

The Great Messengers

HAZRAT ADAM ﷺ



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Hazrat Adam ﷺ

Hazrat Adam's ﷺ name appears in 11 Surahs and a total 25 times in the Qur'an.

Allah Ta'ala created Hazrat Adam ﷺ in his complete form from clay and breathed into him his soul which immediately became a body. Allah then commanded the angels to prostrate to Hazrat Adam ﷺ out of respect. All of them prostrated besides Iblees (Shaytan the cursed), who refused to obey the command out of pride and arrogance. At that point Iblees was regarded to be the most pious and devoted servant to Allah in worship of all heavenly beings.

Why Iblees Refused to Prostrate

Iblees argued that he would not prostrate because he was superior since he was created from fire and Hazrat Adam ﷺ was created from sand. When a person lacks understanding in any matter, even the feeblest of arguments will appear to be valid and correct to them.

Iblees begs for Time

Due to his refusal to prostrate as commanded, he became rejected in the court of Allah. When Iblees realised that his disobedience and arrogance has banished him from the mercy of Allah and has deprived him from entrance into paradise he asked Allah to grant him respite till the day of Qiyaamah so that he may take revenge by misleading humankind. Allah Ta'ala approved of his request so that he may test humankind.

Adam as a Khalifa

Allah granted Adam ﷺ superiority over all his other creation and conferred upon him the responsibility of being his vicegerent on earth to ensure that all his commands would be fulfilled.

The angels were surprised by this news and wondered what made them unfit for this role. They feared that this new creation would wreak havoc on earth just as the jinn had once done.

Teaching Adam

Allah endowed Adam ﷺ with the knowledge of the names of everything. Then he brought him before the angels and asked them: “What knowledge have you regarding these things?” They had no knowledge and they realised at once that this question was to admonish them and to point out to them that being the vice-gerent of Allah is dependent on knowledge, not on glorification and supplication, and knowledge was the noblest quality of Adam.

Hawa joins Adam in Jannah

Adam ﷺ lived in paradise but all along had a feeling of loneliness and a natural need for a partner. Then Allah created Hawwa from his rib and when Adam ﷺ met her he became contented.

The two of them were given permission to live in Jannah and to enjoy the fruits of paradise except the fruit of one tree and they were warned that Iblees was their arch-enemy, who would try to beguile them.

Exit from Paradise

Iblees found a way to mislead Adam ﷺ and Hawa (Radiyahallahu Anha). He whispered and cast the thought into their minds that the tree was the tree of everlasting life and that eating from its fruit would bring everlasting life in paradise. He swore an oath that he was a well-wisher and not an enemy. Adam ﷺ exhibiting a human weakness of forgetfulness ate from the prohibited tree. As soon as this happened, he realised that he was unclothed and he and Hawa began covering themselves with fig leaves.

Allah Ta'ala admonished Adam and unlike Iblees, He at once felt sorrowful and admitted his fault. He begged for forgiveness and took refuge in repentance.

Allah Ta'ala pardoned him but the command was given that he and his wife together with their progeny and their arch enemy shaytan will all inhabit the earth.

Habil and Qabil

Hazrat Adam ﷺ used to father twins, a boy and a girl each time. His 2 sons, Qabil and Habil grew up to be strong men. Qabil was a farmer while Habil was a shepherd. The time came where they desired partners. Allah's command was that offspring from every pair marry the opposite gender of another pair. The only restriction was that an individual of a twin could not marry the other twin from the same birth.

Qabil becomes Jealous of his Brother

The daughter born with Qabil was more beautiful than the one born with Habil. When Hazrat Adam ﷺ decided that the prettier sister has to be married to Habil, Qabil refused to accept it. It was resolved that the matter be determined by either of them presenting a sacrifice to Allah. The sacrifice that was consumed by a fire from the heavens was considered to be accepted, and the one who had offered it would marry the more beautiful of the sisters. Habil brought the best of his cattle while Qabil brought the worst of his crops. Allah Ta'ala accepted Habil's sacrifice due to his sincerity and obedience. Qabil was now further infuriated when he realised that his hope to marry his twin sister had faded and he went to the extent that he threatened to murder Habil, saying, "I will surely kill you!" (5:27)

Habil replied, "Allah accepts (sacrifices) only from those of Taqwa". (5:27)

The First Murder on Earth

Habil added, “The fact of the matter is that if you stretch out your hand to kill me, I will not stretch out mine to kill you. Verily I fear Allah, the Rabb of the universe”. (5:28)

Continuing with the story, Habil added, “I would rather that you take on yourself my sins and your sins and you become of the dwellers of the fire. Such is the punishment of the oppressors.” (5:30)

Commentators mention that Habil was stronger than Qabil, but chose not to defend himself (although it was permissible) because he felt that it was better to die as an oppressed person than to kill another.

This plea of Habil had no effect on Qabil and he instantly killed his brother. This was the first murder committed by man on earth.

Burial of Habil

Qabil did not know what to do with his brother’s dead body. Allah Ta’ala sent two crows to the scene. They began to fight and the one killed the other and buried it. The victorious bird used its claws and beak to dig a hole and covered the victim in the hole. Allah refers to this when He says, “Then Allah sent a crow to dig (a hole in) the earth to show him how to conceal the corpse of his brother.” (5:31)

Following the example of the crow, Qabil then buried his brother and “He (Qabil) cried out, “Woe unto me that I could not be like this crow and conceal the body of my brother!” So, he became one of the remorseful ones.” (5:31)

He expressed remorse that he had killed his brother and that he lacked the intelligence to do as a crow had done.

Adam's Death

Before his death, Adam ﷺ reassured his children that Allah ﷻ will not leave man alone on the earth, but will send His prophets from time to time to guide them. The prophets will have different names, attributes and miracles, but they will be united in one aspect; the call to worship Allah alone. This was Adam's ﷺ bequest to his children. Adam ﷺ finished speaking and closed his eyes. Then the angels entered his room and surrounded him. When he recognised the Angel of Death among them, his heart smiled peacefully. So, they took his soul, embalmed and wrapped him, dug the grave and laid him in it. They prayed on him and put him in his grave, saying: "O Children of Adam, this is your tradition at the time of death."



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HAZRAT AL-YASA ﷺ



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HAZRAT AL-YASA ﷺ

Hazrat Yasa ﷺ was also amongst the messengers that Allah sent to guide the Bani Israeel after the demise of Hazrat Ilyas ﷺ. He continued to guide the Bani Israeel just like Nabi Ilyas ﷺ did. Like many others, only his name is taken in the Qur'an without any account of his life and mission. Narrations from the Bani Israeel explain that his name was Yasa and historical reports confirm that he was the cousin of Hazrat Ilyas ﷺ. He was also his vice and successor. During the early part of his life, he would be in the company of Hazrat Ilyas ﷺ.

Mention of Al-Yasa in the Qur'an

The name of Hazrat Yasa ﷺ is mentioned twice in the Qur'an. Allah says in verse 86 of Surah An'am:

“And (We also guided and rewarded) Ismaeel ﷺ, Yasa ﷺ, Yunus ﷺ and Lut ﷺ. Each of them We favoured above the (people of the) universe (by making them all Ambiya).”

Verse 48 of Surah Saad states:

“Remember Ismaeel ﷺ, Yasa ﷺ and Zul Kifl ﷺ. They were all from the very best (of creation).”

Lesson

Among the Bani Israeel there were a few examples of where one Nabi stayed in the company of another Nabi and was later appointed as a Nabi himself. The fact that Hazrat Yasa ﷺ was appointed as a Nabi of the Bani Israeel after Hazrat Ilyas ﷺ demonstrates that keeping the company of the pious, with sincerity and purpose, has a tremendous effect on a person and can often alter one's life and leads one to righteousness. Allamah Rumi (Rahimahullah) has written that a moment in the company of the righteous is better than a thousand years of worship without show.

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HAZRAT AYUB عليه السلام

Hazrat Ayub عليه السلام is mentioned by name four times in the Noble Qur'an.

Although the first two of these Surahs only mention his name, the other two mention brief details about the fact that he experienced gruelling tests. However, despite facing calamities of all types, he never complained to Allah and bore everything with utmost patience. Allah then enshrouded him with His mercy and alleviated all his hardships. Praising him in the Qur'an, Allah says, "What a fine slave! He was certainly penitent."

Hazrat Ayub عليه السلام was Arab and he lived between the periods of Hazrat Ya'qub عليه السلام and Hazrat Musa عليه السلام. He was a saintly person who was amongst the prophets and messengers of Allah.

There are two primary sources from which we receive information about the nation of Hazrat Ayub عليه السلام and the period during which he was sent as a Nabi. These are the Torah and the ancient historical texts. These details are not mentioned in the Qur'an or in authentic Ahadith since these do not form part of the essential lessons that the Qur'an strives to relate. The Qur'an relates the accounts of the Ambiya عليه السلام to offer advices, admonitions and their message.

Patience in Adversity

Although the Qur'an does not furnish details about the life of Hazrat Ayub عليه السلام, it makes the point very clear that he was a Nabi of Allah and had been one blessed with tremendous wealth and many children. However, he was tested greatly by the destruction of his possessions his family perished, together with utter loss of health as well. However, even then he did not complain but bore it all with patience and continued to be grateful to Allah. The most he uttered concerning his adversities was, "Difficulty has certainly afflicted me and You are the Most Merciful of those who show mercy (so remove my difficulty by Your mercy)". Such was his regard and respect for Allah that he did not attribute his difficulties to Allah.

He knew that although Allah is the real the One who controls all affairs in this world, yet distress and punishment come as a cause of shaytani causes, for this reason he said that shaytan had touched him with distress and suffering.

When he called out to Allah, Allah heard his plea and answered him. Allah instructed him to strike his foot on the ground and to bath in the water that gushed forth from the spot. This restored his health, after which Allah replaced all that he possessed and gave him even more on account of his perseverance. His story of patience and gratitude became proverbial and is a sterling lesson for all to come until the Day of Qiyamah.

Allah says, “(After curing him from the disease) We gifted him with his family and as many of them in addition (twice as many), as a mercy from Us and a reminder for people of intelligence (to remind them that Allah rewards the patient ones and restores their losses)”.

Ibn Asakir narrated: "Ayub عليه السلام was a man who had plenty wealth, slaves, sheep, vast land and many children. All those favours were taken from him and he was physically afflicted as well. His entire body was afflicted, except his heart and tongue, with both of which he glorified Allah, day and night. His disease lasted for a long time until his visitors felt disgusted with him. His friends kept away from him and people abstained from visiting him. No one felt sympathy for him except his wife. She took good care of him, knowing his former charity and pity for her."

Fulfilling an Oath

Hazrat Ayub عليه السلام was deserted by his friends and family when he fell ill, except for his faithful wife, who remained by his side all along. She nursed him through his illness and remained constantly in his attendance. One day she was overcome with pity for him and uttered some words that seemed to be a complaint to Allah. These words angered Hazrat Ayub (Alayhis Salam) greatly and he took an oath saying that he would punish her with a hundred lashes if he ever recovered from his illness.

Whatever the incident was, the dilemma that Hazrat Ayub عليه السلام faced when he was cured how was he to fulfil this oath. While it was wrong to break the oath, it was also wrong to hurt someone who had sacrificed so much for him. Allah then solved his dilemma by instructing him to gather a hundred twigs, bind them together and then as per his oath, strike his wife with it once. In this manner, he was released from the oath and no harm came to her.

Imam Bukhari (Rahimahullah) relates from Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه that Nabi ﷺ said, “While (Nabi) Ayub عليه السلام was taking a bath golden locust started to rain down from the sky. As he started to collect them in his robe, his Rabb called to him saying, ‘O Ayub! Have I not given you enough to have no need for this that you see?’ Ayub عليه السلام replied, ‘I swear by Your honour that you certainly have. However, I can never not be in want of Your blessings (Barakah).’”

Lessons

Most Difficult Tests are for the Closest

It is the way of Allah that people who are closest to Allah are put through the most difficult tests. When these people exercise patience through these tests, the very hardships they suffered become a means for the elevation of their ranks in this world as well as in the Akhirah. The incident of Hazrat Ayub عليه السلام clearly depicts this.

Perseverance and Fortitude

While it is not very difficult to express gratitude to Allah when one has been blessed with wealth, honour, well-being and other bounties of this world and if there is no pride, arrogance and egotism. What proves to be difficult is to exercise patience without a word of complaint and to remain satisfied and content when one suffers hardship and difficulties, sorrow, poverty. To persevere with fortitude during such trying times is a true test of a person’s belief and faith in Allah. When a person during such trying times holds firm and continues to exercise patience and express gratitude, then he

soon falls into the lap of Allah's mercy and is showered with Allah's grace, blessings and mercy and he becomes endowed with such bounties that are unexpected, granting him worldly as well as spiritual benefits. Again, the incident of Hazrat Ayub عليه السلام makes a perfect example.

The Value of Loyalty

Amongst the most precious bounties one can be blessed with is to have the unwavering loyalty and faithfulness of one's spouse. Such loyalty is truly appreciated and loved when a husband suffers such calamities and hardships that find none else to stand by his side and assist him, even friends and family desert him apart from his wife.

The wife of Hazrat Ayub عليه السلام stood by him faithfully, sympathetically and obediently and gave him such love and compassion that when the time came for him to fulfil his oath, a special concession was made for her benefit. Such is the regard that even the Shariah accords to a loyal wife.

Losing Faith

Allah makes it evident in the Qur'an that when righteous people like Hazrat Ayub عليه السلام are faced with calamities, they do not harbour negative opinions about Allah and never lose faith in Him. They continue to persevere and make du'a to Allah, pinning all their hopes in Him. When the help of Allah is not immediate, they do not despair, but continue supplicating to Him and trusting in Him without stretching their hands out to anyone else. They believe that Allah will soon respond and alleviate the difficulties. One should not think that calamities are only a punishment for sins committed. Very often calamities come as a form of tests and trials and for the patient and grateful one's brings Allah's mercy. This is what Hazrat Ayub عليه السلام did throughout the many long years of suffering.

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HAZRAT DAWUD عليه السلام



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HAZRAT DAWUD ﷺ

The name of Hazrat Dawud ﷺ is mentioned sixteen times in nine Surahs of the Qur'an, sometimes with details and sometimes without.

Hazrat Dawud ﷺ was short in stature, had light coloured eyes, sparse hair on his body and his face and body exuded his pleasant temperament and pure soul.

Hazrat Dawud ﷺ had tremendous courage and this earned him great prestige and respect amongst the Bani Israeel and it was not long afterwards that Allah blessed him with Nubuwwah for the guidance of Bani Israeel. He earned the titled of Khalifatullah for the vibrant social development of the nation. The rule of Bani Israeel was in Dawud ﷺ hands.

He was very eloquent in the field of public speaking and he would speak in such a manner that every thought and word was well understood. His judgement on truth and falsehood was such that it was the final word.

Kingship and Prophethood

Until Hazrat Dawud ﷺ arrived, the kings of the Bani Israeel always belonged to the progeny of Hazrat Ya'qub's ﷺ son Ifraheem, while messengers always hailed from the progeny of his son Yahooda. However, with Hazrat Dawud ﷺ, both kingship as well as Nubuwwah were conferred to the progeny of Yahooda.

It is also worth noting that apart from Hazrat Adam ﷺ, no other Nabi besides Hazrat Dawud ﷺ received the title of 'Khalifatullah' (the representative of Allah on earth). This special honour and title is mentioned in the Qur'an.

A Unique Kingdom

Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام was a man of great courage and a masterful strategist. These qualities coupled with his spiritual power ensured that his people were always victorious in all their military expeditions with the help of Allah, regardless of the strength and numbers of the enemy.

It was not long after he started to reign over the Bani Israeel that he was blessed with Nubuwwah and started to lead them in Jihad. In a short period of time, they conquered Shaam, Iraq, Palestine, Eastern Jordan and several other territories. The people knew, that because Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام received revelation from Allah, he could solve the most difficult problems that they faced. Therefore, the humans and Jinn over whom he ruled did not dare to disobey him.

The Zabur

The messengers of the Bani Israeel followed the teachings of the Torah, which was their primary scripture revealed to them. However, as times and condition changed, Allah revealed the Zaboor to Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام, which contained injunctions like the Torah, but with extra details and a large proportion devoted to the praises of Allah. Allah also blessed him with such a melodious voice that when he recited the Zabur, humans, Jinn, birds and even the animals in the wild were moved by it. But like the Torah and Injeel, the Bani Israeel changed the wordings of the Zabur knowingly.

Speaking to the Animals

Dawud عليه السلام recited his scripture and glorified Allah while the mountains joined him in praise and the birds rallied around him.

His sincerity was not the only factor responsible for the birds and beasts joining with him in glorifying Allah, nor was the sweetness of his voice. It was a miracle from Allah. This was not his only miracle, for Allah also endowed him with the faculty of understanding the languages of birds and animals.

