And this incident is alluded to by Allah in the verse, “O’ believers, do not be as those who hurt Moosa, then Allah freed him of what they said of him. And he was highly honoured before Allah.”

Some scholars said, “He was so honourable before Allah that when he requested his brother to be made his minister, Allah accepted his request and made him a Prophet, Allah said, ‘And We granted to him from Our Mercy his brother Hâroon, a Prophet.’” (*cf 19: 53*)

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of ‘Abdullah (رضي الله عنه) who said:

“Once the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) distributed something to people. A man then said, ‘This distribution was not made to seek Allah’s Face.’

So I came to the Prophet and informed him of that. He became so angry that it could be seen on his face. He then said, ‘May Allah bestow His Mercy upon Moosa, he was hurt more than this but he endured it patiently.’”¹²⁷

There is a hadith reported by Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Malik ibn Ṣa‘ṣa’ that:

“The Prophet (ﷺ) passed by Moosa on the sixth heaven during his Night Journey. Jibreel said to him, ‘This is Moosa, so greet him.’ So I greeted him. He said, ‘Welcome to the pious Prophet and pious brother.’ When I passed him, he cried. When he was asked what had made him cry, he replied, ‘I cried because a boy who was made prophet after me, from his Ummah more people will enter Paradise than from my people.’”

All the narrations which show that when fifty prayers were made obligatory in a day and night upon Prophet (ﷺ) agree that when he passed by Moosa. He (Moosa) said, “Go back to your Lord and ask Him to reduce it for your Ummah because I have dealt with Israclites previously. Also, your people are weaker than mine in hearing, seeing and heart (feeling).” So the Prophet (ﷺ) kept going back and forth between Allah and Moosa till the prayers were reduced to five times in a day and night. And Allah said, “These are five prayers with the rewards of fifty prayers.”

Imam Bukhari narrated that Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) said:

“Once the Prophet (ﷺ) came out to us and said, ‘All the nations were shown to me and I saw a multitude of people which filled the horizon. It was said to me that it is Moosa among his people.’”¹²⁸

¹²⁷ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Anbiyā'*, Bāb 28 and Muslim, *Kitāb az-Zakah*, Bāb 140, 141.

¹²⁸ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Anbiyā'*, Bāb *Wafāt Moosa alayhi Salām*.

Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) also narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

“All the nations were shown to me and I saw a Prophet who had with him many people; then another Prophet who had with him one or two people; then another Prophet who did not have anyone with him; then I saw a great multitude of people. So I asked, ‘Are they my Ummah?’ It was said, ‘No, it is Moosa and his people. However, look up in the horizon.’ When I looked up, I saw a huge multitude of people. Then I was told to look to another side. And again there I saw a huge multitude of people. At that I was told, ‘They are your Ummah and from among them seventy thousand will enter the Paradise without reckoning or punishment.’

After the Prophet said that, he stood up and went inside his house. The people began discussing who these people might be. Some of them said, ‘Perhaps they are those who accompanied the Prophet.’ Some others said, ‘Perhaps they are those who are born in Islam and never associated anything with Allah.’ So they mentioned a number of other things as well. Then the Prophet came out of his house he asked them, ‘What was that you were discussing about?’ So they informed him about their discussion. He said, ‘They are those who do not cauterize, who do not seek healing from spell, who do not take bad omen (in things) and who put their trust only in Allah.’ ‘Ukashah ibn Muhsin al-Asadi stood up and said, ‘Am I among them, O’ Messenger of Allah?’ The Prophet replied, ‘Yes you are among them.’ Then another man stood up and said, ‘Am I from them, O’ Messenger of Allah?’ The Prophet said, ‘Ukkashah beat you with this.’”

Allah mentioned Moosa (ﷺ) and his story many times in the Qur'an and He also praised him. At times, He mentioned the story in detail, while at others, He related it in a summarized form. Quite often, Allah mentioned him and his Book together with the mention of our Prophet (ﷺ) and his Book. For example, He (ﷻ) said:

“And when a Messenger came to them from Allah confirming that which was revealed to them before, a group among the people who were given a Scripture threw the Book of Allah behind their backs as if they knew nothing about it.”
(Qur'an 2: 101)

And in *Soorah Al 'Imrân*:

“*Alif-Lâm-Meem*. Allah, there is none worthy of worship but He, the Ever-Living, the Eternal. He has revealed to you the Book in Truth, confirming the Scriptures revealed before it, and He revealed the *Tawrât* [Torah] and *Injeel* [Gospel], before as guidance for the people, and Allah revealed the Criterion. Verily, those who disbelieve in the revelations of Allah will have a severe punishment. And Allah is Almighty, all able of Retribution.” *(Qur'an 3: 1-4)*

He (ﷺ) in *Soorah al-An 'âm*:

“They did not estimate Allah with an estimation due to Him when they said, ‘Allah has not revealed anything to any human.’ Say, ‘Who then sent down the Book which Moosa brought as a light and guidance to the people, which you divided into fragments, part of which you show to the people and most of it you hide from them, and you were taught that which neither you nor your fathers knew?’ Say, ‘Allah.’ Then leave them to play in their vain discussions. And this is a Book We have revealed, blessed and confirming that which was before it, and for you to warn the mother of all towns [Makkah] and all around it. And those who believe in the Hereafter believe in this Book, and they observe their prescribed prayers.” *(Qur'an 6: 91-92)*

Allah has mentioned the *Tawrât* (Torah) and then mentioned the Qur'an, praising both.

And Allah said in the end of the same *Soorah*:

"Then We gave Moosa the Book, to complete [Our favour] upon those who do right, and explaining every thing in detail, and as a guidance and a mercy, that they might believe in their meeting with their Lord. And this is a Book We revealed, blessed, therefore follow it and fear Allah so that you may find mercy." *(Our'an 6: 154-155)*

And said in *Soorah al-Mâ''idah*:

"So let the people of *Injeel* [Gospel] rule according to what Allah has revealed therein. And whoever does not rule according to what Allah has revealed then such people are the rebellious. And We have revealed to you the Book in truth, confirming what has been revealed before it and as a witness over it." *(Our 'an 5: 47-48)*

Allah made the Qur'an as a witness over all previous Books and as an explainer of what they contain of teachings. This is because the people of earlier Scriptures were entrusted with their Books but they were incapable of preserving them. That is why there are many distortions and clear errors in them.

Allah said in *Soorah al-Anbiyâ'*:

"And We gave Moosa and Hâroon the Criterion and a shining light and a reminder for the pious; those who fear their Lord without seeing Him, and they are afraid of the Hour. And this is a blessed Reminder which We have sent down; will you then deny it?" (*Our'an* 21: 48-50)

And said in *Soorah al-Qasas*:

"But when the true Message came to them from Us, they said, 'If only he [Muhammad] was given the same as what was given to Moosa.' Did they not disbelieve also in what

Moosa was given before, saying, ‘Two magicians assisting each other.’ And they said, ‘Verily we disbelieve in both.’ Say, ‘Then bring a Book from Allah which is a better guidance than these and I will follow it, if you are truthful.’”

(Qur'an 28: 48-49)

Thus praised both the Prophets and both Books. The jinn said to their people:

“We have heard a Book revealed after Moosa...”
(Qur'an 46: 30)

Again in the beginning of the revelation, when our Prophet (ﷺ) related his experience to Waraqah ibn Naufal, he said: “This is the angel who brought revelation to Moosa ibn ‘Imrân.”

In summary, the Shari'ah given to Moosa (ﷺ) was a great Shari'ah. His Ummah was very large in number, where many Prophets were sent to them. They also had scholars, righteous and pious people, as well as kings and rulers. However, their Shari'ah was changed after they passed away.

Prophet Moosa (ﷺ) and his pilgrimage

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) that,

“Once when the Prophet (ﷺ) passed by the valley of Azraq, he asked, ‘Which valley is it?’

They replied, ‘The valley of Azraq.’

The Prophet said, ‘It is as though I am looking at Moosa and he is descending from the mountain trail, praying frequently to Allah with his *Talbiyah*.’ Then when he came to the trail of Harshâ’, he asked, ‘Which trail is that?’ They replied, ‘This is the trail of Harshâ’. The Prophet said, ‘As though I am looking at Yunus on a red she-camel, wearing a woollen garment, the halter of the

camel was made of palm fibre, and he was pronouncing the *Talbiyah*.¹²⁹

Imam Ahmād reported on the authority of Mujāhid who said: “We were sitting with Ibn ‘Abbās when they discussed *Dajjāl*. He said, ‘In between his eyes, there will be written (Arabic) letters ‘*ka fa ra*’ — ك ف ر. Ibn ‘Abbās said, ‘What are they saying?’ He said, ‘They are saying that in between his eyes there will be written (Arabic) letters ‘*ka fa ra*’ — ك ف ر. Ibn ‘Abbās said, ‘I did not hear this from the Prophet (ﷺ). But he said,

‘As for Ibraheem, then look at your Companion (meaning himself). And as for Moosa, he was a man of curly hair, on a red camel with its halter made of palm fibre, it is as though I am looking at him descending from the valley, pronouncing the *Talbiyah*.’¹³⁰

Imam Ahmād reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“I saw ‘Eesa, the son of Maryam, Moosa and Ibraheem on the Night Journey. As for ‘Eesa, he had a broad chest. And as for Moosa, he was a tall man with curly hair.” The Companions asked about Ibraheem? The Prophet replied, “Look at your Companion (meaning himself).”¹³¹

Imam Ahmād again reported with a different chain of narrators on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“On the night of the journey, I saw Moosa ibn ‘Imrān as a tall man with curly hair as if a man from Shanoo’ah (a place in Yemen). I

¹²⁹ Ahmād, vol. 1, Pp. 215, 216 and Muslim, *Kitāb al-Eemān, Bāb al-Isra’ bi Rasool*.

¹³⁰ Ahmād, vol. 1, p. 277.

¹³¹ Ibid, p. 296.

also saw ‘Eesa, the son of Maryam, as man of medium height, with a colour between red and white, and with lank hair.”

The Death of Moosa (Moses) (ﷺ)

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), who said:

“The angel of death was sent to Moosa. When he came to him, Moosa punched him. So the angel went back to his Lord, (ﷺ), and said, ‘You sent me to a slave who does not want to die.’ Allah said, ‘Go back to him and tell him to put his hand on the back of an ox and whatever his hand touches the hair of that ox, he will be granted a year for every hair.’ Moosa said, ‘O’ my Lord, then what will happen?’ He replied, ‘Death.’ So Moosa said, ‘Then now.’ Then Moosa asked Allah to make him die near the Holy Land (Jerusalem), at a distance of a stone throw from it.”

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“If I were there, I would have shown you his grave on the side of the road, near the red sand hill.”¹³²

In another narration Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that,

“The angel of death came to Moosa to take his soul. He said to Moosa, ‘Obey to your Lord.’ But Moosa slapped him and blinded the eye of the angel of death. So he returned to Allah and said, ‘Verily, You sent me to a slave of Yours who does not want to die. He slapped me and blinded me.’ Then Allah made his eye normal again and said,

¹³² Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Anbiyâ'*, *Bâb Wafât Moosa* and Muslim, *Kitâb al-Fadâ'il*, *Bâb min Fadâ'il Moosa*.

‘Return to My slave and ask him, ‘Do you want to live? If you want to live, then place your hand on the back of an Ox and the number of hair your hand touches on its back, you will live that many more years.’ So Moosa asked, ‘Then what after those years?’ He said, ‘Death.’ At that, Moosa said, ‘Then now, O’ my Lord, I want death.’”

Ibn Ḥibbān narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“When the angel of death went to Moosa (ﷺ), he did not know it was the angel of death, since he did not come in his normal form by which Moosa may have recognized him as an angel. This is similar to how Jibreel (ﷺ) once came in the form of a Bedouin and the angels went to Prophets Ibraheem and Looṭ (peace be upon them) as young men. Neither of them recognized the angels for the first time. Similarly, Moosa did not recognize him, slapped him and blinded him, as the angel had entered his house without his permission. This is in accordance with our Shari’ah, wherein we are allowed to do this to someone who looks into our house without our permission.”

Ibn Ḥibbān then reported with a different chain on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“The angel of death came to Moosa to take his soul. He said to him, ‘Obey your Lord.’ So Moosa slapped him and blinded him.”¹³³

Ibn Ḥibbān then explains that, “When Moosa (ﷺ) wanted to slap and blind the angel he said to him, ‘Obey your Lord.’ However,

¹³³ Then Ibn Ḥibbān mentioned the rest of the hadith, which is similar to that reported by Imam Bukhari. *Al-Ihsān bi Tarteeb Saheeh Ibn Ḥibbān*, vol. 8, Pp. 39, 40.

this does not seem correct and does not go with the wording of the hadith since the slapping came after the saying of the angel, ‘Obey your Lord.’”

It is quite possible that Moosa (ﷺ) did not recognize him and thus slapped him since he was expecting to carry out many tasks before his death, such as taking the Israelites out of their wandering and to make them enter the Holy Land. However, it was decreed by Allah that Moosa (ﷺ) will die, after Hâroon (ﷺ), leaving the children of Israel wandering.

Some scholars claim that it was Moosa who took Israelites out of their wandering and entered the Holy Land with them. However, this is against the opinion of the people of earlier Scriptures and also against what the majority of Muslims hold as true.

Among the evidences that support the view that Prophet Moosa died while the Israelites were yet wandering is the saying of Moosa (ﷺ) to his Lord when he had chosen to die, “O’ my Lord, bring me at a stone’s throw distance to the Holy Land.” Had he already entered it, he would not have asked this. So what actually happened is that when his death approached, and the children of Israel were still wandering, he wished to come closer to the land he migrated to and had motivated his people to go to. However, the Divine decree stopped him and took him only as far as the distance of a stone throw. That is why the last Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“If I were there, I would have shown you his grave on the side of the road, near the red sand hill.”

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Anas ibn Mâlik (ﷺ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“When I was taken on the Night Journey, I passed by Moosa who was praying in his grave, near the red sand hill.”

Chapter Sixteen

The Story of Yoosha' (Joshua) (ﷺ)

*H*e is Yoosha' (Joshua) ibn Noon ibn Ephracem ibn Yusuf ibn Ya'qoob ibn Ishâq ibn Ibraheem (peace be upon them all). The Jews call him Joshua, the son of the uncle of Hood.

Allah mentioned him in the Qur'an without actually using his name in the story of Moosa (ﷺ) and Khidr. He said, "And when Moosa said to his attendant." We mentioned previously the authentic report on the authority of Ubaiy ibn K'ab (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said about the attendant that he was Yoosha' (Joshua) ibn Noon.

The people of earlier Scriptures are unanimous that he was a Prophet. In fact, there is a Jewish group called as-Sâmirah who do not believe in the Prophethood of anyone after Moosa (ﷺ) except Yoosha', because he is explicitly mentioned in the *Torah*. They disbelieve in all other Prophets who came after him, even though it is the truth and confirmed by their Lord. May Allah curse them with continuous curses till the day of Judgment.

Ibn Jareer and some others from among the Qur'anic exegetes narrated a report from Muhammad ibn Ishâq concerning Moosa (ﷺ) and the Prophethood of Yoosha'. The story, questionable though, says that, "The Prophethood was transferred to Yoosha' from Moosa towards the end of Moosa's life. It says, Moosa used to meet Yoosha' and ask him regarding the latest injunctions that Allah revealed to him. Once, Yoosha' said to him, 'O' Moosa, I never used to ask you

concerning what Allah revealed to you till you yourself informed me of your own accord.' At that, Moosa disliked to live longer and desired death."

As mentioned earlier, this story is not true because Moosa (ﷺ) used to receive the injunctions and laws from Allah till his death. He has always been an honoured Prophet and of a high status before Allah. We have mentioned before the incident that occurred between him and the angel of death. And Allah said to him that if he wants to live longer, he should place his hand on the back of an Ox and for each hair that his hand touches, he will be given one year of life. Moosa then asked what will happen at the end of those years. When told that he will die, he said, "O' my Lord, then I want death now." He then asked Allah to make him come closer to the Holy Land, at a distance of a stone throw. His request was answered. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

If what Muhammad ibn Ishâq mentioned was taken from the earlier scriptures, then what is mentioned in the *Torah* is that revelation used to come to Moosa (ﷺ) whenever they needed it, right up till his death. Thus, what he mentioned does not seem to be taken from even the Jewish sources.

It is said in the Bible that Allah ordered Moosa and Hâroon (peace be upon them) to organize the Israelites according to their tribes, with each tribe having its own leader. The reason for this was to prepare them to fight the tyrants after they had come out of their wandering. This order was given to them towards the end of the forty years of wandering. It is for this reason that some scholars said: "Moosa slapped the angel of death and blinded him because he did not recognize him since he did not come in the form of an angel. Also, since he was ordered to arrange the Israelites to fight, he expected that it would happen in his time."

However, it was not written in Allah's decree that it would be fulfilled in Moosa's time. It was fulfilled in the time of his attendant Yoosha' (Joshua) ibn Noon.

This is similar to the incident in the life of our Prophet (ﷺ). He wanted to fight the Romans in Syria and he reached Tabuk then returned that year, which was the ninth year of Hijra. He then went for pilgrimage in the tenth year. After he came back, he prepared an army under the command of Usamah (رضي الله عنه) to go to Syria. However, after he had prepared the army, the Prophet (ﷺ) passed away while Usamah was camping in a place called Jurf, outside Madleenah.

When Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) was chosen as the Caliph, the successor to the Prophet (ﷺ) he ordered Usamah and his army to proceed. After Abu Bakr obtained control of the situation in the Arabian Peninsula, he prepared and sent armies to conquer Iraq, Syria, Rome and others.

So this is similar to what happened with Moosa (ﷺ), wherein Allah had ordered him to arrange the Israelites in their twelve tribes to fight the tyrants. Allah said:

"And Allah took the covenant from the Children of Israel and We appointed from among them twelve chieftains. And Allah said, 'Verily, I am with you, only if you establish prayer, pay the alms, believe in My Messengers and stand with them, and lend to Allah a good loan, then I will remove from you your sins and I will admit you to gardens beneath which rivers flow. So whoever of you disbelieves after that, verily he has gone astray from the right path.'"

(*Qur'an* 5: 12)

Ibn Ishâq claimed that the one who conquered *Bayt al-Maqdis* (Jerusalem) was Moosa (ﷺ) and that Yoosha' (Joshua) was only in his army. He then mentioned the story of Bal'âm ibn Bâ'oorâ', about whom Allah (ﷻ) said:

“And narrate to them the story of the one to whom We gave Our Signs. But he turned away from them, then Satan pursued him, thus he became one of those who had gone astray. And had We willed, We could have exalted him thereby, but he inclined towards the earth and followed his lusts. Thus his example is like that of a dog, if you chase it, it lolls out its tongue, and if you leave it alone, it lolls out its tongue. Likewise is the example of the people who disbelieved in Our Revelation. So narrate the stories so that they may reflect. How evil is the example of the people who disbelieved in Our Revelation and they were unjust to themselves.”

(Qur'an 7: 175-177)

According to Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) and others, Bal'âm knew the Great Name of Allah — *Ism al-'Âdham* (with which if He is invoked, He accepts the prayer). His people asked him to curse Moosa (ﷺ) and his people. However, he refused to do as they requested initially. When they persisted their request to him, he rode his she-donkey and went towards the camps of Israelites. When he came close to their camps, his donkey sat down and would not go any further. He hit her till she stood up again. She went only a small distance and then sat down again. This time, he beat her more severely than before. As soon she stood up, she sat down again. When he beat her the third time, she asked him, “O' Bal'âm, where are you going? Can't you see the angels in front of me who are turning my face back? Are you going to go and curse the Prophet of Allah and the believers with him?”

Despite this, he did not dismount her and hit her again till she moved. He reached the top of the mountain Hisbân from where he looked upon the camps of Israelites. When he tried to invoke Allah's curse upon Moosa (ﷺ) and the Israelites, his tongue did not obey him. Instead, his tongue would only curse his own people and send prayers upon Moosa and his people. His people reprimanded him for

this and so he apologized to them that he has no control over his tongue. At that, his tongue lolled out till it reached his chest. Seeing this, he said to his people, "I have lost both this world and the Hereafter, and nothing is left for me except mockery and deception."

He then ordered his people to adorn their women and send them to the Israclites with merchandise so that they could sell their goods and also lure them to themselves such that they might commit adultery. He encouraged them by saying that even if one of them commits the sin, it will be sufficient for them. The people did what he ordered and when they went one of the women, whose name was Kashati, passed by one of the leaders of the Israelites, named Zamri ibn Shaloom. It is said that he was the chief of the tribe of Sham'oon ibn Ya'qoob. He took her inside into his tent. And when he committed the sin, Allah sent the plague upon them. When this news reached to Fanhâṣ ibn al-'Eeazâr ibn Hâroon, he took his spear and stabbed both of them. He then took them out of the tent with his spear and went to the people's assembly with his spear still in his hand. He lifted it towards the sky and said, "O' Allah, this is how we deal with those who disobey You." At that, the plague was lifted from them. As a result of the plague, the number of people died were said to be seventy thousand. In another narration, it is said that they were twenty thousand.

This story of Bal'âm which is mentioned by Ibn Ishâq is correct, a number of other scholars in the past also mentioned it. Some of this story is also related in the Bible.

No matter what the story, the point is that according to the opinion of majority of the scholars, Hâroon (؏) died while the Israelites were still wandering. His death was two years before the death of his brother Moosa (؏). Moosa also died while they were in wilderness, as we have already mentioned. He had asked Allah to bring him closer to the *Bayt al-Maqdis* and was subsequently the prayer was granted.

The correct version of the incidents seems to be that the one who brought them out of their wandering and then took them to the Holy Land was Yoosha' ibn Noon. In the Bible, it says that he crossed the Jordanian river with them and came to Areeħah. This place, Areeħah, was one of the most beautiful cities, containing a large population and huge palaces. He surrounded it for six months after which he ordered them to march around the city and to horn using trumpets. Then they all shouted with the *Takbeer* very loudly, resulting in the collapse of walls of the city. They all went in, took every thing in it as booty and killed twelve thousand men and women. They also fought against many kings, so much so that it is said that Yoosha' (Joshua) overpowered thirty-one kings of Syria.

It is mentioned that the siege laid by the Israelites lasted till Friday, after *Aṣr* time. When the sun set and Saturday was to set in before them, which was a holy day for them at that time, Yoosha' said to the sun, "You are commissioned and I too am commissioned as well. O' Allah, withhold it back from setting." So Allah held it back till they were able to conquer the city. It is also said that the moon was also stopped from rising.

Imam Ahmād reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"Verily the sun was never held back from setting except for Yoosha', when he was going to *Bayt al-Maqdis*."¹³⁴

Imam Ahmād also reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"One of the Prophets went for a battle and said to his people, 'No one should come with me who has just married but has not yet slept with her; and no one who has built a house but did not put its

¹³⁴ Ahmād, vol. 2, p. 325, following the Bulcharī Standard.

roof yet; and no one who has bought pregnant goats or camels and is waiting for them to deliver.' So that Prophet went for the battle and approached the town soon after he had prayed the 'Asr prayer. He said to the sun, 'You are commissioned and I too am commissioned. O' Allah, withhold it back for sometime.' So it was held back till Allah helped him conquer the town.

Then they all gathered the spoils of the war and a fire then came to eat the spoils but did not eat it. The Prophet then said, 'There is a person among you who has cheated from the spoils.' He then asked one man from each tribe to come forward and make a pledge to him. They all came and pledged to him except one man, his hand got stuck to the hand of the Prophet. The Prophet said, 'The person who cheated is from your tribe, so order everyone of your tribe to make a pledge to me.' They came and when they offered their pledge to him, the hands of two or three people got stuck to the Prophet's hand. So he said, 'You are the people who cheated and took from the spoils of war.' So they gave gold, equivalent to the head of a cow. They put it together with other spoils and the fire came and ate it all. The spoils of war were not permissible for anyone before us. But when Allah saw our weakness and inability, He purified it for us."

The point is that when they entered the city of Areehah, they were ordered to enter it with humbleness bowing their heads and thanking Allah for their victory. They were also ordered to say while entering, '*Hittatun*', meaning: forgive us our sins which we have committed in the past.

That is why we find that when the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) entered Makkah on the day he conquered it, entered it on his camel with humbleness bowing his head, thanking and praising Allah, the Almighty, All-Merciful. In fact, he lowered his head so much that his beard touched the back of the camel. After entering, the Prophet (ﷺ) took a bath and prayed eight *Rak'ahs* as prayers of gratitude. It is said

that it was the forenoon — *duḥa* — prayer, that means it was the *duḥa* time.

As for the children of Israel, they disobeyed the orders given to them both in words and deeds and entered the city while creeping on their buttocks and saying, “A grain in a hair” (instead of saying, *Hittatun* as ordained). In another version, it is mentioned that they were saying, “A wheat in a hair” — *Hittatun fee shay'rah*.

The point is that they changed what they were ordered to do and mocked at the instructions. Allah (ﷻ), said about this in *Soorah al-A'rāf*, revealed in Makkah:

“When it was said to them, ‘Dwell in this town and eat from it wherever you please, and say we beg Allah’s forgiveness, --- *Hittatun* — and enter the gate prostrating [bowing your head], We will forgive you your sins, and increase the rewards of the good doers.’ However, those who were wrongdoers among them changed the word from that which had been told to them to say, so We sent on them a torment from the heaven in return for their wrongdoing.”

(Qur'an 7: 161-162)

And in *Soorah al-Baqarah*, revealed in Madeenah:

“And when We said, ‘Enter this town and eat freely wherever you please, and enter the gate prostrating, and say, --- *Hittatun* — ‘We beg Allah’s forgiveness,’ so that We forgive you your sins and We shall increase the reward of the righteous.’ However, those who were wrongdoers changed a saying other than that which had been said to them. So We sent down on the wrongdoers a torment from the heaven for their transgression.” *(Qur'an 2: 58-59)*

Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) said: “They entered it in a manner and state contrary to what they were ordered.”

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

"It was said to the children of Israel, 'Enter the gate prostrating, and say, '*Hittatun* — We beg Allah's forgiveness,' so that We forgive you your sins.' However, they changed it and entered it while creeping on their buttocks and instead said, '*Habbah fee Shay'ratin* — a grain in a hair.'"