Devotion to Worship

Dawud عليه السلام fasted every other day. Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Al-As narrated: Nabi ﷺ said to me: "The most beloved fasting to Allah was the fasting of the Nabi Dawud عليه السلام, who used to fast alternate days. And the most beloved prayer to Allah was the prayer of Dawud عليه السلام, who used to sleep the first half of the night, and pray for one third of it and again sleep for a sixth of it." (Sahih Al-Bukhari).

Iron Becomes Soft and Pliable

Allah granted Dawud عليه السلام great influence. His people had a number of wars in their time, but they had a problem in that the iron armour was too heavy for the fighter to move and fight as he wished. Despite the fact that the kingdom of Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام was so vast, Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام made du'a to Allah to make means for him to earn through the effort of his own hands rather than having to depend on the state treasury. Allah therefore made iron and steel like wax in his hands so that he could shape them as he liked without the need for tools. Almighty Allah had made it flexible for him: "And We made the iron soft for him." (34:10)

Passing Sound Judgement

Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام was renowned for the sound judgement that he passed in disputes between people since he had been blessed with the rare ability to understand the depths of a dispute and solve it.

The Qur'an also makes mention of an incident concerning the judgement of Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام. This dispute was intended as a test for him. When Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام erred during this test, he immediately supplicated to Allah and sought forgiveness. Allah loved his humility so much in this incident that Allah has related it in the Qur'an. It is cited as a lesson to all those who are close to Allah and who happen to err. The incident exhorts them to immediately turn to Allah and seek His forgiveness.

The incident of Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام concerned the time when he hastened to resolve a dispute between two men without first hearing both parties plead their case. The Qur'an does not relate the details of the case and no authentic Ahadith contain the details either. Keep in mind that the lesson of every story is more important than knowing the details.

Allamah ibn Hazam (Rahimahullah) stated that the two disputants who came to Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام to have their dispute settled were in a great hurry because they scaled the wall to his place of worship rather than entering in the conventional manner.

Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas رضي الله عنه, reports that Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام had allocated separate days to tend to his affairs, which rotated every four days. The first day was allocated exclusively for Ibadah (worship), the second day for hearing and settling disputes, the third day for the guidance and reformation of the Bani Israeel and the fourth day for personal matters.

When the two men scaled his wall and barged into his presence on the day when he was engaged in Ibadah, Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام was naturally shocked. The men therefore bade him not to be frightened and explained that they needed judgement in their dispute. The one started to explain that he owned only one ewe, whereas the other person owned ninety-nine ewes. Despite this, he explained, the other man wanted his one ewe as well and was being harsh in demanding it. Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام told him that the man was being oppressive in demanding the single ewe and that it often happened that one partner in a business behaved in this manner.

Because the silence of the defendant suggested that he had no counter claim, Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام passed judgment in favour of the plaintiff. However, when he realised that his judgement seemed partial, he immediately repented to Allah, realising that he had been tested. Allah then forgave him since the error of judgement was not irreparable.

Age and Demise

Dawud عليه السلام worshipped Allah and glorified Him till the end. It is reported that Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام lived for a hundred years. The Torah and some books of history state that he ruled over the Bani Israeel for forty years other narrations mention seventy years.

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HAZRAT HIZQEEL ﷺ

There were many messengers who led and guided the Bani Israeel after the demise of Hazrat Musa ﷺ, ending with the demise of Hazrat Isa ﷺ. Only Allah fully knows how many messengers there have been, the Qur'an sheds some information about some of them. While the incidents of a few are mentioned in some detail, others have been mentioned only by name.

Although historians differ with regard to the chronological sequence of these messengers, the research of authorities such as Ibn Jareer Tabari (Rahimahullah) and Allamah ibn Katheer (Rahimahullah) say that it was Hazrat Yusha ﷺ who was granted Nubuwwah after Hazrat Musa ﷺ. Ibn Katheer (Rahimahullah) states that after Hazrat Yusha ﷺ passed on, it was Kalib bin Yuhanna who took charge of the Bani Israeel. However, Ibn Jareer (Rahimahullah) states that it was Hazrat Hizqeel ﷺ who was blessed with Nubuwwah after Hazrat Yusha ﷺ and he therefore led the Bani Israeel. And Allah knows best.

Hazrat Hizqeel ﷺ lost his father when he was still a child. He was therefore raised by his widowed mother, who was very old and weak by the time he was blessed with Nubuwwah. It was for this reason that the Torah refers to him as the son of an old woman. Hazrat Hizqeel ﷺ led the Bani Israeel for a very long time.

The name of Hizqeel ﷺ does not appear in the Qur'an, but in Surah Baqarah an incident is mentioned and according to some authorities the reference is to Nabi Hizqeel ﷺ.

Mention in Qur'an

"Did you (O Muhammad) not think of those who went forth from their homes in thousands, fearing death? Allah said to them, "Die." And then He restored them to life. Truly, Allah is full of Bounty to mankind, but most men think not. (2:243)

It is narrated by Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas (Rahimahullah) and other

Mufasssireen that Hazrat Hizqeel ﷺ once told a large army from the Bani Israeel to prepare for war against an enemy to elevate the name of Allah. However, far from complying with his instruction, they all ran away out of fear of their lives to far off places, certain that they had escaped death in this manner and were safe. However, this caused the displeasure of Allah and the wrath of Allah swiftly seized them and all of them died. When Hazrat Hizqeel ﷺ happened to pass by their corpses, he was very sorry of their condition and he made dua that Allah brings them all back to life as a warning and lesson to them and to others. Allah accepted his dua and all of them were brought back to life, after which they lived in obedience to Hazrat Hizqeel ﷺ.

Allah makes it clear to people that although they hesitate to fight in Jihad for fear of death, the same death will still come to them even if they flee from Jihad. Allah Ta'ala says in another verse that death is certain to find every person even if he is hiding behind fortified walls.

Muhammad ibn Ishaq mentions that we do not know how long Hizqeel ﷺ stayed among the Bani Israeel before Allah took him away. After him, the Bani Israeel deviated from the right way of life, as they usually did, and deserted Allah's covenant with them. They worshipped many idols, among them Ba'al, so Allah sent to them other prophets.

Lessons

Life after Death

It is evident that people do not come back to life in this world after they have died. It is the general law that this will take place only in the Akhirah.

However, Allah has a special law according to which for a special reason and wisdom it is possible that life be returned. If anyone is brought back to life, this is by the power of Allah, Who can do as He pleases, as was done in this incident of Hazrat Hizqeel ﷺ. When

Allah was able to create without any raw materials to start the bodily structure, why should it be difficult to accept that He can recreate the bodily structure with the raw materials once they have dispersed? Allah has demonstrated this ability before with the messengers as a sign for people. There should therefore be no hesitation in accepting the revival of the dead.

Duty to fulfil the Divine Command

When a person accepts that good and bad, life and death are all subject to Allah's predestination. Our duty is to carry out the command of Allah. This makes a person brave and courageous keeping cowardice away, it also makes a person steadfast.

Although Jihad spells certain death for many and seems to deprive them of their worldly pleasures, yet it is really the gateway for eternal life in the Akhirah for all. It ensures survival with honour and dignity for nations in this world and eternal bliss in the Akhirah for those whose lives are lost. It is this belief that has set Muslims apart from other nations throughout the ages and spurred them on to continue fighting for the cause of Jihad.

Bravery

Bravery and valour have been highly acclaimed in Islaam, while cowardliness has been renounced. Nabi ﷺ was once asked whether a Muslim can sin. "Yes," Nabi ﷺ replied. "Can a Muslim be a coward?" someone asked further. "Not at all," replied Nabi ﷺ. Bravery means to remain steadfast on truth and to stand against evil fearlessly. However, a mere display of bravery when the occasion does not warrant is not regarded as bravery and valour.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT HUD ﷺ



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HAZRAT HUD ﷺ

The name of Hazrat Hud ﷺ appears seven times in the Qur'an.

The nation of Hazrat Hud ﷺ, Aad, are mentioned in ten verses of the Qur'an.

Hazrat Hud ﷺ belonged to one of their most noble tribes, the Khulood from the nation of Aad.

Hazrat Hud ﷺ was fair (reddish-white) in complexion, very tall, powerfully built and very awe-inspiring. He also wore a full beard.

The Nation of Aad

The Aad were a very powerful Arab nation, who settled in Shaam, Egypt and Babylon. They soon seized control over these lands because of their strength and force. They boasted about their immense strength and would say, "Who can be more powerful than us?"

They were extremely tall people. They were renowned for their craftsmanship especially in the construction of tall buildings with lofty towers.

The Aad worshipped idols like the people of Hazrat Nuh ﷺ. Together with blessing them with strength and kingdom, Allah also granted them prosperity. However, these bounties made them arrogant and boastful and they soon started to abuse them. They oppressed the weak, opposed the truth and raised high buildings and monuments to symbolise their power. Allah therefore sent Hazrat Hud ﷺ as a messenger to guide them.

Hud's ﷺ Appeal to his People

Hazrat Hud ﷺ condemned idol worship and advised the Aad to worship Allah Alone, prohibiting them from all injustices and evil and

reminded them to be grateful to Him for the bounties they were blessed with. He told them that if they obeyed Allah, Allah will increase them in bounties.

He addressed his people concerning the Day of Judgment. He explained that belief in the Day of Judgment is essential to Allah's justice, teaching them the same thing that every prophet taught about it.

The Disbeliever's Attitude

The nation of Nabi Hud عليه السلام did not accept that anyone from amongst them should accept his ideas and beliefs or become his follower. They rejected his arguments to prove the truth and mockingly said that people of the past also spoke meaningless words like him and that he had perhaps been affected by witchcraft.

Hud عليه السلام clarified to them that the gods they worshipped would be the reason for their destruction, that it is Allah alone Who saves people, and that no other power on earth can benefit or harm anyone.

The conflict between Hud and his people continued. The years passed, and they became more proud and more obstinate, and more tyrannical and more defiant of their prophet's message.

Hazrat Hud عليه السلام explained to them how the people of Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام were punished for their disobedience and arrogance.

Like the people of Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام they also challenged him to bring Allah's punishment to them if he was truthful.

The Punishment Descends

Hud عليه السلام renounced them and their gods and affirmed his dependence on Allah Who had created him. Hud عليه السلام realised that punishment would be incurred on the disbelievers among his people. It is one of

the laws of life. Allah punishes the disbelievers, no matter how rich, tyrannical or great they are.

After the intense disobedience of the people of Hud عليه السلام and their enmity and rejection of his teachings, the time came near for their punishment. A drought spread throughout the land as a precursor to the punishment. The sky no longer sent its rain. the sun scorched the desert sands, looking like a disk of fire which settled on people's heads.

This caused them great concern and discomfort and they appeared helpless and destitute.

Nabi Hud عليه السلام felt very sympathetic towards them and once again he called them to the truth. He called them to believe in his advices as the only way to salvation in this world and the hereafter.

However, his call was in vain and had no effect on them. They still refused to submit despite the warnings and advices of Hazrat Hud عليه السلام.

They mocked him and became more obstinate, sarcastic and persevered in their disbelief. The drought increased, the trees turned yellow, and plants died.

Hence, a dreadful punishment descended.

The Destruction of Aad

A day came when they found the sky full of clouds. Hud's عليه السلام people were glad as they came out of their tents crying: "A cloud, which will give us rain!"

The weather changed suddenly from burning dry and hot to stinging cold with wind that shook everything; trees, plants, tents, men and women. The wind increased day after day and night after night.

Strong and well-built men who used to be proud of their strength and disobedience, appeared devoid of their senses as the strong wind brought down strong trees and uprooted them.

It left the disbelievers like fallen date palms to become a sign of warning for future generations.

The storm raged for 8 days and 7 nights which flattened everything around them.

The Believers are Saved

That violent gale did not stop until the entire region was reduced to ruins and its wicked people destroyed, swallowed by the sands of the desert.

Through Allah's mercy and grace only Hud عليه السلام and his small group of followers remained unharmed. They migrated to Hadhramaut in Yemen and lived there in peace, worshipping Allah, their true Lord.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT IBRAHEEM عليه السلام



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HAZRAT IBRAHEEM ﷺ

The Qur'an speaks extensively of Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ in both the Makkan and Madanian Surahs since the Qur'an and its message of guidance is called the Ibraheemi message. He is mentioned in 25 Surahs of the Qur'an and in 69 verses.

His story is mentioned in various ways in the Qur'an, in some places it is summarised while in other places detailed to highlight his noble qualities.

Nabi ﷺ referred to Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ as the father of all the Ambiya ﷺ.

The father of Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ was a carpenter who carved wooden idols and sold them to the various tribes at the time. However, Allah had granted guidance and wisdom to Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ from the very beginning. He had always been convinced that since idols have no powers of sight and hearing and could do no harm or good, how could they ever fulfil the needs of people?

The Nation of Ibraheem ﷺ

The nation of Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ were perhaps the first nation that adopted idol worship as the state religion. It is therefore difficult to find another nation in history that manufactured and worshipped idols to the degree that these people did. Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ was born into this nation where everything was centred on idols.

Preaching to his Father Aazar

When Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ realised that the obsession of the people with worshipping idols and heavenly bodies has completely erased all esteem for Allah from their hearts, he took the courage to preach to the people about worshipping Allah Alone.

Recognising his own home as a focal point of idol worship because his father carved the people's idols, and it was because of this that people acted on idol worship, Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام started to preach to his father, Aazar.

He told his father that the manner of worship that he and his forebears adopted was misguided and useless. He explained that the idols they worshipped were no more than toys that could be manipulated, without any will of their own. How could such helpless objects be of help to anyone? He told his father that he had been granted a light of guidance, which his father should also follow to be able to discern the truth from falsehood. He informed his father that shaytan had misled him and he feared that this deception of shaytan should not cause his father to suffer the punishment of Allah.

Unfortunately, these words had no effect on his father. Rather than accept this sincere advice, Aazar threatened to stone Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام if he did not desist from vilifying the idols. Realising that he needed to respect his father, Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام did not behave harshly despite his father's harshness. However, it was his duty to deliver the message, so he politely replied by saying that since he was unable to stop propagating the message from Allah, he would have to part ways with his father. However, he did promise to continue praying that Allah guides his father.

Preaching to the People

When Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام realised that his father was not inclined to listen to his invitation to guidance, he started preaching to the people. However, the people also preferred to cling blindly to the ways of their forefathers and refused to accept. Although they could hear, they were deaf to his message and though sighted they acted blind to the truth he called them towards.

Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام eventually asked them to inform him why they worshipped the idols whereas the idols were unable to give neither benefit nor harm. These idols did not eat, drink or talk and they could

not even turn themselves right side up if someone turned them upside down. How then, could people believe that such statues could harm or benefit them? Unable to reply, the people brushed off the question and said that they preferred not to delve into the subject, but to rather continue doing that which their forefathers did.

Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام then told them that he henceforth declared the idols to be his enemies and if the idols were able to do anything, they were welcome to do as they pleased. Although this challenge ought to have stirred some thought in their minds because the idols were helpless, yet the people resolved not to listen to Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام at all.

Ibraheem عليه السلام Reasons with Celestial Worshippers

The people of Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام worshipped the stars because they regarded the stars to be in control of life, death, sustenance, droughts, victory, defeat and many other matters. They believed that the motion of the stars affected the system of the universe. As a result, they believed that the stars needed to be pleased at all times, which could be done only through worshipping them.

He was astonished that these celestial bodies were worshipped by men when they had been created to worship and obey their Creator, appearing and disappearing at His command.

He tried to prove to them the futility and inconsistency of worshipping the heavenly bodies.

Ibraheem عليه السلام clarified to his people that these celestial bodies do not serve as deities and cannot be worshipped as partners with Allah the Almighty. Indeed, these bodies are created things, fashioned, controlled, managed and made to serve. They appear sometimes and disappear at others, going out of sight from our world. However, Allah the Almighty does not lose sight of anything, and nothing can be hidden from Him. He is without end, everlasting without disappearance. There is no other deity but Allah.

Ibraheem ﷺ made clear to them, first that the celestial bodies are unworthy of worship and second that they are among the signs of Allah.

The people then grew very angry and started to debate with him and threatened him with the wrath of their gods. Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ was not frightened by this and declared that he has no fear for their gods since he has Allah with him and Allah has control over everything in the universe.

Ibraheem ﷺ breaks the idols

He decided to do something about their state of disbelief, but did not reveal it. He ventured to practically demonstrate to them that their idols were equally helpless. It was not long afterwards that the people were all leaving for a cultural festival.

Ibraheem ﷺ waited until the city was empty, then came out cautiously, directing his steps towards the temple. The streets leading to it were empty and the temple itself was deserted for the priests had also gone to the festival outside the city. Abraham went there carrying a sharp axe. He looked at the stone and wood statues of the gods and at the food laid in front of them as offerings. He approached one of the statues and asked: "The food in front of you is getting cold. Why don't you eat?" the statue kept silent. He asked all the other statues around him: "Will you not eat of the offering before you?" (37:91)

He was mocking them for he knew they would not eat. He once again asked them:

"What is the matter with you that you do not speak?" (37:92)

He then raised his axe and started smashing the false gods worshipped by the people. He destroyed them all except one on whose neck he hung the axe.

The Idolaters Question Ibraheem ﷺ

When the people returned, they were shocked to see their gods smashed to pieces, lying scattered all over the temple. They began to guess who had destroyed their idols and Hazrat Ibraheem's ﷺ name came to their minds. They summoned him before a large audience. This was exactly what Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ wanted. He intended to make the truth evident before a large audience of the people and not only to the caretakers of the idols.

At the trial they asked him if he was responsible for breaking the idols. Smiling, he told them to ask the biggest idol which was still whole. He told them that he must be the culprit! They replied that he knew well that the idol could not speak or move which gave Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ the chance to prove the foolishness of worshipping these lifeless objects.

They then realised the senselessness of their beliefs; since their idols were helpless in defending even themselves, how could they be relied upon to help others? However, their arrogance would not allow them to admit their foolishness. All they could do was to use their power of authority as tyrants usually do to punish Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ. They kept him in chains and planned their revenge.

Preaching to the self-made god - King Namrud

The news reached the King Namrud. People considered him to be their god and worshipped him. He was a man endowed with excellent reasoning abilities. Namrud became worried that if the preaching of Nabi Ibraheem ﷺ continued, his claim to divinity and lordship would be rejected by his people. Therefore, he ordered that Ibraheem ﷺ be brought before him.

Namrud could not understand life and death, Namrud claimed that he could also give life and death. He then promptly summoned an innocent person and commanded his executioner to put the man to

death. After this was done, he summoned a criminal in custody who was condemned to be executed and set him free.

Realising that the king was really not capable of understanding subtleties, he decided to name a feat that was apparent and did not need an understanding of the true nature of things. He therefore told the king that Allah was the Being Who made the sun rise every morning in the east and makes it set every evening in the west. He challenged the king to make the sun rise in the west and set in the east if he was indeed a god. This silenced Namrud.

They all agreed that for the sake of revenge Ibraheem عليه السلام should be burnt to death.

The Fire becomes Cool

They decided to throw Ibraheem عليه السلام into the biggest fire they could build. For several days they collected fuel. They dug a deep pit, filled it with firewood and ignited it. They brought a catapult with which to cast Ibraheem عليه السلام into the fire. Ibraheem عليه السلام was put on the catapult; his hands and feet were tied. The fire was ready with its flame reaching the sky. The people stood away from the pit because of the great heat. Then the chief priest gave his order to cast Ibraheem عليه السلام into the fire.

The one who gives the fire the quality to burn ordered the fire to become cool and safe for Ibraheem عليه السلام. He walked out of the fire as if he were walking out of a garden. Cries of astonishment were heard from the disbelievers.

Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام migrated to Egypt, there the king realised that he was indeed from the chosen people of Allah and granted him his daughter Hajar, from who Ibraheem عليه السلام had his 2 sons Hazrat Ismaeel عليه السلام and Hazrat Ishaq عليه السلام.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT IDREES عليه السلام



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Hazrat Idrees عليه السلام

Nabi Idrees عليه السلام is mentioned twice in the Quran. The Qur'an makes mention of his prophethood, high qualities and high rank.

Description of Hazrat Idrees عليه السلام

He was brown in complexion and tall, with thin hair and a full beard. He was broad-shouldered, had powerful limbs, smoky eyes and though an eloquent speaker, he preferred silence. He was a forthright person who looked down when walking and was always deep in thought.

He lived upto an age of 82 years and had an inscription on his ring, which read, "Success is earned through patience and Iman in Allah".

Birth and Da'wah

Idrees عليه السلام was born in the town of Babylon. He acquired knowledge from Nabi Sheeth عليه السلام the son of Adam عليه السلام and when he reached the age of wisdom, Allah endowed him with prophethood.

He then started spreading the message of Islam among the people, but they opposed him and did not take heed. Only a small group accepted his message.

When Nabi Idrees عليه السلام saw this, he decided to migrate to Egypt and he told his followers also to migrate.

There he continued preaching the message of Allah, commanding good and forbidding evil.

Allah Ta'ala gave him a unique gift; he was able to converse in any language. At the time, the people in Egypt spoke 72 languages and lived in 200 towns. Allah granted Hazrat Idrees عليه السلام the ability to speak all these languages and he thus managed to propagate the message of Allah to all the tribes there.

Nabi Idrees عليه السلام was the first person to use the pen. He was also the first to wear sewn clothing when others were still wearing animal skins.

Nabi عليه السلام met Hazrat Idrees عليه السلام on the fourth heaven when he went on the journey of Miraj.

Mention in the Noble Qur'an

The Qura'nic Verses 56 & 57 of Surah Maryam state:

Mention Idrees عليه السلام in the scripture (the Qur'an). He was certainly a Siddeeq (true in his Imaan), a Nabi. We elevated him to a high rank (of excellent attributes).

Allah states in verses 85 & 86 of Surah Ambiya:

And (remember also) Ismail عليه السلام, Idrees عليه السلام and Dhul Kifl عليه السلام. They were all from the patient ones. We admitted them all into Our mercy. They were indeed from the righteous.

The Khilafat of Nabi Idrees عليه السلام

When Nabi Idrees عليه السلام was made the ruler of this earth he divided the inhabitants into 3 categories:

The priests - the highest rank, they were responsible to Allah regarding the affairs of the kings and the subjects.

The kings - next in rank, they were responsible for the affairs of the subjects.

The subjects - only responsible for themselves.

Special Qualities

Together with conveying the message of Allah, Nabi Idrees عليه السلام also thought people the civilised manner how to run their civil affairs in their towns and villages.

He also thought philosophy and astronomy as Allah had given him the knowledge of the heavenly bodies and their movements, the stars, their coming together and their separation together with their magnetic pull.

Allah also made him a scholar of mathematics, if these arts were not discovered then mankind would have had great difficulty in acquiring this knowledge.

He is also responsible for promulgating various laws for various groups of people according to their various situations. He divided the earth into 4 sections and appointed a ruler for each section on condition that the Divine law brought to them be the uppermost in their legal system.

Synopsis of his Teachings

- Tawheed (Oneness) of Allah, only He is worthy of worship
- One should do good deeds in order to be successful in the hereafter
- In all matters justice should prevail
- Zakah should be given to the poor
- Special attention should be paid to cleanliness
- Ignore the temptation of this world
- Place justice at the forefront in all affairs
- Fast during the 13th, 14th and 15th of every month
- Continue with Jihad

- Abstain from all intoxicants
- Take only the name of Allah when making vows and sacrificing animals
- Always give the first fruits and flowers of the season in charity.

Future Prophets

He informed his people that many other prophets would appear in the future for the worldly and spiritual guidance of Man. Their outstanding qualities will be:

They will be free from Evil. They will be praiseworthy with high virtues. The summary of their message will be the reform and rectification of the world.

The wise sayings of Hazrat Idrees عليه السلام

- Man is incapable of thanking Allah for all His favours
- When you are striving to attain perfection in knowledge and righteousness, then never even approach anything linked to ignorance and bad character. Don't you see that someone that wishes to sew something takes a needle in his hand and not a drill. Keep this principle in mind at all times.
- Sincerity of intention is required in the remembrance of Allah as well as in all good deeds
- Never take false oaths, never use the name of Allah for practice and never force a liar take an oath because you will then share in the sin
- Never adopt an occupation that is humiliating
- Obey your leaders and remain humble before your elders
- Always keep your tongue moist with the zikr of Allah
- Wisdom is the life of the soul

- Never envy the good life of people because it is fleeting
- The one who desires more than the necessities of life will never be content
- Happy is he who looks at his own deeds and appoints them as pleaders to his Lord.
- None can show better gratitude for Allah's Favors than he who shares them with others.



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HAZRAT ILYAS ؑ

The first Nabi after Hazrat Musa ؑ whose name is mentioned in the Qur'an is Hazrat Ilyas ؑ. He came after Hazrat Hizqeel ؑ and is referred to as Eelya.

In the Qur'an Hazrat Ilyas ؑ is mentioned twice. In Surah An'am his name is only mentioned as being among the prophets and in Surah Safat there is more detail of his mission.

The historian Imam Tabari (Rahimahullah) has written that Hazrat Ilyas ؑ was the cousin of Hazrat Yasa ؑ and from the progeny of Hazrat Harun ؑ.

Message and Mission

Hazrat Ilyas ؑ lived in the region of Jal'aad in Jordan. He was sent to the people of Shaam for their guidance and the centre of his mission was the well-known city Ba'labak.

These people were idol-worshippers who worshipped the idol B'al and were far from the worship of the Oneness of Allah. This idol was made from gold, 20 feet high. He had four faces and four hundred servants were at all times at his service.

Allah Ta'ala sent Hazrat Ilyas ؑ as a Nabi to the Bani Israeel to reform their beliefs and sway them away from idolatry. Like the other messengers, Hazrat Ilyas ؑ also applied his best efforts to get the people to abolish idolatry, but they rejected his preaching.

Books of Tafseer such as Tafseer Mazhari and others have reported many incidents concerning Hazrat Ilyas ؑ from Allama Baghawi (Rahimahullah), Hazrat Wahab bin Munabbih (Rahimahullah) and Hazrat Ka'b Ahbaar (Rahimahullah). However, these are sourced from the Bani Israeel the crux of which is, Hazrat Ilyas ؑ forbade the king and the people from worshipping the idol called Ba'l and called them towards worshipping One Allah. However, only a few people

accepted his message. The others opposed him to such a degree that the queen ultimately tried to have him killed.

When he heard about the attempt upon his life, Hazrat Ilyas عليه السلام fled the area and hid in a cave for a lengthy period. While he was there, a devastating drought struck the land. In desperation, the people searched for Hazrat Ilyas عليه السلام so that he could pray for the drought to end. Hazrat Ilyas عليه السلام then left the cave by the permission of Allah and went to the king to explain to him that the drought was a result of them worshipping Ba'l. To be delivered from the drought, they needed to stop this worship.

To prove his truthfulness, Hazrat Ilyas عليه السلام proposed that the four hundred devotees of Ba'l should present a sacrifice to Ba'l and then pray that she accepts it by sending a fire from the heavens to consume it. He would then also make a sacrifice and pray to Allah to accept it in the same manner. In this way, the one whose sacrifice is accepted will be declared the truthful one. This was an ancient manner of judging acceptance. The king and his people accepted the proposal. The devotees therefore presented their sacrifices and prayed to Ba'l all day to accept. However, no response was forthcoming. When Hazrat Ilyas عليه السلام presented his sacrifice and prayed to Allah to accept it, a fire immediately descended from the heavens and devoured it. Seeing this, many people fell into Sajdah and became followers of Hazrat Ilyas عليه السلام).

Torrential rains then fell and the drought ended. Despite this, the devotees of Ba'l, the king and queen refused to submit. They were still adamant to have Hazrat Ilyas عليه السلام assassinated and he was forced to migrate to another town called Yahudiyyah, where he stayed for a long time. Unfortunately, the worship of Ba'l had spread to this place as well and Hazrat Ilyas عليه السلام continued to preach the Oneness of Allah to the people and king here as well. However, they also refused to accept his message and were eventually destroyed.

Hazrat Ilyas عليه السلام then returned to the Bani Israeel and again preached to them, their king and his son Akhtarya. Unfortunately, they again

refused to accept and it was not long afterwards that they were struck by a disease that killed them. Allah then took his beloved Nabi Hazrat Ilyas عليه السلام also from this world.

Lesson

In the time of Hazrat Ilyas عليه السلام the mentality of the Bani Israeel had been changed so much for the worst that there was no evil in the world that they were not keen to do. And there was no virtue that they strove for. In spite of the continuous and successive appearance of the prophets, they still held onto idol-worship. It is a lesson for the latter people to hold onto the commands of Allah and not to deviate from the straight path.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT ISA ﷺ



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HAZRAT ISA ﷺ

Hazrat Isa ﷺ was amongst the most eminent of the messengers. While Nabi ﷺ was the seal of all the messengers, Hazrat Isa ﷺ was the last of the messengers of the Bani Israeel (the descendants of Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ).

The Injeel that was given to Hazrat Isa ﷺ was the highest-ranking scripture revealed to the Bani Israeel. The Injeel corrected the malpractices and alterations made to the Deen of the Bani Israeel after the revelation of the Torah. It was therefore regarded as the completion of the Torah. Hazrat Isa ﷺ therefore revived the teachings brought to the Bani Israeel by Hazrat Musa ﷺ.

In addition to this, Hazrat Isa ﷺ was the greatest bearer of the glad tidings that Nabi ﷺ would soon be coming to this world. Hazrat Isa ﷺ is amongst the most mentioned figures in the Qur'an, which provides great details about him.

Hazrat Isa ﷺ and his mother are mentioned in fourteen Surahs of the Qur'an, sometimes in detail and sometimes in brief. Hazrat Isa ﷺ is referred to by his name Isa twenty-five times, by the title Maseeh eleven times, by the name Ibn Maryam (the son of Maryam) twenty-three times and sometimes by the title Kalimah or Rooh.

In many verses of the Glorious Qur'an Allah denied the claim of the Christians that He has a son.

Glad Tidings of the Birth of Hazrat Isa ﷺ

The coming of Hazrat Isa ﷺ was foretold by several Ambiya ﷺ.

Hazrat Maryam (Radiyahallahu anha) would not leave her room during the days except for a need and therefore never came into contact with men. It therefore came as a shock to her when Hazrat Jibrail ﷺ appeared before her in the form of a human one day. She bade him to leave, but he assured her that she had nothing to fear from him since

he was an angel deputed by Allah to give her a message. He then proceeded to inform her that she would soon be giving birth to a special and celebrated child. She exclaimed in surprise, “how can I bear a child when no man has touched me?”

However, Hazrat Jibrail عليه السلام then gave her courage by describing to her the special qualities of the child and assuring her that the child will be born as it is the decree of Allah.

The Birth of Hazrat Isa عليه السلام

It was not long thereafter that Hazrat Maryam (Radiyallahu anha) felt that she was pregnant. As it would worry anyone, she also began to worry as the pregnancy progressed. However, what worried her more was the fact that people would accuse her of fornication.

When the time for birth was imminent, she left her home and went out alone into the wilderness, until she reached a hill close to the Saraat mountain, which was located approximately nine miles out of Baytul Muqaddas. This place is now called Bethlehem. She was forced to sit down beneath a date palm when her labour pains started. While she had managed to conceal the pregnancy all the months, she wondered how she could ever conceal the child.

In this most desperate hour of need, Allah sent Hazrat Jibraeel عليه السلام to her again. Calling out to her from a distance, he bade her not to grieve. He told her that Allah would cause a stream to flow beside her for water and that she only needed to shake the trunk of the date palm for it to drop down fresh and nutritious dates to eat. Since she recognised the voice and appearance of the angel, she felt comforted and the child was soon born.

However, the worry did linger at the back of her mind concerning what she would say to her people when she returned.

However, Allah Ta’ala would not allow her to suffer slander and the angels arrived yet again to provide the solution. He told her to tell

the people that she was observing a fast of silence and could therefore not answer their questions. She was to point to the child to tell them to address their queries to the infant. Content with the directive from Allah, she returned to Baytul Muqaddas with the baby in her arms.

Maryam returns with her baby

As expected, the people immediately censured her for committing a heinous act, adding that this was inexcusable because she belonged to a family in which piety was a hallmark. As commanded, she pointed to the child. The people were outraged and asked, “How can we speak to an infant in a cradle?” However, the little baby then spoke in clear words for all of them to understand. He said, “I am a slave of Allah (contrary to the beliefs of the Christians who claim that he is Allah or Allah’s son). Allah gave me a scripture (the Injeel) and made me a Nabi (contrary to the beliefs of the Jews who claim that he was not a Nabi). Allah has blessed me wherever I may be (so that I may always be of benefit to people) and has commanded me to perform salah and to pay zakah (when I return to the world before Qiyamah) as long as I remain alive. Allah has also made me kind to my mother (because I have no father) and has not made me a tyrant and a wretched person. Peace be on me the day I was born, the day death comes to me (after I return to this world before Qiyamah), and the day when I shall be resurrected (because these are the most traumatic days for people in general)”.

It is evident that the claim of the Christians who say that Hazrat Isa عليه السلام was the son of Allah is a false claim. It is for this reason that Allah clarifies the fact that Hazrat Isa عليه السلام was created by Allah merely saying “Be!”

When the people heard the infant speak in this manner, they realised that the birth was indeed a miracle and that Hazrat Maryam (Radiyahallahu anha) was blameless of the slander they had implied. It did not take long for the news of this miraculous birth to reach all the people in the area.