Allah mentioned that He punished them for their disobedience by sending upon them a plague. This is also established in an authentic report from Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Usâmah ibn Zayd (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

"Those who were before you were punished by the plague."

After the children of Israel conquered *Bayt al-Maqdis*, they remained in it for a long time. The Prophet of Allah, Yoosha' (Joshua) (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) stayed with them and ruled among them with the Book of Allah, the Torah. He did this till Allah took him away at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven years. Thus he lived after Moosa (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) for twenty-seven years.

Chapter Seventeen

The Story of Khidr (ﷺ)

We have mentioned previously how Moosa (Moses) (ﷺ) set out on a journey to seek knowledge that Khidr (ﷺ) possessed. Allah narrated this story in His Book, in *Soorah al-Kahf*. We mentioned at that time the details of this story and also the hadith wherein the name of Khidr is clearly mentioned and also that it was Moosa ibn ‘Imrân, the Prophet of the children of Israel upon whom the Torah was revealed, who went to him to seek knowledge.

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Khidr was called Khidr because he sat on a white fur which then started shaking from behind him and became green.”¹³⁵

We have already mentioned earlier that when Moosa and Yoosha‘ (Joshua) (peace be upon them) retraced their footsteps, they found Khidr (ﷺ), sitting on a velvet like green carpet. He covered himself with a cloth by putting its both ends under his head and feet. When Moosa (ﷺ) greeted him, he uncovered his face and returned the greeting and asked, “Who are you?” He said, “I am Moosa.” He said, “The Prophet of the children of Israel?” He answered, “Yes.” Allah then narrated the rest of the story in His Book.

There are many indications in the context of the story which show that Khidr (ﷺ) was a Prophet. Firstly: the saying of Allah:

¹³⁵ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Anbiyâ'*, *Bâb Hadîth al-Khidr ma'a Moosa*.

“Then they found one of Our slaves upon whom We had given mercy from Us and We taught him knowledge from Us.”

(*Qur'an 18: 65*)

Secondly: Moosa (ﷺ) said to him:

“Can I follow you so that you may teach me of what you have been taught of right knowledge?” He [Khidr] said, “Verily, you will not be able to have patience with me. And how can you bear patiently what you have never encompassed in your knowledge?” He [Moosa] said, “If Allah so wills, you will find me patient and I will not disobey you in any matter.” He [Khidr] said, “Then if you follow me, do not question me about anything until I myself mention of it to you.”

(*Qur'an 18: 60-70*)

Thus if Khidr (ﷺ) was a *Wali* and not a Prophet, Moosa (ﷺ) would not have addressed him in this manner and Khidr would not have answered him in this way. In fact, Moosa even requested to accompany him in order to benefit from the knowledge which Allah had granted him only. If he was not a Prophet, he would not have been infallible and thus Moosa would not have had a great desire to learn from him, especially he himself being a great Prophet and infallible. How, then could he acquire knowledge from someone who is not infallible? Similarly, Moosa would not have gone in search for him nor would he have shown such humbleness when he first met him. This clearly shows that Khidr (ﷺ) was a Prophet just like Moosa (ﷺ). The difference between the two is that Allah granted Khidr special knowledge which He did not grant Moosa.

Thirdly: Khidr killed the boy. This act was not possible unless revelation had come to him from Allah concerning the boy. This by itself is a clear proof of him being a Prophet and of him being infallible because it is not permissible, even for a pious person, to kill anyone on the basis of something that occurs to him. This is because

a pious person is not infallible and thus can commit errors. Similarly, Khidr (ﷺ) had the knowledge concerning the boy that when he reaches the age of puberty, he will become a disbeliever and thus his parents will follow him due to their strong love of their son. Thus in killing the boy, there was a great benefit of protecting his parents' religion, which outweighed the benefit of him remaining alive. Again, this is a clear sign of his Prophethood.

I saw myself that Abu al-Faraj ibn al-Jawzi used this as proof of Khidr's Prophethood. Similarly, it is reported that ar-Rummâni also used this as evidence.

Fourthly: At the end when Khidr (ﷺ) informed Moosa (ﷺ) about the reasoning behind his actions, he said:

“A mercy from your Lord; and I did not do it of my own accord.”
(*Qur'an 18: 82*)

That is: What I have done was not something of my own accord; rather it was an order and a revelation to me.

All these points indicate that Khidr (ﷺ) was a Prophet, which does not necessarily contradict him being a *Wali* and a Messenger as well. The suggestion of his being an angel is very strange. Now that it is proved from what has preceded that he was a Prophet, there is no reason to discuss whether he was a *Wali* or not.

As regards whether Khidr (ﷺ) is alive in our time or not, the majority of the scholars hold the opinion that he is still alive. They said that he buried his father Adam (ﷺ) when they were coming out of the plague and thus the supplication of Adam for long life was answered for him. Others suggested that he drank from the spring of life, thus he is alive. These scholars mentioned many hadiths in this regards to prove their opinion.

Ibn al-Jawzi (may Allah have mercy upon him) analysed these hadiths in his book titled, '*Ijâlah al-Muntâdhîr fee Sharh Hala al-*

Khidr. He proved that all these hadiths are fabricated. Similarly, as regards the sayings of the Companions and those who came after them on this issue, he again explained that all these reports are weak.

The other opinion concerning *Khidr* is that he has died. The prominent scholars who held this opinion are Imam Bukhari and Ibn al-Jawzi. Ibn al-Jawzi wrote a book '*Ijālah al-Muntadhir fee Sharḥ Hala al-Khidr*' put forward many arguments to support this opinion.

Among the proofs is the verse:

“And We did not ordain to any human to live for ever.”

(*Qur'an* 21: 34)

So if *Khidr* is a human being, then he comes under the generality of this verse. There can be no doubt in this since it is not permissible to make him an exception from this without an authentic proof. And we know that in this issue, there is no authentic proof to state that *Khidr* (ﷺ) does not come under the generality of this verse.

Again there is another verse to support, that is:

“And remember when Allah took the covenant of the Prophets saying, ‘Take whatever I gave you from the Book and *Hikmah* [understanding of the Laws of Allah], afterwards there will come to you a Messenger confirming what is with you; you must then believe in him and help him.’ Allah said, ‘Do you agree to it and will you take up My Covenant?’ They said, ‘We agree.’ He [Allah] said, ‘Then bear witness, and I am with you among the witnesses.’”

(*Qur'an* 3: 81)

Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) said regarding this:

“Allah never sent a Prophet but He took a covenant from him that if Muhammad is sent while this Prophet is alive, he should believe in him and help him. Then He ordered the Prophets to

take this covenant from his people also, that if Muhammad is sent while they are alive, then they should believe in him and help him.”¹³⁶

So if Khidr was a Prophet or not, comes under this covenant, and thus if he was alive in the time of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), it would have been best for Khidr (ﷺ) to come to him and to believe in what Allah sent down to him and help him against his enemies. And if he were a *Wali*, then Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) would be better than him. And if he were a Prophet, then Moosa (ﷺ) would be better than him.

Imam Ahmad reported in his *Musnad* on the authority of Jâbir ibn ‘Abdullah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, if Moosa was alive, he could not have done anything except to follow me.”¹³⁷

This is one of the fundamental beliefs of this religion, for which there is support from the above verse, that if all the Prophets were alive during the time of our Prophet (ﷺ), they would all have been among his followers, under his instruction and his Shari‘ah would have applied to them also. This is like the incident of the Night Journey, when we know that our Prophet (ﷺ) was given the highest position above all of them. Also, when he was at *Bayt al-Maqdis* and the time of prayer came, Allah ordered him through Jibreel (ﷺ) to lead all the Prophets in prayer. In fact, he led them in prayer in a place which had been their homes in their past. This shows that our Prophet (ﷺ) is their leader and the seal of Prophethood. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

From this, it can be concluded that if Khidr were to be alive in the time of our Prophet (ﷺ) he would have been one of his Ummah and among those who had no choice but to follow his Shari‘ah. Even

¹³⁶ Imam Bukhari reported this saying from Ibn ‘Abbâs.

¹³⁷ Ahmad, vol. 3, p. 387.

'Eesa, the son of Maryam, (peace be upon them), when he descends to earth close to the Day of Judgment, he will rule by this pure Shari'ah of our Prophet (ﷺ). This is despite the fact that he is one of the five great Prophets and the last to be sent to the children of Israel. We know for sure, due to the absence of any authentic or acceptable hadith, that Khidr (ﷺ) never met our Prophet (ﷺ) at all and he never participated in any of the battles against his enemies.

On the day of the battle of Badr, our Prophet (ﷺ) supplicated to Allah for help and victory against his enemies by saying:

"O' Allah, if this group of believers are destroyed, You will not be worshipped on this earth again."

In that group were the best of the Prophets and the prominent angels even the arch-angel, Jibreel (ﷺ). Had Khidr (ﷺ) were alive, it would have been the noblest act for him to be present in that battle.

Ibn al-Jawzi reported in his book *Ijâlah* that Qâdi Abu Yala' al-Hanbali said: "One of our scholars was asked concerning Khidr, is he dead? He said, 'Yes, he is dead.' Then he said, 'Similar view reached me from Abu Tâhir al-Ghubâri. They all argued that if he were to be alive, he would have come to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).'"

If it is said that maybe he was present but people just could not see him. The answer is: there is a very remote probability and we cannot specify the general natures of the evidences on the basis of mere imaginations. And if this was the case, then what made him decide to hide from the people? For him to come out and meet the Prophet (ﷺ) would have been more rewarding for him and would have made his miracle of living such a long time more prominent. Furthermore, if he were to be alive even after the Prophet's (ﷺ) death, it would be better for him to convey the Qur'anic teachings and the hadiths to people. Similarly, it would have been better for him to expose the forged hadiths and to fight against the heretical people.

He could have benefited the people, both in the matters pertaining to their life and death. Anyone who considers these points will see the truth. However, it is Allah Who guides whoever He wishes to the straight path.

Among other evidences which support the view that Khidr (ﷺ) has died is a hadith reported by Imam Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them). In this hadith, he said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) finished praying his 'Isha' prayer one night and then said:

"Have you seen this night of yours? No one who exists now on the face of this earth will survive at the end of one hundred years."¹³⁸

Imam Ahmad reported a similar narration on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) finished his 'Isha' prayer one night during the last days of his life. After saying *salām*, that is, after the end of the prayer, he stood up and said:

"Have you seen this night of yours? At the end of one hundred years from now, no one who is alive on earth now will survive."¹³⁹

In another narration reported by Imam Ahmad on the authority of Jâbir ibn 'Abdullah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said a little or about a month before his death:

"No living soul (or no living soul from among you today) will survive by hundred years."

Ibn al-Jawzi said that all these authentic hadiths clearly prove, without a doubt, that the claim of Khidr (ﷺ) being alive is false.

¹³⁸ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Muwâqeet al-Mawâqeet*, Bâb as-Samar fee al-Fiqh wa al-Khayr Ba'd al-'Isha' and Muslim, *Kitâb Fadâ'il as-Shâhâbah*, Bâb lâ Tâ'ee Mi'ah Samah... (Eng. trans. vol. 4, p. 1348).

¹³⁹ Ahmad, vol. 2, p. 88, also see the hadith referred to before.

Chapter Eighteen

The Story of Prophet Ilyâs (ﷺ)

Allah (ﷻ), said in *Soorah as-Sâffât*, after the story of Moosa and Hâroon (peace be upon them):

“And Ilyâs was one of the Messengers; when he said to his people, ‘Will you not fear Allah? Do you invoke Bâ’l and forsake the Best of the creators? Allah, your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers?’ But they denied, so they will certainly be brought forth; except the chosen slaves of Allah. And We left for him a good remembrance among the later generations. Peace be upon Ilyâs. Verily, thus do We reward the good doers; verily, he was one of Our believing slaves.”
(Qur'an 37: 123-132)

Genealogists said that his name was Ilyâs an-Nashabi. He is also called Ibn Yâseen ibn Fanhâş ibn al-'Feezâr ibn Hâroon.¹⁴⁰ It is also said that his name was Ilyâs ibn al-Â'zar ibn al-'Eezâr ibn Hâroon.

He was sent to the people of Bâ’labak, to the west of Damascus. He invited them to worship Allah and forbade them from the worship of an idol called Ba’lâ and the female god was called Bâ’l. That is why Allah said: “Do you invoke Bâ’l and forsake the Best of creators? Allah, your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers?”

When he did that, his people denied and rejected him, and wanted to kill him even. It is said that he fled and hid from them. In

¹⁴⁰ Ibn Asâkir, *Tahzeeb*, vol. 1, p. 98.

this context, Ka'b al-Aḥbâr said: "Ilyâs (ﷺ) hid from the king of his people by going into a cave for ten years. When Allah destroyed that king and another replaced him, Ilyâs (ﷺ) came to him and presented to him Islam. He accepted the invitation and along with him, a large number of his people also became believers. About ten thousand of his people did not believe so the king ordered their killing, which was carried out."

There are many hadiths concerning some details about Ilyâs (ﷺ). However, they all are weak. Similar to Khidr (ﷺ), it was said that Ilyâs too did not die. However, the correct opinion is that both of them have died.

Chapter Nineteen

The Story of Hazqeel (ﷺ)

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“Have you not seen those who fled their homes in thousands for fear of death. Then Allah said to them, ‘Die,’ then He gave them life. Verily Allah is Bountiful to the people but most of the people are ungrateful.” (*Qur'an 2: 243*)

Muhammad ibn Ishâq reported Wahb ibn Munabbih as saying: “When Kâlib ibn Yoofana died after Yoosha‘, Hazqeel ibn Boodhi succeeded him as a Prophet of the children of Israel.”

Ibn Ishâq said: “The Israelites fled from their houses for the fear of plague and settled down in the plateau. So Allah said to them, ‘Die’ and they all died. Then a fence was erected around where they lay dead so that wild animals would not eat them. After a very long time, a few centuries, Hazqeel (ﷺ) passed by them. He stopped and started reflecting. It was said to him, ‘Would you like that Allah resurrect them while you are watching?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ So he was ordered to call out to the bones to come back to life and to have the flesh upon them, muscle by muscle. So he called them due to Allah’s order and all the people stood up and said, *Allâhu Akbar*, like one man.”

According to a number of Companions (may Allah be pleased with them): “There was a town called Dâwardân where a plague inflicted the people. So the majority of its inhabitants fled and camped outside the town. Whoever remained behind perished except a few. When the plague finished, all those who fled returned to their

town. The few who survived from among those who remained behind in the town said, ‘These people were more intelligent than us; if we had done as they did, we all would have survived. If the plague comes again, we all will flee with them.’

Later on, the plague inflicted them again and this time, they all fled together. Their number exceeded thirty three thousand. They camped in the same place as they did before, in the valley of Afeeh. An angel from the bottom of the valley and another from the top called out to them saying, ‘All of you die.’ So they all died.

After a long time from this incident, a Prophet by the name of Hazqeel passed by them. When he saw their state, he stopped and began reflecting, twisting his fingers and jaws. Then Allah revealed to him, ‘Do you want that I show you how I bring them to life?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ So he was asked, ‘Call out to them.’ He called, saying, ‘O’ bones, Allah orders you to come together.’ So the bones started flying towards each other and became skeletons. Then Allah ordered him to call, ‘O’ bones, Allah orders you to put on flesh.’ So they started putting on flesh and blood, and the clothes in which they died. Then he was ordered to call them, ‘O’ bodies, Allah orders you to rise.’ So they all stood up.”

Mansoor claimed that Mujāhid said: “When they came to life, they said, ‘Glory be to You, O’ Allah, and praise is due to You; there is none worthy of worship except You.’ Then they all returned to their people who knew that they were dead before. After that, they lived their full lives, which had been written for them.”

Imams Ahmād, Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (ؑ) that once Caliph ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ؓ) went to Syria. When he reached a place called Sargh, the commanders of the Muslim army Abu ‘Ubaydah and others met him and informed him that a plague has inflicted Syria. ‘Umar then consulted the Companions, both the *Muhājireen* and *Anṣār*. They could not come to an agreement as to what to do next. Then came

‘Abdur-Rahmân ibn ‘Auf (رضي الله عنه)، who was away for some reason, said, “I have some knowledge about this issue. I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say:

‘If a plague inflicts a place and you happen to be there, then do not come out of it fleeing from it. And if you hear about it inflicting another place, then do not enter it.’ So ‘Umar praised Allah and then went back.’”¹⁴¹

Muhammad ibn Ishâq said: “Nothing was mentioned to us regarding the period Hazqeel (رسول) stayed among the children of Israel and even regarding his death. However, after his death, the children of Israel forgot their covenant with Allah and started worshipping idols. Amongst the idols they worshipped was an idol called Bâ’l. Then Allah sent to them Prophet Ilyâs ibn Yâseen ibn Fanhâs ibn al-‘Eezâr ibn Hâroon ibn ‘Imrân.”

We have already mentioned the story of Prophet Ilyâs (رسول) earlier after the story of Khiðr (رسول) since they are often mentioned together and also since their story came after the story of Prophet Moosa (Moses) (رسول) in *Soorah as-Sâffât*. And Allah knows best.

¹⁴¹ Ahmad, vol. 1, p. 182; Bukhari, *Kitâb at-Tibb*, *Bâb Mâ yuzkar fee at-Tâ’oon* and Muslim, *Kitâb as-Salâm*, *Bâb at-Tâ’oon wa at-Teerah*.

Chapter Twenty

The Story of al-Yasa' (Elisha)

Allah mentioned him along with other Prophets in *Soorah al-An'am*, saying:

"[And We guided] Isma'eel, al-Yasa' [Elisha], Yunus [Jonah] and Loot [Lot]. And to all We favoured over the nations." *(Qur'an 6: 86)*

And Allah (ﷻ), said in *Soorah Sad*:

"And mention Isma'eel, al-Yasa' and Dhul-Kifl; and they were all of the best." *(Qur'an 38: 48)*

Muhammad ibn Ishâq reported from Hasan al-Bâsri as saying: "Al-Yasa' came after Ilyâs, peace be upon them. He stayed among them for as long as Allah willed, calling his people to the way of Allah and following the laws and Shari'ah revealed to Ilyâs (ﷺ). He did this till he passed away. Then evil actions spread among the people, including transgression against people. They even killed Prophets."

Ibn Asâkir said that his lineage was al-Yasa' ibn 'Adee ibn Shootlam ibn Afrâtheem ibn Yusuf ibn Ya'qoob ibn Ishâq ibn Ibraheem. It is said that he was the cousin of Prophet Ilyâs (peace be upon them). It is also said that he hid with Ilyâs (ﷺ) in the cave when the latter hid from the king of Bâ'labeck. When Ilyâs (ﷺ) came out of his hiding, al-Yasa' (ﷺ) also went with him to his people. When Ilyâs died, al-Yasa' took over his mission when Allah made him a Prophet to his people.

Chapter Twenty One

The Story of Shamweel (Samuel) (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“Have you not thought of what happened with the elders of the children of Israel after Moosa? When they said to a Prophet of theirs, ‘Appoint for us a king and we will fight in the way of Allah.’ He said, ‘Would you then refrain from fighting, if fighting was prescribed for you?’ They said, ‘Why should we not fight in Allah’s way while we have been driven out of our homes and our children have been taken as captives?’ But when fighting was ordered for them, they turned away, all except a few of them. And Allah is All-Aware of the wrong doers. And their Prophet [Shamweel] said to them, ‘Indeed, Allah has appointed Tâloot as a king over you.’ They said, ‘How can he be a king over us when we are fitter than him for the kingdom, and he has not been given enough wealth.’ He said, ‘Verily, Allah has chosen him above you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature. And Allah grants His kingdom to whom He wills. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures’ needs, All-Knower.’ And their Prophet [Shamweel] said to them, ‘Verily the sign of His kingdom is that there shall come to you a wooden box [Tâhoot], wherein is peace and reassurance [Sakeenah] from your Lord and a remnant of that which Moosa and Hâroon left

behind, carried by the angels. Verily, in this is a sign for you if you are indeed believers. When Tâloot set out with his army, he said, ‘Verily, Allah will try you by a river. So whoever drinks thereof, he is not of me, and whoever does not taste it, he is of me, except him who takes thereof in the hollow of his hand.’ Yet they drank thereof, all except a few of them. So when he had crossed it [the river], he and those who believed with him, they said, ‘We have no power this day against Jâloot [Goliath] and his hosts.’ But those who knew with certainty that they were going to meet Allah, said, ‘How often a small group overcome a mighty host by Allah’s leave.’ And Allah is with the patient.’ And when they advanced to meet Jâloot [Goliath] and his forces, they invoked, ‘Our Lord, pour forth on us patience, and set firm our feet and make us victorious over the disbelieving people.’ So they rooted them by Allah’s leave, and Dawood killed Jâloot [Goliath], and Allah gave him the kingdom and Prophethood, and taught him of that He willed. And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But Allah is full of bounty to the creation.”

(Qur'an 2: 246-251)

Most exegetes said that the Prophet mentioned in the above verses is Shamweel. It is said he was Sham'oon, some others held that Sham'oon and Shamweel are the same. And some of them suggested that he was Yoosha'. However, it does not seem to be correct because, as Ibn Jareer pointed out in his book of history, the difference between Yoosha' and Shamweel was four hundred and sixty years.

The point is that when these people faced tough times and enemies, and became exhausted by wars, they asked the Prophet of Allah of the time, to appoint a king for them, under whose command they could unite and fight their enemies. The Prophet (Shamweel)

knew the weakness and history of his people, and said to them, "Would you then refrain from fighting, if fighting was prescribed for you?" But their answer was, "Why should we not fight in Allah's way while we have been driven out of our homes and our children have been taken as captives?" What they meant was that we have been oppressed and separated from our wives and children, so how could we refuse to fight against our enemies?

Allah informs us, "But when fighting was ordered for them, they turned away, all except a few of them. And Allah is All-Aware of the wrong doers." As is mentioned at the end of the story, only a few crossed the river with their king, while the rest turned away from fighting.

"And their Prophet [Shamweel] said to them, 'Allah has appointed Tâloot as a king for you.' Thalabi said that this king's name was Tâloot ibn Qeesh ibn Afeel ibn Sârû ibn Tahoorat ibn Afeeh ibn Unays ibn Benyameen ibn Ya'qoob ibn Ishâq ibn Ibraheem. 'Ikrimah and as-Suddi said that he was a water carrier; while Wahb ibn Munabbih said that he was a tanner. Others have said other things. And Allah knows best.

That is why the children of Israel said, "How can he be a king over us when we are fitter than him for the kingdom, and he has not been given enough wealth?" It is said that Prophethood was assigned to the progeny of Levi, while kingship was given to Yahoodha's progeny. Thus when they saw that this king (Tâloot) was from the progeny of Benyameen. They rejected him and tried to find faults with him and said, "We are fitter than him." They meant that they were more deserving of kingship than him. It is said that Tâloot was poor and did not have any wealth. Thus how can such a person be given kingship.

Allah said, "He [Tâloot] said, 'Verily, Allah has chosen him above you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and

stature.''" It meant that it is not unto you to decide who is fit and who is unfit. Tâloot had a personality that was unmatched by any among the Israelites.

"And their Prophet [Shamweel] said to them, 'Verily the sign of His kingdom is that there shall come to you a wooden box [Tâboot], wherein is peace and reassurance [Sakeenah] from your Lord and a remnant of that which Moosa and Hâroon left behind, carried by the angels. Verily, in this is a sign for you if you are indeed believers.''" This was another blessing of Allah upon them where He appointed such a pious man over them. Also, Allah returned to them the *tâboot* (wooden box) that they brought to the battlefield as a blessing to make the war go in their favour. Their enemies had taken it.

As regards the word *Sakeenah*, it is said that it was a basin made of gold, in which the chest of the Prophets were washed. As per other opinion, it is said that it was a kind of strong wind. Some others opined that its shape was like that of a cat, if blown during a battle, signalled to the Israelites that they would win.

The version mentioned in the Bible states that when their enemies captured the *tâboot* and took it with them to their city, they placed it beside their idol. On the following morning, they found that the *tâboot* was at the head of their idol. So they took it and placed it back where it was before. Again the next morning they found it in the same position. When this incident repeated, they knew that it was Allah who did that and thus took it out from their city and placed it in a town. After that, they were afflicted by tumours in their necks. So again they moved it to another place. They kept on moving it from one town to another. Finally, they decided to send it back to the Israelites and did so by placing it on a cart with two cows and sent them back. It is said that the Angels brought the cart and handed it over to the Israelites, who at the time were watching all this. This is according to what their Prophet informed. Allah knows best how the

angels actually brought it, but what is clear is that the angels brought it by themselves.

"Then when Tâloot set out with his army, he said, 'Verily, Allah will try you by a river. So whoever drinks thereof, he is not of me, and whoever does not taste it, he is of me, except him who takes thereof in the hollow of his hand.'" Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) and many scholars said that this river was the Jordan River. This was a test from Allah to the people that whoever tastes from the river to not accompany him in the battle. Only those who took in the hollow of their hand were permitted to accompany him. Then Allah informed that most of them tasted. As-Suddi said that the army contained eighty thousand people, of whom seventy-six thousand tasted and only four thousand remained with him who did not taste.

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Barâ' ibn 'Âzib (رضي الله عنه) that he narrated: "We, the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), were discussing concerning the number of people who attended the battle of Badr and the number of those who participated with Tâloot and who crossed the river. Those who crossed it with him did not exceed over three hundred and over ten people (i.e., eleven to nineteen)."

So the saying of as-Suddi that their number was eighty thousand seems incorrect since the land where they were, that is, *Bayt al-Maqdis* is not large enough to hold that many people. Allah knows best.

"Allah [the Exalted] said, 'So when he had crossed it [the river], he and those who believed with him, they said, 'We have no power this day against Jâloot [Goliath] and his hosts'.'" The meaning of this is that they thought they were few in number and strength when compared to their enemies. "But those who knew with certainty that they were going to meet Allah, said, 'How often a small group overcome a mighty host by Allah's leave.' And Allah is with

the patient.” Those in the army who had firm faith and were patient reassured the others.

“And when they advanced to meet Jâloot [Goliath] and his forces, they invoked, ‘Our Lord, pour forth on us patience, and set firm our feet and make us victorious over the disbelieving people.’” They invoked Allah to give them patience and make their feet firm. They asked Him for firmness of their bodies and hearts, and for Him to give them victory. So Allah answered their prayers and they were able to defeat their enemy by the Might of Allah despite their low numbers and the large army of their enemies.

“And Dawood killed Jâloot [Goliath], and Allah gave him the kingdom and wisdom (Prophethood), and taught him of that He willed.” This verse indicates the bravery of Dawood (David) (ﷺ) and how he killed his enemies’ king, Jâloot, which sent fear into the hearts of his army. They were then able to take the spoils of war and the true religion prevailed over idol worship.

Ibn Jareer said that Torah people claim that the duration of Tâloot’s rule till the time when he was killed along with his children was forty years. And Allah knows best.

Chapter Twenty Two

The Story of Dawood (David) (ﷺ)

According to genealogists, his name was Dawood ibn Eesha ibn ‘Owayd ibn ‘Âber ibn Salmoon ibn Nahshoon ibn ‘Awainâdeb ibn Iram ibn Haşroon ibn Faraş ibn Yahoodha ibn Ya‘qoob ibn Ishâq ibn Ibraheem.

Muhammad ibn Ishâq reported from scholars that Wahb ibn Munabbih said: “Dawood (David) was short, had blue eyes, fine hair and a clean heart.”

After Dawood (ﷺ) killed Jâloot (Goliath), the children of Israel began to love him. They preferred that he be their king. After the end of Tâloot, Dawood (ﷺ) became the king. Thus Allah granted Dawood both the kingdom and Prophethood together, the best of this world and the Hereafter. Prior to this, nobody had ever been given kingship and Prophethood at a time, and thus Allah combined it for the first time in Prophet Dawood. Allah said:

“And Dawood killed Jâloot [Goliath] and Allah gave him sovereignty and wisdom, and taught him of what He willed. And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief, but Allah is full of bounty to the worlds.” (Qur'an 2: 251)

That is, if it were not that Allah appointed kings, the strong among mankind would have overpowered the weak. It is reported from the third Caliph ‘Uthmân ibn ‘Affân (ﷺ) that he said: “Verily Allah forbids some things to the people by way of kings that he does not forbid by the Qur'an.”

Ibn Jareer said that when Jâloot (Goliath) challenged Tâloot to come forward and fight by saying, "Come forward to me and I will come to you," Tâloot tried to gather the people to fight. Then Dawood (ﷺ) stepped forward and thus killed Jâloot.¹⁴²

Wahb ibn Munabbih said that after this incident, the people began to love Dawood (ﷺ) a lot, so much so that they left Tâloot. In fact, they even removed Tâloot from kingship and appointed Dawood as their king in his place. In another version of the story, it is said that Dawood was appointed as a king on the orders of Prophet Shamweel (ﷺ). Ibn Jareer said that the opinion of the majority of scholars is that Dawood came to power after Jâloot was killed. And Allah knows best.

Allah said:

"And indeed We bestowed grace upon Dawood from Us saying, 'O' you mountains, Glorify Allah with him.' And you birds also. And We made the iron soft for him saying, 'Make perfect coats of mail, and balance well the rings of chain armour, and work righteousness, truly I am All-Seer of what you do.'" *(Qur'an 34: 10-11)*

And:

"And We subjected the mountains and the birds to glorify Our praises along with Dawood. And it was We Who were the doer of all these things. And We taught him the making of metal coats of mail [for battles], to protect you in your fighting. Are you then grateful?" *(Qur'an 21: 79-80)*

Allah helped him in making metal shields in order to fortify themselves from their enemies. He also guided him to the manner in which it should be made.

¹⁴² *Târîkh at-Tabârî*, vol. 1, p. 337.

Hasan al-Baṣrī, Qatādah and al-‘Āmâsh said: “Allah softened the iron for Dawood (ﷺ) such that he could work with it in his hand without needing any fire or hammer.”

It is authentically established in a hadith that:

“The best and purest food a man could eat is that which is earned by him. And verily the Prophet of Allah Dawood used to eat from what he earned with his hands.”

Allah said:

“... And remember Our slave Dawood, endued with power. Verily, he was ever oft-returning in all matters and in repentance. Verily, We made the mountains to glorify Our praises with him in the afternoon and after sunrise. And so did the birds assemble, all obedient to him [to praise Allah]. We made his kingdom strong and gave him Prophethood and sound judgement.” *(Qur'an 38: 17-20)*

Ibn ‘Abbâs and Mujâhid said: “The ‘endued with power’ means that he had strength in acts of worship and in doing good deeds.”

Qatâdah said: “He was given strength to perform acts of worship and was also given understanding of Islam.”

Imam Bukhari and Muslim reported that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

“The most beloved prayer to Allah is the prayer of Dawood; and the most beloved of fasts to Allah are the fasts of Dawood; he used to sleep for half the night, then stand up in prayer for the next one-third of the night, and then he used to sleep for the rest one-sixth. He used to fast on alternate days; and whenever he met his enemy in battle, he never backed off.”¹⁴³

¹⁴³ Bukhari, *Kitâb at-Tahâjjud* and Muslim, *Kitâb as-Siyâm*.

“Verily, We made the mountains to glorify Our praises with him in the afternoon and after sunrise. And so did the birds assemble, all obedient to him [to praise Allah].” Explaining the *âyah* Ibn ‘Abbâs, Mujâhid and others said: “Allah granted Dawood powerful (and attractive) voice, the like of which was not given to anyone else. It was such that whenever he read his Book, the birds stopped in the air in order to echo and glorify Allah with him. Similarly, the mountains also used to join him in praise and glorification, every morning and every evening.”

Awzâ’cc said that ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Âmir told me: “Dawood was given such a beautiful voice as was never given to anyone else before him. Even the birds and wild animals would join him.”

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of ‘Âishah (رضي الله عنها) that,

“The Prophet (ﷺ) heard the voice of Abu Moosa al-Ash’ari while he was reciting. At that, the Prophet said, ‘Verily, Abu Moosa is given some of the sweetness of Dawood.’”

Along with a beautiful voice, Prophet Dawood (ﷺ) was also very fast in reciting his Book, the *Zaboor*. On this issue, Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Recitation was made easy for Dawood, to the extent that he would ask for his horse to be saddled, then start to recite the Qur’an and finish it before the horse was saddled. And he used to eat only from what he earned from his hands.”¹⁴⁴

The meaning of “Qur’an” in the above hadith is the Book revealed to Dawood called *Zaboor*. He would finish the recitation of the *Zaboor* just by the time it takes for a horse to be saddled. This is very fast indeed, and he would do so with pondering and understanding also.

¹⁴⁴ Imam Bukhari also reported the same hadith through ‘Abdullah ibn Muhammad, through ‘Abdur-Razzâq in his *Saheeh*.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“And We gave Dawood the *Zaboor*.” (*Qur'an* 17: 55)

Zaboor (Psalms) is the famous Book revealed to Prophet Dawood (ﷻ). In our book of *Tafseer*, we have mentioned a hadith reported by Imam Ahmad and others that *Zaboor* was revealed in the month of Ramadān. It contained admonitions and wisdom for his people.

Allah said:

“We made his kingdom strong and gave him Prophethood and sound judgment.” (*Qur'an* 38: 20)

This means: We gave him a great and vast kingdom, and a powerful authority.

Ibn Jareer reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) who said: “Two people, who had a dispute between them concerning a cow, took their case to Dawood (ﷻ). One of them argued that the other took the cow from him by force. However, the defendant denied the claim. So Dawood postponed the case till night. When it was night, Allah revealed to him to kill the claimant. When it was morning, Dawood said to the claimant, ‘Allah revealed to me that I should kill you, so I will kill you without any doubt. Tell me the truth about your claim?’ He said, ‘By Allah, O’ Messenger of Allah, I am true in what I claimed against him, however I had murdered his father before it.’ Dawood then ordered for the claimant to be killed and he was killed. As a result of this case, Dawood’s authority was recognized even more among Israelites and they became much more obedient to him.” Ibn ‘Abbâs said this is the meaning of “... And We made his kingdom strong.”

Allah, the Exalted, said:

“Has the news of the disputants reached you when they climbed over the wall of the *mîhrâb* [i.e. a niche, a praying

[place]. When they entered before Dawood, he was terrified of them and they said, 'Do not fear, we are two disputants, one of whom has wronged the other, therefore judge between us with truth and do not treat us with injustice, and guide us to the right way. Verily, this is my brother; he has ninety-nine ewes, while I have only one ewe. And he says, 'Hand it over to me, and he overpowered me in speech.' Dawood said, 'He has wronged you in demanding your ewe in addition to his ewes. And verily many partners oppress one another, except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and they are few.' And Dawood guessed that We have tried him and he sought forgiveness from his Lord, and he fell down prostrate and turned [to Allah] in repentance. So We forgave him that, and verily, for him is a near access to Us, and a good place of final return." (*Qur'an* 38: 21-25)

Many Qur'anic exegetes — past and present — mentioned here some stories, most of which have come from the Israelite sources. Some of these are a clear lie without a doubt. We will not mention them in order not to make this too long and in order to suffice with what has been reported in the Qur'an. And Allah guides whoever He wishes to the right path.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"O' Dawood, verily We have placed you as a viceroy on the earth; so judge between men in truth [and justice] and do not follow your desire, for it will mislead you from the path of Allah. Verily those who wander astray from the path of Allah shall have a severe punishment because they forgot the Day of Reckoning." *(Our'an 38: 26)*

Allah commanded the rulers and those in authority to be just and to follow the truth that was revealed from Allah and not what is apart from that, such as opinions and desires. He threatened those who

follow a path other than this path with severe consequences. In his time, Dawood (ﷺ) was the role model for justice and acts of worship. It is said that there would not pass an hour during the day or night except that his household would be performing acts of worship. As Allah said:

“O’ family of Dawood, exercise thanks; and few of My slaves are grateful.”
(*Qur'an* 34: 13)

Death of Prophet Dawood (ﷺ)

We have already mentioned a hadith that,

“When Allah created Prophet Adam (ﷺ), He took out all his progeny from his back. Adam saw that among them there were Prophets. He also saw among them a man who was glowing, so he asked, ‘O’ my Lord, who is this?’ Allah said, ‘He is your son Dawood.’ Adam said, ‘What is his lifespan?’ Allah said, ‘Sixty years.’ Adam said, ‘My Lord, increase his lifespan.’ Allah said, ‘No, except if I take from your lifespan and increase his.’ Adam’s lifespan was one thousand years, so he gave him forty years. When Adam’s life was about to end, the angel of death came to him. Adam said, ‘I still have forty years of my life left?’ Adam had forgotten what he granted his son Dawood from his age. Allah then granted Adam his original age of one thousand years and to Dawood one hundred years.”¹⁴⁵

Ibn Jareer said: “The people of the book said that Dawood’s lifespan was seventy seven years. However, this is wrong and unacceptable. They also said that Dawood ruled as king for forty

¹⁴⁵ Imams Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Khuzaymah and Ibn Ḥibbān reported this hadith. Al-Ḥākim said it is upon the condition of Imam Muslim. *Tāreekh at-Tabari*, vol. 1, p. 343.

years. This is something that we can accept since we do not have anything (in the Qur'an or hadith) that belies or nullifies this."

As regards his death, Imam Ahmād reported a hadīth on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"Dawood was jealous for his family and took great care of them. So whenever he went out of his house, he used to lock the door so that nobody could enter his house until he returned. One day when he went out, he locked the door as usual. Suddenly his wife saw a man in the middle of his house, so she said to the other members of the family in house, 'How did this man enter the house when the door was locked? By Allah, Dawood is going to feel disgraced.' When Dawood came, he saw a man standing in the middle of the house. So he asked him, 'Who are you?' He replied, 'I am the one who scares the kings and no barrier can stop me.' Dawood said, 'By Allah, you must be the angel of death, so welcome by Allah's Command.' Then he stayed till he took Dawood's soul. When he was washed and shrouded, the sun shone upon him. So Sulaymān (ﷺ) said to the birds, 'Provide shade to Dawood.' So they did as ordered. When it became dark, Sulaymān once again ordered them saying, 'Contract your wings.'"

Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) said:

"The Prophet (ﷺ) then showed us with his hand how the birds contracted their wings."¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ Only Imam Ahmād reported this hadīth.

Chapter Twenty Three

The Story of Sulaymân (Solomon) (ﷺ)

Ibn Asâkir said: "His name was Sulaymân ibn Dawood ibn Eeshâ ibn 'Owayd ibn 'Âbir ibn Salmoon ibn Nakhshoon ibn 'Omainâ Adab ibn Iram ibn Haşroon ibn Fâriş ibn Yahoodha ibn Ya'qoob ibn Ishâq ibn Ibraheem (peace be upon them all)." ¹⁴⁷

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"And Sulaymân was Dawood's heir and said, 'O' people, we have been taught the speech of the birds and we have been given [in abundance] from everything. Verily this is a manifest bounty.'" *(Qur'an 27: 16)*

The inheritance that is being referred to in the verse is that Sulaymân inherited Dawood (peace be upon them) in Prophethood and kingdom. It is not intended to mean the inheritance of wealth. This is because Dawood had other sons as well apart from Sulaymân (peace be upon them) and so he was not alone to inherit the wealth and properties. There is also an authentic narration in the books of hadith on the authority of a number of Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"We (i.e. the Prophets) do not leave inheritance, whatever we leave behind is charity."

¹⁴⁷ Ibn 'Asâkir, *Tahdheeb*, vol. 5, p. 190.

In another version, the words of the hadith are:

“We, the group of Prophets, do not leave behind inheritance (of property and wealth).”

So the Prophet (ﷺ) informed that whatever the Prophets in general leave behind after their death, is not to be divided as inheritance, but rather it goes to charity, for the poor and destitute. Their close relatives are not preferred over others who are in need. This is because the life of this world was worthless to them just like it is worthless with the One Who sent them and chose them (i.e. Allah).

Allah (ﷻ), quoted Sulaymân (ﷺ) as saying: “O’ people, we have been taught the speech of the birds.” What he meant was that he knows what the birds speak using their language. He would then interpret their goals and desires for the people.

“And we have been given from everything.” Allah granted Prophet Sulaymân (ﷺ) everything a king needs to govern over his kingdom, such as tools, weapons, a huge army consisting of men, jinn, birds and wild animals. He was also given the knowledge of other things and the ability to understand the language of other types of creatures. All this was from the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

Allah, the All-High said:

“And there were gathered before Sulaymân his hosts of jinn, men and birds, and they all were set in battle order. Till, when they came to the valleys of the ants, one of the ants said, ‘O’ ants, enter your dwellings, lest Sulaymân and his hosts should crush you, while they do not perceive.’ So he [Sulaymân] smiled, amused at her speech, and said, ‘My Lord, grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your favours which You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do righteous deeds that will

please You, and admit me by Your Mercy among Your righteous slaves.''"

(*Qur'an* 27: 17-19)¹⁴⁸

In these verses, Allah informs us about his servant and Prophet, the son of another Prophet, Sulaymân (ﷺ), that once he set out with all his army, which included men, jinn, and birds. The men and jinn were travelling with him, while the birds were flying overhead and giving them shade from the heat with their wings. Then he came with them to a valley and when he approached, an ant warned the other ants in the valley to move out of their way so that they do not get crushed under the feet of the army. "O' ants, enter your dwellings lest Sulaymân and his hosts should crush you, while they do not perceive."

Sulaymân (ﷺ) heard what the ant had said to other ants and how she had warned them. He smiled out of joy and happiness that Allah gave him the ability to hear what others could not hear it. This shows the wrong belief held by some ignorant people who believe that animals used to speak and address people even before the time of Sulaymân (ﷺ). They further say that this was the case till Sulaymân (ﷺ) came and took a covenant from these people who spoke to the animals, to not speak to them again. All this is something that only an ignorant person would say. If the situation were as they claimed, Sulaymân (ﷺ) would not have had any privilege over others since many people would have spoken to the animals prior to him. That is why Sulaymân (ﷺ) said, as quoted by Allah, "My Lord, grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your favours which You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do righteous deeds that will please You, and admit me by Your Mercy among Your righteous slaves." He asked Allah to grant him the ability to be grateful for His favours upon him and for what Allah had granted to him only. Similarly, he asked that the performance of

¹⁴⁸ Ibn 'Asâkir, *Tahdheeh*, vol. 6, p. 269.

righteous deeds be made easy for him and to raise him after his death with His pious slaves. Allah answered his prayers.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"He inspected the birds and said, 'What is the matter that I do not see the hoopoe bird? Or is he among the absentees? I will surely punish him with a severe torment, or slaughter him, unless he brings me a clear reason.' But the hoopoe did not stay long, he [came up and] said, 'I have grasped the knowledge of a thing that you have not grasped and I have come to you from Sheba [Saba] with true news. I found a woman ruling over them. She has been given all things that could be possessed by any ruler of the earth, and she has a great throne. I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allah, and *Shaytân* has made their deeds fair-seeming to them, and has barred them from [Allah's] way, so they do not have any guidance. So they do not worship Allah, Who brings to light what is hidden in the heavens and the earth, and knows what you conceal and what you reveal. Allah, there is none worthy of worship but He, the Lord of the Supreme Throne.' He [Sulaymân] said, 'We will see whether you speak the truth or you are one of the liars. Go with this letter of mine, and deliver it to them, then draw back from them, and see what answer they return.' She said, 'O' chiefs, a noble letter has been delivered to me. Verily, it is from Sulaymân and it reads: In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Do not exalt against me but come to me as Muslims [true believers who submit to Allah with full submission].' She said, 'O' chiefs, advise me in this case of mine. I do not decide any case till you are present with me [and give me your opinions].' They said, 'We have great strength, and great ability for war, but it is for you to command, so think over what you will

command.' She said, 'Verily kings, when they enter a town, destroy it and make the most honourable among its people the lowest. And thus they do. But verily, I am going to send him a present, and see with what the messengers return.' So when [messengers with the present] came to Sulaymân [Solomon], he said, 'Will you help me in wealth? What Allah has given me is better than that which He has given you. Nay, you rejoice in your gift.' [Then Sulaymân said to her messengers], 'Go back to them. We verily will come back to them with hosts they cannot resist, and shall drive them out from there in disgrace, and they will be abased.'"

(*Qur'an* 27: 20-37)

In these verses, Allah informs us about what happened between Sulaymân (ﷺ) and the hoopoe. All types of birds who were in Sulaymân's army had their commanders who would come and report to him regularly about everyday matters. This is a common procedure that is in place between rulers and their armies. The duty of hoopoe, as has been mentioned by Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) and others, was to find the sources of water for them while they were travelling. Allah gave the hoopoe the ability to uncover water sources that were underneath the earth and hidden. So if it discovered any water, it would lead the people to that place and they would dig for water. One day, when Sulaymân (ﷺ) sought the hoopoe, he found that it was not present. That is why he said, "What is the matter that I do not see the hoopoe bird? Or is he among the absentees? I will surely punish him with a severe torment, or slaughter him, unless he brings me a clear reason."

Allah informed that the hoopoe did not go for long and soon came back to Sulaymân (ﷺ) and said to him, "I have grasped the knowledge of a thing that you have not grasped and I have come to you from Sheba [Saba] with true news. I found a woman ruling over them. She has been given all things that could be possessed by any ruler of the earth, and she has a great throne." The hoopoe mentioned

to Sulaymân the situation and status of the kingdom of Sheba, in the land of Yemen. A woman, who came from the family of the previous king, inherited that kingdom when they did not have any male heir to the throne.

It is authentically established in the *Ṣaheeh* book of Imam Bukhari on the authority of Abu Bakrah (رضي الله عنه) that when the news of a woman being nominated as the queen of Persia came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), he said,

“No people will prosper who appoint a woman as their ruler.”¹⁴⁹

“She has been given all things that could be possessed by any ruler of the earth, and she has a great throne,” means that she was given all things that kings are normally given or possess. As regards the great throne, it was adorned with all kinds of jewellery, gold and other precious stones.

The hoopoe then informed about their disbelief and how they worshipped the sun instead of Allah. The *Shayṭân* had misguided them from the worship of Allah, Alone, Who does not have any partner and Who knows the hidden and the apparent. To Him belongs the great throne, the greatest of the creation.

When Sulaymân (ﷺ) heard that, he sent with the hoopoe a letter to the queen of Sheba, inviting her to obey Allah and His Messenger, to submit herself and repent to Him, and to give up her kingdom to his kingdom. He told her not to be proud or arrogant, and to obey him and his orders. “Do not exalt against me but come to me as Muslims [true believers who submit to Allah with full submission].” He ordered her to come to him in a state of submission to his orders, without any enmity.

Many of the Qur’anic exegetes mentioned that it was the hoopoe who delivered the letter to her. He gave it to her when she

¹⁴⁹ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Maghâzi*, *Bâb Kitâb an-Nabi ilâ Kisrâ* (Khosroes) and *Qaysar* (Ceasar).

was by herself, in seclusion, and then waited to see what answer she would give. After reading it, she summoned all her ministers and advisors for consultation. She said to them, "O' chiefs, a noble letter has been delivered to me." She first read its heading by saying, "Verily, it is from Sulaymân." Then she read the rest of it saying, "... And it reads: In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Do not exalt against me but come to me as Muslims [true believers who submit to Allah with full submission]." She then sought advise from her ministers and high ranked people who she had gathered. She said this in a nice manner by saying, "O' chiefs, advise me in this case of mine. I do not decide any case till you are present with me [and give me your opinions]." They said, 'We have great strength, and great ability for war, but it is for you to command, so think over what you will command.'"

They replied by saying that 'we possess power and strength to fight and to defeat the enemy, and thus if you desire that we fight, then we have the ability to do so. However, despite that, we leave the matter to you.' They were then ready to carry out whatever she ordered.

However, her decision and opinion was better than theirs and she knew well that the one who had written the letter couldn't be defeated or prevented from what he threatened or be tricked in any way. "She said, 'Verily kings, when they enter a town, destroy it and make the most honourable among its people the lowest. And thus they do.'" She advised them using her well-informed opinion, that if Sulaymân (ﷺ) conquered their kingdom, they would become the most abased and humiliated people. Thus she further said, "But verily, I am going to send him a present, and see with what the messengers return." She wanted to bribe Sulaymân (ﷺ) by sending a gift and perhaps taking his attention away from her and her kingdom. However, what she did not know was that Sulaymân (ﷺ) would not accept from them anything due to them being disbelievers and due to his army being capable of overpowering her army.

That is why, Allah mentioned after that, “So when [messengers with the present] came to Sulaymân, he said, ‘Will you help me in wealth? What Allah has given me is better than that which He has given you. Nay, you rejoice in your gift.’” Then Sulaymân (ﷺ) said to the queen’s messenger in the presence of everyone, “Go back to them. We verily will come back to them with hosts they cannot resist, and shall drive them out from there in disgrace, and they will be abased.” He meant: ‘take this gift back to the one who sent it because Allah has given me of wealth and power much more than this. It is also much better than this mere thing that you rejoice at.’ He said that he will send such a large and powerful army to them that they will not have the ability to fight against and that he will expel them from their land.

When the messenger went back to the queen and informed what the Prophet of Allah, Sulaymân (ﷺ) said, they had no option but to surrender and obey him. They acted at once and went to him, submitting themselves to him and in obedience. When Sulaymân (ﷺ) heard of their approach, he addressed those around him, of jinn, as Allah has quoted him in the Qur'an:

“He [Sulaymân] said, ‘O’ chiefs, which one of you can bring me here throne before they come to me surrendering themselves in obedience?’ A strong one from the jinn [*Ifreeet*] said, ‘I will bring it to you before you rise from your place. And verily, I am indeed strong and trustworthy for such work.’ One with whom was knowledge of the Scripture said, ‘I will bring it to you within the wink of an eye.’ And when he [Sulaymân] saw it placed before him, he said, ‘This is by the Grace of my Lord, to test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful. And whoever is grateful, truly his gratitude is for the good of himself; and whoever is ungrateful, [he is ungrateful only for the loss of himself]. Certainly my Lord is Rich [All-Sufficient], Bountiful.’ He

said, ‘Disguise her throne for her that we may see whether she will be guided [to recognize her throne], or she will be one of those not guided.’ When she came, it was said to her, ‘Is your throne like this?’ She said, ‘It is as though it were the very same.’ And [Sulaymân said], ‘Knowledge was given on us before her, and we were submitted to Allah [in Islam as Muslims before her].’ And that which she used to worship besides Allah has prevented her [from Islam], for she was of a disbelieving people. It was said to her, ‘Enter the *Sarh* — a lofty palace.’ But when she saw it, she thought it was a pool of water, and she tucked up her clothes uncovering her skin. He said, ‘It is *Sarh* — a palace [whose floor is] made smooth with glass.’ She said, ‘My Lord, verily I have wronged myself and I submit myself to Allah, the Lord of all that exists.’” (*Qur'an* 27: 38-44)

When Sulaymân (ﷺ) asked the jinn to bring the throne of Bilqees, upon which she used to sit when attending her court, before she arrives to him, “A strong one from the jinn [*Iffreej*] said, ‘I will bring it to you before you rise from your place.’” What he meant was that before ‘you bring your meetings and gatherings to an end’. It is said that Sulaymân (ﷺ) would sit everyday in his court from morning to noon to look into important matters of the children of Israel. He then said that he had the ability and trustworthiness to carry out this task. “And verily, I am indeed strong and trustworthy for such work.”

“One with whom was knowledge of the Scripture said, ‘I will bring it to you within the wink of an eye.’” There are a number of sayings from scholars as regards who this was who brought the throne. Some said it was a person called Âşîf ibn Barkhiyâ, son of maternal aunt of Sulaymân. Others said it was someone from among the scholars of the children of Israel. Yet others said it was one of the believing jinns with the knowledge of *Ism al-Â‘dham* — the Greatest name of Allah.

“And when he [Sulaymân] saw it placed before him.” That is, when Sulaymân (ﷺ) saw the throne of Bilqeess brought and placed in front of him in such a short time from Yemen to Jerusalem, “He said, ‘This is by the Grace of my Lord, to test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful. And whoever is grateful, truly his gratitude is for the good of himself; and whoever is ungrateful, [she is ungrateful only for the loss of himself]. Certainly my Lord is Rich [All-Sufficient], Bountiful.’” He said that this was from the favour of Allah to see whether he was grateful or not for the favours. So the benefit for anyone who is grateful for such things returns only to him. And as for one who is not grateful, then Allah is self-sufficient and is in no need for His slaves to thank Him, and by no means is He affected or harmed by the disbelief of the *Kuffâr*.