Declaration of Nubuwwah

Before the coming of Hazrat Isa عليه السلام, the Bani Israeel fell into many sinful activities and had also corrupted their beliefs with their practices. They eventually became so insolent in the matters of religion that they stooped to the level of assassinating the messengers whom Allah sent for their guidance.

The scholars of the Bani Israeel during those times used to alter the injunctions of the Torah according to their whims and the whims of those who rewarded them for doing so. According to the bidding of the people, they therefore made lawful what was unlawful and vice versa. They did nothing to forbid evil when they could and even went a step further to associate with the evil doers. They even declared evils like usury and bribery to be lawful.

Hazrat Isa عليه السلام was sent during these dark times for the guidance of the people. From a young age he started to call the people towards good and made it clear to them that Allah had sent him for their guidance. He told them that he had come to reinstate the injunctions of the Torah, which they had forsaken so that the truth it stated is confirmed as the truth.

The Four Miracles

Together with being given a divine scripture, Hazrat Isa عليه السلام was also blessed with several miracles relevant to his times. The Qur'an explicitly mentions the following four miracles that Hazrat Isa عليه السلام performed:

1. By the command of Allah, he would raise the dead back to life
2. He would cure congenitally blind people as well as lepers
3. He would make birds out of clay and then cause them to come to life and fly away merely by blowing onto them

4. He could tell people exactly what they had eaten and what they had stored in their homes.

People who were objective and not obstinate could see clearly that these feats were performed with the help of Allah. This then led them to accept his prophethood and follow him. However, people whose hearts were blinded and who chose to be stubborn would brush his feats off as magic. In addition to this, the very birth of Hazrat Isa عليه السلام was a miracle in itself.

Summary of his Teachings

Together with basic principles, Hazrat Isa عليه السلام advised the people with the words of the Torah and Injeel. However, with their stubborn and insolent nature still intact, the Jews did all they could to oppose him. It was only a small group from amongst them who accepted his message and supported him.

The ‘Hawariyeen’ - Disciples

Hazrat Isa عليه السلام also had a few Hawariyeen, who assisted him in his duty, braved trying situations in the cause and gave everything for the propagation and preservation of the religion that Hazrat Isa عليه السلام brought. They constantly remained in the company of Hazrat Isa عليه السلام and thus earned the title of the ‘Helpers of Allah’; meaning ‘Helpers of the Deen of Allah’. These men adopted the lifestyle of Hazrat Isa عليه السلام and never deserted him. They maintained their loyalty to him even after he was raised to the heavens.

Allah had made the following five promises to Hazrat Isa عليه السلام:

1. That he will not be killed by the Jews
2. He would be raised to the heavens
3. He will be protected from the libelling of his enemies

4. His followers would dominate over their enemies until the Day of Qiyamah

5. Allah will be judge over the differences between his followers on the Day of Qiyamah

Allah protected His chosen Nabi by raising him to the heavens and changing the appearance of someone else so that he looked just like Hazrat Isa عليه السلام. Thinking that he was Hazrat Isa عليه السلام, the others grabbed hold of him. It is this episode that Allah refers to when He says, “They never killed him, nor did they crucify him, but they were cast into doubt (when Allah made the people think that another person was Isa عليه السلام, whom they killed instead). Indeed, those who dispute about him (who say that Isa عليه السلام was crucified) are definitely in doubt. The only knowledge they possess about Isa عليه السلام is guesswork (they have no accurate knowledge about his whereabouts). With certainty, they never killed him.” (4:157)

A Witness on the Day of Qiyamah

Hafiz Ibn Asakir (Rahimahullah) has quoted a narration from Hazrat Abu Moosa Ash'ari رضي الله عنه in which Nabi ﷺ said that Hazrat Isa عليه السلام will be summoned on the Day of Qiyamah together with all the other Ambiya عليهم السلام. Allah will recount all the favours that he was blessed with in this world, which he will acknowledge. Allah will then ask him, “Did you say to the people, ‘Take myself and my mother both as Ilaah instead of Allah?’” (5:116) - Hazrat Isa عليه السلام will deny it. Allah will then summon the Christians and ask them about this. When they will lie and claim that he did tell them to do this, Hazrat Isa عليه السلام will be overcome with fear and fall prostrate before Allah. He will remain like this for what would seem like a period of a thousand years before Allah disproves the Christians and then dispatches them all off to Jahannam.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT ISHAQ عليه السلام



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HAZRAT ISHAQ ﷺ

Ishaq ﷺ is mentioned seventeen times in the Noble Qur'an.

When Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ was about 100 years old, Allah conveyed to him the good news of a son that was to be born to him from his wife Hazrat Sarah who was then between 80 and 90 years of age. Hazrat Ishaq ﷺ was therefore approximately 13 years younger than his brother Hazrat Ismaeel ﷺ.

The angels came to Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ in the form of human beings whom he did not recognise. As was his habit, Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ had prepared meals for them. When the roasted mutton was ready, he served it to them, but they did not take any of it because angels do not eat. Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ sensed some fear for the strangers because it was common that the only people who would not eat from a person were those who had come with sinister motives, such as murderers or robbers.

Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ then asked them why they had come and they promptly bade him not to have any fear. They then told him that they were angels deputed to punish the people of Hazrat Loot ﷺ. They also informed him that he was to father a son of great knowledge (Ghulam Aleem), who was Hazrat Ishaq ﷺ.

Describing him as a son with tremendous knowledge meant that the son would be a Nabi, since the messengers were the most knowledgeable of all humanity. When Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ expressed astonishment that he could father a child at such a late age, the angels assured him that the day would certainly come to pass.

Hazrat Ibraheem's ﷺ wife, Hazrat Sarah was standing nearby, so she overheard the conversation. She was also surprised, but the angels reassured her as well with the news of a son, Ishaq. In addition to this, they even told her that her son Ishaq would be the father of Yaqoob, who would also be a messenger of Allah.

In the Words of the Qur'an

In verses 69 to 73 of Surah Hud, Allah says:

“Indeed, Our messenger angels came to Ibraheem عليه السلام with good news (that he will father a son and have grandsons afterwards) and greeted him with (the words of) Salaam. He said, “Salaam (Peace be on you too),” and did not hesitate to bring a roasted calf (to entertain them). (However, they did not partake of the meal because angels do not eat.) When he noticed that their hands were not reaching towards it (to eat), he grew fearful of them (thinking that they had come to harm him). They said, “Do not fear. We (are angels who) have been sent to (destroy) the nation of Lut عليه السلام.” His wife (Sarah), standing by, laughed (with happiness) as We conveyed to her the good news (that she would be giving birth to a son by the name) of Ishaq عليه السلام, and (that she will have a grandson by the name of) Yaqub عليه السلام after Ishaq عليه السلام. She said (in astonishment), “Oh dear! Shall I bear a child when I am an old woman (of over 80 years) and my husband here is an old man (of over 100 years)? This is indeed a strange event!” They (the angels) said, “Are you surprised at the command (and power) of Allah (Who can do anything)? May Allah’s mercy and blessings be on you, O members of the household (of Ibraheem عليه السلام). Verily He is Worthy of all praise, The Exalted.”

Verses 24-30 of Surah Zariyat relate the incident in the following words

“Has the story of Ibraheem عليه السلام’s honourable guests (some angels) reached you? When they came to him and greeted with Salaam, he (thinking them to be travellers) said, “Peace be upon you too. You must be strangers (to this place).” He then went to his family and returned with a fat (roasted) calf. He served it to them and (when they did not partake of it because angels do not eat food) he said, “Are you not going to eat (Will you not accept my hospitality)?” He grew afraid of them (thinking that they may have come for some sinister purpose). They said, “Do not be afraid,” and they gave him the good news of an intelligent child (that was to be born to him). His

wife (Sarah) arrived calling loudly (in amazement upon hearing the news), smote her face (because of her surprise) and said, “(How can) An old barren woman (like me bear a child)?” They (the angels) said, “Thus has your Rabb said (you will therefore certainly bear a child). He is the Wise, the All Knowing (He knows why and to whom a child should be born).”

Marriage

The Qur'an does not give details of Ishaq's ﷺ life nor does the hadith give reference to this part of his life. According to the Torah when Ibraheem ﷺ felt that his life was drawing to a close, he wished to see Ishaq ﷺ married. He did not want Ishaq to marry one of the Canaanites, who were pagans, so he sent a trustworthy servant to Iraq to choose a bride for Ishaq.

He told the servant that if they agree then tell them that since I cannot part with Ishaq, would you please send your daughter. They agreed and sent her with many gifts and items that she would need.

Sons from the People of the Book

The People of the Book said that when Ishaq was forty or sixty years old, he got married during his father's life. They said his wife was sterile, so Ishaq ﷺ prayed to Allah and then she became pregnant. She gave birth to twin boys. The first one was called Esau whom the Arabs called Al-Eis. He became the father of Rum. The second one was called Yacoob (Jacob), which means Israel, (belonging to the people of Israel).

Death and Demise

Yaqub ﷺ came to his father Ishaq ﷺ and settled with him in the village of Hebron which lies in the land of Canaan where Ibraheem ﷺ had lived. Then Ishaq ﷺ fell ill and passed away when he was one hundred eighty years old. His sons Esau and Yacoob ﷺ buried him with his father Ibraheem Al Khalil ﷺ in a cave which he had bought.

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HAZRAT ISMAEEL عليه السلام

Hazrat Ismaeel عليه السلام is mentioned is also mentioned exclusively in 12 verses of the Noble Qur'an.

When Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام was rescued from the fire and he started his emigration with his wife Hajar and settled in Palestine. They had no child up to that point and so He made dua to Allah, saying, "O my Rabb! Grant me a son from among the pious". Allah accepted his dua and informed Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام that he would soon get a son, whose name would be Ismaeel عليه السلام.

A Valley of no Vegetation

One day, Ibraheem عليه السلام woke up and asked his wife Hajar to prepare for a long journey. In a few days Ibraheem عليه السلام started out with his wife Hajar and their son Ismaeel عليه السلام. The child was still nursing and not yet weaned. Ibraheem عليه السلام walked through cultivated land, desert, and mountains until he reached the desert of the Arabian Peninsula and came to an uncultivated valley having no fruit, no trees, no food, no water. The valley had no sign of life. After Ibraheem عليه السلام had helped his wife and child to dismount, he left them with a small amount of food and water hardly enough for two days. He turned around and began walking away. He wife hurried after him asking: "Where are you going Ibraheem, leaving us in this barren valley?"

Ibraheem عليه السلام did not answer her, but continued walking. She repeated what she had said, but he remained silent. Finally, she understood that he was not acting on his own initiative. She realised that Allah had commanded him to do this. She asked him: "Did Allah command you to do so?" He replied: "Yes." Then his wife said: "We are not going to be lost, since Allah Who has commanded you is with us."

When he reached a point known as Quday, from where his wife could no longer see him, he turned to the direction of the Ka'bah and made the following dua:

"O Our Lord! I have made some of my offspring to dwell in a valley with no cultivation, by Your Sacred House (the Ka'ba); in order, O our Rabb! (I have left them here) So that they establish salah perfectly, so cause the hearts of some people to be inclined towards them (so that people may love them and settle with them)., and (O Allah) provide them with fruits (referring to all types of provisions) so that they may give thanks. O our Lord! Certainly, you know what we conceal and what we reveal. Nothing on the earth or in the heavens is hidden from Allah." (14:37-38)

Hazrat Hajar (Radiyallahu Anha) continued to suckle her child while drinking from the waterbag and eating from the dates. When the water was exhausted, she and her infant grew thirsty. Seeing her child in a restless condition, she ascended the mount of Safa to see whether any people were approaching. When she could not see anyone, she hastened to Marwah, running through the valley in between to reach the top as soon as possible so as to keep an eye on her child as well. She repeated that running between Safa and Marwa seven times.

Hajar sees Zam-Zam

When she reached Al Marwa (for the last time) she heard a voice and she tried to remain calm and listened attentively. She heard the voice again and said: "O whoever you maybe! You have made me hear your voice; have you got something to help me?" And behold! She witnessed an angel at the place of Zam Zam, digging the earth with his heel (or his wing) till water flowed from that place. She started to make a sand wall around it and started filling her water skin. The water continued to gush forth. Nabi ﷺ added, "May Allah bestow mercy on Ismaeel عليه السلام mother! Had she let the Zamzam (flow without trying to control it) (or had she not scooped from that water) (to fill her water-skin), Zamzam would have been a stream flowing on the surface of the earth."

Makkah becomes Inhabited

She continued to drink from the well and to feed her child. The angels would reassure her not to fear since Allah would not allow them to be destroyed because this child and his father will construct the house of Allah in this place. They added that Allah would never destroy His own, the faithful.

It was not long thereafter that people from the Jurhum tribe passed by and noticed birds. Knowing that it was a sure sign of water, they approached the place and sought permission from Hazrat Hajar to settle there. She told them that they were free to settle, but that they would not become shareholders of the well. They accepted her condition and started to live there.

The Jurhum people then sent some of their men to call the others and people gradually started to settle and build there. Hazrat Ismaeel عليه السلام also learnt their language and played with their children. His virtues caused them to love and admire him as he grew up. When he grew up, the Jurhum people loved him for his good looks and intelligence and got him married to a woman from amongst them.

Advice to change his 'Doorstep'

Ibraheem عليه السلام came after Ismaeel's عليه السلام marriage in order to see his family that he had left before but he did not find Ismaeel عليه السلام there. To ascertain the personality of his daughter-in-law, he asked her about their way of living and their condition, she complained that they were struggling and having a hard time. He said: "When your husband returns, convey my salutations to him and tell him to change his doorstep."

When Ismaeel عليه السلام returned home, he sensed the earlier presence of his father and asked his wife if anyone had visited. She related the incident to him and gave him the message from Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام. Hazrat Ismaeel عليه السلام informed her that the man was his father Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام and the advice was to be separated from her. He then

did as his father bade him. So, Ismaeel عليه السلام divorced her and married another woman from among them (Jurhum).

The Great Sacrifice

Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام saw a dream for three consecutive nights. Allah had commanded him in this dream to slaughter his son Hazrat Ismaeel عليه السلام. The dreams of the messengers are revelation. Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام was immediately ready to comply with this command.

As difficult as it was, he prepared himself for the task. However, since he was not the only one involved in this command, he had to explain the matter to his son Hazrat Ismaeel عليه السلام. Like his father, Hazrat Ismaeel عليه السلام did not hesitate to fulfil the command of Allah and the two soon left to do that which pleased Allah.

Father and son proceeded towards where they were to fulfil the command. When they reached the place of sacrifice, Hazrat Ismaeel عليه السلام was tied up just as is done with a sacrificial animal. Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام then turned Hazrat Ismaeel عليه السلام on his side, with the side of the forehead upon the ground and started to slaughter when he was then stopped and told, “O Ibraheem! You have certainly brought the dream to a realisation (fulfilled the command). In this manner (as We shall reward you) do We reward those who do good. This (command to slaughter your son) is definitely a decisive test (of Iman)”.

Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام immediately stopped and looked up to Hazrat Jibrail عليه السلام approaching with a large ram. It was this ram that Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام slaughtered in place of his son.

Erection of the Ka’bah

Allah Ta’ala commanded Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام to build ‘The House of Allah’. He informed his son Ismaeel عليه السلام about the command and they started building the Ka’bah. This was the first house erected solely for the worship of Allah Ta’ala.

Then they raised the foundations of the House (the Ka'bah). Ismaeel عليه السلام brought the stones while Ibraheem عليه السلام built and when the walls became high, Ismaeel عليه السلام brought a stone on which Ibraheem عليه السلام stood and it would move up and down as required. Then the Hajre Aswad was placed in its spot which came from paradise.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT LUQMAN عليه السلام



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HAZRAT LUQMAN عليه السلام

Hazrat Luqman عليه السلام is mentioned twice by name in the Noble Qur'an, both in Surah Luqman (31) which named after him.

Luqman عليه السلام is also known as “Luqman the wise man”, and he is as famous amongst the non-Arabs as he is amongst the Arabs. He is also listed amongst the people who may have been a Nabi. There are conflicting reports concerning his life and lineage, but what is certain is that he possessed immense wisdom. His wise sayings have been compiled and are well known in the circle of the learned.

The conflicting narrations concerning the lineage of Hazrat Luqman عليه السلام stem primarily from the fact that ancient history has records of a good king from Arabia who was a descendant of the Thamud and who was also known as Luqman and also due to the fact that there were no historical records kept during those times and all records were oral, making them unreliable, because all people narrating the accounts were not equally capable in memorising and reporting.

It is reported in historical accounts that when a man by the name of Suwayd bin Samit arrived in Makkah three years before the Hijrah, he heard the preaching of Nabi ﷺ. He then exclaimed, “I have something with me that resembles what you speak.” When Nabi ﷺ asked him what it was, he produced the Book of Luqman. Nabi ﷺ then requested him to read from it and he did. He then admitted that what Nabi ﷺ had to say was certainly better than what was contained in the book.