Prophet Sulaymân (ﷺ) then ordered his people to change the ornaments of the throne in order to test her and see if she could recognize it. That is why he said, “Disguise her throne for her that we may see whether she will be guided [to recognize her throne], or she will be one of those not guided.” When she arrived, it was said to her, ‘Is your throne like this?’ She said, ‘It is as though it were the very same.’” She ruled out the possibility of it being her own throne since she had just left it back in her palace and she could not imagine that anybody would be able to bring it to this place so quickly.

Allah informed about Sulaymân and his people by saying, “Knowledge was given on us before her, and we were submitted to Allah [in Islam as Muslims before her].” And that which she used to worship besides Allah has prevented her [from Islam], for she was of a disbelieving people.” That is, the queen and her people used to worship the sun besides Allah, which was the way of their forefathers, and it was this that diverted them from worshipping Allah.

Prophet Sulaymân (ﷺ) had ordered the construction of a grand palace and throughout its passages, there were water streams

covered with crystal glass. He even ordered for fish and other water animals to be placed therein in order for them to look like aquariums throughout the palace. When Bilqeess came, she was asked to enter the palace, while Sulaymân was sitting on his usual place. When she entered the palace and saw it, "... She thought it was a pool of water, and she tucked her clothes up uncovering her skin. He said, 'It is *Sarh* [a glass surface with water underneath it].' She said, 'My Lord, verily I have wronged myself and I submit myself to Allah, the Lord of all that exists.'"

Tha'labi and others said that when Sulaymân (ﷺ) married her, he left her as the queen of Yemen and sent her back. It is said that he used to visit her once a month and would stay with her for three days during each visit. Also, he ordered the jinn to build three palaces for him in Yemen, called Ghumdân, Şâliheen, and Baytoon. And Allah knows best.

The All-High said in *Soorah Sâd*:

"And to Dawood We gave Sulaymân. How excellent a slave [of Allah]! Verily, he was ever oft-returning in repentance. When there were displayed before him, in the afternoon, well trained horses of the highest breed. He said, 'I did love the good [i.e. these horses] instead of remembering my Lord [in my 'asr prayer] till the time was over, and [the sun] had hidden in the veil [of night].' Then he said, 'Bring them [horses] back to me.' Then he began to pass his hand over their legs and their necks. And indeed, We did try Sulaymân and We placed on his throne a mere body and he repented. He said, 'My Lord, forgive me and bestow upon me a kingdom such as shall not belong to any other after me. Verily, You are the Bestower.' So We subjected to him the wind; it blew gently by his order, wherever he desired. And the Satans, every king of builder and diver, and others fettered in chains. [Allah said], 'This is Our gift, whether

you bestow them or withhold them, no account will be asked.' And verily, he has a near access to Us, and a good return." (Our'an 38: 30-40)

In these verses, Allah informs us that He bestowed Sulaymân upon Dawood (peace be upon them) and described him by saying, "How excellent a slave!" He used to repent to Allah often and was obedient to Him. One evening, he became so absorbed with the horses, in stroking and admiring them, that the time for evening prayer passed and the sun set. What we can say for sure is that he did not intentionally miss the prayer, without any excuse. Or it could be that it may have been permissible in the Shari'ah given to him to delay the prayers.

Allah said, "And indeed, We did try Sulaymân and We placed on his throne a mere body, and he repented." Regarding this verse, Ibn Jareer, Ibn Abi Hâtim and other exegetes mentioned many narrations, most or all of which have their reference in the Israelite literature. We have pointed this out in our book of *Tafseer*.

The sum of what these scholars mentioned is that once Sulaymân (رضي الله عنه) was absent from his palace for forty days. When he came back, he ordered the construction of *Bayt al-Maqdis*. We mentioned earlier that the first person to build a mosque there was Ya'qoob (رضي الله عنه). Similarly, we mentioned a hadith narrated by Abu Dharr (رضي الله عنه) that he asked the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم):

"O' Messenger of Allah, which was the first mosque to be built?" The Prophet replied, "*Masjid al-Haram* (in Makkah)." I then asked, "After that?" The Prophet replied, "The mosque of *Bayt al-Maqdis*." I asked, "How many years were between them?" The Prophet said, "Forty years."

We know that between the time of Ibraheem (ﷺ) who built the Mosque in Makkah and between the time of Sulaymân, the son of Dawood (peace be upon them) there was more than one thousand years, leave out forty years.

Imam Ahmâd, Nasâ'i, Ibn Mâjah, Ibn Khuzaymah, et. al. reported on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âs (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"When Sulaymân built the *Bayt al-Maqdis*, he asked Allah for three things. Of these, he was given only two and we hope that the third will be for us. He asked for judgment that could correspond to the Judgment of Allah. So he was given this. He then asked for a kingdom that nobody would be given after him. Again, his prayer was accepted. He finally asked Allah that any one who leaves his home only for the purpose of prayer in that mosque, should have all his sins be forgiven and become like the day he was born. We hope that Allah may grant this one to us."¹⁵⁰

As regards the judgment that corresponds the Judgment of Allah, we find in the Qur'an that Allah has praised him and his father for this. He, the All-High said:

"And remember Dawood and Sulaymân when they gave judgment in the case of the field in which the sheep of certain people had pastured at night; and We were witness to their judgment. And We made Sulaymân to understand the case; and to each of them We gave *Hukm* [right judgment of affairs and Prophethood] and knowledge."

(*Qur'an* 21: 78-79)

Qâdi Shurayh and others said that these people had a vineyard. Once, the sheep of other people crossed over and ate a full tree. So they took the dispute to Prophet Dawood (ﷺ). He judged that the owners of the vineyard should be given compensation equal to the amount that they lost. And when they came out and passed by Sulaymân (ﷺ), he asked them, "What was the decision given by the Prophet of Allah?" They said, "He ordered such and such."

¹⁵⁰ Nasâ'i, *Kitâb al-Masâjid*, *Bâb Fadl al-Masjid al-Aqsa*...

Sulaymân said, "If I were to judge, I would have ordered that the sheep be surrendered to the owners of the vineyard so they could have benefited from it till a time when the owners of the sheep grow a similar vine for them and then take the sheep back." When this verdict reached Dawood, he cancelled his previous verdict and gave this new verdict.

There is a similar story authentically reported by Imams Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رض) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"There were two women who had their sons with them. Suddenly, a wolf attacked them and took away one of their sons. A dispute broke out where the elder of them said, 'The wolf took your son.' Then the younger one said, 'No, it took your son.' So they took their case to Dawood and he decided in favour of the elder woman. When they came out and passed by Sulaymân, he said, 'Bring me a knife and I will cut this child into two pieces, each of you can take a piece.' The younger woman said, 'No, may Allah have Mercy upon you, the child belongs to her.' So Sulaymân then gave the verdict in favour of the younger woman."¹⁵¹

Perhaps the case was such that both verdicts were from their Shari'ah. However, what Sulaymân (ﷺ) said was more correct. That is why Allah praised him by mentioning what He inspired him with, and then after that, He praised his father Dawood (رض) and said:

"And We made Sulaymân to understand the case; and to each of them We gave *Hukm* [right judgment of affairs and Prophethood] and knowledge. And We subjected the mountains and the birds to glorify Our praises along with Dawood. And it was We Who was the Doer [of all these

¹⁵¹ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Anbiyâ'* and Muslim, *Kitâb al-Aqdiyah, Bâb Bayân Ikhtilâf al-Mujtahideen*.

things]. And We taught him the making of metal coats of mail, to protect you in your fighting. Are you then grateful?" (Our'an 21: 79-80)

(*Qur'an* 21: 79-80)

Then Allah said:

"And to Sulaymân We subjected the wind, blowing strongly, running by his command to the land that We had blessed; and We are aware of all things. And of the Satans some dived for him, and did other work besides this, and We guarded them." *(Our'an 21: 81-82)*

(*Qur'an* 21: 81-82)

And in *Soorah Sâd* He said:

"So We subjected to him the wind; it blew gently by his order, wherever he desired. And the Satans, every king of builder and diver, and others fettered in chains. [Allah said], 'This is Our gift, whether you bestow them or withhold them, no account will be asked.' And verily, he has a near access to Us and a good return." (Our'an 38: 36-40)

When Sulaymân (ﷺ) left the horses for the sake of Allah, Allah compensated him by making the wind subject to his order. The wind was a faster means of transportation, stronger, more powerful and no effort was required on the part of Sulaymân (ﷺ). "It blew gently by his order, wherever he desired." He used to have a rug that was fitted with wood and it was large enough to hold everything that he required, such as goods, horses, men and jinns. Then when he placed on these things on the rug, he would order the wind and it would blow under it and raise it and carry it with the wind to the land he desired. It used to travel so fast that he could cover in one day the distance normally travelled in one month.

As the All-High said:

"And to Sulaymân We subjected the wind, its going was a month's journey, and its return was a month's journey. And

We made a fountain of molten brass to flow for him, and there were jinn that worked in front of him by the command of his Lord. And if any of them turned away from Our command, We will make them taste the torment of the blazing fire. They worked for him as he desired, making arches, images, basins as large as wells and fixed cauldrons. ‘Work, O’ family of Dawood, with thanks.’ But only a few of My slaves are grateful.’”

(*Qur'an* 34: 12-13)

Allah subjected the jinn as workers for Sulaymân (ﷺ), doing whatever he desired and without disobeying any of his orders. Whoever did not obey him, He punished them. They made for him arches and images on the walls. This was something permissible in their Shari‘ah. When they made these things, as well as huge pots and fixed cauldrons for the purpose of providing food for people and animals, Allah said to them, “Work, O’ family of Dawood, with thanks.’ But only a few of My slaves are grateful.”

Allah (ﷻ), said, “And the Satans, every kind of builder and diver, and others fettered in chains.” The meaning of this is that there were ones from among the Satans who obeyed Sulaymân (ﷺ) and worked for him whatever he desired. And there were others who disobeyed him and thus were chained in pairs. All these are among the things that Allah subjected for Sulaymân (ﷺ), they formed a complete kingdom and authority for him that was not given to anybody after him. It was also something not given to anybody before him either.

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“‘Ifreet, from among the jinns, came to me last night to break my prayer. But Allah made me capture them. I took hold of him and wanted to tie him to one of the pillars of the mosque so that you all may see him. But then I remembered the prayer of my brother

Sulaymân, ‘O’ Lord, forgive me and grant me a kingdom that will not be given to anyone after me.’ (*cf* 38: 35) So I let him go.”

Imam Muslim reported on the authority of Abu ad-Darda who said:

“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) once stood up and started praying. Then we heard him saying, ‘I seek refuge with Allah from you. I curse you with the curse of Allah.’ He said this three times. Then he spread out his hand as though he was trying to hold something. When he finished his prayer, we said to him, ‘O Messenger of Allah, we heard you saying something in your prayer which we never heard you say before and we saw you stretch out your hands.’ The Prophet said, ‘The enemy of Allah, Iblees, came to me with a blazing fire to throw it on my face. So I said, ‘I seek refuge with Allah from you.’ I said this three times. Then I said, ‘I curse you with the perfect curse of Allah.’ However, he did not go back. Then I wanted to seize him but were it not for the prayer of our brother Sulaymân, he would have been tied, whereby the children of Madcenah would play with him.”¹⁵²

Many exegetes mentioned that Sulaymân had one thousand wives; of whom he was married to seven hundred and the rest three hundred were concubines. In another opinion, the opposite of it was suggested, that he was married to three hundred women and the rest seven hundred were concubines. He had a great power to enjoy women.

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Sulaymân ibn Dawood once said, ‘I will sleep tonight with seventy women, all of whom will bear a child who will fight in the way of Allah.’ His companion told him, ‘If Allah wills.’ However, he did not say that. So it happened that none of those women became pregnant except one who gave birth to a child whose one-

¹⁵² Muslim, *Kitâb al-Masâjid*, *Bâb Jawâz la’n ash-Shaytân fee athnâ’ as-Salâh*.

half of the body was deformed. The Prophet (ﷺ) then said, ‘If he had said that, (all would have been born and) fought in the way of Allah.’”

Also, Imam Ahmad reported a similar hadith on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Once Sulaymân ibn Dawood said, ‘I will sleep tonight with one hundred wives, each of them will give birth to a boy who will fight in the way of Allah.’ However, he forgot to say, ‘If Allah wills.’ Then he slept with all of them and none of them became pregnant except one. She gave birth to a half body of a boy.”

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Had he said, ‘If Allah wills,’ he would have got what he desired.”¹⁵³

Sulaymân (ﷺ) possessed a kingdom, army and other things which none possessed before him and which Allah did not give to anyone after him. That is why he (Sulaymân) said, “And we are given of everything.” He also said, “O’ Lord, forgive me and grant me a kingdom which will not be given to anyone after me. Verily, You are the Bestower.” He was given the option to spend whatever he wanted and to withhold whatever he wanted. No account was going to be asked from him. This is the case with regards to a Prophet who was also a king, in contrast to a (general) slave Prophet (of Allah). For such a Prophet, he is not allowed to give anything except after Allah grants him permission.

Our Prophet (ﷺ) was given the choice between these two ranks. He chose to be a slave Prophet. Some narrations mention that he consulted angel Jibreel (ﷺ), who advised him to be humble, and thus the Prophet chose to be a slave Prophet (may Blessings and

¹⁵³ Bukhari and Muslim also reported a similar hadith through ‘Abdur-Razzâq.

peace of Allah be upon him). However, Allah made the kingship and Caliphate in his ummah (nation) after him, which will remain till the Day of Judgment. All praise is to Allah.

When Allah mentioned all that He granted to Sulaymân (ﷺ) in this world, He also mentioned what He has prepared for him in the Hereafter. He said, “And verily, for him is a near access to Us, and a good place of final return.” (*cf* 38: 25)

Death of Prophet Sulaymân (ﷺ)

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“When We decreed his death, nothing informed them [jinn] of his death except a little worm of the earth which kept gnawing away at his staff. So when he fell down, the jinn saw clearly that if they had known the unseen, they would not have abided in the humiliating punishment.”

(*Qur'an* 34: 14)

Usbagh ibn al-Faraj said: “It has reached me that the worm kept gnawing his staff for one year after the death of Sulaymân (ﷺ) till he fell down.”

Similar sayings have been reported from a number of predecessor scholars. Zuhri and others said that Sulaymân lived for fifty-two years, of which he ruled for forty years. However, Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said that he ruled for only twenty years. Ibn Jareer held the opinion that Sulaymân lived for either fifty-one or fifty-two years. In the fourth year of his rule, he started the construction of *Bayt al-Maqdis*. Ibn Jareer also said that after his death, his son Rahbî'âm succeeded him as king for a period of seventeen years and after him, the kingdom of the children of Israel disintegrated.

Chapter Twenty Four

The Mention of Some Other Prophets (Peace be upon them) Sent to the Children of Israel

These are the Prophets about whom we do not know for sure when they were sent. However, what we are sure of is that they were sent after Prophets Dawood and Sulaymân (peace be upon them) and before the time of Prophets Zakariya and Yahya (peace be upon them).

The Story of Shai'ya (ﷺ)

Among them is a Prophet called Shai'ya ibn Amşıya. Muhammad ibn Ishâq said: "He was sent sometime before Zakariya and Yahya (peace be upon them) and he was one of those Prophets who informed their people about the coming of Prophets 'Eesa and Muhammad (peace be upon them). The king who ruled over the children of Israel in Jerusalem during his time was called Hîzqiyâ. He used to obey Prophet Shai'ya in whatever he ordered and whatever he forbade. That period in history was a tough time for the Israclites. Their king had fallen ill with an infection in his leg and the Babylonian king, called Senhâreeb, wanted to take over Jerusalem and headed towards it with an army of six hundred thousand soldiers.

Thus, the people were greatly terrified. The king asked the Prophet

Shai‘ya, ‘What has Allah revealed to you concerning Sanhâreeb and his army?’ He replied, ‘Nothing has been revealed to me regarding them as yet.’ Then a revelation came to him to order the king to appoint anyone he likes as a successor to his throne since his death is approaching. When Shai‘ya informed the king of this revelation, he faced the *qiblah* and began to pray and glorify Allah and cried. While crying and supplicating, he said, ‘O’ Allah, the Lord of the lords and the God of the gods, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful; O’ the One Who neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him, remember me for my deeds, actions and for my just verdicts among the Israelites. All of that was from You. You are more knowledgeable about them than I am.’

So Allah accepted his prayers and bestowed His Mercy upon him. He revealed to Shai‘ya to give him the glad tiding that his supplication has been accepted and that his life span has been increased by another fifteen years and that Allah will protect him from his enemy Sanhâreeb. When the king was informed of this, all his pain and illnesses ceased and he prostrated in thanks, saying, ‘O’ Allah, You are the One Who grants kingdom to whoever You want and You remove it from whoever you want, and You grant honour to whoever You want, and You disgrace whoever You want. You are the Knower of the unseen and apparent. You are the First and You are the Last, You are the Manifest and You are the Hidden, and You have mercy and You respond to the prayers of those whose affairs have become difficult.’

When he raised his head from prostration, Allah revealed to Prophet Shai‘ya (ﷺ) to order the king to put some fig water on his infected leg, thus healing it. So he did as ordered and it was healed.

Allah sent death upon the army of Sanhâreeb, thus they all died except Sanhâreeb and five of his companions, among whom was Bakhtnaşar. The king of Israelites sent people to bring them to him. He bounded them in chains and made them go around the city in humiliation for seventy days. He fed them only two loafs of bread

every day, after which they were thrown in prison. Allah then revealed to Shai'ya to order the king to send them back to their country to warn their people and inform them what happened to him and his army. When he went back to his country, the magicians and soothsayers said to him, 'We warned you about their God and Prophets, but you did not obey us. They are a nation whose God cannot be defeated.' Sanhâreeb died after seven years from that time."

Ibn Ishâq said: "When Hizqiyâ, the king of the Israelites died, the plight and condition of the children of Israel deteriorated. They started engaging in many evil acts. Allah revealed to Shai'ya (ﷺ) to admonish them and to remind them about Allah. He thus gathered them, and warned them of the consequences if they did not desist from their evil. When he had finished what he had to say, they sought to kill him. So he fled from them. Along his way, he passed by a tree that opened itself for him. When he entered it, *Shaytân* made part of his clothes visible and the people saw that. The *Shaytân* had been there with the people. Upon seeing the cloth, they brought a saw and sawed the tree with him inside it, thus killing him. To Allah we belong and to Him is our return."¹⁵⁴

The Story of Armiyâ ibn Halqiyâ (Jeremiah) (ﷺ)

Armiyâ ibn Halqiyâ was from the family of Lâvy ibn Ya'qoob (ﷺ).

Ibn Asâkir said: "Some reports attributed to *Sahâbah* say that when Yahya, the son of Zakariya, was murdered in Damascus,

¹⁵⁴ There is no any authenticity for this statement in any of the Islamic resources. This is from Israeli sources. (Ibn Katheer)

Armiyâ stood nearby and his blood was gushing forth. He said to it, ‘O’ blood, you have put many people to test, so stop flowing.’ So the blood stopped and then disappeared.”

Abu Bakr ibn Abi ad-Dunya reported that ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abdur-Rahmân said: “Armiyâ said, ‘O’ Lord, which of Your slaves is most beloved to You?’ Allah said, ‘Those who remember Me the most; those who engage themselves with My remembrance rather than the remembrance of others; those who do not desire to live forever; those who, if the worldly luxuries are presented to them, they do not desire it and if it is taken away from them, they become happy. These are the ones I love them most and upon whom I will bestow beyond their desire.’”

The Destruction of Jerusalem

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And We gave Moosa the Scripture and made it a guidance for the Children of Israel [saying], ‘Do not take for yourselves any protector other than Me. O’ Offspring of those We carried with Nooh. Verily, he was a grateful slave.’ And We decreed for the Children of Israel in the Book that you would do mischief on the earth twice and you will become tyrants and extremely arrogant. So when the promise came for the first of the two, We sent against you Our slaves who were formidable in warfare. They entered the very innermost parts of your homes. And it was a promise fulfilled.

Then We granted you a return of victory over them. And We helped you with wealth and children and made you more numerous in manpower. [And We said], ‘If you do good, it is for the good of your own souls, and if you do evil, you do

it against yourselves.' Then when the second promise came to pass, [We permitted your enemies] to disgrace your faces and to enter the Mosque [of Jerusalem] as they had entered it before, and to destroy with utter destruction all that fell in their hands. [And We said in the Torah], 'It may be that your Lord may show mercy upon you, but if you turn back, We shall return to Our punishment, and We have made Hell a dungeon for the disbelievers.'" *(Our'an 17: 2-8)*

(*Qur'an* 17: 2-8)

Wahb ibn Munabbih said:

"When sins became prevalent among the Israelites, Allah revealed to one of their Prophets, called Armiyâ, that he should stand before his people and tell them, 'They do not understand despite having hearts, that they do not see despite having eyes and do not listen despite having ears. Also, Allah showed mercy upon them only because of the righteousness of their forefathers. Has anyone who disobeyed Him ever gained happiness and whether anyone who obeyed Him ever suffered? Animals are able to remember their habitat and thus return to it. However, these people left the matter for which I honoured their forefathers. Now they seek honour from other than Me. Their rabbis denied My right and their reciters worshipped others. As for their worshippers, they did not benefit from their knowledge. Their leaders have lied against Me and My Prophets. Their hearts are full of deceit and their tongues have become accustomed to lies. I swear by My Majesty, that I will send upon them such people whose languages they will not understand, nor will they recognize their faces, nor will they show mercy upon them due to their cries.

Also, I will send upon them an oppressing king who will come to them with armies like clouds, ruining their cities and habitations. Then I will order the heavens to become like levels of iron and the earth to become like brass. Then, even if it rained, nothing will grow; and if something grows, then it will be due to My mercy for the

animals. I will withhold the rain when it is the time of plantation and rather, send it during the time of harvest. If they try to sow any thing in between, I will inflict it with a calamity and if anything is left, I will take the blessings away from it. If they invoked Me, I will not respond to them and if they ask Me, I will not give. If they cry, I will not have mercy, and if they lower themselves to Me, I will turn My face away from them."

Wahb ibn Munabbih further said:

"Allah sent His Prophet Armiyâ to the Israelites when they started committing evil acts, killing Prophets aspiring to please Bakhtnaşar. Allah revealed to Armiyâ, 'I am going to destroy the children of Israel and take revenge for their disobedience. So go and stand on the rock of *Bayt al-Maqdis* and My order and revelation will come to you.' Armiyâ prostrated and said, 'O' Lord! I wish my mother did not give birth to me when You made me the last of the Prophets to the children of Israel because the destruction of *Bayt al-Maqdis* will be due to me.' Allah said, 'Raise your head.' So he raised his head and cried. He then asked, 'O' Lord! Who are You going to make predominant and victorious over them?' Allah said, 'They are the worshippers of fire who do not fear My punishment nor do they hope for My rewards. Before I created you, I chose you. Before I fashioned you in your mothers' womb, I purified you. Before you became mature, I made you a Prophet. I chose you for a great matter. So stand and go and tell them what I order you with and remind them of My favours upon them. Also, remind them of their past.'

Armiyâ said, 'My Lord, I am weak if You do not strengthen me. I am incapable unless You give me ability. I make errors unless You protect me. I am overpowered unless You give me victory. I am humiliated unless You give me honour.' So Allah said, 'Don't you know that all matters occur according to My will. To Me belongs the creation and the commandment. All the hearts and tongues are in My Hand, so I turn them as I wish. Therefore obey Me, I am Allah, there

is none like Me. The heavens and the earth all existed due to My Word. Verily, I have sent you to a large group of My creation in order to deliver to them My messages. Go and tell them that due to the righteousness of your forefather, Allah has spared you till now. Has anyone who disobeyed Me ever gained happiness and whether anyone who obeyed Me ever suffered? Animals are able to remember their habitat and thus return to it. However, these people left the matter for which I honoured their forefathers. Now they seek honour from other than Me. However, since you have forgotten My teachings, I will now send upon you a tyrant king who will not have any mercy or kindness towards you and will destroy you.'

When Armiyā delivered the message of their Lord and they heard what it contained of threats and punishment, they disobeyed and belied him. They said, 'You lied and have invented a great lie against Allah by claiming that He is going to destroy His earth, books and the places of worship? If this is going to be the case, then who will worship and obey Him on the earth?' They seized him and imprisoned him.

At that point, Allah sent Bakhtnaşar upon them who marched towards the Israelites with his army until he descended near them and held a siege over them. He killed one-third of them, took another third as captives and left those who were ill, old and disabled. He then trampled them down under the feet of their horses, destroyed *Bayt al-Maqdis*, killed all able-bodied men and burnt the Torah.

Bakhtnaşar then attacked other lands of Syria and killed the children of Israel. When he had finished with them, he returned and took with him the booties and captives of the war. It is said that they numbered around ninety thousand. Seven thousand of them were from the household of Dawood (ﷺ), another eleven thousand from the households of Yusuf ibn Ya'qoob (peace be upon them) and his brother Benyameen, and fifty thousand from the descendants of other children of Ya'qoob. Apart from them, there were twelve thousand

from the rest of the Israelites. Bakhtnaşar then headed back to Babylon.

Hishâm ibn Muhammad ibn Sâib al-Kalbi said:

“When Bakhtnaşar came to *Bayt al-Maqdis*, he made an agreement with its king who was from the family of Dawood (ﷺ). He took from him some people as security and returned. However, when he reached the town of Tabriyyah, news reached him that the children of Israel rebelled against their king and killed him because he signed an agreement with him. So he killed those whom he had taken as security and after returning to *Bayt al-Maqdis*, he took it by force and killed all their fighters and took others as captives.”

Hishâm ibn al-Kalbi also said:

“It reached me that Bakhtnaşar found the Prophet Armiyâ (ﷺ) in the prison, and so he freed him. Armiyâ then informed Bakhtnaşar about what happened between him and the Israelites and how they at first belied him and then subsequently imprisoned him. So Bakhtnaşar said to him, ‘How evil are those people who rejected the Messenger of Allah when he had been good towards them.’ The Israelites who were left gathered around Armiyâ and said to him, ‘We have done evil acts and have wronged ourselves. We now repent to Allah from what we have done previously. So pray to Allah to accept our repentance.’ When he supplicated, Allah revealed to him that He was not going to accept (the repentance) and to inform them that if they are true in their request, then they should remain with you in this town.’ When Armiyâ informed them what Allah ordered, they said, ‘How can we stay in this town when it has been destroyed and Allah is angry with its habitants.’ Thus they refused to stay with him.”

Hishâm ibn al-Kalbi further added:

“It was from that time onwards that the Israelites dispersed throughout the lands. Some moved to Hijaz, another group went to

Yathrib, and a group to *Wady al-Qura* (Qura valley), while some others went to Egypt. Bakhtnaşar wrote to the Egyptian king asking him to send back to him those who fled to his country. But the king refused. So Bakhtnaşar went there with his army and after overpowering and defeating the king, he took its people as captives. Then he set off towards Morocco and reached the sea on its other side. Along his way, he captured many people from the lands of Morocco, Egypt, Syria, *Bayt al-Maqdis*, Palestine and Jordan. Among his captives was Danyâl."

However, it appears that this Danyâl ibn Hazqeel was the younger one and not the older Danyâl, as has been mentioned by Wahb ibn Munabbih.

The Story of Danyâl (Daniel) (ؑ)

Ibn Abi ad-Dunya reported from 'Abdullah ibn Abi Hoodhayl that he said: "Bakhtnaşar captured two lions and put them in a pit. He then brought Danyâl and threw him into the pit. However, they did not do anything to him. He stayed therein for as long as Allah had willed and then he desired for food and water. Allah then revealed to Armiyâ while he was in *Shâm* (i.e., Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan and parts of Iraq) saying, 'Prepare some food and drink for Danyâl.' Armiyâ said, 'My Lord, I am in the sacred land and Danyâl is in Babylon, in Iraq?' Then Allah said to him, 'Do what We have ordered you to do and We will send one who will take you and the food you prepare.' He did as ordered and Allah sent one who carried him and the food till he reached the pit. Danyâl said, 'Who is this?' He said, 'I am Armiyâ.' Danyâl asked him, 'What brought you here?' He said, 'Your Lord sent me to you.' Danyâl said, 'Did my Lord remember me?' He said, 'Yes.' Danyâl said, 'Praise be to Allah Who does not forget those who remember Him; praise be to Allah Who responds to those who have hope in Him; praise be to Allah Who

does not leave astray those who put their trust in Him; praise be to Allah Who rewards with goodness for goodness; praise be to Allah Who rewards patience with success; praise be to Allah Who removes our distress after our trials; praise be to Allah Who saves us when we think our deeds worthless; praise be to Allah Who is our hope when everything else is cut off from us.'"

Muhammad ibn Ishāq reported that Abu al-‘Ālia said: "When we invaded the city of Tastur¹⁵⁵, we found in the property of Harmuzān a bed on which a dead man was lying. There was a scripture near his head. We took it back with us to Caliph ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه). He called K‘ab and asked him to translate it into Arabic. When he completed, I was the first Arab to read it. I read it as I read the Qur‘an. Khālid dinar said to Abu al-‘Ālia, 'What was in that scripture?' He said, 'It contained your stories, your affairs, your tones and what was going to happen.' I said, 'What did you do with the man who was lying on the bed?' He said, 'In the morning, we dug thirteen different graves and we buried him at night in one of them and made each grave similar to the other, in order to mislead people so they do not unearth it.' I said, 'What did they hope from him?' He said, 'When it did not rain in their town, they would come out with that bed and then it would rain.' I said, 'Who do you think the man was?' He said, 'A man called Danyāl.' I asked, 'For how long was he dead when you found him?' He said, 'About three hundred years.' I asked, 'Did anything change in him?' He said, 'No, except some hair at the back of his head. This is because the flesh of Prophets is not eaten by the earth, nor is eaten by wild animals.'"

The chain of narrators of this report is authentic. However, if the number of years since the man's death is correct, as is mentioned in the report to be three hundred years, then it is not Danyāl the Prophet, rather it is another pious man. This is because it is mentioned in an

¹⁵⁵ A city in Persia near Basra (*Mujām al-Buldān*, vol. 2, p. 29).

authentic hadith in Bukhari that there was no Prophet between Prophets ‘Eesa and Muhammad (peace be upon them). As regards the period between them, it is said to be four hundred years. In some other narrations, it says six hundred years or six hundred and twenty years. It is possible that the man may have died eight hundred years ago and thus it would be near the time of Danyâl. It is also possible that the man was just a pious man, either among the Prophets or other pious people. However, the most likely of these is that the man may have, in fact, been Danyâl because the king of Persia had taken him and kept Danyâl with him imprisoned, as we have mentioned previously.

Ibn Abi ad-Dunya reported on the authority of ‘Abdur-Rahmân ibn Abi Zinâd that his father said: “I saw a ring on the hand of Abu Burdah, the son of Abu Moosa al-Ash‘ari (رضي الله عنه). Two lions were carved on its stone, with a man in between them and they were licking him.” Abu Burdah said, “This is the ring of that dead man who the people of this town claim to be Danyâl. Abu Moosa al-Ash‘ari had taken from him on the day when they buried him.”

Abu Moosa asked the knowledgeable people of that town about the engraving on that ring. They said: “The king, amongst whose people was Danyâl, was approached by soothsayers and astrologers and they said to him that a boy will be born who will destroy his kingdom. At that, the king swore that there will not be any boy who be born that night except that he will kill him. So the people took Danyâl and threw him in lions’ den. They licked him and did not harm him. When Danyâl’s mother came, she found the lions licking her baby. So Allah saved him from that.”

Abu Burdah reported on the authority of Abu Moosa that the scholars of that town informed him that Danyâl engraved his image and the image of the lions licking him on the ring so that he does not forget the blessing of Allah upon him in this matter.

The Re-building of Bayt al-Maqdis

Allah, the Most Truthful of those who speak, said in His Book:

"Or like the one who passed by a town while it had fallen down upon its roofs. He said, 'How will Allah ever bring this back to life?' So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised him to life, and said, 'How long did you remain in this state?' He said, 'I remained so for a day or part of a day.' He said, 'No, you have been dead for a hundred years. Look at your food and drink, they have not changed, and look at your donkey. And thus We make you a sign to the people. And look at the bones, how We bring them together and clothe them with flesh.' So when it became clear to him, he said, 'I know now that Allah has power over all things.'" *(Our'an 2: 259)*

Hishâm ibn al-Kalbi said: "After that, Allah revealed to Prophet Armiyâ, 'I am going to re-build *Bayt al-Maqdis*, so go and stay there.' So when he went there he found it destroyed, he said to himself, 'Glory be to Allah, He ordered me to come and stay here and told me that He was going to reconstruct it. When will Allah reconstruct it and when will He bring it back to life?' Armiyâ then lied down and slept. He had his donkey with him and a basket full of food. He lay there sleeping for seventy years till Bakhtnaşar and the king above him Lahrâseb, both died. He had ruled there for one hundred and twenty years. After his death, his son Bashtâseb succeeded him. The news from the land of *Sham* (Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan and parts of Iraq) reached Bashtâseb that it has been destroyed and that wild animals have greatly increased in the land of Palestine, to the extent that there was no human left. So Bashtâseb announced to the Israelites living with him in captivity in Babylon, that whoever wants to go back to his land, he can go. He also appointed a man from the family of Dawood as king over them and

ordered him to re-build *Bayt al-Maqdis* and reconstruct its mosque. So they returned and reconstructed the land.

After that, Allah opened the eyes of Armiyâ (عليه السلام) and he looked towards the city and how it was being re-built. He had remained in his sleep until it had become a total of hundred years. Then Allah brought him back to life. Armiyâ thought that he did not sleep for more than an hour. Before his sleep, he saw the city in ruin. Then upon waking up, he found it re-built. At that, he said, ‘I know that Allah has power over all things.’”

Hishâm further said: “Israelites settled there in that land again and Allah gave them back what they had in the past. They remained in that state till a time when the (Christian) Romans conquered them, after which they did not have any community or any authority. This is what Ibn Jareer mentioned in his book of history. He also said that Lahrâseb was a just king and ruled his country appropriately. All people, lands, (subordinate) kings and commanders were under him. He possessed an ability to rebuild towns, canals and castles. When he became old, after ruling for more than one hundred years, he appointed his son Bashtâseb as the king. It was during his reign that the religion of Zoroastrianism first appeared at the hands of a man called Zardasht / Zarathustra (Zoroaster). He was a companion of Armiyâ (عليه السلام) initially, but then he had angered him and so Armiyâ supplicated against him, thus he was inflicted with leprosy. After that, he left for Azerbaijan and joined Bashtâseb. He started preaching the religion of Zoroastrianism, something he had invented, and then Bashtâseb also accepted it. He then forced his people also to accept it and killed many people who refused to enter into his new religion.

After Bashtâseb, his son Bahman succeeded him. He was one of the famous Persian kings. All these evil kings had lived for a long time.

The point here is that what Ibn Jareer has mentioned that the person who passed by this city, as mentioned in the verse (*Qur'an* 2: 259),

was Prophet Armiyâ (ع). This is what Wahb ibn Munabbih, ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Ubayd ibn ‘Umayr and others said. The context of the verse strongly supports this. However, it is narrated from ‘Ali, ‘Abdullah ibn Salâm, Ibn ‘Abbâs (ع), Hasan, Qatâdah, as-Suddî, Sulaymân and others that the mention of the passer-by here is ‘Uzayr.”

And this view is popular among most of the past and contemporary scholars.

The Story of ‘Uzayr (Ezra)

Hâfidh Abu Qâsim ibn Asâkir said: “He was ‘Uzayr ibn Jarwah. It is also said he was Ibn Sooreeq ibn ‘Adyâ ibn Ayyub ibn Darzanâ ibn ‘Arie ibn Taqee ibn Usboo’ ibn Fanhâş ibn al-‘Âdhir ibn Hâroon. Still others said ‘Uzayr ibn Saroukhâ. It is said that his grave is in Damascus.”

According to ‘Abdullah ibn Salâm as reported by Ishâq ibn Bishr, it was ‘Uzayr who Allah caused to die for one hundred years then raised him.

Ishâq ibn Bishr reported through a number of chain of narrators that Ibn ‘Abbâs (ع) and many others said that ‘Uzayr was a pious and wise man. One day, he went out to one of his estates that he used to take care of. During his return from there, he passed by a ruined place. It was noon and the heat was severe, affecting him. He entered that ruined place. He had with him his donkey and a basket of figs and a basket of grapes. He descended where he found some shade. He took out a bowl and squeezed grape juice in it, then took some dry bread and placed it in the juice in order to make the bread moist and eat it. After he finished with his food, he lay down on his back and propped up his leg on a wall and then looked around the ruins of that place. When he saw what he saw, he said:

"How will Allah ever bring this back to life?"

(*Qur'an* 2: 259)

He did not say this as a result of any doubt in Allah's ability to revive them back to life. Rather, he said that out of his curiosity and amazement at what he saw. So Allah sent the angel of death to him who took out his soul and caused him to die for one hundred years.

When hundred years passed, during which time the Israelites went through tough times and changes, Allah sent an angel to 'Uzayr, who made for him his heart so that he may understand and opened his eyes so that he may look at things around him. Thus he can understand how Allah brings the dead back to life. Then he gathered the bones (of the donkey he rode) and put flesh on them, made hair and skin, and then breathed into it the soul. All this happened while 'Uzayr was able to see and understand. He then sat up and the angel asked him, "How long did you remain sleeping?" He said, "I stayed for a day or part of it." He thought like this because when he slept, it was noon and when he woke up, the sun still had not set. The angel then said to him, "No, you remained sleeping for one hundred years; look at your food and drink." He asked him to look at the dry bread and the grape juice that he squeezed into the bowl. All these are the same, fresh. Similarly, even the figs and grapes did not change at all. When he saw this, it is as if he denied it within himself, thus the angel said to him, "You deny what I say, then look at your donkey." When he looked, he saw its bones. Then the angel called out to those bones to gather. They started coming together from wherever they had scattered to and the angel put them back together while 'Uzayr was watching. He then put the veins and arteries, then put the flesh and muscles on the bones, then grew on them hair and skin. Then the angel breathed into it and the donkey stood up in front of him.

'Uzayr then mounted his donkey and went to his own locality. However, no one there could recognize him and he too could not recognize any one. Then he went to his house, confused. He found

there an old blind and disabled lady, who was more than one hundred and twenty years old. That lady was their servant before. ‘Uzayr had left when she was twenty years old, she knew and could recognize him. But due to old age, she could not recognize him anymore. ‘Uzayr asked her, “O’ you old lady, is this the house of ‘Uzayr?” She replied, “Yes, this is the house of ‘Uzayr.” She then started crying and said, “I have not seen any one for so many years who have remembered ‘Uzayr. Everyone has forgotten him.” ‘Uzayr said, “I am ‘Uzayr, Allah had caused me to die for one hundred years and then brought me back to life.” She said, “Glory be to Allah, we have lost ‘Uzayr for one hundred years and did not hear anything about him.” He said, “I am ‘Uzayr.” She said, “Uzayr was a man whose prayers Allah accepted, he used to pray for the sick and those who were inflicted by any illness. So pray to Allah so that He may return me my sight and I may see you; then if you are ‘Uzayr, I will recognize you.”

So ‘Uzayr prayed to his Lord and then passed his hand over her eyes. Her eyes became normal and he held her hand and said, “Stand up, with Allah’s permission.” Allah aided her and she stood up healthy. She then looked at him and said, “I bear witness that you are ‘Uzayr.”

She went to the locality of the children of Israel, who were at the time gathered in their assemblies and to a son of ‘Uzayr who was one hundred and eighteen years old and had his grandchildren. She called out to them saying, “This is ‘Uzayr, he has come back to you.” But they belied her. She then said to them, “I am so-and-so, your maidservant. ‘Uzayr prayed to his Lord for me and He returned to me my sight. ‘Uzayr claims that Allah caused him to die for one hundred years and then raised him.” People then began to rush towards him and his son said, “My father had a black mole between his shoulders.” So ‘Uzayr uncovered his shoulders and it confirmed that he was ‘Uzayr. The children of Israel said, “There was no one among

us who could memorize the Torah like ‘Uzayr. Bakhtnaşar burnt the Torah and nothing is left of it except what the people have memorized. So write it for us.” ‘Uzayr’s father, Sarookha, hid one copy of the Torah and had buried it in a place that nobody knew except ‘Uzayr. He went with them to that place and dug out the Torah. Its pages had decayed and its writing had faded.

‘Uzayr sat down under the shade of a tree, with the children of Israel around him. Two flames came down from the sky and after entering his chest, he remembered the Torah and rewrote it for them. From then on, the Israelites started claiming that ‘Uzayr was the son of Allah. Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) said regarding the saying of Allah, “That We make you a sign to the people,” it means that he was a sign for the Israelites because when he sat with his sons, they were older than him because when he died he was forty years old and then Allah raised after one hundred years the same age as when he died.

What is famous regarding ‘Uzayr is that he was one of the Prophets of the children of Israel and that he lived in the period between Prophet Dawood and Sulaymân (peace be upon them) and the Prophet Zakariya and Yahya (peace be upon them). When there was nobody who memorized the Torah, Allah inspired to him and he rewrote it. As Wahb ibn Munabbih said: “Allah ordered an angel to descend with a flame of light to put inside ‘Uzayr and then ‘Uzayr rewrote the Torah, letter by letter, till he completed.”

Ibn Asâkir reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that he asked ‘Abdullah ibn Salâm about the verse:

“And the Jews said, ‘Uzayr is the son of Allah.’”

(*Qur'an* 9: 30)

He asked him why they said this. So Ibn Salâm said to him how he had rewritten the Torah for the children of Israel from his memory and how they said, “Moosa could not bring us the Torah except in a book; but ‘Uzayr brought it to us without a book.” Thus a group of

them claimed that he was the son of Allah. This is why many Muslim scholars say that the chain of Torah being transmitted broke in the time of ‘Uzayr.

Ishāq ibn Bishr narrated that al-Ḥasan said: “‘Uzayr and Bakhtnaṣar were in the same time period. It is authentically established by Imam Bukhari that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

‘The nearest person to ‘Eesa is me for there was no Prophet between me and him.’”¹⁵⁶

Wahb ibn Munabbih said that he was between Sulaymān and ‘Eesa (peace be upon them). The authors of the *Sunan*, except Tirmidhi, reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“One of the Prophets was bitten by an ant when he sat down under a tree. So he had them taken out and then ordered for them to be burnt. Allah revealed to him, ‘Why not only one ant (why did you burn all of them).’”¹⁵⁷

The Story of Prophets Zakariya (Zechariah) and Yahya (John the Baptist) (Peace be upon them)

Allah, the All-High said in His Book:

“Kāf-Ha-Ya-‘Ain-Ṣād. This is a mention of the mercy of your Lord to His slave Zakariya; when he called out to his

¹⁵⁶ Bukhari, *Kitāb al-Anbiyā*, *Bāb Wadhkūr fil-Kitāb Maryam* and Muslim, *Kitāb al-Faḍā'il*, *Bāb Faḍā'il ‘Eesa alayhi-salām*.

¹⁵⁷ Bukhari, *Kitāb Bada’ al-Khalq*, *Bāb waq'a adh-Dhabāb see Inā' aḥadakum* and Muslim, *Kitāb as-Salām*, *Bāb an-Nahee 'an Qatl an-Namāl*.

Ibn ‘Abbās, Hasan al-Baṣrī and others said that the person was ‘Uzayr.

Lord secretly. He said, ‘My Lord, indeed my bones have become feeble, and my head has gone gray. And I have never been unblessed in my invocation to You, my Lord. And verily I fear for my relatives after me, and my wife is barren. So grant me a heir from You who will be my inheritor and the inheritor of the house of Ya’qoob. And make him, my Lord, one with whom you are well pleased.’ [Allah said], ‘O’ Zakariya, verily We give you glad tidings of a son whose name is Yahya. We have not given that name to anyone before.’ He said, ‘O’ my Lord, how will I have a son when my wife is barren and I have reached the extreme old age.’ He said, ‘So will it be.’ Your Lord says, ‘That is easy for Me. Certainly I have created you before when you were nothing.’ He said, ‘My Lord, give me a sign.’ He said, ‘Your sign is that you will not speak to the people for three nights, though you will be in good health.’ So he came out to his people from the chamber and he told them by signs to glorify Allah’s praises in the morning and in the evening. [It was said to his son], ‘O’ Yahya. hold the scripture with firmness.’ And We granted him wisdom while yet a child and sympathetic to men as a mercy from Us, and pure and he was pious. And dutiful to his parents and he was neither arrogant nor disobedient. So the day he was born and on the day he dies and the day he shall be raised to life.”

(*Qur'an 19: 1-15*)

And Allah (ﷻ) said:

“So her [Maryam] Lord accepted her with good acceptance. He made her grow in a good manner and put her under the care of Zakariya. Every time he entered the chamber to visit her, he found her provided with sustenance. He said, ‘O’ Maryam, from where did you get this?’ She said, ‘It is from Allah.’ Verily Allah gives sustenance to whom He wills

without measure.' At that, Zakariya prayed to his Lord, saying, 'My Lord, grant me from You a pious offspring. Indeed, You are the All-Hearer of prayers.' Then the angels called him while he was standing in prayer in the chamber [saying], 'Allah gives you glad tidings of Yahya, confirming the word from Allah, noble, chaste and a Prophet, from among the righteous.' He said, 'My Lord, how can I have a son when I am old and my wife is barren?' [Allah] said, 'Thus Allah does what He wills.' He said, 'My Lord, make a sign for me.' He said, 'Your sign is that you will not speak to the people for three days, except by signals. And remember your Lord often and glorify Him in the evening and in the morning.'" *(Qur'an 3: 37-41)*

And said in *Soorah al-Anbiyâ*:

"And remember when Zakariya called his Lord, 'O' My Lord, do not leave me without offspring, though You are the Best of inheritors.' So We answered his prayers and We granted him Yahya and cured his wife [to bear a child] for him. Verily, they used to hasten in doing good deeds and used to call upon Us with hope and fear, and used to humble themselves before Us." *(Qur'an 21: 89-90)*

And said in *Soorah al-An'am*:

"And Zakariya, Yahya, 'Eesa and Ilyâs, they were all from the righteous." *(Qur'an 6: 85)*

Hâfidh Abu al-Qâsim ibn Asâkir said in his renowned book of history: "He was Zakariya ibn Barkhiyâ. It is also said that he was Zakariya ibn Dân. Others have said he was Zakariya ibn Ladan ibn Muslim ibn Şudoq ibn Hashbân ibn Dawood ibn Sulaymân ibn Muslim ibn Şadceqah ibn Barkhiyâ ibn Bal'atah ibn Nâhoor ibn Shaloom ibn Bahfashât ibn Eenâmen ibn Rahee'âm ibn Sulaymân

ibn Dawood, the father of Prophet Yahya (peace be upon them), from the children of Israel.”

Allah ordered our Prophet (ﷺ) to relate the story of Zakariya and what happened when Allah granted him a son during his old age and when his wife was barren all her life as well as old. This is so that nobody loses hope of gaining Allah’s bounties and mercy. Allah said, “This is a mention of the mercy of your Lord to His slave Zakariya, when he called his Lord secretly.” Qatâdah said in explanation of this verse, “Allah knows the pure heart and hears the secret voices.” Some scholars also said, “He [Zakariya] woke up at night and called his Lord secretly so that no one around him could hear. He said, ‘O’ my Lord, O’ my Lord, O’ my Lord.’ Allah said, ‘I answered, I answered, I answered.’”

“And I have never been unblessed in calling on You, my Lord.” He said that You have made me accustomed to the fact that whenever I call You, You answer my prayer. The reason he made this prayer for a son was that when he started taking care of Maryam, he saw miracles. Whenever he entered the chamber to visit Maryam, he found fruits of various kinds all the time; the fruits of summer in winter and the fruits of winter in summer. It was from the miracles given to some pious people. At that, he knew that the One Who can provide things miraculously like this can also provide him with a son, even if he had reached an old age. “At that, Zakariya prayed to his Lord, saying, ‘My Lord, grant me from You a pious offspring. Indeed, You are the All-Hearer of prayers.’” (*cf 3: 38*)

“And verily I fear for my relatives after me, and my wife is barren. So grant me an heir from You, who will be my inheritor and the inheritor of the house of Ya‘qoob. And make him, my Lord, one with whom you are well pleased.” (*cf 19: 5-6*) It seems that Zakariya (ﷺ) feared what they will do towards the children of Israel in a manner that would not be in accordance with the Shari‘ah of Allah and in His disobedience. So he asked a pious and righteous son who

will inherit him in wisdom and Prophethood of the children of Israel. The inheritance is not meant to mean the inheritance of wealth and property, as the Shi'as (Shi'ites) have claimed. Many evidences support (the correct) view that it refers to wisdom and Prophethood.

Firstly: As we have mentioned earlier, Allah (ﷻ) said, "And Sulaymân inherited Dawood" (*cf* 27: 16), meaning that he inherited prophethood and wisdom. Similarly, we have also mentioned the authentic hadith recorded in most books of hadith on the authority of many Companions (may Allah be pleased with them). They reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "We (the Prophets) are not inherited; but what we leave behind is charity."¹⁵⁸

This is a very clear hadith text showing that the Prophet is not inherited. That is why Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه), during his reign as Caliph, stopped the distribution of the Prophet's wealth to his family, that is, his daughter Fâtimah, his wives and his uncle 'Abbâs (may Allah be pleased with them). He only prevented them from inheriting the Prophet on the basis of this hadith and quoted it to them when asked the reason for his actions. Many other Companions, like 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb, 'Uthmân ibn Affân, 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib, 'Abbâs ibn 'Abdul Mu'talib, Tâlîhah, Zubayr, Abu Hurayrah and others (may Allah be pleased with them) also agreed with him.

Secondly: Imam Tirmidhi reported a hadith with a more general wording, wherein the hadith says: "We, the group of Prophets, are not inherited."¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ Bukhari, *Kitâb Fard al-Khams*, *Bâb Fard al-Khams* and Muslim, *Kitâb al-Jihâd*, *Bâb Qawl an-Nabi* (ﷺ) *lâ Noorithu mâ tarakna fa huwa sadaqah.*

¹⁵⁹ I (editor and researcher) did not find these words as mentioned by the author in Tirmidhi, generalizing rule for the Prophets. *Sunan Tirmidhi*, says *Lâ noorithu, mâ taraknâ sadaqah. Kitâb as-Siyar, Bâb mâ fâ'a' fee taraka rasoolullah.*

Thirdly: This world was not worth anything to the Prophets which may have made them get involved in hoarding up wealth and properties. They never turned towards this world and it did not concern them at all. Anybody who reaches their level of piety does not ask for a son to inherit their wealth and property.

Fourthly: Prophet Zakariya (ﷺ) was a carpenter by profession, who worked and ate from the money earned by his own hands just like Dawood (ﷺ) did before him. Also, the Prophets did not make themselves involved in full time work in order to gain wealth in excess of their needs so as to leave some of it behind as inheritance after their death. This is a clear point that anybody who ponders and thinks will understand, if Allah wills. Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “Zakariya was a carpenter.”

Allah (ﷻ) said, “O’ Zakariya, verily We give you glad tidings of a son whose name is Yahya. We have not given that name to anyone before.” (cf 19: 7) And Allah also said, “Then the angels called him while he was standing in prayer in the chamber [saying], ‘Allah gives you glad tidings of Yahya, confirming the word form Allah, noble, chaste and a Prophet, from among the righteous.’” (cf 3: 39)

When Allah gave Prophet Zakariya the glad tidings of a son, he could not believe that he will have a child at that age and in such a condition. That is why he said in astonishment, “O’ my Lord! How will I have a son when my wife is barren and I have reached the extreme old age.” (cf 3: 40) What he meant was that how will a son come out of an old person and when his wife was barren. It is said that Zakariya was seventy-seven years old at that time. However, it seems that he was much older than that. And Allah knows best.

This reaction by Zakariya is similar to the reaction by Prophet Ibraheem (ﷺ) when he was given the glad tidings of a son. He said:

“Do you give me glad tidings when I have reached an old

age? So with what do you give me glad tidings?"