Suwayd was known by the title of Kamil (the perfect) in Madinah because of his accomplishments, bravery and poetic skills. However, he was killed in the Bu'ath feudal battle before Nabi ﷺ arrived in Madinah. His tribesmen believe that he had become a Muslim after meeting Nabi ﷺ.

There is also the opinion that Hazrat Luqman عليه السلام is from the lands of Nuba (Northern Sudan to Southern Egypt).

It is said that he lived till the time of Nabi Dawud ﷺ. When Dawud ﷺ proclaimed his prophethood, Luqman ﷺ stopped issuing legal rulings. When he was asked the reason, He said, “Shall I not deem sufficient what has been made sufficient for me (meaning it now becomes Hazrat Dawud’s ﷺ responsibility to issue legal rulings)?”

Choosing Wisdom over Messengership

Hazrat Qatadah (Rahimahullah) narrates that someone once asked Hazrat Luqman ﷺ why he chose wisdom over Nubuwwah when he was given a choice between the two. Hazrat Luqman ﷺ replied, “Nubuwwah is a greater responsibility. Had it been given to me without me having to choose, Allah would have made it possible for me to fulfil the duty. However, if I choose it by my will, I will have to fulfil it by myself.”

Hazrat Luqman ﷺ was indeed blessed with tremendous Hikmah (wisdom). The Arabic word Hikmah refers to wisdom, knowledge, intelligence, tolerance and the ability to pass sound judgement. Hazrat Abu Hayan Andalusi (Rahimahullah) has stated that Hikmah refers to speech that contains profound lessons, which affect the heart and which people remember in order to pass it on to others.

Mention in the Qur'an

There is a Surah in the Qur'an named after Hazrat Luqman ﷺ. The Qur'an does not concern itself with the lineage and identity of Hazrat Luqman ﷺ since the purpose is to convey the words of wisdom that he imparted. What is evident from his words is that he was not the average person, but someone of high esteem.

The narration that the historian Ibn Ishaq has narrated from Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas ؓ contains some of the statements of Hazrat Luqman ﷺ, but also does not provide details about whether he was a Nabi or not. It is for this reason that most Ulama are of the opinion that he was not a Nabi, but a pious servant and friend of Allah. The Qur'an praises him and mentions the advices he gave to his son, who

was very beloved to him.

Advices and Teachings

The most important of the wise advices that Hazrat Luqman عليه السلام gave to his son was to avoid shirk because this is an incredibly serious act of injustice, which distinguishes a believer from a non-believer. It is an act of great injustice because it equates other beings with Allah, our Creator and Sustainer when they play no part in creation or sustaining. How can due be given to anyone else for what Allah is solely responsible for? This is regarded to be the worst form of injustice and is therefore unpardonable.

In his advice to his son, Hazrat Luqman عليه السلام said, “O my beloved son! If there has to be an action equivalent to the weight of a mustard seed (hidden) within a rock or (scattered somewhere) in the heavens or (somewhere) in the earth, Allah would (locate it and) bring it (for reward or punishment in the Akhirah). Without doubt, Allah is (the Knower of) the subtle (has knowledge of the most intricate and subtle details), and is well informed (nothing is hidden from Him)”. (31:16)

Whereas physical things hidden in the darkness of the earth or outer space will remain hidden to us, none of it escapes the knowledge of Allah. Man can therefore never hope to hide anything from Allah and will be held accountable for everything he does wrong.

Hazrat Luqman عليه السلام said, “Do not turn your face away from people (out of pride)”. (31:8) The literal meaning of the Arabic word sa’ir is a condition afflicting the necks of camels, which causes them to keep their heads turned in one direction all the time. It is from this that the Arabs used the word to coin the phrase “turning your head like a camel”, which refers to turning one’s face away from people out of pride. This is referred to in this verse. When people are afflicted with the illness of arrogance, they begin to turn their faces away from others because they regard others to be inferior to themselves. If left unchecked, factors such as wealth, beauty, knowledge, fame, leadership, strength and lineage can create pride within a person.

However, a person can become an angel if he bears in mind that the power, grandeur and control of Allah is much more superior.

Hazrat Luqman عليه السلام also advised, “and do not walk arrogantly on earth. Verily Allah detests every arrogant boaster. Moderate your walk”. (31:18)

A person is considered arrogant and vain when he regards himself to be something of great worth and expresses this to others. It is then that he develops a gait of pride when walking so that people may consider him to be someone great. When this happens, it indicates that his head is truly swollen.

Islam encourages moderation in everything, even to extent of one's manner of walking because this will encourage humility. Walking with pride makes it evident to others that a person is obsessed with himself and looks down upon others.

On the contrary, when one walks moderately, it is a clear indication that he has humility and dignity within his heart. However, there are occasions when a proud person walks with his head lowered because his morale has been crushed by circumstances. Hazrat Luqman عليه السلام therefore advised that one walks in the manner that the average person of dignity walks so that pride is not evident, nor the vanity of being a very humble person.

A person's walk is the first window to his character and disposition. It betrays whether the person is a criminal, a boastful person, a dignified man, a wealthy man, a poor man, a righteous man and any other type of person he may be. It is therefore seen that people have different manners of walking. May Allah Ta'ala grant us all the ability to walk like His pious and righteous servants.

The Wisdom of Hazrat Luqman عليه السلام

The words of Hazrat Luqman عليه السلام were commonly quoted and related amongst the Arabs and are many in number. Amongst the many that

have been quoted by the Sahabah ﷺ and Tabi'een are the following:

1. Wisdom and intelligence make a king out of a pauper.
2. When attending a gathering, be sure to greet with Salam, sit at the end and do not say anything until you have first heard what is being said. If the people are engaged in the remembrance of Allah, then join them. However, if they are wasting time, then leave them and seek better company.
3. When Allah has granted anyone a responsibility, then it is his bounden duty to fulfil it.
4. Dear son! Fear Allah, but never express this fear out of show so that people may respect you because of it. In that case, your heart will be guilty of a sin.
5. Dear son! Never befriend an ignorant person because he will think that you are fond of his ignorant talk. You should also never ignore the dissatisfaction of an intelligent person, for this may cause him to leave you.
6. You should know that the power of Allah is upon the tongue of the intelligent ones.
7. Dear son! There can be no regrets for remaining silent. If speech is silver, then silence is golden.
8. Dear son! If you remain aloof from evil, it will remain aloof from you because evil can only arise from evil.
9. Dear son! Never lose your temper because this kills the heart of even the most intelligent people.
10. Dear son! Always speak kindly and display good character because this will cause you to become more beloved in the eyes of the people than those who are charitable towards them.

11. Kind speech is at the root of intellect.

12. You shall reap what you sow.

13. Always show concern for your own friends as well as the friends of your father.

14. When someone asked him who the most patient person was, he replied, "The one whose patience is not followed by hurt." When asked who the most knowledgeable person was, he replied, "The one who supplements his own knowledge with the knowledge of others." When asked who the best of people was, he replied, "The wealthy one." When the person then asked if he was referring to someone with monetary wealth, he clarified, "No. The wealthy one is he who, when he searches himself, he finds a wealth of good and is independent of others."

15. When asked who the worst of people were, he replied, "The one who does not care that people would form a negative opinion of him when they see the evil he perpetrates."

16. Dear son! It is best to entertain only the righteous ones at your table and seek counsel only from the true Ulama.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT LUT عليه السلام



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HAZRAT LUT ﷺ

Hazrat Lut ﷺ is mentioned by name seventeen times in the Qur'an.

Hazrat Lut ﷺ was the nephew of Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ. Both uncle and nephew hailed from the city of Babylon, close to Basrah in Iraq. The city of Babylon is mentioned in the Qur'an in Surah Baqarah. He lived under the care of Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ and grew up in his house. Despite the tireless efforts of Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ to convince his father, family and nation to accept Tawheed, they refused. He was eventually forced to leave the city with his wife Hazrat Sarah and his nephew Hazrat Lut ﷺ.

They travelled for a while to spread the message of Alla's Oneness, and it was when they reached the Jordan River that Allah commanded Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ to settle in Can'aan, which was close to Baytul Muqaddas. At the same time, Allah instructed Hazrat Lut ﷺ to settle to the South West of the dead sea between Jordan and Baytul Muqaddas where Sodom and Gomoroh were situated. There he was to preach the message of Tawheed to the people.

The Overturned Cities

The area Lut ﷺ settled in was a region that comprised of five cities. The cities were called:

1. Sodom
2. Gomorrah
3. Admah
4. Sabubim
5. Baali/Soghar

The Qur'an refers to these cities as the overturned cities. The city of Sodom was the capital and it was there that Hazrat Lut ﷺ lived. It was a lush and fertile area, with plenty of crops and food. Allah had blessed the people of Sodom with an abundance of bounties. However, they were so inundated with wealth and riches that it

started to intoxicate them. As a result, they lost their natural modesty and the ability to distinguish between what was morally correct and what was not. They started to engage in acts that diametrically opposed human nature.

The sin they engaged in was to have sexual intercourse with men and young boys rather than with women. Such a despicable act was unheard of at that time and they were the first to do it. This unnatural act later became known as sodomy (after the city of Sodom). To make matters worse, they were not ashamed of their behaviour and even boasted about it. This city was filled with evil. Its residents waylaid, robbed and killed travellers.

Lut عليه السلام's Message

It was at the height of these crimes and sins that Allah revealed to Prophet Lut عليه السلام that he should summon the people to give up their indecent behaviour. Hazrat Lut عليه السلام preached to these morally depraved people by explaining to them the evil of what they were doing and encouraged them to lead lives of purity and to be morally upright. He left no stone unturned to convey the message of Allah to them and also related to them the plights of the nations of the past that disobeyed Allah but they were so deeply sunk in their immoral habits that they were deaf to Lut عليه السلام's preaching. Immersed in their unnatural desires, they refused to listen, even when Lut عليه السلام warned them of Allah's punishment. Instead, the people chose to reject him and even threatened to banish him if he kept on preaching.

Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام and the angels

While this was happening to Nabi Lut عليه السلام, Nabi Ibraheem عليه السلام who lived approximately fifteen miles away from Sodom had an experience. He was out one day, when he met three men by the road. Being the generous and hospitable man, he was renowned to be, he promptly took the men home for a meal. He was always ready to entertain guests. He roasted a calf for them and served the meal. However, when they refused to eat any of it, Hazrat Ibraheem (Alayhis Salam)

became worried, thinking that they had perhaps come with sinister motives. Sensing his worry, the men put him at ease by informing him that they were angels bound for Sodom, where they were charged with destroying the nation. At the same time, they also gave him the good news of the birth of his son Ishaq عليه السلام.

Ibraheem عليه السلام being soft hearted, sympathetic, merciful and compassionate asked the angels how they could destroy a nation when there were good people like Hazrat Lut عليه السلام amongst them. He told them that Hazrat Lut عليه السلام was a Mu'min who had brought Iman. The angels told him that they knew all about Hazrat Lut عليه السلام, but their orders were to destroy the nation because of their immorality and evil ways. However, they assured him that Hazrat Lut عليه السلام and his followers will be safe from the punishment, with the exception of his wife, who will perish with the people she supported.

The Angels meet Hazrat Lut عليه السلام

If home is the place of comfort and rest, then Lut عليه السلام found none, for he was tormented both inside and outside his home. His life was a continuous chain of challenges and he suffered greatly, but he remained patient and steadfast with his people. The years rolled by, and still, they did not believe in him.

Instead, they belittled his message and mockingly challenged him: "Bring Allah's Torment upon us if you are one of the truthful!" (29:29).

Overwhelmed with despair, Lut عليه السلام prayed to Allah to grant him victory and destroy the corrupt.

The time now came for the angels charged with punishment to visit Hazrat Lut عليه السلام and inform him of Allah's decision to punish the people. Therefore, the angels left Ibraheem عليه السلام and headed for Sodom the town of Lut عليه السلام where they became the guests of Nabi Lut عليه السلام.

When they met Hazrat Lut عليه السلام, he became worried about their safety because they appeared in the form of very handsome young men and it was men like this that the people of Sodom desired to satisfy their lusts with. He did not know that these were angels yet.

Just as he feared, the people came running to him to tell him to hand over the guests to them for their purposes. Disgusted with them, Hazrat Lut عليه السلام told them that the men were guests and that they should not embarrass him in front of them. He again reminded them that they ought to satisfy themselves with the women of their nation through marriage since there was no shortage of women. However, they made it clear to him that they no longer had any interest in women and that he ought to have known that if he brought any guests such as these, it would only arouse and excite them.

However, despite him pleading with them, they forced their way in and Hazrat Lut عليه السلام grieved about not having the ability to restrain them. Seeing his concern, the angels consoled him by telling him that since they were angels, the people would be unable to get close to them. They also told Hazrat Lut عليه السلام that they were commissioned to destroy the nation and that he should leave the area with his followers that night. In addition to this, they told him to warn his followers not to look back as they left. However, they informed him that his wife would perish with the rest since she supported them and not him.

Hazrat Lut عليه السلام therefore left with his followers that night, but his wife refused to go along with them. Hazrat Lut عليه السلام and his followers heard a frightening sound from the cities and the entire area with the buildings and inhabitants ripped from the ground, lifted into the air and thrown back upside-down. Stones were then rained down upon the place and destroyed them so that not a trace remained.

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HAZRAT MUHAMMAD ﷺ



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HAZRAT MUHAMMAD ﷺ

The Qur'an is the message and Nabi ﷺ is the messenger responsible for conveying the message to the creation. It is for this reason that every word of the Qur'an is linked to the character and life of Nabi ﷺ.

The Blessed Morning

Six centuries after the ascent of Hazrat Isa (عليه السلام) to the heavens, the teachings of over a hundred thousand messengers were forgotten by mankind. Rather than worshipping One Allah, people of the world worshipped other things. While some people worshipped the son of God, others worshipped people whom they claimed were gods and so many even worshipped lifeless idols. Some people worshipped the heavenly bodies, while others worshipped animals and stones. Even those who claimed to worship Allah did not worship Him exclusively and felt the need to associate others as partners to Him. This age of darkness and deviation was known as the period of ignorance.

It was in the year known as the Year of the Elephant that a light of guidance and knowledge was born, which would dispel the prevailing darkness of ignorance, Kufr and Shirk. It took place one Monday morning on either the 8th, 9th or 12th of Rabiul Awwal. This was the day when Nabi ﷺ was born in the house of Abu Talib in Makkah. His mother, Aminah, was the daughter of Wahb ibn Abdu Manaf of the Zahrah family. His father, 'Abdullah, was the son of Abdul Muttalib. His genealogy has been traced to the noble house of Ismaeel (عليه السلام), the son of Ibraheem (عليه السلام). Nabi ﷺ was an Arab and born in the most esteemed family of the Quraish tribe, called the Banu Hashim.

His father died before his birth. Before he was six years old his mother died, and as an orphan he was put under the charge of his grandfather, Abdul Muttalib who took the most tender care of him. But the old chief died two years afterwards. On his deathbed he confided to his son Abu Talib the charge of the little orphan.

Before Announcing his Prophethood

Nabi ﷺ developed a fondness to be alone from a young age and would spend much time in seclusion, away from the people. This was because the idolatry and deviation of his people concerned him deeply and made him restless. The closer the time drew for revelation to start descending upon him, the more his yearning for seclusion increased.

This later set the scene for the first revelation that came to Nabi ﷺ. The first verses revealed were those at the beginning of Surah Iqra, followed by some verses of Surah Muddassir.

The Start of the Mission

Nabi ﷺ was not commanded to openly call the people to Islam until Allah revealed the verses of Surah Shu'ara, which instructed him to extend the message to his closest relatives. After three years of constant but quiet struggle, only thirty followers were secured.

People had begun to doubt his sanity, thinking him insane or possessed by an evil spirit. Hitherto he preached quietly and unobtrusively. He now decided to appeal publicly to the Makkans, requesting them to abandon their idolatry. For this he arranged a gathering on a neighbouring hill and there spoke to them of their folly in the sight of Allah in worshipping pieces of stone which they called their gods. He invited them to forsake their old impious worship and adopt the faith of love, truth and purity. He warned them of the fate that had overtaken past races who had not heeded the preaching of former prophets. But the gathering departed without listening to the warning given them by the Prophet. Having thus failed to induce his fellow citizens to listen to him, he turned his attention to the strangers arriving in the city on commerce or pilgrimage. But the Quraish made attempts to frustrate his efforts. They hastened themselves to meet the strangers first on different routes, to warn them against holding any communication with the Prophet, whom they represented as a magician. When the pilgrims or traders

returned to their homes, they carried with them the news of the advent of the bold preacher who was inviting the Arabs loudly - at the risk of his own life - to abandon the worship of their dear idols.

Quraish Increase Persecution - First Hijra of 615 C.E. to Abyssinia

As the years passed, Nabi ﷺ extended the message of Islaam to the people of Makkah, neighbouring Taif and Hunain and even as far as the people of Madinah. During this time, he even dispatched the first group of emigrants to Abyssinia. It was them who conveyed the message to the king Najashi, who reigned as the sovereign over the region. This emigration was necessary because the Muslims could not bear the relentless torture and harassment they received from the Mushrikeen of Makkah.