(*Qur'an* 15: 54)

His wife, Sârah, also said something similar when given the glad tidings.

"She said [in astonishment], 'Woe to me, will I bear a child while I am an old woman and this is my husband, an old man? This is an unusual thing.' They [the angels] said, 'Do you wonder at the Decree of Allah? The mercy of Allah and His blessings be upon you, O' family of Ibraheem. Surely, He is All-Praiseworthy, All-Glorious.'" (*Qur'an* 11: 72-73)

This is how Zakariya was replied to when he was astonished. The angel said to him, "So will it be. Your Lord says, 'That is easy for Me. Certainly I have created you before when you were nothing.'" What he meant was that such a thing is easy for Allah. He created you when you did not even exist, so why can't He create something out of you, even if you are old?

"So We answered his prayers and We granted him Yahya and cured his wife for him. Verily, they used to hasten in doing good deeds and used to call upon Us with hope and fear, and used to humble themselves before Us." The meaning of curing his wife is that she did not use to have menses and so He made her have menses.

Zakariya (ﷺ) then asked Allah for a sign over this. Allah told him, "Your sign is that you will not speak to the people for three nights, though you will be in good health." He was told that his sign will be that he cannot speak for three days except using signals to communicate. All throughout this, he will be healthy and nothing will be wrong with him. He was ordered to remember Allah frequently in such a situation, both in the evening and in the morning.

Allah said, "O' Yahya, take the scripture with firmness." And We granted upon him wisdom while yet a child." In this verse, Allah

informs us about the son about whom the glad tidings were given to his father Zakariya (ﷺ) and that Allah will teach him the scripture and wisdom in his childhood. ‘Abdullah ibn Mubârak narrated that Ma‘mar said, “Some children said to Yahya ibn Zakariya, ‘Come with us and play.’ He replied, ‘We are not created for play.’” Ma‘mar said that this is the meaning of, “And We granted upon him wisdom while yet a child.”

As for the part of the verse, “And tenderness from Us,” Ibn ‘Abbâs, Mujâhid, ‘Ikrimah, Qatâdah and Dâhhâk said, it means, “Mercy from Us wherein We had mercy upon him and granted him a child.” ‘Ikrimah said it means, “We loved him.” It could also mean that Yahya was very kind with people, in particular with his parents.

As regards the purity mentioned in the verse, it refers to the purity of creation wherein he was created perfectly, without any defects. Similarly, it refers to piety and obedience of Allah by performing what He ordered and leaving what He forbade. Then Allah mentioned his dutiful nature towards his parents and obedience to them. He described him saying, “And dutiful to his parents and he was neither arrogant nor disobedient.” Then Allah further said, “So the day he was born and on the day he dies and the day he shall be raised to life.” These three times mentioned are critical in a person’s life since one moves from one world to another. He loses one world after he had been there and became familiar with it and then goes to another world about which he does not know anything. So when these three times are critical in any person’s life, Allah protected Yahya (ﷺ) in all of them.

Sa‘eed ibn Abi Aroobah reported from Qatâdah that Hasan said: “Yahya and ‘Eesa (peace be upon them) met. So ‘Eesa said to him, ‘Seek forgiveness for me because you are better than me.’ Yahya replied saying, ‘You seek forgiveness for me because you are better than me.’ So ‘Eesa replied, ‘You are better than me since I invoked peace on myself but Allah sent His peace upon you.’”

It is reported on the authority of Abu Sa'eed (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

"Al-Hasan and al-Husayn are the leader of youths in the Paradise, except Yahya and 'Eesa (peace be upon them)." ¹⁶⁰

There are a number of narrations from Wahb ibn Munabbih as regards when Zakariya (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) died a natural death or was he killed? There are two opinions. The first opinion from Wahb ibn Munabbih, reported by 'Abdul Munim, is that Zakariya fled from his people and hid inside a tree. They brought a saw and started cutting the tree. When the saw reached his ribs, he screamed. Allah, the Almighty, All-High, revealed to him, "If your scream does not cease, I will turn the earth upside down along with whoever is on it." He stopped screaming and was thus cut in two pieces. However in a second opinion from him, reported by Ishâq ibn Bishr, Wahb said that the one who was cut inside the tree was Sha'iâ, and Zakariya died a natural death. Allah knows best.

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of al-Hâarith al-Ash'ari (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

"Allah ordered Yahya, the son of Zakariya (peace be upon them), to perform five things and, also to order the Israelites to carry them out. But Yahya delayed for a while, so 'Eesa said to him, 'You were ordered to perform five things and to order the Israelites to do the same. So will you tell them yourself or should I convey that to them.' He said, 'My brother, I fear that if you do precede me to it, I may be punished or the earth may swallow me.' Then Yahya gathered the Israelites in the *Bayt al-Maqdis* till the mosque became full. He sat on an elevated place, praised and glorified Allah, and then said, 'Allah (صلوات الله عليه وسلم), ordered me with five things that I should perform them personally and that I order you

¹⁶⁰ Suyooti, *Jâm'ey as-Sagheer*, hadith no. 3822.

to do the same. The first of them is that you worship Allah and do not associate any partner with Him. This is because its similitude is like the one who bought a slave with the best and purest of his wealth, silver or gold, but then that slave started working for others. So tell me who among you will like his slave to act like this. Allah created you and bestowed upon you provisions, so worship Him and do not associate any partner with Him.

I also command you to pray. Verily, Allah turns His Face towards His slave as long he does not distract himself. So when you are praying, do not get distracted. And I direct you to fast because its similitude is like a man with a bag of musk who is among a gathering of people. Each of them enjoys its fragrance. The smell from the mouth of a fasting person is purer with Allah than the fragrance of musk. And I bid you with charity because its similitude is like a person who is captured by the enemy, who then tie his hands up with his neck and then want to behead him. The man then says to them, ‘Can I free myself by paying ransom?’ When they agreed, he started paying his ransom, bit by bit, till he became completely free.

And I enjoin you to remember Allah frequently because its similitude is that of a man who is sought by his enemy who are chasing after him. He then found a fortified castle and he entered it. A slave is most protected from the *Shayṭān* when he is remembering Allah, (ﷺ).

The Prophet (ﷺ) then said:

“And I order you with five things that Allah has ordered me with. He ordered to stick with the Muslim majority, to listen and obey, to migrate, and to fight in the cause of Allah. Whoever leaves the group of Muslims even by a hand span will be out of Islam till he comes back. And whoever calls with the falsehood of the *Jāhilīyah* period will be in the fire.”

The Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) enquired, “O’ Messenger of Allah, will this be the case even if such a person prayed and fasted?”

The Prophet replied,

“Yes, even if he prayed and fasted, and claimed to be a Muslim. Call the Muslims by their names that Allah has called them with, of *Muslimoon*, *Mu’minoon* and slaves of Allah, (ﷺ).”¹⁶¹

Many people have mentioned that Yahya (ﷺ) loved to be isolated from people. He used to find comfort in open areas and the desert. He would eat the leaves of the trees and seldom locusts and drink from the rivers. He would say to himself, “Who is more blessed than you, O’ Yahya!”

Muhammad ibn Yahya adh-Dhahli narrated that Ibn Shihab said: “Once, I sat down with Abu Idris al-Khawlāni while he was telling a story. He said, ‘Should I tell you who ate the purest food?’ When he looked at people, he saw that they were looking at him, expecting an answer. So he said, ‘Yahya ibn Zakariya ate the purest food. He used to eat with animals rather than with men because he disliked mixing with people.’”

Ibn Mubārak narrated that Wuhayb ibn al-Ward said:

“Once, Zakariya could not find his son Yahya for three days, so he went out into desert looking for him. He was surprised to find him in a grave he had dug for himself and was weeping while sitting inside it. Zakariya said, ‘O’ my son, I have been looking for you for three days and you are here in a grave you dug for yourself and sitting inside, weeping?’ Yahya said, ‘O’ father, didn’t you tell me that between Paradise and Hell is a crossing that cannot be crossed except

¹⁶¹ Ahmad, vol. 4, p. 202.

by the tears of weepers?" Zakariya said, 'Cry my son.' And then they both cried together."

The Reason for the Murder of Yahya

Many reasons are mentioned as the cause of his murder. The most popular of these reasons is that one of the kings of that time in Damascus wanted to marry one of his close relatives who was forbidden for him to marry. Yahya forbade him from what he wanted, and so the king held something against him. One day, when the king wanted to fulfill his desire with the woman he loved, she asked him to give her the head of Yahya as a gift. The king agreed to that at once and sent people to kill him. They brought back his head in a bowl. However, it is said that the woman died as soon as the head of Yahya was brought to her.

In another version it is said that the woman of that king liked Yahya (ﷺ) a lot and she used to write to him. But seeing that he refused her, she tricked the king to give her Yahya's head as a gift. Initially, the king refused, but later he agreed and sent people to kill Yahya and present her his head and blood in a pan.

The scholars differed also regarding the place where Yahya was killed; was he killed in the al-Aqṣa Mosque or somewhere else? Ath-Thawri reported that Shaml ibn 'Atiyah said: "Seventy Prophets were killed on the rock that is inside the *Bayt al-Maqdis*, among them was Yahya ibn Zakariya (peace be upon them).

Abu 'Ubayd al-Qâsim narrated from Sa'eed ibn Musayyib that Bakhtnaṣar came to Damascus and found that the blood of Yahya ibn Zakariya was still boiling. He asked the people about it, they then informed him of what happened. He then killed seventy thousand people in revenge for his blood and then the blood settled."

Ibn Asâkir reported that Zayd ibn Wâqid said: “When the mosque of Damascus was being built, I saw the head of Yahya ibn Zakariya. It was dug up from a place where they wanted to place a pillar, near the *mîhrâb*. His body and hair were still the same and had not changed at all.”

In another version, it says that the body was as if he was killed an hour ago.

Chapter Twenty Five

The Story of ‘Eesa (Jesus) (ﷺ)

*H*e was a slave and Messenger of Allah, and the son of a slave of Allah (Maryam — Mary), peace be upon him. In eighty-three verses of *Soorah Al 'Imrân*, Allah rebuts the belief of the Christians, wherein they claim that Allah has a son. Glory be to Allah.

A group of Christians came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and began to mention their false and baseless beliefs in trinity. They claimed that Allah is the third of the three (i.e. trinity). Some say that the three are Allah, Prophet ‘Eesa (Jesus) and Maryam (Mary). However, different groups among the Christians have various beliefs as regards who constitutes the three. So Allah revealed this *Soorah* (chapter) wherein He mentions that ‘Eesa (ﷺ) is mere a slave from among the slaves of Allah, He created and fashioned him in the womb of his mother just like everyone else. Similarly, Allah mentions that He created ‘Eesa from a mother, without a father, and that He created Prophet Adam (ﷺ) without a father and mother. Allah only said, “Be” and he was. Glory be to Allah. He also mentioned the birth of ‘Eesa’s mother, Maryam, and how she bore him. All this is also mentioned in *Soorah Maryam* and we will mention this with the help from Allah and His guidance.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“Allah chose Adam, Nooh, the family of Ibraheem and the family of ‘Imrân above the ‘Alameen [mankind and jinn]. Offspring, one of the other, and Allah is the All-Hearer, All-

Knower. Remember when the wife of 'Imrân said, 'O' my Lord, I have vowed to You what is in my womb to be dedicated for Your services, so accept this from me. Verily, You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knowing.' Then when she [Maryam] gave birth to her child, she said, 'O' my Lord, I have given birth to a female child. And Allah knew better what she brought forth. And the male is not like the female and I have named her Maryam and I seek refuge with You for her and for her offspring from *Shayṭân*, the outcast.' So her Lord accepted her with good acceptance. He made her grow in a good manner and put her under the care of Zakariya. Every time he entered the chamber to visit her, he found her supplied with sustenance. He said, 'O' Maryam, from where did you get this?' She said, 'This if from Allah.' Verily, Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills, without limit."

(Qur'an 3: 33-37)

The All-High informs us that He chose Adam (ﷺ) and from his progeny who followed His Shari'ah and were obedient to Him. Then He made special mention of the family of Ibraheem, which includes the children of Ya'qoob. He then mentioned the family of 'Imrân. The 'Imrân referred to here is the father of Maryam (Mary).

Muhammad ibn Ishâq said: "He was 'Imrân ibn Bâshim ibn Umoon ibn Mayshâ ibn Hazqiyâ ibn Ahreeq ibn Motham ibn 'Azâziâ ibn Amseeyâ ibn Yâvush ibn Ahreehu ibn Yazîm ibn Yahfâshât ibn Eeshâ ibn Eyân ibn Rahba'âm ibn Dawood."

The family of 'Imrân is from the progeny of Prophet Dawood (ﷺ). 'Imrân was a pious man and also Maryam's mother, Hannah bint Fâqood ibn Qabeel, was a pious woman. Zakariya (ﷺ) was the Prophet of that time. He was the husband of Maryam's sister, whose name was Ashyâ'. This is the opinion of the majority of scholars. However, some others have said that he was the husband of Maryam's aunty (the sister of her mother), called Ashyâ'.

Muhammad ibn Ishāq and others said: "Maryam's mother was unable to conceive a baby. One day, she watched a bird feeding its baby. So she also desired to have a baby and made a vow to Allah that if she conceives, she will put him to serve Allah, meaning make him work for the mosque of *Bayt al-Maqdis*.

It is said that she had her period immediately. When she became pure from her menses, her husband had relations with her and she conceived Maryam (peace be upon her). She was hoping for a boy so that he could serve the *Bayt al-Maqdis*. That is why when she delivered a girl, she said, "My Lord, I have delivered a female." As regards the meaning of, "And male is not like the female," it is referring to the fact that a girl cannot serve the *Bayt al-Maqdis* like boy can. In her time, it was a custom of the people to vow that they will make their sons serve *Bayt al-Maqdis*.

"And I have named her Maryam." The scholars have deduced from this that it is permissible to name a baby on the day he or she is born. This is also established authentically in a hadith reported by Bukhari and Muslim where Anas (رضي الله عنه) took his brother to the Prophet (ﷺ) and he named him 'Abdullah.

"And I seek refuge with You for her and for her offspring from *Shaytān*, the outcast." Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"There is not a baby that is born except that it is touched by *Shaytān* at the time of its birth and thus it comes out screaming and crying, except Maryam and her son 'Eesa."

Abu Hurayrah then said, "Read if you want the saying of Maryam, as quoted by Allah: 'And I seek refuge with You for her and for her offspring from *Shaytān*, the outcast.'"¹⁶²

¹⁶² Ahmad, vol. 2, p. 274.

Imam Ahmād reported another hadīth on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Every newborn from the children of Adam is touched by the *Shayṭān* with his finger except Maryam bint ‘Imrān and her son ‘Eesa.”¹⁶³

In another hadīth, also reported by Imam Ahmād on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه), the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Every person who is given birth to by his mother is kicked by the *Shayṭān* on both sides, except Maryam and her son. Don’t you see a newborn baby how it cries when its delivered?” The Companions said, “Yes, O’ Messenger of Allah.” He said, “That is due to the *Shayṭān* when he kicks him on both sides.”¹⁶⁴

“So her Lord accepted her with good acceptance. He made her grow in a good manner and put her under the care of Zakariya.” Many Qur’anic exegetes said that when Maryam was given birth, her mother wrapped her in rags, and after taking her to the mosque, gave her to worshippers who lived in the mosque. Since Maryam was the daughter of their Imam and a very pious person, they disputed concerning who will take care of her. It seems most probable that Maryam’s mother gave her to them after completing the duration of breast-feeding. As mentioned earlier, Zakariya was the Prophet of that time and he wanted to take care of her because of his wife, who was the sister of Maryam’s mother or her aunt, as mentioned earlier concerning the difference of opinion in this matter. The people, unable to reach an agreement, agreed to cast lots. The decree of Allah had that the lot came out in the name of Zakariya. This is because the maternal aunt is like the mother.

¹⁶³ Ahmād, vol. 2, p. 288. Muslim reported similar hadīth from Abu Hurayrah but with a different chain.

¹⁶⁴ Ahmād, vol. 2, p. 368.

Allah mentioned about this in another place in the Qur'an when He (ع) said:

"This is from the news of the unseen, which We reveal to you. And you were not present with them when they cast their lots with pens, to decide which of them will take care of Maryam. And you were not present with them when they disputed one with another." *(Our'an 3: 44)*

The people who disputed regarding the custody of Maryam agreed to cast lots when they were unable to come to a settlement. They decided to draw lots using pens, each person had a pen that was known to belong to him. So all the pens were collected and put in a place and then they asked a boy to withdraw one pen. When the boy did that, the pen of Zakariya came out. The people refused to accept this and so requested that the cast be repeated, but this time to put the pens in a river and whoever's pen goes against the river's current will take custody of Maryam. Again it was the pen of Zakariya that won the lot by going against the current. The people were again not satisfied and requested that a third lot be drawn. This time, they said that the winner will be the one whose pen flows with the current, opposite of the situation in the second lot. So once again, it was Zakariya's pen that won. So he became Maryam's guardian since he was more deserving according to the Shari'ah.¹⁶⁵

"Every time he entered the chamber to visit her, he found her supplied with sustenance. He said, 'O' Maryam, from where did you get this?' She said, 'This is from Allah.' Verily, Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills, without limit." The Qur'anic exegetes said that Zakariya appointed a special place for Maryam inside the mosque, where nobody was allowed to enter except her. In that place, she used to worship Allah in solitude and looked after the mosque.

¹⁶⁵ *Tafseer at-Tabari*, vol. 3, p. 162.

with whatever was her responsibility. She would perform her acts of worship day and night to such an extent that she was used as an example among the children of Israel. Allah bestowed upon her special favours and miracles. Whenever the Prophet of Allah, Zakariya (ﷺ) entered her chamber to attend to her needs, he found that she was provided with fruits. In summer, he found with her the fruits that were special to winter. Likewise, in winter he found with her fruits that were special to summer. When he enquired about this, Maryam replied that it was from Allah.

Upon seeing that, Zakariya desired to have a son, even at the old age that he had reached. Some scholars said that he prayed to Allah saying, "O' the One Who provides to Maryam fruits out of their season, grant me a son out of its time [i.e. even in old age when a son is not possible]."¹⁶⁶

Allah said,

"And remember when the angels said, 'O' Maryam, verily Allah has chosen you, purified you and chosen you above the women of the 'Âlameen [the mankind and jinn]. O' Maryam, submit yourself with obedience to your Lord and prostrate yourself and bow down with those who bow down.' This is a part of the news of the unseen which We reveal to you. You were not with them when they cast lots with their pens as to which of them should be charged with the care of Maryam, nor were you there with them when they disputed. Remember when the angels said, 'O' Maryam, verily Allah gives you the glad tidings of a Word [i.e. 'Eesa] from Him, his name will be the Messiah 'Eesa, the son of Maryam, held in honour in this world and in the Hereafter, and will be one of those who are near to Allah.

¹⁶⁶ *Tafseer at-Tabari*, vol. 3, p. 163.

He will speak to the people in the cradle and in manhood, and he will be one of the righteous.'

She said, 'O' my Lord, how will I have a son when no man has touched me?' He said, 'So it will be, for Allah creates what He wills. When He has decreed something, He says to it, 'Be' and it is. And He will teach him [i.e. 'Eesa] the book and wisdom, the Torah and the Injeel. And will make him a Messenger to the children of Israel saying, 'I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I design for you out of clay, a figure like that of a bird, and breathe into it and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave. And I heal him who was born blind and the leper, and I bring the dead to life by Allah's leave. And I inform you of what you eat and what you store in your houses. Surely, therein is a sign for you, if you believe. And I have come confirming that which was before me of the Torah, and to make lawful to you part of what was forbidden to you, and I have come to you with a proof from your Lord. So fear Allah and obey me. Truly, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. This is the straight path.''"

(*Qur'an 3: 42-51*)

Allah (ﷻ), informs us that the angels gave Maryam (Mary) the glad tidings that Allah has chosen her among all women of her time. He chose her for a miraculous birth will take place from her wherein a boy will be born to her without a father. This child will be a noble Prophet and will speak in his infancy, calling people to the worship of Allah, Alone, Who does not have any partner. Maryam was ordered to increase her acts of worship so that she will be worthy of such a miracle and so that she can thank Allah for the favour. It is said that Maryam used to stand in prayer for so long that her feet would crack. May Allah be pleased with her and have mercy upon her and her parents.

"And remember when the angels said, 'O' Maryam, verily Allah has chosen you, purified you and chosen you above the women of the 'Álameen [the mankind and jinn].'" The purification mentioned in the verse is referring to the fact that Allah purified her from bad characteristics and instead gave her the best and most beautiful characteristics. As regards Maryam (Mary) being chosen above the women of the 'Álameen, it could mean above the women of her time. It is also possible that the meaning of the verse is that He chose her above all women of all times. If we take the opinion of Ibn Hazm and some others who claimed that Maryam was a Prophet, just like they claimed Prophethood of Sârah, the mother of Ishâq (ﷺ), and the mother of Moosa, since the angels spoke to her, then the meaning of the verse could be that Maryam was the best and greatest of all of them. However, if we take the opinion of the majority of scholars of *Ahlus Sunnah*, that Prophethood was restricted to men, in that case, the verse could mean that Maryam was the best of all pious women of all times.

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Anas (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"The best women of the mankind are four: Maryam the daughter of 'Imrân, Ásiyah the wife of Pharaoh, Khadeejah bint Khuwaylid, and Fâtimah the daughter of Muhammad."¹⁶⁷

In another narration reported by Tirmidhi, the wordings of the hadith are: "... and Fâtimah, the daughter of Muhammad Messenger of Allah."

Abu Yalâ reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) that he said:

"Once, the Prophet (ﷺ) drew four lines on the ground and said,

¹⁶⁷ Tirmidhi, *Kitâb al-Manâqib*, *Bâb Faâl Khadeejah* and Hâkim, *Kitâb al-Manâqib*, *Bâb Manâqib Fâtimah alayhas-salâm*.

‘Do you know what this is?’ The Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) said, ‘Allah and His Messenger know best.’ He said, ‘The best women of Paradise are Khadeejah bint Khuwaylid, Fâtimah the daughter of Muhammad, Maryam the daughter of ‘Imrân and Âsiyah bint Muzâhim, the wife of Pharaoh.’”

Abu al-Qâsim al-Baghawi reported that once ‘Âishah (رضي الله عنها) said to Fâtimah (رضي الله عنها):

“Inform me why you wept and then smiled when you leaned forward towards the Prophet?” Fâtimah said, “First time, he told me that he was going to die due to that illness, so I wept. Then the second time, I leaned forward and he said that I was going to be the first to join him from his household and that I was the leader of the women in Paradise, except for Maryam bint ‘Imrân. So I smiled.”¹⁶⁸

The point here is that these hadiths show that Maryam and Fâtimah are the best of those four women. As for them two, then it is possible that Maryam is better than Fâtimah or may be that they both are equal. There is a hadith reported by Hâfiidh Abu al-Qâsim on this matter, if it is authentic, then we would know for sure who was best. This hadith is reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) that the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

“The best of the women of Paradise are Maryam bint ‘Imrân, then Fâtimah, then Khadeejah and then Âsiya the wife of Pharaoh.”

So if this hadith, with the words ‘then’ is authentic, then we know for sure who is the best. The other hadiths have been reported with the words ‘and’ and not ‘then’. The word ‘and’ does not indicate any order, whereas the word ‘then’ indicates their order.

¹⁶⁸ The main part of this hadith is also reported in other books of authentic hadiths.

There is another hadith reported by Imams Bukhari, Muslim and others on the authority of Mu'âwiyah ibn Qurrah's father (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"Many from among the men reached the position of perfection, but from the women, only three attained this perfection: Maryam bint 'Imrân, Âsiyah the wife of Pharaoh, and Khadeejah bint Khuwaylid. And the excellence of 'Âishah over other women is like the excellence of *Thareed* (i.e. porridge, a special type of food) over all other food."

In another similar hadith narrated by Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, the Prophet (ﷺ) is reported to have said:

"Many from among the men attained perfection, but from the women, only Âsiyah the wife of Pharaoh and Maryam bint 'Imrân attained perfection. And the excellence of 'Âishah over other women is like the excellence of *Thareed* (i.e. porridge, a special type of food) over all other food."

The wording of these hadiths indicates that perfection among the women is confined to Maryam and Âsiyah only. Perhaps what is meant is perfection with respect to their time, since both of them took care of a Prophet in their childhood. Âsiyah looked after Moosa and Maryam raised her son, the slave and Messenger of Allah, 'Eesa. So this does not negate the possibility of other women attaining perfection from this ummah, such as Khadeejah and Fâtimah. We know that Khadeejah served the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) before his Prophethood for fifteen years and after it for over ten years. She sacrificed herself and her wealth, and was a comfort to the Prophet in difficult times. May Allah be pleased with her.