The hostile Quraish, furious at the escape of their victims, sent deputies to the king of Abyssinia to request him to send the Muslims back, that they might be put to death for forsaking their old religion and embracing a new one. The king summoned the poor fugitives and inquired of them what was the religion they had adopted in preference to their old faith.

Ja'far bin Abi Talib, acted as spokesman for the exiles. He spoke thus: "O king, we were plunged in the depth of ignorance and barbarism, we adored idols, we lived in unchastity, and we ate dead bodies, and we spoke abomination, we disregarded every feeling of humanity and sense of duty towards our neighbours, and we knew no law but that of the strong, when Allah raised among us a man, of whose birth, truthfulness, honesty, and purity we were aware. He called us to profess the Oneness of Allah and taught us to associate nothing with Him; he forbade us the worship of idols and enjoined us to speak the truth, to be faithful to our trusts, to be merciful, and to regard the rights of neighbours; he forbade us to speak evil of the worship of Allah and not to return to the worship of idols of wood and stone and to abstain from evil, to offer prayers, to give alms, to observe the

fast. We have believed in him; we have accepted his teachings and his injunctions to worship Allah alone and to associate nothing with Him. Hence our people have persecuted us, trying to make us forego the worship of Allah and return to the worship of idols of wood and stone and other abominations. They have tortured us and injured us until, finding no safety among them, we have come to your kingdom trusting you will give us protection against their persecution."

After hearing the above speech, the hospitable king ordered the deputies to return to their people in safety and not to interfere with their fugitives. Thus, the emigrants passed the period of exile in peace and comfort.

The Isra (Miraj)

In the twelfth year of his mission, Nabi ﷺ made his night journey from Makkah Mukarramah to Masjidul Aqsa in Jerusalem, and thereon to the heavens. His journey, known in history as Miraj (Ascension) was a real bodily one and not only a vision. It was at this time that Allah Ta'ala ordered the Muslims to pray the five daily prayers.

The Hijrah - Migration

The idolaters of Makkah exerted themselves to make the lives of the Muslims a misery in Makkah so that they should forsake their Deen. When this became unbearable for the Muslims, Allah permitted them to emigrate to Madinah Munawwarah to preserve their Deen.

The Battle of Badr

From amongst the prominent expeditions that the Qur'an mentions, it is the Battle of Badr which heads the list because it was this battle that marked the beginning of the rise of Muslim strength and power. The result of the battle was that the Makkans were driven back with great loss. Several of their chiefs were slain, including Abu Jahl.

The Battle of Uhud

The Battle of Uhud also occupies an important position in the history of Islaam. It was the second major battle in Islaam and contained a treasury of lessons to be learnt. The details of this battle are recorded in the books of history, Ahadith and the Qur'an.

The Battle of the Trench

This battle was unique in Islamic history for several reasons, one of them being the fact that it was the first time that the Mushrikeen had united on such a large scale to fight the Muslims.

The Treaty of Hdaybiyah

The total number of Muhaajireen (emigrants) and Ansaar (helpers) numbered one thousand five hundred. They stopped at Dhul Hulayfah to enter into the Ihraam and garland the over seventy camels that they were taking along as sacrifices. A treaty was concluded and the Prophet returned with his people to Medina.

Quraish violate the Terms of Hdaybiyah

About the end of the seventh year of the hijrah, the Quraish and their allies, the Bani Bakr, violated the terms of the peace concluded at Hdaybiyah by attacking the Bani Khuzah, who were in alliance with the Muslims. The Bani Khuzah appealed to Nabi ﷺ for help and protection. Nabi ﷺ determined to make a stop to the reign of injustice and oppression, which had lasted so long at Mecca. He immediately gathered ten thousand men to march against the idolaters and set out. The Muslim army entered the city unpretentiously and peacefully. He ordered the destruction of all idols.

Nabi ﷺ returns to Madina

After performing the farewell Hajj Nabi ﷺ returned with his followers to Medina. The eleventh year of the Hijrah, being the last year of Nabi's ﷺ life, was spent at Madinah Munawwarah. His last days were remarkable for the calmness and serenity of his mind. He was able, though weak and feeble, to lead the public prayers until within three days of his death. He requested that he might be permitted to stay at 'Aisha's (Radiyahallahu anha) house close to the Masjid during his illness, an arrangement to which his other wives assented. As long as his strength lasted, he took part in the public prayers. Nabi ﷺ passed on while laying his head on the bosom of Aisha (Radiyahallahu anha). Hazrat Abbas ؓ, Nabi's ﷺ uncle, presided at the preparation for the burial, and the body was duly washed and perfumed. A grave was accordingly dug in the ground within the house of Aisha (Radiyahallahu anha) and under the bed on which Nabi ﷺ died. The funeral rites were performed by the family members and those who were present.

Thus ended the glorious life of Nabi ﷺ in this world.

May Allah shower His choicest mercy and blessings upon the final messenger and mercy to the worlds, as well as upon his family and his companions.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT MUSA & HARUN ﷺ



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HAZRAT MUSA ﷺ AND HAZRAT HARUN ﷺ

Hazrat Musa ﷺ is mentioned by name one hundred and thirty-six times in the Qur'an. Hazrat Harun ﷺ is closely linked to his brother. Harun ﷺ is mentioned twenty times by name in the Qur'an.

Description of Fir'oun - Pharaoh of Egypt

Fir'oun who ruled Egypt was a tyrant who oppressed the Bani Israeel. He used every means to demean and disgrace them. They were kept in bondage and forced to work for him for a pittance or nothing. Under this system the people obeyed and worshipped the Pharaoh, and the ruling class carried out his orders. Fir'oun wanted the people to obey him only.

The Bani Israeel were awaiting a prophet who was prophesised in the divine scriptures. This news reached the ears of Fir'oun. He instantly issued a decree to slay any male child that would be born to Bani Israeel, as he perceived this prophet to be a threat to his throne.

This took place for a while until some people from among the coptics realised that if all the males of the Bani Israeel were killed, there will eventually be no male slaves, resulting in a depletion of the workforce. The coptics will then have to do all the work. Since they were not comfortable with this prospect, the rule was changed to kill the male children of the Bani Israeel every alternate year, thereby sparing half the workforce.

The Birth of Harun ﷺ and Musa ﷺ

Musa ﷺ's mother was pregnant with Harun ﷺ in a year that boy children of the Bani Israeel were spared. However, Musa ﷺ was born during a year in which the boys were to be slain. Allah Ta'ala consoled her and said she should nurse him secretly.

Musa's ﷺ mother suspended her baby to a casket which she would lower into the river with rope when she sensed fear of the authorities.

When the police would disperse she would pull the casket back. On one occasion it happened that the casket cut loose and floated away. She instructed her daughter to follow the basket and to report back to her.

The casket came to rest at the riverbank, in front of Fir'oun's palace. The palace servants found the casket with the baby and took it to the queen. When the queen beheld the lovely infant, Allah instilled in her a strong love for this baby. She requested her husband: "Let me keep the baby and let him be a son to us."

Fir'oun's wife began to search for someone to suckle the child, but he would not drink from any of the women who tried to nurse him. Musa's عليه السلام sister blurted that she knew someone who would suckle the child affectionately. Her mother was waiting with a heavy heart, worried about the fate of her baby. Just then her daughter rushed in with the good news.

Exit from Egypt

Musa عليه السلام grew up in the palace until he reached his youth with good health, strength, knowledge, and wisdom. One day he saw two men fighting. One was an Israelite and the other an Egyptian.

When the Israeeli saw Hazrat Moosa عليه السلام approach, he called to him for help. Hazrat Musa عليه السلام responded to his call, but the Egyptian would not yield. As he separated the two, Hazrat Musa عليه السلام struck the Egyptian who died on the spot. Musa عليه السلام's heart was filled with deep sorrow, and immediately he begged Allah for forgiveness.

The next day he saw the same Israelite involved in another fight. Musa عليه السلام went to him and said: "You seem to be a quarrelsome fellow." Fearing that Musa عليه السلام might strike him, the Israelite warned Musa عليه السلام: "Would you kill me as you killed the person yesterday?"

This was enough for the Egyptian to hear and he immediately reported it to the authorities. When Fir'oun heard about it, he issued

orders for the arrest of Hazrat Musa عليه السلام and the troops went out in search of him. Fortunately, someone from another part of the city happened to hear about the arrest warrant and immediately warned Hazrat Musa عليه السلام to leave the city. Nabi Musa عليه السلام accepted his advice and quietly slipped out of Egypt in the direction of Madyan.

Assistance at the Water Well

On reaching Madyan, he saw the people crowding the waterhole as they took their animals to drink water. A little distance away he saw two young ladies standing with their animals, but keeping the animals away from the water. Upon seeing this, Hazrat Musa عليه السلام went to them and enquired if he could help them in any way. They replied, “We have to wait until these people have finished and then we water our animals. We are here because our father (Shuayb عليه السلام) is very old and does not have the strength to bring the animals here.” Hazrat Musa عليه السلام offered to take their animals for them and, because of his tremendous strength and agility, he watered the animals in no time at all and returned them to the ladies.

The young ladies returned home earlier than usual, which surprised their father, Shuayb عليه السلام. They related the incident at the well which was the reason that they were back early. Their father sent one of his daughters to invite the stranger to his home. She left and brought Hazrat Musa عليه السلام home. He introduced himself and told the old man about the misfortune that had befallen him and had compelled him to flee from Egypt.

Musa عليه السلام as a Shepherd

One of the daughters suggested to her father that he employ Musa عليه السلام, as he was strong and trustworthy. The old man was pleased to hear this. The father then proposed to Hazrat Musa عليه السلام that he may marry one of the daughters on condition that he worked for him for eight years. Of course, if he preferred to stay on for ten years, he was most welcome to do so. Musa عليه السلام completed the time of 10 years.

Return to Egypt

After ten years of obedience to Allah's, destinies impelled him to make a decision to return to Egypt. However, he lost the way and found himself stranded without a way of making a fire. It was then that he saw a fire burning brightly in the distance on the mountain of Tur, which was really not fire, but Noor from Allah. Hazrat Musa عليه السلام made his way towards the 'fire' to get a firebrand, but it was there that he was told that he was a Nabi of Allah and shown the miracles of his staff and shining hand.

Allah Ta'ala then commanded Musa عليه السلام; "You have two signs from Your Lord; go to Fir'oun and his chiefs, for they are an evil gang and have transgressed all bounds." Hazrat Musa عليه السلام was concerned that he would have difficulty going alone to Fir'oun to deliver the message of Tawheed because they would want to punish him for the unintentional death of the Egyptian and he also did not feel confident because of his stutter. He therefore requested Allah if he could take his brother Harun عليه السلام along as well. Allah Ta'ala therefore conferred the mantle of prophethood to Hazrat Harun عليه السلام.

Musa عليه السلام defeats the Magicians

Musa عليه السلام and Harun عليه السلام went together to Firoun and delivered their message. Fearing that his rule was in danger, Fir'oun dispatched courtiers all over the land to gather the best magicians so that they could oppose Musa عليه السلام. On the customary festival day, Fir'oun arranged for a public contest between Musa عليه السلام and the magicians. The people came in droves when they heard of the greatest contest ever between Firoun's many magicians and a single man who claimed to be a prophet. The magicians were overwhelmed by their greed for money and glory. They hoped to impress the people with their magic and to expose Musa عليه السلام as a fraud and a cheat.

Musa عليه السلام asked the magicians to perform first. They threw their magical objects down on the ground. Their staffs and ropes took the forms of wriggling serpents while the crowd watched in amazement.

Fir'oun and his men applauded loudly. Then Musa ﷺ threw his staff. It became an enormous serpent. Musa ﷺ's huge serpent swallowed all the snakes of the magicians. Musa ﷺ bent to pick it up, and it became a staff in his hand.

When the magicians saw this miracle, they all fell into prostration to Allah Ta'ala, declaring: "We believe in the Lord of Musa ﷺ and Harun ﷺ." Firoun was angry and exclaimed that the demonstration had been arranged secretly between Musa ﷺ and the magicians. Fir'oun threatened to cut off their hands and feet and to crucify them on the trunks of palm trees.

Bani Israeel Flee Egypt

Almighty Allah decided to put an end to Fir'oun's crimes. Allah Ta'ala commanded Musa ﷺ to depart. In the darkness of night, Musa ﷺ led his people towards the Red Sea, and in the morning, they reached the beach. By then, Firoun was aware of their departure, so he mobilised a huge army to pursue them and caught up with them. Allah then instructed Hazrat Musa ﷺ to strike the sea with his staff, the water split and stood like two mountains. They then walked through the sea unharmed. However, as Fir'oun and his hordes followed, the sea closed up upon them and they were all drowned.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT NUH عليه السلام



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Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام

Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام is mentioned 43 times in the Noble Qur'an.

Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام was the first of the Ambiya عليه السلام after Hazrat Adam عليه السلام classified as a Rasool. A Rasool is a Nabi who has been given a scripture or a new Sharia and they number 313 in total.

A Nabi is a person whom Allah has selected to convey His message to the people and they propagate the Sharia and scripture of the Rasool before them.

Genealogists say that Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام was sent approximately 1026 years after Hazrat Adam عليه السلام.

Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام is mentioned in 28 Surahs (Chapters) of the Qur'an.

The Da'wah of Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام

During the more than 1000 years between Hazrat Adam عليه السلام and Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام, mankind had greatly increased in number and had spread over large areas of the earth. Messengers like Hazrat Sheeth عليه السلام and Hazrat Idrees عليه السلام propagated the Sharia of Hazrat Adam عليه السلام of Tawheed (Oneness of Allah). However, shaytan gradually got people to worship idols. In fact, when Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام started to propagate, the people were unaware of Tawheed and were worshipping thousands of idols. The five main idols were Waddan, Suwa'an, Yaghutha, Ya'uqa, and Nasran.

Initially, these were the names of noble people who had lived among them. After their deaths, statues of them were erected to keep their memories alive. After sometime, however, people began to worship these statues. Later generations did not even know why they had been erected; they only knew their parents had prayed to them.

Nuh ﷺ reasons with his people

Allah Ta'ala sent His messengers as a mercy and guidance for people. Nuh ﷺ was an excellent speaker and very patient. For 950 years Nuh ﷺ continued appealing to his people to believe in Allah hour after hour, day after day year after year. He admonished his people and called them to Allah day and night, in secret and openly. He pointed out to his people the mysteries of life and the wonders of the universe. He gave them examples, explained Allah's signs and illustrated Allah's ability in the formation of His creatures. Therefore, there cannot be more than one deity. He clarified for them how the devil had deceived them for so long and that the time had come for this deceit to stop. Nuh ﷺ spoke to them of Allah's glorification of man, how He had created him and provided him with sustenance and the blessings of a mind. He told them that idol worship was a suffocating injustice to the mind. He warned them not to worship anyone but Allah and described the terrible punishment Allah would mete out if they continued in their evil ways.

Division Among Nuh's People

Nuh's people were divided into two groups after his warning. His words touched the hearts of the weak, the poor, and soothed their wounds with its mercy. As for the rich, the strong, the mighty and the rulers they looked upon the warning with cold distrust. They believed they would be better off if things stayed as they were. They mocked and jeered at him and rejected his message. But whenever he called them to Allah, they ran away from him. Whenever he urged them to ask Allah to forgive them, they put their fingers in their ears and became too proud to listen to the truth.

The Disbelievers' Arguments

They accused Nuh ﷺ of being only human like themselves. He asserted that, indeed, he was only a human being; Allah had sent a human messenger because the earth was inhabited by humans. If it

had been inhabited by angels Allah would have sent an angelic messenger.

The affluent refused to accept his call because he was not as wealthy as them. When they saw the meek and poor follow Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام, they mocked at them, saying that these people did not know any better due to their poverty. They felt it below their dignity to affiliate with people of lower standing. Therefore, when Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام called them to accept his message, they demanded the poor should be first expelled from his company before they arrive. Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام refused to do that and told them that Allah's punishment will soon arrive if these people were to be expelled since Allah appreciated them. He emphasised to them that wealth did not hold status in the sight of Allah. It was obedience to Allah and sincerity that He valued most.

Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام prays against the disbelievers

Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام made a great effort to get the people to accept his message and thereby be saved from the punishment of Allah. However, instead of obeying him, they became more obstinate and even threatened to banish him from their lands or to stone him. Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام made it clear to them that he only willed good for them and never desired their wealth or status. They issued him the ultimatum. They told him that it was time that he show them the destruction that would meet them on account of their opposition. However, Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام still tried to make them understand that it would be best for them to accept his message since he was sincerely trying to help them. At the very end, he told them that the punishment was not within his control, but when the time for the punishment arrived, they would then have no recourse.