As for Fâtimah (رضي الله عنها), the daughter of the Prophet, she was given special excellence that her sisters did not have, for she lived till after the death of the Prophet whereas all the other sisters passed

away before the Prophet's death. And as for 'A'ishah (رضي الله عنها), she was the most beloved wife to the Prophet. It is not known in any woman from this ummah or from the women of any period who were more knowledgeable and had a better understanding than her. Allah revealed in the Qur'an her innocence concerning the slander caused by some people. She lived after the Prophet for fifty years, all the time teaching the Qur'an and Sunnah, and giving *fatwa* to the Muslims. Some scholars have said that she was the best of the Prophet's wives. However, it is best to restrain from making any final judgment in this matter since the saying of the Prophet, "The excellence of 'A'ishah over other women is like the excellence of *Thareed* over all other food", could be general, referring to all women, or it could mean better than all women except those four women mentioned in the first part of the hadith.¹⁶⁹

Birth of 'Eesa (Jesus) the Son of Maryam, and the slave and Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)

Allah (ﷻ), said:

"And mention in the Book Maryam, when she withdrew in seclusion from her family to a place facing east. She placed a screen to screen herself from them; then We sent to her Our *Rooh* — Spirit [angel Jibreel], and he appeared before her in the form of a man in all respects. She said, 'Verily, I seek refuge with the Most Gracious from you, if you do fear Allah.' He [the angel] said, 'I am only a messenger from your Lord, to announce to you the gift of a righteous son.' She said, 'How can I have a son when no man has touched

¹⁶⁹ Bukhari, vol. 4, Pp. 129, 196 and 198, *Kitâb al-At'amah wa kitâb al-Aqâ'il* and Muslim, vol. 2, p. 246, *Fadâ'il Khadeejah*.

me nor am I unchaste?" He said, 'So it will be, your Lord said, 'That is easy for Me and We wish to make him as a sign to mankind and a mercy from Us and it is a matter already decreed.'" So she conceived him and she withdrew with him to a far off place. And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a date palm. She said, 'Would that I had died before this and had been forgotten and out of sight.' A voice cried to her from below her saying, 'Do not grieve, your Lord has provided a water stream under you. And shake the trunk of date palm towards you, it will make fresh ripe dates fall upon you. So eat and drink and be glad. And if you see any human, say, 'Verily, I have vowed a fast to the Most Gracious, so I will not speak to any human being this day.' Then she brought him [the baby] to her people, carrying him. They said, 'O' Maryam, indeed you have brought a mighty thing. O' sister of Hâroon, your father was not an evil man nor was your mother an unchaste woman.' Then she pointed to him. They said, 'How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?' He ['Eesa] said, 'Verily, I am a slave of Allah; He has given me the scripture and made me a Prophet. And He has made me blessed wherever I am and has enjoined prayer and *zakah* on me as long as I live. And to be dutiful to my mother and did not make me arrogant, unblessed. And peace be upon me the day I was born, and the day I die and the day I will be raised alive.' Such is 'Eesa, son of Maryam. It is a statement of truth about which they doubt. It does not befit Allah that He should beget a son. Glorified be He. When He decrees a thing, He only says to it, 'Be' and it is. He ['Eesa] said, 'And verily Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him Alone. That is the straight path.' Then the sects differed, so woe to the disbelievers from the meeting of a great day."

(Qur'an 19: 16-37)

Here, we see that Allah (ﷻ), mentioned the story of Maryam and her son ‘Eesa (ﷺ) after the story of Prophet Zakariya (ﷺ) since the latter is like an introduction and basis for this story. Similarly, Allah combined between these two stories in *Soorah Al ‘Imrân*, as well as *Soorah al-Anbiyâ’*. Allah said:

“And remember Zakariya when he cried to his Lord, ‘O’ my Lord, do not leave me single, though You are the Best of the inheritors.’ So We answered his call and We bestowed upon him Yahya and cured his wife for him. Verily, they used to hasten to do good deeds and they used to call on Us with hope and fear, and used to humble themselves before Us. And she [Maryam] who guarded her chastity; We breathed into her and We made her and her son [‘Eesa] a sign for the ‘Âlameen [mankind and jinn].” (*Qur'an 21: 89-91*)

We have already mentioned earlier how Maryam (Mary) was devoted for the service of *Bayt al-Maqdis* by her mother and that the Prophet of that time, Zakariya (ﷺ) became her guardian and appointed for her a special chamber to live and worship Allah therein. Whenever he would enter the chamber to visit her, he found that Ailah had provided her provisions. Seeing that, he desired to have a son of his own. We have already mentioned also how the angels came to her giving glad tidings of being chosen by Allah and that He will bestow upon her a boy who will be a noble Prophet, blessed with miracles. Maryam was surprised as to how she will have a baby since she was not married. The angels informed her that Allah is able to do all things. If he decrees a thing, He only says, “Be” and it is. She realized that it was going to be a great trial of her because the people will speak out about her since they do not know the reality. They will be judging her only by what they see.

Maryam used to go out from the mosque only when she had her menstrual period or when there was some other need, such as getting water or food. One day, when she went out by herself for her

needs towards the eastern direction of *Bayt al-Maqdis*, Allah sent to her angel Jibreel (ﷺ), who appeared in front of her in the guise of a man. "And he appeared to her in the form of a human in all respects."

"She said, 'I seek refuge in the Most Gracious from you, if you do fear Him.'" Jibreel informed her that he was a Messenger from her Lord and not a human being. He then told her that she was going to conceive a boy, who was going to be pure. "How can I have a son when no man has touched me nor am I unchaste?" She said how can I have a son when I am not married and I am not one of those who go near evil acts. "He [Jibreel] said, 'So it will be, your Lord said, 'That is easy for Me'.'" The angel replied to her saying that it is a promise from Allah to create from you a boy even though you do not have a husband and you are not one of those who practice evil acts. This is something easy for Allah as He is able to do whatever He wills.

The part of the verse, "We wish to make him as a sign to mankind," means that Allah will make his creation a sign of His complete might and power over all sorts of creation. He created Adam (ﷺ) without a father or mother. Then He created Hawwa [Eve] from a man, without any woman. And then created 'Eesa (ﷺ) from a woman, without a father. And finally, He created the rest of creation from a father and mother. The part of the verse, "And a mercy from Us and it is a matter already decreed," means that Allah was going to have mercy upon the mankind via 'Eesa (Jesus), wherein he would invite them, while in his cradle and in old age, to the worship of Allah, Alone, Who does not have any partner.

Many scholars said that Jibreel blew on her chest, which then entered her womb through her vagina and she became pregnant immediately just like a woman conceives after having relations with her husband. There is another opinion that says that Jibreel blew in her mouth. However, this opinion appears contradictory in the context of the story.

When Maryam conceived ‘Eesa (ﷺ), she realized that the people will speak about her. Many scholars, including Wahb ibn Munabbih and others, mentioned that when the first signs of pregnancy showed on her, a man by the name Yusuf ibn Ya‘qoob al-Najjâr, who was the son of her maternal uncle, noticed her pregnancy and was astonished. He knew her piety and righteousness, and despite that he saw that she was pregnant when she was not married. So one day he approached her and said, “O’ Maryam, is it possible for a plant to grow without a seed?” She replied, “Yes, who created the first plant?” Then he said, “Is it possible to have a baby without a father?” She said, “Yes, Allah created Adam without a father or mother.” So the man said, “So tell me about yourself.” She said,

“Allah gave me glad tidings of a Word from Him, his name is the Messiah ‘Eesa [Jesus], the son of Maryam, held in honour in this world and in the Hereafter, and will be one of those who are near to Allah. He will speak to the people when in the cradle and in manhood, and he will be one of the righteous.” *(Qur'an 3: 45-46)*

There is a similar narration wherein it says that Zakariya (ﷺ) asked her the same questions and she answered him with the same reply. As-Suddi reported from some Companions that one day Maryam went to see her sister, who said to her, “Do you feel that I am pregnant?” Maryam said, “And do you feel that I am pregnant?” So they both hugged each other and her sister said, “I feel that what is in my womb bows down to what is in your womb.” The meaning of bowing down here is referring to humbling oneself and honouring the other. This is like what the people used to do when they met and greeted each other. This was something permissible in the Shari‘ah before ours, just like how Allah ordered the angels to prostrate to Adam (ﷺ).

Abu al-Qâsim reported that Mâlik said: “It has reached me that ‘Eesa (Jesus) and Yahya (John) the son of Zakariya were the sons of

maternal aunts. They both were conceived at the same time and it has also reached me that the mother of Yaḥya said to Maryam, ‘I feel that what is in my womb bows down to what is in your womb.’” Mâlik then said, “I believe this is the case because of the excellence of ‘Eesa over Yaḥya, peace be upon them.” Allah granted him (‘Eesa) power to bring to life the dead, and cure the leper and blind.”

It is apparent that Maryam carried him in her womb for nine months, just like any woman do and then she delivered him. If it was something other than this, it would have been reported. It is reported that Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنه) and Ikrimah said that she bore him for eight months. However, in another narration from Ibn ‘Abbâs, it is reported that he said that she gave birth to him as soon as she conceived. Others said that she bore him for nine hours. However, the correct opinion is that she bore him for nine months, as is the norm of women.

Muhammad ibn Ishāq said: “The news of Maryam’s pregnancy spread among the children of Israel. Some heretics slandered her of being pregnant with Yusuf, who used to worship along with her in the same mosque. So Maryam secluded herself from people and stayed in isolation.”

She said, “Would that I had died before this and had been forgotten and out of sight.” There is a proof in this verse of the permissibility of wanting to die at times of severe *fitnah*. She knew that the people would accuse her of being unchaste and they will not believe what she says. In fact, she knew that they will belie her when she gives birth to her son even though she was known among them for her piety and devotion to worship, and for being from a Prophetic household. So all this led her into desiring that if only she had died before all this.

“A voice cried to her from below her.” As regards the one who cried out to her, the scholars have two opinions. The first opinion,

reported from Ibn ‘Abbâs and others, is that it was Jibreel’s voice. The second opinion, narrated from Mujâhid, Hasan and others, is that it was the voice of ‘Eesa (ع). Ibn Jareer preferred this opinion.

Maryam was told that if someone spoke to her, she should indicate to them that she was fasting by saying, “Verily, I have vowed a fast to the Most Gracious, so I will not speak to any human being this day.” In their Shari’ah, a fast consisted of refraining from food and drink and also from speaking.

Many scholars, who report stories from the Jews and Christians, mentioned that when the people could not find Maryam for sometime, they went looking for her. When they finally found her, she had a baby with her, so they said, “O’ Maryam, indeed you have brought a mighty thing.” However, what these scholars mentioned does not seem correct since the clear meaning indicated by the Qur'an is that it was Maryam who delivered the baby and that she herself brought the baby to the people. Ibn ‘Abbâs (رض) said that she did that after finishing the forty days of post-natal bleeding.

“O’ sister of Hâroon.” It is said that Hâroon was a pious man of their time and that is why they said this to her since she too was pious. However, Sa‘eed ibn Jubayr said that they meant Hâroon, the brother of Moosa (peace be upon them). Muhammad ibn Kâb al-Quradhi erred when he claimed that Maryam was the blood sister of Moosa and Hâroon since there were generations between them.

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Mugheerah ibn Shu‘bah (رض) who said:

“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) once sent me to Najrân. The people there said to me, ‘Inform us about what you read, ‘O’ sister of Hâroon, when there was such and such a time between Moosa and ‘Eesa?’ Shu‘bah said, ‘So when I came back, I mentioned that to the Prophet.’ He said, ‘Why did you not tell them that those people used to name themselves with the names of the Prophets

and Messengers and the pious people before.''"

Qatādah and other said that they used to name themselves Hāroon more than any other name.

Ibn Jareer mentioned in his book of history that people accused Zakariya (ﷺ) of having sexual relation with Maryam and thus they wanted to kill him. He fled from them and hid in a tree. But they followed him and sawed him in two while he was inside the tree. Some of the hypocrites accused Maryam of having relations with her cousin Yusuf ibn Ya'qoob an-Najjār.

When the situation became severe and whatever she said in her defence was of no effect, her reliance upon Allah increased. She then pointed to the baby for them to speak to him, for he will give them what they want. "They said, 'How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?'" When they thought that she was making fun of them and mocking them by telling them to speak to a baby in its cradle, the baby spoke, saying, "Verily, I am a slave of Allah; He has given me the scripture and made me a Prophet. And He has made me blessed wherever I am and has enjoined prayer and zakah on me as long as I live. And to be dutiful to my mother and did not make me arrogant, unblessed. And peace be upon me the day I was born, and the day I die and the day I will be raised alive.' (cf 19: 30-33)

This was the first time 'Eesa (ﷺ) spoke and the first thing he said was, "Verily, I am a slave of Allah." He acknowledged that his Lord was Allah, deserving of worship. Then he mentioned the innocence of his mother by saying that Allah gave him the scripture and made him a Prophet. This is because Allah, the Exalted, does not give Prophethood to one who came the wrong way, as you have claimed.

After Allah mentioned this part of the story, He said, "Such is 'Eesa, son of Maryam. It is a statement of truth about which they doubt. It does not befit Allah that He should beget a son. Glorified be

He. When He decrees a thing, He only says to it, 'Be' and it is." (*cf* 19: 34-35).

This is similar to what Allah mentioned about the same story in another place in the Qur'an. He (ﷺ) said:

"This is what We recite to you of the verses and the wise reminder [i.e. Qur'an]. Verily, the likeness of 'Eesa before Allah is the likeness of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him, 'Be' and he was. This is the truth from your Lord, so do not be of those who doubt. Then whoever disputes with you concerning him after knowledge has come to you, say, 'Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves, then we pray and invoke the curse of Allah upon those who lie.' Verily, this is the true story of 'Eesa, and none is worthy of worship except Allah. And indeed Allah is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. And if they turn away, then surely Allah is All-Aware of those who do mischief."

(*Qur'an* 3: 58-63)

When some Christians from Najrân came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and disputed with him regarding 'Eesa, Allah revealed parts of *Soorah Al-'Imrân* which contains details about his birth, life, and the birth of his mother. Allah asked His messenger to gather them and for both parties to invoke curse on those who lie. However, the Christians backed off. The beliefs of the Jewish people of the time were all plain disbelief and *kufir*. One group said that 'Eesa (ﷺ) was the result of adultery. Another group said that he was Allah, while a third group said he was the son of Allah. As for the believers, they said that 'Eesa was a slave and Prophet of Allah, and the son of a maid slave of Allah. He is word from Allah bestowed on Maryam, a spirit from Him.

Imam Bukhari reported on the authority of Ubâdah ibn Şâmit (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Whoever bears witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, Alone, Who does not have any partner, and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger, and that 'Eesa is the slave and Messenger of Allah, His Word which He bestowed on Maryam, and His spirit from Him, and that Paradise and Hell are true. Allah will make him enter Paradise."¹⁷⁰

Allah is purified and far above of having a son

Allah (ﷻ), said at the end of *Soorah Maryam*:

"And they say, 'The Most Gracious [Allah] has begotten a son.' Indeed, you have said a terrible evil thing; whereby the heavens are almost torn and the earth is split asunder, and the mountains fall in ruins, that they ascribe a son to the Most Gracious. But it is not suitable for the Most Gracious that He should beget a son. There is none in the heavens and the earth but comes to the Most Gracious as a slave. Verily He knows each one of them and has counted them a full counting. And everyone of them will come to Him alone on the day of resurrection." *(Qur'an 19: 89-95)*

In these verses, Allah (ﷻ) says that it is not befitting for Him to have a son because He is the Creator of everything and everyone is in need of Him. All those who live, whether on the earth or heavens, are all His slaves. He is their Lord and they do not have any Lord besides Him. As He (ﷻ) said:

¹⁷⁰ Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Anbiyâ'*, Bâb Qawlahu ta'âla: Yâ ahl al-Kitâb lá taqhloo fee Deenakum and Muslim, *Kitâb al-'Eemân*, Bâb Daleel 'ala an man mâta' 'ala at-Tawheed.

“Yet, they ascribe the jinn as partners in worship with Allah, while He created them; and they attribute sons and daughters to Him falsely, without knowledge. Glory be to Him and Exalted is He above what they ascribe to Him; the Originator of the heavens and the earth. How can He have a son when He has no wife? He created all things and He is the Knower of all things. Such is Allah, your Lord. None is worthy of worship except He, the Creator of all things. Therefore worship Him and He is the Trustee over all things.”
(Qur'an 6: 100-103)

Allah refuted their claims by saying that He is the Creator of everything, so how can He have a son since a son must come from a thing, while Allah does not have anyone like Him or similar to Him. He does not have a wife and so there can be no son. As He mentioned in *Soorah Ikhlas*:

“Say, ‘He is Allah, One; the Self Sufficient, Who all creatures need. He begets not nor was He begotten. And there is none co-equal or comparable to Him.’”

(Qur'an 112: 1-4)

So a son comes from two equal things or similar. And there is none comparable to Allah be it in ‘self’, qualities, attributes or actions.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“O’ people of the Scripture, do not go to extremes in your religion, nor say of Allah anything but the truth. Verily, ‘Eesa the son of Maryam, was no more than a Messenger of Allah and His Word which He bestowed on Maryam and a spirit created by Him. So believe in Allah and His Messengers and do not say, ‘Three [i.e. trinity].’ Cease, it is better for you, most surely Allah is One, Glory be to Him, far Exalted is He from having a son. Whatever is in the

heavens and on the earth belongs to Allah, and Allah is sufficient as a Trustee. The Messiah [i.e. 'Eesa] will never be proud to reject to be a slave of Allah, nor the angels who are the near [to Allah]. And whoever rejects His worship and is proud, He will gather them all to Him. As for those who believed and performed deeds of righteousness, He will give them their rewards and more out of His bounty. But those who refused His worship and were proud, He will punish them with a painful torment and they will not find any protector or helper from Allah." (*Qur'an* 4: 172-173)

In these verses, Allah prohibits the Christians from crossing the bounds and going to extremes in their religion since they went to the extremes concerning — the Messiah — 'Eesa, son of Maryam.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"And the Jews say, 'Uzayr is the son of Allah' and the Christians say, 'Messiah is the son of Allah.' That is a saying from their mouth, resembling the saying of disbelievers before them. Allah's curse be on them, how they are deluded from the right way." (*Qur'an* 9: 30)

In these verses, Allah informs us that both the Jews and Christians, may Allah curse them, claimed that He has a son. Glorified be He, far Exalted is He above what they claim. Allah also informs us that they do not have anything upon which they based their false claims except just something they came up with and resemblance of the deviant people who passed before them. The Arabs said that the angels were the daughters of Allah. Glorified be He, far Exalted, is He above what they claim. As Allah said about them:

"And they make the angels, who are themselves slaves of the Most Gracious, as female. Did they witness their creation? Their testimony will be recorded and they will be questioned." (*Qur'an* 43: 19)

The All-High said in another place:

“And they say, ‘The Most Gracious has begotten a son.’ Glory be to Him; they are only honoured slaves. They do not speak until He has spoken and they act on His command. He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot intercede except for him with whom He is pleased. And they stand in awe for fear of Him. And if anyone of them should say, ‘Verily, I am a god besides Him,’ We will recompense such a one with Hell. Thus We recompense the wrong doers.” (*Qur'an* 21: 26-29)

And Allah said in *Soorah Yunus*:

“They say, ‘Allah has begotten a son.’ Glory be to Him, He is self sufficient. To Him belongs what is in the heavens and on the earth. You do not have any warrant for this. Do you say against Allah what you do not know? Say, ‘Verily, those who invent a lie against Allah will never be successful.’ A brief enjoyment in this world and then to Us will be their return, then We will make them taste the severest punishment because they used to disbelieve.”

(*Qur'an* 10: 68-70)

All these verses, which were revealed in Makkah, refute the claims of all types of disbelievers, such as the Philosophers, the disbelievers among the Arabs, the Jews and Christians, who claimed without any knowledge that Allah has a son. Glory be to Him, far is He Exalted above what they say. These Christians, who are renowned to say this falsehood, are themselves divided into many groups since falsehood always has differences and contradictions.

Allah said in *Soorah al-Mâ'ida*:

“Indeed, they are disbelievers who say that Allah is the Messiah, son of Maryam. Say [O' Muhammad], ‘Who then

has the power against Allah if He chose to destroy the Messiah, son of Maryam, his mother, and all those on the earth?' And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them. He creates what He wills, and Allah is able to do all things.' " (*Qur'an* 5: 17)

So we see that in these verses, Allah informed about their disbelief and ignorance, and He mentioned that He is the Creator and the One able to do all things. He is the Lord of everything.

Allah mentioned at the end of the same *Soorah*:

"Surely they have disbelieved who say, 'Allah is the Messiah, son of Maryam.' But the Messiah said, 'O' Children of Israel, worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.' Whoever associates partners with Allah, then Allah has forbidden Paradise to him and the fire will be his abode. And the wrongdoers will not have any helpers.' Surely they disbelieved who say, 'Allah is the third of the three [i.e. trinity].' There is no god worthy of worship but one God. And if they do not cease what they say, verily a painful punishment will befall the disbelievers among them. Will they not turn with repentance to Allah and ask His forgiveness? For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. The Messiah, son of Maryam, was no more than a Messenger; many Messengers passed before him. His mother was a *Siddiqah* [i.e. believed in Allah's words and books]. They both used to eat food. Look how We make the proofs clear to them, yet look how they are deluded away."

(*Qur'an* 5: 72-75)

Allah described their beliefs as disbelief and informed us that this blasphemy came from them despite the fact that the Messenger sent to them, — 'Eesa (ﷺ) — told them that he is a slave, created by Allah. He also called his people to the worship of Allah, Alone, Who

does not have any partners. He informed them that the consequences of persisting in disbelief were Hell-fire and humiliation for eternity. Allah then informed that Maryam was a pious woman by saying that she was a *siddiqah*. This is another proof that she was not a prophet as has been claimed by some. Then Allah mentioned that both 'Eesa and his mother ate food. The point alluded to by this is that whoever eats, something will come out from him. If this is the case, then how can such a person be god?

Allah then mentioned the disbelief of those who say that 'Eesa (ﷺ) and his mother were gods besides Allah. He (ﷻ) said:

"And when Allah will say [on the day of resurrection], 'O' 'Eesa, son of Maryam, did you say to the people, 'Take me and my mother as gods other than Allah?'" He will say, 'Glory be to You, it was not for me to say that which I have no right to say. Had I said such a thing, You would surely have known it. You know what is in my inner-self, and I do not know what is in Yours. Indeed, You are the Knower of the unseen. I did not say to them anything other than what You ordered me to say, 'Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.' And I was a witness over them while I lived among them. But when You took me up, You were the watcher over them, and You are a witness to all things. If You punish them, they are Your slaves; and if You forgive them, verily You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.'" (*Qur'an* 5: 116-118)

In these verses, Allah, the Almighty informs us that He will ask 'Eesa, son of Maryam on the day of judgment as an honour for him and to further humiliate those who worshipped him; those who invented lies and claimed that he was Allah's son. Allah will ask this question even though He knows the answer, in order to humiliate the disbelievers. 'Eesa (ﷺ) replies that he only said to them what Allah ordered him to say when He had sent him as a Messenger. He told the people that Allah was his Creator and the Creator of all of them also.

As regards the part of the verse "... but when You took me up," this is referring to how Allah raised up 'Eesa (ع) when the children of Israel tried to kill and crucify him. Allah made another person among them look similar to 'Eesa (ع) and then the people took their revenge on him.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"Had Allah wanted to take a son, He could have chosen whom He willed from His creation. Glory be to Him, He is Allah, the One, the superior force. He has created the heavens and the earth with truth. He makes the night to go in the day and makes the day go into the night. And He subjected the sun and the moon; each running on a fixed course for an appointed term. Verily, He is the All-Mighty, the Oft-Forgiving." *(Our'an 39: 45)*

(*Qur'an* 39: 4-5)

Again in *Soorah Zukhruf* He (ه) said:

"Say, 'If the Most Gracious had a son, then I am the first of Allah's worshippers. Glory be to the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of the Throne. Exalted be He from all that they ascribe.'"
(Our'an 43: 81-82)

(*Qur'an* 43: 81-82)

And said in *Soorah al-Ikhlas*:

"Say, 'He is Allah, the One. Allah, the self-sufficient master, Who all creatures need. He begets not nor was He begotten. And there is none equal or comparable to Him.'"

(*Qur'an* 112: 1-4)

It is authentically established in Bukhari that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"Allah says, 'The son of Adam insulted Me, when He had no right to do so; he claimed that I have a son, whereas I am the One, the Eternal, Who begets not nor was begotten and there is none

comparable to Me.”¹⁷¹

In another authentic hadith reported by Bukhari, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“There is no one more tolerant to insults that he hears than Allah; they ascribed a son to Him while He gives them provision and health.”¹⁷²

Abu Zurah ad-Dimashqi reported Mu‘âwiyah ibn Sâlih as saying: “The Torah was revealed to Moosa on the 6th of Ramadân; and *Zaboor* (Psalms) was revealed to Dawood on 12th of Ramadân. This was after the Torah by four hundred and eighty-two years. And the Gospel (*Injeel*) was revealed to ‘Eesa son of Maryam on 18th of Ramadân, which was one thousand and fifty years after *Zaboor*. And the *Furqân* (i.e. Qur'an) was revealed to Muhammad (Blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) on 24th of the month of Ramadân.”¹⁷³

Ibn Jareer said: “The Gospel was revealed when ‘Eesa was thirty years old and he stayed on earth till he was raised to the heavens at the age of thirty-three.”

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And remember when Allah will say, ‘O’ ‘Eesa, son of Maryam, remember My favour to you and to your mother when I supported you with the *Rooh al-Qudus* [Jibreel] so that you spoke to people in the cradle and in maturity; and when I taught you writing and understanding, the Torah and the Gospel; and when you made out of clay a figure of a bird by My permission, and you breathed into it and it became a bird by My permission; and you healed those born blind and

¹⁷¹ Bukhari, *Kitâb at-Tafseer*, Bâb *Tafseer Soorah Ikhlâs*.

¹⁷² Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Adab*, Bâb *us-Sabr fee al-Adhâ*.

¹⁷³ We have mentioned the verses concerning this in our book of *Tafseer*.

the lepers by My permission; and when you brought forth the dead by My permission; and when I restrained the Children of Israel from you when you came to them with clear signs but the disbelievers among them said, 'This is nothing but plain magic.' And when I inspired the disciples to believe in Me and in My Messenger, they said, 'We believe. And bear witness that we are Muslims.'"

(Qur'an 5: 110-111)

In these verses, Allah mentions His favours upon 'Eesa (ﷺ) i.e., He created him from a mother, without a father, and made him a sign for the people, and it is for Allah to do anything He wills. Allah also chose his ('Eesa) mother over all other women for this favour. Then Jibreel came and blew into her. Then 'Eesa (ﷺ) spoke to people, both from his cradle and in maturity, calling them to worship only Allah. Also, Allah mentioned how 'Eesa (ﷺ) would make something like a bird from clay, in obedience to Allah's order, and then Allah would make it into a real bird. Allah said many times that it was Him Who did all this so that there should be no misunderstanding. Then Allah restrained the children of Israel when they tried to kill and crucify him, and then Allah raised him up. Then Allah gave him helpers and supports, his disciples, who worshipped Allah along with him associating nothing with Allah.

Allah (ﷻ), said:

"And He will teach him ['Eesa] the Book and the wisdom, and the Torah and the Gospel. And will make him a Messenger to the Children of Israel, 'I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, I make for you out of clay a figure like that of a bird and breathe into it and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave; and I heal him who was born blind and the leper, and I bring the dead to life by Allah's leave. And I inform you of what you eat and what you store in your houses. Surely therein is a sign if you are believers.