The Final Episode

When Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام saw that it would be useless trying to persuade them further, he became despondent since there were only about 80 people who followed him. Allah reassured him that his efforts would

not be wasted and that the people would soon meet with the end they demanded. There came a day when Allah revealed to Nuh ﷺ that no one else will believe. Allah inspired him not to grieve for them at which point Nuh ﷺ prayed that the disbelievers be destroyed.

The Ark

Allah Ta'ala revealed to him that the promised punishment would soon be coming. Hazrat Nuh ﷺ was therefore instructed to build an ark, which would be a source of safety for him and his followers.

Hazrat Nuh ﷺ and his followers then started to collect wood from the forest and worked day and night to complete the construction. Since the task was a strange one, the disbelievers people started to mock at Hazrat Nuh ﷺ, asking him why he needed to build such a large ark on dry land. In fact, they now claimed that Hazrat Nuh ﷺ was insane. Undeterred, Hazrat Nuh ﷺ told them that the time was near when they will be the ones to be mocked at.

The Great Flood

Once the ark had been completed, Hazrat Nuh ﷺ was commanded to take on board a male and female from every species of animal together with his family and the believers. Before the floods came, Hazrat Nuh ﷺ was informed that a sign will come to signal the event. The sign was that water would start to flow from people's ovens in their homes. The time eventually arrived and the skies were commanded to unleash their waters, as was the ground. In a short while, houses and hills were submerged and the disbelievers started to climb the mountains to seek safety.

The Ark Settles

When the punishment of Allah had been completed and the disbelievers were destroyed, the ark came to a standstill on Mount Judy. The water started receding and drying up. The inhabitants of

the ship disembarked in safety. It was as if the earth had to be inhabited all over again, for this reason Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام is known as “The second father of mankind” or “The second Adam”.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT SALIH عليه السلام



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HAZRAT SALIH ﷺ

The Qur'an mentions Hazrat Salih ﷺ by name in 9 passages.

Hazrat Salih ﷺ was born amongst a nation called Thamud and their name is mentioned in 10 Surahs of the Qur'an.

After the destruction of the people of Aad (known as the first Aad), the survivors from them became known as the second Aad and were later known as the Thamud.

The Cities of the Thamud

The Qur'an names the valley of Hijr as the area where the Thamud had settled. This area was situated between Hijaz and Shaam in the valley of Qura and was a very large tract of flat land.

Like the Aad, the Thamud also lived in the mountains, where they carved magnificent homes and palaces. It is for this reason that they are referred to as the second Aad. From this we can deduce that the people of Thamud were especially gifted in the art of building and architecture. The ruins of the buildings are present there till this day.

The Beliefs of the Thamud

Like the people of Aad, the Thamud also worshipped idols. They ascribed many idols as partners to Allah and begged their needs from these idols. The Thamud were also affected by the diseases of pride, arrogance and pomp and all their time was consumed with vying with each other in constructing large palaces and monuments. As their material wealth increased, so too did their evil ways, while their virtue decreased.

Allah Ta'ala then sent his prophet Hazrat Salih ﷺ as a reformer and guide to them, a man from among them, so that they could recognise who Allah was and acknowledge that it was the bounties that He gave them which they were flaunting all day and night. He was sent to

teach them that needs are to be begged only from Him and that He needed nothing and no one to assist Him in the administration of the universe. All worship was to be dedicated only to Him.

Thamud Reject the Message

It surprised the influential ones of the Thamud that Allah selected Hazrat Salih عليه السلام to convey this message to them. In their arrogance, they believed that they were more worthy of being selected for the message of Allah.

Many of the poor and weak ones accepted, the wealthy and influential ones refused to forsake their idols and give thanks to Allah. They mocked at Hazrat Salih عليه السلام and said that if they were in the wrong, why were they blessed with wealth and prestige, while Hazrat Salih عليه السلام and his followers were not? Hazrat Salih عليه السلام tried to explain to them that worldly wealth is temporary and never a yardstick to differentiate the truth from falsehood.

Salih's People demand a Miracle

Nabi Salih عليه السلام continued to preach to his people but his preaching had no effect on them. They merely wanted to worship the same gods as their fathers had, with no reason, no proof and no thought. The proof of Salih's عليه السلام message was evident, but despite this it was obvious that besides a small group of followers, most of his people did not believe him and continued to reject Hazrat Salih عليه السلام. They doubted his words, thinking he was charmed, and they realised that he would not stop preaching. Fearing that his followers would increase, they tried to put him off by assigning him an important task; to prove that he was a messenger of Allah by producing a miracle. They promised Hazrat Salih عليه السلام that they would have no qualms about believing in him if he produced this miracle. When he asked them what miracle they sought, they said that he should produce a unique pregnant she-camel from the mountain, which must then give birth.

The Camel of Allah

Hazrat Salih عليه السلام prayed to Allah to grant the miracle and Allah granted Salih عليه السلام this miracle. With Allah's permission, a huge, unique, she camel appeared from the direction of the mountain.

Hazrat Salih عليه السلام then told the people that since they asked for the camel, it was Allah's decree that the camel and her calf should be allowed every alternate day to drink from the watering place. The camels of the people would be allowed every day in between. Allah also told him to inform the people that if the camel is harmed in any way, they will not be forgiven for it and it will signal their prompt destruction.

At first, the people of Thamud were greatly surprised when the she camel issued from the mountain rocks.

Although the people did not admit their belief in Hazrat Salih عليه السلام, they were so awestruck by the incident that they agreed to leave the camel in safety. The camel of Allah then watered herself every alternate day, and the days in between were then left for the people and their animals to water themselves.

There are a number of ancient accounts of this camel and its miraculous nature. It is said that the she camel used to drink all the water in the wells in one day, and no other animals could approach the water and that the she camel produced milk sufficient for all the people to drink. If it slept in a place, that place was abandoned by other animals. Thus, it was obvious that it was not an ordinary camel, but one of Allah's signs.

The people's hatred of Salih عليه السلام turned towards the blessed she camel and became centred on it. A conspiracy was hatched against the camel by the disbelievers, and they secretly plotted against it.

The Thamud could not handle its presence for much longer and one day, after plotting, they ambushed it and killed it.

In their arrogance they mocked Salih, but he warned them: "Enjoy life for 3 more days, then the punishment will descend upon you." Salih was hoping that they would see the folly of their ways and change their attitude before the three days expired.

Allah saved Salih عليه السلام and his followers from their wicked plans. Heavy hearted, they left the evil doers and moved to another place.

The Punishment over Thamud

Allamah Aalusi (Rahimahullah) writes in his Tafseer Ruhul Ma'ani that the signs of punishment arrived the very next day when the faces of the people turned pale out of intense fear. The following day, their faces were red as their fear increased. Eventually, on the third day, their faces became black and darkened like a person who is awaiting death.

Three days after Salih's warning, thunderbolts filled the air, followed by severe earthquakes which destroyed the entire tribe and its homeland. The land was violently shaken, destroying all living creatures in it. There was one loud screech which had hardly ended when the disbelievers of Salih's people were struck dead, all at the same time. Neither their strong buildings nor their rock hewn homes could protect them. This served as a sign to mankind.

The Significance of Qur'anic Stories

For the guidance of mankind, the Qur'an tells the stories of previous nations and their guides as a form of admonition for the present. Those who rejected the calls of the prophets and mocked at them Allah brought miracles to the nation. If after such a miracle the people still rejected and continued in their enmity and hatred, then the punishment of Allah descended and destroyed them. These events remain as a lesson and warning for future generations.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT SHAMWEEL ﷺ



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HAZRAT SHAMWEEL ﷺ

After the demise of Hazrat Musa ﷺ, the Bani Israeel had no king or leader for almost 350 years. Each tribe and family had their own leaders and judgements in civil suits were handed down by the judges amongst them. The Nabi of the time would supervise proceedings and engaged in the work of Da'wah. Hazrat Yusha ﷺ did this until his last moments on earth and appointed judges and others in positions of authority. It sometimes happened that these judges and others in authority would be appointed as messengers, after which he would fulfil a dual task.

Ibn Jarir (Rahimahullah) reported that the condition of the Israelites deteriorated. They committed many sins and killed whom they wished of the prophets. The Bani Israeel were not united under one leader, they were often plundered by neighbouring kingdoms and dynasties such as the Amaliqa, the Medes and the Amorites. This left the Bani Israeel in ruin when their lands were annexed, their wealth looted and their strength lost.

They used to go war, taking with them The Ark of the Covenant. They did this so that they would be victorious by its blessings, and it became a symbol of calm and a relic left behind by Musa ﷺ's people.

Four centuries after the demise of Hazrat Musa ﷺ, the Bani Israeel suffered a terrible defeat at the hands of a Palestinian nation. So crushing was the defeat that even their sacred casket, which they had guarded for so many centuries, was taken away. Amongst the many relics belonging to Hazrat Musa ﷺ and Hazrat Harun ﷺ, the casket also contained the original tablets of the Torah. It was then housed in the temple of Bayt Dajun, dedicated to the idol Dajun.

The children of Israel remained like sheep without a shepherd until Almighty Allah sent them a prophet named Shamweel ﷺ. They asked him to appoint a king over them to lead in a war against their enemies.

Shamweel عليه السلام leads the Israelites

It was during this period that a very pious and righteous judge by the name of Shamweel who was from them was blessed with the mantle of Nubuwwah, to bring some relief and charged with the guidance and reformation of the Bani Israeel. It has always been the case that when a nation is blessed with a Nabi, they are rejuvenated and start to rise from any fallen condition they may find themselves in.

They asked the prophet's help in appointing a strong leader, a king under whose banner they could unite and fight the Philistines. Shamweel عليه السلام, knowing their weakness, told them: "I fear that when the time comes to fight you may refuse." But they assured him that they had suffered enough insults and were now ready to fight in the way of Allah, even if they lost their lives.

Shamweel عليه السلام prayed to Allah for guidance. Allah revealed to him that He had chosen Talut, to be their king. The prophet wanted to know how to recognise the future king. He was told that Talut would come to him by himself and that they should then hand over the control of kingdom to him, for he would lead them in battle against the Philistines.

Talut is Appointed King

Talut was tall, pious, very intelligent and physically powerful. However, the Bani Israeel were appalled by the appointment because Talut was a poor man who hailed from a poor family. They felt that a king needed to be from an aristocratic family.

Some historians have written that the reason for their objection was that the leaders of Bani Israeel traditionally hailed from the progeny of Hazrat Ya'qub's عليه السلام son Yahuda. Talut, on the other hand, came from the lineage of Hazrat Ya'qub عليه السلام's son Bin Yameen. This was therefore a cause for jealousy, which they expressed by arguing with Hazrat Shamweel عليه السلام.

Hazrat Shamweel ﷺ explained to them that leadership was not born from wealth and aristocracy, but that leadership required intelligence and strength. Talut possessed both of these to a remarkable degree. They would therefore be doing well for themselves to follow him and reclaim their lost land. He also assured them that Allah's help was with Talut since Allah had selected him and none can argue with Allah's selection.

However, despite explaining to them, the Bani Israeel were adamant that a king needs to be a wealthy person. When the argument became prolonged, some people suggested that proof be shown to convince the people that Talut was indeed appointed by Allah. When Hazrat Shamweel ﷺ prayed to Allah for such a sign, Allah informed him that the sign will be that Talut shall return to them the sacred casket. When the Bani Israeel found the casket with Talut the following morning, they accepted that he was their king appointed by Allah and agreed to obey him.

The Death of Jaloot

Talut set about organising his army with strong faith and wisdom. He ordered that only men free from responsibilities should join. Those engaged in building homes, men who were about to be married and those occupied with business should not join. Talut took command of a large well-trained army of the Bani Israeel and marched with them against the Amaliqah, he needed to test them to see if they could be relied upon to obey orders. This was necessary because the Bani Israeel were given to be cowardly and disobedient, especially since they had not engaged in Jihad for a long while. Therefore, when they reached the Jordan River, Talut instructed them that it was an order from Allah for them not to drink from the river. Whoever drank from it would immediately be expelled from the army. They were, however, given the concession to drink just a little if they were very thirsty.

It then happened that the people who had drunk to their fill from the river lost courage when they faced the army of Jalut and conceded they that were unable to fight. They therefore sought permission to

leave. It was those who obeyed the order who were able to persevere and fight. He believed in quality and not numbers; better a small band of true believers he could rely on than a huge army of unreliable men. These men fearlessly marched on to face the enemy and said to the others that it so often happens that a small army defeats a large army by the will of Allah. This is because Allah is with those who trust in Him, who persevere and obey His commands.

Jalut was a giant of a man and had an army much larger and better equipped than the army of the Bani Israeel. The Muslims prayed to Allah to grant them fortitude and steadfastness and to assist them against the enemy. The Torah and books of history relate that there was a youngster in the army of the Bani Israeel who had never before displayed any feat of bravery and was not even experienced in battle. When Jalut stepped forward to challenge someone in single combat, it was this youngster who stood up to meet the challenge. Talut tried to stop the youngster, but he refused to give up the challenge. This youngster was the young Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام.

It is said that Hazrat Dawood عليه السلام was the youngest son and had not even come to fight in the battle. He had been sent only to bring news of the army and his father on the battlefield. However, when he saw the reluctance of the soldiers of the Bani Israeel to take up Jalut's challenge as he repeated it over and over again, Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام decided that he will stand up.

Jalut ignored Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام when he stepped forward since the youngster posed no threat to him. Seizing the opportunity, Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام flung three rocks at Jalut's head with such force that giant's head was crushed and he fell to the ground. Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام then immediately sprang forward and severed his head from his body. When they saw their leader fall, Jalut's army lost courage and fled the battlefield, thereby allowing the Bani Israeel to valiantly reclaim their land and property.

Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام became loved and admired amongst the Bani Israeel and it was soon afterwards that Allah blessed him with

Nubuwwah and also gave him kingship over a vast kingdom.

When Hazrat Shamweel ﷺ passed away, Hazrat Dawud ﷺ succeeded him as Nabi of the Bani Israeel.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT SHUAYB عليه السلام



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HAZRAT SHUAYB ﷺ

Hazrat Shuayb ﷺ is mentioned by name a total of eleven times in the Qur'an.

Hazrat Shu'ayb ﷺ was blessed with most eloquent speech and he is referred to as the orator of the Ambiya ﷺ, sweet tongue and strong way of expression.

The Nation of Hazrat Shuayb ﷺ

Hazrat Shuayb ﷺ lived in a city named Madyan. The name Madyan was therefore the name of a city as well as the name of a nation. The people of Madyan were Arabs. This city was located in Al-Hijaz close to the modern city of Ma'an in eastern Jordan, greater Syria.

The Qur'an describes their settlement as being amongst the forest (Aykah) and also states that it was located next to a prominent road.

They were prolific businessmen, but were greedy people who did not believe in Allah and engaged in many evils such as robbery, cheating by giving short measure, praising their goods beyond their worth and hid their defects while lying to their customers.

The Message of Faith

When Nabi Shuayb ﷺ was sent to his nation with many miracles to save them from evil and make them God-fearing, he saw that the prevalence of sin was not only confined to few people but that the whole nation was involved in sin and so involved were they that they were boastful of their sins.

Together with conveying to them the message of Tawheed (Oneness) as all messengers did, he also focussed specifically on the social ills prevalent amongst them. He advocated just and honest trade. The three basic messages he propagated were:

1. There is none worthy of worship but Allah. He emphasised this because these people also worshipped the creation rather than the Creator

2. Honesty in trade and commerce

3. Abstaining from threatening and robbing people and preventing people from accepting the truth that he propagated

Despite his tireless efforts, the people refused to accept what he said. In addition to this, they went a step further and stopped others from following him. However, there were only a few weak and poor people who accepted his message and followed him. Although the people threatened to banish him and his followers, Hazrat Shuayb عليه السلام continued with this propagation.

He reminded them that he sought no payment for his efforts, which ought to tell them that he was sincerely wishing well for them. He also warned them of the consequences of rejecting the message from Allah, which was imminent destruction, as happened to the people of Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام as well as the Aad and Thamud.

The End with a Double Punishment

Eventually, the people of Madyan sentenced themselves to the fate that afflicted previous nations that rejected their messengers, mocked them and proved to be obstacles to the truth. They were also to be added to the list of nations who resigned themselves to being lessons for people to come. Shuayb عليه السلام turned to Allah for help, and his plea was answered. Allah destroyed them with a double punishment; an earthquake as well as flames from the sky. Allah sent down on them scorching heat and they suffered terribly. On seeing a cloud gathering in the sky, they thought it would bring cool, refreshing rain, and rushed outside in the hope of enjoying the rainfall. Instead, the cloud burst, hurling thunderbolts and fire. They heard a thunderous sound from above which caused the earth under

their feet to tremble. The evil doers perished in this state of horror. The arrogant and evil doers lying on their faces.