And I have come confirming that which was before me of the Torah and to make lawful to you part of what was forbidden to you. And I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, so fear Allah and obey me. Indeed Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him; this is the straight path. And ‘Eesa perceived their disbelief, he said, ‘Who will be my helpers in Allah’s cause?’ The disciples said, ‘We are the helpers of Allah; we believe in Allah and bear witness that we are Muslims. Our Lord, we believe in what You have revealed and we follow the Messenger; so write us down among those who bear witness.’ And they [the disbelievers] plotted [to kill ‘Eesa] and Allah too plotted; and Allah is the Best of planners.” (*Qur'an 3: 48-54*)

The miracle given to every Prophet was something appropriate for their times. For example, Moosa (ﷺ) was given a miracle that was appropriate for the people of his time. They were great magicians and thus Moosa was sent with miracles that left them dumbfounded. That is because the magicians knew magic well and then when they saw something that was totally different, they knew it was from Allah and so hastened to believe in Him. As for ‘Eesa (ﷺ), he was sent with miracles concerning medicine that could not be matched by the people of his time. How can any doctor heal a person who was born blind or a leper or bring the dead to life? All these were clear indications of his truthfulness and the ability of the One Who sent him.

It was similar with our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), wherein he was sent to a place and at a time when the people excelled in literary work and poetry. So Allah revealed to him the Qur'an. Its words are miracles and the mankind and jinn are challenged to produce the like of it, or the like of ten chapters or even the like of one chapter. They will never be able to match the Qur'an since it is from the Creator and there is nothing similar to Allah in His attributes or actions.

Anyhow, the point is that when 'Eesa (ﷺ) established the evidences and proofs against his people, most of them persisted in their disbelief and stubbornness. A pious group among them responded to his call and became his helpers. They followed him and helped him spread his message. Some of his people opposed him and misled the king of that time by providing false information about 'Eesa (ﷺ). When they plotted to kill and crucify him, Allah saved him from them and raised him up to Him. He then made another person seem like 'Eesa (ﷺ) and so the people mistook him for 'Eesa and thus killed and crucified him.

Allah (ﷻ) said in *Soorah as-Saff*:

"And remember when 'Eesa, son of Maryam, said, 'O' children of Israel, I am the Messenger of Allah to you, confirming the Torah before me and giving glad tidings of a Messenger who will come after me whose name will be Ahмad [i.e. Muhammad].' But when he [Ahмad] came to them with clear signs, they said, 'This is plain magic.' And who is more unjust than he who invents a lie against Allah while he is being invited to Islam? And Allah does not guide the wrong doing people. They intend to extinguish Allah's Light [i.e. the religion of Islam, the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad] with their mouths, but Allah will bring His Light to perfection even though the disbelievers hate it."

(Qur'an 61: 6-8)

'Eesa (ﷺ) was the last of the Prophets sent to the children of Israel. He informed them of the final Prophet who will come after him and will be the seal of Prophethood. He told them his name and characteristics so that when he comes, they will be able to recognize him and thus follow him. Allah said:

"Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write, who they find written with them in

the Torah and the Gospel, he enjoins on them what is good [Islamic monotheism] and forbids them from what is wrong [disbelief and polytheism]; he makes the pure things lawful for them and prohibits them the impure things, he releases them from their heavy burdens and frees them from the bindings which were upon them. So those who believe in him, honour him, help him, and follow the light [Qur'an] which has been revealed with him, it is they who will be successful.”
(Qur'an 7: 157)

Muhammad ibn Ishâq reported on the authority of Khâlid ibn Ma'dân that the Companions asked the Prophet to tell them about him. In reply thereof he (ﷺ) said:

“I am the prayer of my father Ibraheem and the glad tiding given by ‘Eesa.”

Abu Umâmah (رضي الله عنه) narrated a similar hadith.

As regards the prayer of Ibraheem (ﷺ), it refers to his prayer when he built the Ka'bah, “Our Lord, and send to them a Messenger from among them.” (*cf 2: 129*) And since ‘Eesa (ﷺ) was the last Prophet to be sent to the children of Israel, he stood up among them and said that the Prophethood has come to an end among the Israelites and that an unlettered Arab Prophet will come to them, who will be the seal of Prophethood. He mentioned that his name will be Ahmad i.e. Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abdul Mu'talib ibn Hâshim, from the offspring of Isma'eel ibn Ibraheem (peace be upon them).

The Story of the Mâ'idah

Allah (ﷻ) said:

“And remember when the disciples said, ‘O’ ‘Eesa, son of Maryam, can your Lord send down to us a *Mâ'idah* [a table

with food] from heaven?' He said, 'Fear Allah, if you are indeed believers.' They said, 'We only wish to eat from it and to satisfy our hearts and to know that you have indeed told us the truth and that we be witnesses to it.' 'Eesa, son of Maryam, said, 'Our Lord, send down to us from heaven a *Mâ'idah* that there may be a festival for us, for the first and last of us, and a sign from You; and give us sustenance, for You are the Best of sustainers.' Allah said, 'I will send it down to you, but if any of you disbelieves after that, I will punish him with a torment such as I have not inflicted on any among all the people.'" *(Qur'an 5: 112-115)*

We have mentioned in our book of *tafseer* some narrations regarding the *Mâ'idah*. The gist of the story is that Prophet 'Eesa (ﷺ) ordered his disciples to fast for thirty days. When they completed their fasting, they asked 'Eesa to send down a *Mâ'idah* for them so that they can eat of it and so that they know that Allah accepted their fasts and answered their prayers. They also wanted to take that day as a festival for all Israelites, those present then and one to come after them, as well as the rich and poor. When 'Eesa heard that, he admonished them for their demand and feared that they might not thank Allah properly for such a favour. However, they persisted in their demand for 'Eesa to ask Allah, the All-Powerful, All-High.

When 'Eesa (ﷺ) saw that they were not desisting from their demand, he prayed to Allah with humbleness to answer their prayers and give them what they wanted. So Allah sent down the *Mâ'idah*, from between the clouds, while the people were watching. They saw it coming closer and closer. Each time it came closer, 'Eesa prayed to Allah to make it a mercy and blessing. It kept coming down till it landed right in front of 'Eesa. While uncovering the table, he said, "In the Name of Allah, the Best of providers." Upon it were seven fish, seven breads and fruits; all possessing a pleasant smell.

Then ‘Eesa (ﷺ) ordered them to eat from it. However, they refused to do so till he eats. So ‘Eesa said, “It was you who asked for it.” Still they refused to be the first to start eating it so ‘Eesa asked the poor, needy, the sick and disabled people to eat first. They were about one thousand and three hundred. Once they ate, they all were cured from their illnesses. Seeing that, those who did not eat regretted since perhaps they too could have improved their situation. It is said that it used to come down once every day and people would eat from it. Each one of them would eat till he was satisfied. It is said that seven thousand people ate from it.

Later on, it was sent down every alternate day, similar to the she-camel of Prophet Sâlih (ﷺ) wherein the people used to drink her milk on every alternate day. Then Allah ordered ‘Eesa (ﷺ) to restrict it and give it only to the poor and needy. Some people found this very difficult and the hypocrites started speaking about it. So it was stopped and not sent down anymore. Those who spoke against it were transformed into pigs.

Ibn Abi Hâtim and Ibn Jareer reported on the authority of ‘Ammâr ibn Yâsir (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“The *Mâ’idah* was sent down from the heavens, containing bread and meat. The people were ordered not to cheat and not to take extra and store it for the next day. However, they cheated and took extra to store for the next day. So they were transformed into monkeys and pigs.”

The scholars differed concerning the *Mâ’idah*, did it actually descend or not. Majority of the scholars said that it did descend based on the narrations similar to the one quoted above and also based upon the context of the verse, “I will send it down to you”. Some of the *tâbi’een* said that it did not descend. They said that when Allah said to them, “I will send it down to you. Then if any of you disbelieves after that, I will punish him with a torment with which I have

punished any one among all the people," they became scared and said that they do not want it anymore. They also said that it is because of this that the Christians do not know anything about the *Mâ'idah* and neither is it mentioned in their books.

Ibn Abi ad-Dunya reported that Fuḍayl ibn ‘Ayâd said: "It was said to 'Eesa, 'O' 'Eesa, how do you walk on water?' He said, 'With my faith and certainty in (the belief of) Allah.' They said, 'But we believed like you have and we have certainty like you have.' 'Eesa said, 'Then walk.' When they started walking with him on the waves, they drowned. 'Eesa said, 'What happened?' They said, 'We were scared of the waves.' 'Eesa said, 'Do you not fear the Lord of the waves?' Then he took them out of the water, stroke the earth with his hands, taking up some dust, and when he opened them, in one hand there was gold and pebbles in the other. He asked, 'Which one is more desired by you?' They said, 'Gold.' 'Eesa said, 'Both are equal to me.'"

We have already mentioned in the story of Yaḥya ibn Zakariya (peace be upon them) that 'Eesa used to wear woollen clothes, ate from leaves, did not have a home or family or wealth and would not save anything for the next day. Ash-Sha‘bi said: "Whenever the day of Judgment was mentioned in front of 'Eesa, he used to cry and say, 'It is not befitting for the son of Maryam to keep quite when the day of Judgment is mentioned in front of him.'"

It is reported that 'Eesa said: "O' the weak son of Adam, fear Allah wherever you are. Be in this world like a guest and take the mosques as a house. Teach your eye how to cry, patience to your body and thinking to your heart. And do not concern yourself with the provision of the next day."

The Raising of ‘Eesa (Jesus) (ﷺ)

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“And they [disbelievers] plotted [to kill ‘Eesa] and Allah plotted too. And Allah is the best of those who plot. And remember when Allah said, ‘O’ ‘Eesa, I will take you and raise you to Myself and clear you of those who disbelieve, and I will make those who follow you superior to those who disbelieve till the day of resurrection. Then to Me will you return and I will judge between you in that which you used to dispute.’”

(*Qur'an* 3: 54-55)

And said in *Soorah Nisâ*:

“Because of their breaking the covenant and of their rejecting the proofs of Allah and of their killing the Prophets unjustly and of their saying, ‘Our hearts are wrapped.’ No, rather, Allah has set a seal upon their hearts because of their disbelief, so they do not believe but little. And because of their disbelief and uttering against Maryam a grave false charge. And because of their saying [in boast], ‘We killed Messiah, ‘Eesa son of Maryam, the Messenger of Allah;’ but they did not kill him nor crucified him but it appeared like that to them. And those who differ therein are full of doubts. They do not have certain knowledge but follow mere conjecture, for surely they did not kill him. But Allah raised him up to Himself and Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise. And there is none of the people of the scriptures but must believe in him before his death. And on the Day of Judgment, he [‘Eesa] will be a witness against them.”

(*Qur'an* 4: 155-159)

Allah (ﷻ) informs us in these verses that He (ﷻ) raised up ‘Eesa to the heavens and saved him from those who desired to kill him from

the Jews who misled the king of that time against 'Eesa. Allah made another person seem like 'Eesa to the Jews and so they killed him. Hasan al-Baṣri and Muhammad ibn Ishāq said: "The name of the king who ordered the killing and crucifixion of 'Eesa (Jesus) was Dawood ibn Noora. They surrounded 'Eesa when he was in a house of the *Bayt al-Maqdis* on Friday night. When the time came for them to enter the house, 'Eesa's likeness was put on one of those who were present in the house with him and 'Eesa was raised up from the house to the heaven while the people of the *Bayt* watched. When the police entered and saw the youth, they took him thinking he was 'Eesa and crucified him. Since most of the Christians did not see the ascending of 'Eesa, they believed that 'Eesa was killed and crucified and it was because of this that they deviated far away."

Ibn Abi Ḥâtim reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) who said: "When Allah wanted to raise 'Eesa up to the heaven, 'Eesa went to his companions in the house. They were twelve men, of them some were his disciples. Water seemed to be dripping from his hair as though he had just had a bath. He said to them, 'Some among you will disbelieve in me twelve times after he had believed in me.' He then said, 'Who from among you will take my likeness and thus be killed in my place, taking him equal to me in rank?' A youth came forward, he was youngest of them. 'Eesa said to him, 'Sit down.' Then he repeated the question and the same youth stood up and said, 'I.' 'Eesa said, 'You are the one.' Then the likeness of 'Eesa was put on him and 'Eesa was raised to the heaven through an upper opening (window) of his house."

At that, the Jews came looking for 'Eesa and when they saw the youth, they took and killed him and then crucified him. Later on, those twelve people divided into three groups. One group, called *Ya'qoobiyah*, believed that it was Allah Himself who was among them and then ascended to the heaven. A second group, called *Nastooriyah*, believed that it was the son of Allah who was with

them, then Allah raised him up. The third group, the Muslims among them, said that ‘Eesa was the slave and Messenger of Allah and then Allah raised him up to Himself. Then it happened that the two disbelieving groups came together against the believing group and killed them. This resulted in Islam becoming obscure till Allah sent Muhammad, Blessings and peace be upon him.

Allah said, “And there is none of people of the Book except that he will believe in him [‘Eesa] before his death and on the Day of Judgment he will be a witness against them.” (*cf 4: 159*) This refers to when ‘Eesa will descend to the earth before the Day of Judgment, since when he descends, he will kill the swine, break the cross and get rid of *Jizyah* (the money paid by the non-Muslims to the Muslim ruler for the protection given to them) and will not accept except Islam.

Ibn Jareer reported that Wahb ibn Munabbih said: “Eesa, along with seventeen of his disciples, went to a house. Then the people came and surrounded the house. When they entered, all of them were made to look like ‘Eesa. So they said, ‘You have bewitched us. Either ‘Eesa comes out to us or we will kill all of you.’ So ‘Eesa said to his disciples, ‘Who among you will give his soul today for Paradise?’ A man said, ‘I’ and then went out saying, ‘I am ‘Eesa.’ So they took him, killed and crucified him. Because he was made to look like ‘Eesa, they thought that they killed ‘Eesa and the Christians also thought the same. However Allah raised ‘Eesa up on that day.”¹⁷⁴

Ibn Asâkir said: “It has reached me that Maryam lived for five years after ‘Eesa was raised and then she died at the age of fifty-three.”

Hasan al-Basri said: “Eesa was thirty-four years old when he was raised up.”

¹⁷⁴ *Tafseer at-Tabari*, vol. 6, p. 10.

It is mentioned in a hadith that the people will enter Paradise with the ages being thirty-three.

The Characteristics and Virtues of 'Eesa (ﷺ)

Allah (ﷻ), said:

“The Messiah son of Maryam was no more than a Messenger; many Messengers have passed away before him and his mother was a *Siddiqah* [a pious woman who was a believer].” *(Qur'an 5: 75)*

It is said that 'Eesa was called the Messiah because he used to travel in the land, avoiding the *fitnah* of the time since the Jews would strongly belie him and invent lies against him and his mother (peace be upon them). In another opinion, it is said that it was because he was foot anointed.

We have mentioned earlier the authentic hadith reported by Bukhari and Muslim that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“There is no baby who is born except that *Shayṭân* kicks him in his sides, thus he comes out screaming; except for Maryam and her son, he went to kick him but could not.”

Similarly, there is another hadith where the Messenger of Allah (ﷻ) said:

“Whosoever bears witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, Alone, Who does not have any partner, and that Muhammad is Allah's slave and Messenger, and that 'Eesa is Allah's slave and Messenger, and His Word which He bestowed to Maryam and a spirit from Him, and believes that the Paradise and Hell are true, Allah will enter him into the Paradise regardless

of what deeds he has done.”¹⁷⁵

There is yet another hadith reported by both Imam Bukhari and Muslim, on the authority of Abu Moosa (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

“... If a person believed in ‘Eesa, the son of Maryam, then believed in me, he will have two rewards...”

Imam Bukhari also reported another hadith on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs (رضي الله عنهما) who heard ‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) say on the pulpit:

“I heard the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) say, ‘Do not extol me (and go to extremes) as the Christians did with ‘Eesa, the son of Maryam. Verily, I am only a slave, so say, ‘The slave of Allah and His Messenger’.’”

Imam Ahmad reported the on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

“... I am the closest person to ‘Eesa and the Prophets are brothers. There was no Prophet between me and ‘Eesa...”

Imam Ahmad also reported another hadith on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said:

“Prophets are brothers; their religion is one but their mothers are different. I am the closest person to ‘Eesa because there was no Prophet between him and me. When he will descend from the heaven, you will recognize him. He will appear as white and red in texture. It will look as if water drops will fall out from his head. He will break the cross, kill the swine and get rid of the *Jizyah* and destroy all other religions till no religion will remain except Islam. Allah will destroy in his time the *Dajjâl* (Pseudo-Christ). Peace

¹⁷⁵ Bukhari, *Kitâb Tafseer Soorah Âl 'Imrân* and Muslim, *Kitâb al-Qadr*; the words mentioned here are from Muslim.

and safety will prevail on the earth, to such an extent that you will see camels alongside lions and sheep with wolves. Even the children will be playing with snakes and they will not harm each other. Allah will leave 'Eesa on the earth for as long as He wills and then cause him to die. The Muslims will then offer his funeral prayer and then bury him.”¹⁷⁶

In another version, it says:

“He will stay for forty years and then will die and the Muslims will pray on him.” He will descent on the white minaret in Damascus at a time when the morning prayer would have been called. The Imam will tell him, ‘Come forward and lead the prayer.’ However, 'Eesa will say, ‘No, you are the leaders to one another, Allah's honour for this ummah.’”

In another narration, it is said that 'Eesa will say: “No, the prayer was called for you.”

After praying, he will ride along with the Muslims in pursuit of the *Dajjāl* (Pseudo-Christ). He will catch him and kill him with his noble hand at the Ludd gate.

Imam Bukhari reported that Salmān (رضي الله عنه) said: “The period between 'Eesa and Muhammad (peace be upon them) was six hundred years.”

Qatādah said it was five hundred years. Others said it was five hundred and forty years. The most popular opinion, however, is that it was six hundred years.

¹⁷⁶ Ahmad, vol. 2, p. 406.

Glossary

'Abd	عبد :	Slave
'Âlameen	عالیم :	Universe, mankind, jinn and all that exists
<i>Allâhu Akbar</i>	الله اکبر :	Allah is Greatest, All-Great
<i>Al-Lawh</i> <i>al-Mahfoodh</i>	اللوح المحفوظ :	The Preserved Tablet, the book that is in the Heaven with Allah where everything is written
'Ashoorah	عاشورة :	Tenth of Muharram of the Hijri calendar
Âyât	آیات :	Sing. <i>Âyah</i> ; Verses, signs, proof
Bay'ah	بيعة :	Oath of allegiance to an Imam
Bayt	بیت :	House, home
Daboor	دبور :	West wind
Dahriyah	ذهبية :	Materialist
Dajjâl	دجال :	Pseudo-Christ
Dhira'	ذراع :	It is the distance from the elbow to the finger tips
Duha	ضُحى :	Forenoon, forenoon prayer
Eemân	إيمان :	Faith, belief
'Eid al-Adha	عيد الأضحى :	The tenth day of Dhul-Hijjah, the 12th month of the Hijri calendar
'Eid al-Fitr	عيد الفطر :	The first day of Shawwâl, the tenth month of the Hijri calendar

<i>Fâsiqoon</i>	فاسقون :	Sing. <i>Fâsiq</i> ; Rebellious, disobedients of Allah
<i>Fatwa</i>	فتوى :	Ruling (religious ruling)
<i>Fitnah</i>	فتنة :	Trials, afflictions, persecution
<i>Fitrah</i>	فطرة :	Natural disposition
<i>Furqân</i>	فرقان :	Lit. Proofs, evidence; the distinguisher between good and evil, name of the 25th <i>Soorah</i> of the Qur'an
<i>Halâl</i>	حلال :	Permissible, allowed, legal as per Islamic law
<i>Harâm</i>	حرام :	Forbidden by Allah, illegal as per Islamic law
<i>Hasan</i>	حسن :	Lit. Good; In hadith discipline it applies to an approved (almost authentic) hadith
<i>Hikmah</i>	حكمة :	Wisdom, understanding the laws of Allah
<i>Hukm</i>	حکم :	Order, right judgment
<i>Iblees</i>	إبليس :	Devil, Satan
<i>Ifk</i>	إفك :	The lie
<i>'Ifreet</i>	عفريت :	Jinn
<i>Injeel</i>	إنجيل :	Gospel
<i>'Isha'</i>	عشاء :	The obligatory night prayer
<i>Isra'</i>	إسراء :	The Night Journey of the last Prophet (Muhammad) from Makkah to Jerusalem
<i>Ithnayn</i>	اثنين :	Two

<i>Jâhiliyah</i>	جاهلية :	Period of ignorance, pre-Islamic, non-Islamic
<i>Jannatul Ma'wah</i>	جنة المأوى :	The Garden of Abode, Paradise near the Lote-tree
<i>Jizyah</i>	جزية :	The money paid by the non-Muslims to the Muslim ruler for the protection given to them. They are exempted from the military service. They do not pay Zakah
<i>Jubbah</i>	جبة :	Long garment
<i>Khalah</i>	خالة :	Mother's sister
<i>Khaleel</i>	خليل :	Close friend, a title for the Prophet Ibraheem (Abraham)
<i>Khaṭeeb</i>	خطيب :	Speaker, orator, the one who delivers sermon
<i>Kufr</i>	كفر :	Disbelief
<i>Mâ'idah</i>	مائدة :	A table with food, name of the 5th <i>Soorah</i> of the Qur'an
<i>Mi'raj</i>	میراج :	The ascension of the last Prophet
<i>Mihrâb</i>	محراب :	Niche, a separate praying place
<i>Miswâk</i>	مسوک :	A stick of Arak tree used as tooth brush
<i>Mithqâl</i>	مقابل :	Weight
<i>Mu'minoon</i>	مؤمنون :	Sing. <i>Mu'min</i> ; The believers in Islam
<i>Mufassireen</i>	مفسرین :	Sing. <i>Mufassir</i> ; Qur'anic exegetes

<i>Mushrikoon</i>	مُشْرِكُون	: Sing. <i>Mushrik</i> ; Polytheists, believers in more than one deity
<i>Muslimoon</i>	مُسْلِمُون	: Sing. Muslim; Muslims
<i>Qarn</i>	قرن	: Centuries, generations
<i>Qiblah</i>	قبلة	: Direction of Ka'bah, the place Muslims turn towards when offering prayer (<i>Salâh</i>)
<i>Rak'ah</i>	رَكْعَةٌ	: A unit of prayer
<i>Rooh</i>	روح	: Spirit, arch-angel Jibreel (Gabriel)
<i>Saba</i>	سَبَا	: The Yemeni kingdom of the Queen of Sheba 700-800 BC; name of 34th <i>Soorah</i> of the Qur'an
<i>Sabâ</i>	صَبَا	: East wind
<i>Sahâbah</i>	صَحَّابَةٍ	: Sing. <i>Sahâbi</i> ; Companions of the last Prophet, Muhammad
<i>Saheeh</i>	صَحِّيْحٌ	: Authentic, Correct
<i>Sajdah</i>	سَجْدَةٌ	: Prostration
<i>Sakeenah</i>	سَكِينَةٌ	: Peace and reassurance, tranquillity, calmness
<i>Salâm</i>	سَلَامٌ	: Greeting with peace
<i>Sarh</i>	صَرْحٌ	: A lofty palace, a glass surface with water underneath
<i>Shâm</i>	شَامٌ	: The area covering Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and parts of Iraq
<i>Shari'ah</i>	شَرِيعَةٌ	: Islamic law

<i>Shaytān</i>	شیطان :	Satan
<i>Shirk</i>	شرك :	Polytheism, belief in more than one deity
<i>Siddeeqah</i>	صَدِيقَةٌ :	A pious woman, firm believer in Allah's ordinances, title for the mother of the believers 'Ā'ishah
<i>Soorah</i>	سُورَةٌ :	Chapter of the Qur'an
<i>Taboot</i>	تابوت :	Wooden box, Coffin
<i>Tafseer</i>	تَفْسِيرٌ :	Explanation, exegeses of the Qur'an
<i>Tahārah</i>	طَهَارَةٌ :	Cleanliness and purity as desired by Islamic Shari'ah
<i>Talbiyah</i>	تَلْبِيَةٌ :	Recitation while travelling for 'Umrah or Hajj, i.e., <i>Allāhumma labbayk, lā shareekah laka labbayk ...</i>
<i>Tannur</i>	تَنْوُرٌ :	Oven
<i>Taqwa</i>	تَقْوَى :	Piety
<i>Tawakkul</i>	تَوَكُّلٌ :	Reliance
<i>Tawheed</i>	تَوْحِيدٌ :	Islamic Monotheism
<i>Thareed</i>	ثَرِيدٌ :	Porridge, a special type of food
<i>Wahy</i>	وَحْيٌ :	Inspiration, revelation
<i>Wali</i>	وَلِيٌ :	Friend, Guardian
<i>Zaboor</i>	زَبُورٌ :	Psalms

NOTES

STORIES OF THE PROPHETS

Believing in all the Messengers and Prophets - from Adam to Muhammad - may peace be upon them all, is one of the pillars of faith in Islam. Denying any of them is a form of *kufr* - disbelief - which if not repented leads to the Hell-Fire. Similar is the case with exaggerating any of them beyond their respective honourable status that Allah, the All-Mighty, has given them, as the followers of many faiths are doing.

(The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the believers. Each one (of them) believes in Allah, His Angels, His books, and His Messengers. "We make no distinction between any of His messengers." And they say, "We hear and we obey. [We seek] Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the [final] destination.)[Qur'an 2:285]

(We do relate to you (O' Muhammad) the best of stories in what We have revealed to you the Qur'an, although you were, before it, among the unaware.) [Qur'an 12:3]

(So relate the stories that perhaps they will give thought) [Qur'an 7:176]

The renowned *mufassir* (exegete), *muhaddith* (expert in hadith) and historian Ismail ibn Katheer has compiled the *Stories of the Prophets* from the Qur'an and the narration of the Prophet, Blessings and Peace be upon him, authentically reported.

The book is thus unique in its content, dealing with the important events of the Prophets and Messengers with all authenticity right from Adam the first prophet to Jesus, Peace be upon them all. As for Prophet Muhammad, the author has written a separate book about his *seerah*.

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