The Blessed Resting Place

There is a grave in Hadhramaut in Yemen that is especially visited by many people. The locals claim that this is the resting place of Hazrat Shuayb عليه السلام since it was in this place that he settled after the destruction of his people. However, the author of Qasasul Ambiya Allamah Abdul Wahab Najjar (Rahimahullah) opines that this is incorrect. He is of the opinion that Hazrat Shuayb عليه السلام migrated to Makkah thereafter and it is close to Darun Nadwa in Makkah that he is buried together with some of his followers.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT SULAYMAN عليه السلام



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HAZRAT SULAYMAN ﷺ

Hazrat Sulayman ﷺ is mentioned by name seventeen times in the Noble Qur'an, detailing the many favours that Allah had blessed him and his father Hazrat Dawud ﷺ with.

Hazrat Sulayman ﷺ was the son of Hazrat Dawud ﷺ. The name of his mother is unknown. All that is mentioned about her in the Ahadith is that she once advised her son Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ with the words, "Dear son! Never sleep throughout the night because sleeping during most of the night makes a person most dependent on good deeds on the Day of Qiyamah."

The Qur'an states that Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ was from the progeny of Hazrat Ibraheem ﷺ through Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ. Allah states, "We gifted him (Ibraheem ﷺ) with (a son) Ishaq ﷺ and (a grandson) Ya'qub ﷺ, both of whom We guided. We guided Nuh ﷺ before (Ibraheem ﷺ) and from his progeny (we guided) Dawud ﷺ, Sulayman ﷺ ..."

Succession and Leadership

Allah had blessed Hazrat Sulayman ﷺ with great intelligence, a keen sense of judgement and a tremendous aptitude for making the right decisions. All of this became apparent from a very young age. When Hazrat Dawud ﷺ passed away, Hazrat Sulayman ﷺ reached manhood and succeeded him as king and Nabi of the Bani Israeel. This was not a material inheritance, as prophets do not bequeath their property. Their wealth is given away to the poor and needy, not to their relatives. He begged Allah for a kingdom such as none after him would have, and Allah granted his wish. While the mantle of Nubuwwah is not usually inherited by a son, Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ was amongst the few messengers who was made a Nabi by virtue of lineage to a Nabi. Allah had blessed Hazrat Sulaiman ﷺ with the traits of Nubuwwah that were present in his father Hazrat Dawud ﷺ. Allah says, "Sulayman ﷺ succeeded Dawud ﷺ". Allah also says,

“Indeed We granted knowledge (of passing sound judgement) to Dawud عليه السلام and (his son) Sulayman عليه السلام.”

Special Bounties and Status

Like Dawud عليه السلام, Allah bestowed on Sulayman عليه السلام some specialities and points of superiority and granted him such bounties which became a sign of his high status.

Knowledge of the Language of the Birds

This was nothing but a bounty from Allah because it cannot be learnt. Even today, no one can claim to understand and speak with birds. All that people may understand of their pet birds is perhaps their exclamations of fear, surprise, etc. This too, is done by guesswork or many years of experience. Nonetheless, it is nothing at all like the knowledge that Hazrat Sulayman عليه السلام possessed. It is something beyond all natural abilities. It is also evident that the knowledge of the speech of birds does not refer to the knowledge of zoology. The knowledge granted to Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام and Hazrat Sulayman عليه السلام was far superior and is therefore mentioned with emphasis in the Qur'an. This was a certainly a miraculous feat and a sign of him being a special servant of Allah.

Command over the Winds

Amongst the privileges that Allah blessed Hazrat Sulayman عليه السلام with was that he could command the winds to blow and to stop blowing as and when he willed. He could also control their speed. The strong, fast and cold wind became gentle, slow and comforting at his command, despite this He would sit upon his throne and be carried by the wind with such speed that he could cover the distance of a month's journey in the span of the early hours of the morning or the evening. This was yet another miracle that Allah conferred upon Hazrat Sulayman عليه السلام

Kingship

Yet another privilege that Allah blessed Hazrat Sulayman عليه السلام with was that he exercised control over the Jinn, animals as well as humans. This was in reply to his supplication to Allah to grant him a kingdom that is greater than that of anyone else. Quoting this supplication in the Qur'an, Allah says, "He (Sulayman عليه السلام) said, 'O my Rabb! Forgive me and grant me a kingdom that cannot be had by any other after me. Undoubtedly, You are the Great Giver.'"

Reconstruction of Baytul Muqaddas

Allah has given the Jinn the strength to accomplish the most difficult tasks. They were therefore employed to reconstruct the splendorous Masjidul Aqsa and a city around it.

For this, they carried large and expensive rock from various parts of the world to Baytul Muqaddas, where it was used in the construction. In fact, the sheer size of the rocks and the exquisite beauty amazes people who see the construction even today. The manner in which these large rocks were brought to the site and then used to erect the building is a wonder to all. One wonders where it could have been brought from and how could these stones be laid in their places so high up.

Amongst the other favours that Allah blessed Hazrat Sulayman عليه السلام with was that copper melted for Sulayman عليه السلام according to his needs.

The Valley of Ants

The Qur'an relates an incident concerning the Valley of Ants, which occurred during the time of Hazrat Sulayman عليه السلام. Hazrat Sulayman عليه السلام was once travelling with a large army of men, jinn and animals. Despite their large numbers and varying manners of marching because of their differences, they maintained strict order in their ranks. As they passed through a valley that was inhabited by ants, the leader of the ants saw the approaching army and cried out to warn

the other to run for cover because the army should not trample them. Hazrat Sulayman ﷺ was amused by this action and expressed gratitude to Allah for allowing him the privilege of understanding the speech of all of creation.

Hudhud and the Queen of Saba

Hazrat Sulayman ﷺ was once inspecting his army when he noticed that a bird by the name of Hudhud was absent from the row of birds. Hazrat Sulayman ﷺ asked about his absence and made it clear that he would punish Hudhud severely if he did not have a legitimate excuse. It was then that Hudhud arrived and explained that he had something to tell Hazrat Sulayman ﷺ that he had not heard about previously.

He related that he discovered that the people of Saba in Yemen were ruled by a queen who had been blessed with tremendous wealth and who owned a throne that was most elaborate. However, the queen and her people have been misled by Shaytan to worship the sun instead of Allah.

Hazrat Sulayman ﷺ told Hudhud that he wished to send a letter to the queen. The queen read the letter to her ministers to seek their counsel. She said, "O ministers! An honourable letter has been thrown (given) to me. It is from Sulayman and it says, "I begin with the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. Do not be arrogant against me (by refusing to come) and come to me in submission (in obedience as Muslims).'"

After reading the letter to her ministers, the queen assured that she would not decide anything until they had first given their opinions. They reacted as to a challenge, for they felt that there was someone challenging them, hinting at war and defeat, and asking them to submit to his conditions. They told her that they could only offer advice, but it was her right to command action. She sensed that they wanted to repel the invasion threat with a battle. However, she told them: "Peace and friendship are better and wiser; war only brings

humiliation, enslaves people and destroys the good things. I have decided to send gifts to Sulayman, selected from our most precious treasure. The courtiers who will deliver the gifts will also have an opportunity to learn about him and his military might."

However, Allah notified Hazrat Sulayman عليه السلام about these gifts even before they arrived. When they presented the gifts to him, Hazrat Sulayman عليه السلام told them that they had misunderstood his message. While they thought that it was worldly wealth that he was after, they should note that Allah had blessed him with more than everything they could ever hope to give him. He returned the gifts and made it clear to them that if they did not come in peace, he would have no option but to march against them with an army that they had no defences against. He also directed them to take back the gifts to the queen and to tell her that if she did not stop her kind of worship, he would uproot her kingdom and drive its people out of the land.

The queen's envoys returned with the gifts and delivered the message. They also told her of the wonderful things they had seen. Instead of taking offense, she decided to visit Sulayman. Accompanied by her royal officials and servants, she left Sheba, sending a messenger ahead to inform Sulayman عليه السلام that she was on her way to meet him.

Sulayman عليه السلام asked the jinns whether anyone among them could bring her throne to his palace before she arrived. One of them said; "I will bring it to you before this sitting is over." However, one of the people there who was blessed with knowledge claimed that he would be able to accomplish the task before Hazrat Sulayman عليه السلام could blink his eye. True to his word, the throne was there in front of Hazrat Sulayman عليه السلام in an instant. Sulayman عليه السلام ordered that some changes be made to the throne. When the queen finally arrived, she was shown the throne and asked whether hers was the same. Being an intelligent woman, she gave a wise reply and said that the throne appears to be hers.

He then invited her into the great hall, the floor of which was laid in glass and shimmering. Thinking it was water, as she stepped on the floor, she lifted her skirt slightly above her heels, for fear of wetting it. Solomon pointed out to her that it was made of solid glass.

This incident proved to be the final eye-opener for her before she attested to her Iman.

Demise

Then Allah the Exalted ordained for Sulayman عليه السلام to leave this temporary world. He was sitting holding his staff, overseeing the jinns at work in a mine. He died sitting in this position. For a long time, no one was aware of his death, for he was seen sitting erect. The jinns continued with their sand toil, thinking that Sulayman عليه السلام was watching over them.

Many days later, a hungry ant began nibbling his staff. It continued to do so, eating the lower part of the staff, until it fell out of his hand, and his great body fell to the ground.

People hurried to him, realising that he had died a long time ago and that the jinns did not perceive the unseen, for had the jinns known the unseen, they would not have kept working, thinking that Sulayman عليه السلام was alive.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT YAHYA عليه السلام



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HAZRAT YAHYA عليه السلام

Hazrat Yahya عليه السلام is mentioned five times by name in the Qur'an alongside his illustrious father Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام, these were the prayers his father made for his coming.

Allah chose the name Yahya for him and this was the first time this name was ever kept for a child. Apart from his name, Hazrat Yahya عليه السلام was also blessed with certain specialties. These were:

1. Hukm: This means that he was decisive when passing judgement, possessed deep insight into matters and always gave the correct opinion. Allah guided him to read the Book of Jurisprudence closely; thus, he became the wisest and most knowledgeable man of that time. Therefore, Allah the Almighty endowed him with the faculties of passing judgments on people's affairs, interpreting the secrets of religion, guiding people to the right path, and warning them against the wrong one.

2. Hannaan: This means that he was very soft-hearted and even more compassionate towards people than their very own mothers.

3. Hasoor: This means that he exercised control over his carnal passions, and was very abstinent and cautious. In fact, he never got married and the thought of evil never crossed his mind.

Dua for Pious Off-Spring

According to historical reports, Hazrat Yahya عليه السلام was six months elder than Hazrat Isa عليه السلام. Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام made dua for pious off-spring and as such Hazrat Yahya عليه السلام was a very pious and righteous person and was a prophet of Allah just like his father Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام.

A Life of Devotion

Yahya عليه السلام was born a stranger to the world of children who used to amuse themselves, as he was devoted all the time. Allah endowed

him with knowledge and wisdom. When children took delight in torturing animals whereas, he was merciful to them. He fed the animals from his food until there was nothing left for him, and he just ate fruit or leaves of trees. Ibn Wahb has mentioned that, according to Malik, grass was the food of Yahya ibn Zakariya, and he wept sorely in fear of Allah. A chain of narrators reported that Idris Al Khawlawi said: "Shall I not tell you who had the best food? It is Yahya ibn Zakariyah, who joined the beasts at dinner, fearing to mix with men. "When called to play, he would tell the others, "I have not been created for play and amusement."

His Prophethood

He professed his Prophethood (Nubuwwah) at the age of thirty. He then started to preach to the people in eastern Jordan, encouraging them to repent for their wrongs and to then reform themselves. It is said that he wore garments made of camel hairs and all he ate were birds caught in the forest and honey. He lived an ascetic life and encouraged people to fast and to pray. He slept anywhere in the mountains or in holes in the ground. He sometimes would find a lion or a bear as he entered a cave, but being deeply absorbed in praising Allah, he never heeded them. The beasts easily recognised Yahya as the prophet who cared for all the creatures, so they would leave the cave, bowing their heads. His most important duty was that he gave the good news of the coming of Isa عليه السلام and he already prepared the ground with spreading guidance. Yahya عليه السلام loved reading since childhood. When he grew up, Allah the Exalted called upon him:

"O Yahya! Hold fast to the Scripture (The Torah)." And We gave him wisdom while yet a child. (19:12 Qur'an).

Blessed with the Help of Allah

Allah has declared that he would be blessed with peace and safety on three occasions when people are most vulnerable and in need of assistance. These three occasions are:

1. At the time of birth, when one is leaving the womb and entering this world
2. At the time of death, when one is leaving this world and entering the realm of Barzakh in the grave.
3. At the time of resurrection, when one is leaving the Barzakh and entering the Akhirah

Therefore, anyone blessed with the help of Allah during these occasions is truly fortunate.

Preaching and Teachings

Hazrat Harith Ash'ari رحمہ اللہ reports that Nabi ﷺ said, “Allah commanded Yahya bin Zakariya عليه السلام to implement five commands and to order the Bani Israeel to implement them, but Yahya عليه السلام was slow in carrying out these commands. Isa عليه السلام said to Yahya عليه السلام, ‘You were ordered to implement five commands and to instruct the Bani Israeel to implement them. So, you may proceed to instruct them, or I will do it for you.’ Yahya عليه السلام said, ‘My brother! I fear that if you do it, I will be punished or the earth will be shaken under my feet.’ Hence, Yahya عليه السلام called the Bani Israeel to Baytul Muqaddas, (and they arrived in large numbers) until they filled the Masjid. He started to address them by first thanking Allah and praising Him. Then he said, ‘Allah ordered me to implement five commandments and that I should order you to adhere to them. These are:

1. That you worship Allah alone and not associate any as partner with Him. The example of this command is the example of a man who bought a servant from his money with paper or gold. The servant started to work for the master, but was paying the profits to another person. Who among you would like his servant to do that? Allah created you and sustains you, so you should therefore worship Him alone and not associate anything as partner to Him
2. I also command you to pray with devotion, for Allah directs His

attention towards His servant as long as the servant does not turn away. So, when you pray, do not turn your heads to and fro.

3. I also command you to fast. The example of it is the example of a man amongst a group of men. Because the man has some musk wrapped in a piece of cloth, all in the group smells the scent of the wrapped musk. Verily, the odour from the mouth of a fasting person is better before Allah than the scent of musk.

4. I also command you to give charity. The example of this is the example of a man who was captured by the enemy, who tied his hands to his neck and brought him forth to cut off his neck. He said to them, 'Can I pay a ransom for myself?'. He then ransomed himself with small and large amounts until he liberated himself.

5. I also command you to always remember Allah. The example of this deed is like that of a man who the enemy is tirelessly pursuing. He then takes refuge in a fortified fortress (and is safe from them). When the servant remembers Allah, he will be resorting to the best refuge from Shaytan."

Nabi ﷺ then said, "And I instruct you with the five commandments that Allah has given me. (1) Stick to the Jama'ah, (2) listen (to the truth), (3) obey (your leaders), (4) perform Hijrah (migration) and (5) strive in Jihad for the sake of Allah. Whoever abandons the Jama'ah for even the distance of a hand span, he will have removed the tie of Islam from his neck until he returns. Whoever uses the slogans of the period of ignorance will be among those kneeling in Jahannam."

Someone then asked, "O Rasulullah ﷺ! Even if he prays and fasts?" Nabi ﷺ replied, "Yes, even if he prays, fasts and claims to be Muslim (he will still be headed for Jahannam)."

Ibn Asakir has reported from Hazrat Wahab bin Munabbih (Rahimahullah) that Hazrat Yahya ؑ was so overwhelmed by his fear for Allah that he wept very much, causing lines to be etched upon his cheeks because of the stream of tears.

It is reported that his father Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام once found him in the forest and said, “Dear son! You are weeping here while we were worrying so much about you that I had to come out in search for you.” Hazrat Yahya عليه السلام replied, “Dear father! Did you not tell me that there is a valley between Jannah and Jahannam that cannot be crossed to gain access to Jannah without the tears shed for fear of Allah?” When he heard this, Hazrat Zakariyya عليه السلام also started to weep.

Martyrdom

Bani Israeel generally accepted the preaching of Hazrat Yahya عليه السلام and would gather in large numbers to listen to him. However, his popularity was detested by the despotic King Herod of Judea, who feared that his kingdom will fall to Hazrat Yahya عليه السلام.

It then occurred that Herod’s step brother died, leaving behind a young and beautiful wife, whom Herod fell in love with. She also loved him and the two agreed to marry. However, such a marriage was not permissible in the Israeeli religion and Hazrat Yahya عليه السلام cautioned them not to proceed. He warned them of the punishment of Allah should they go ahead. This infuriated Herod’s lover so much that she convinced Herod to assassinate Hazrat Yahya عليه السلام. Although Herod desperately wanted this, the overwhelming popularity of Hazrat Yahya عليه السلام made him hesitate.

The lover then waited for the perfect opportunity, which did not take long to present itself. During Herod’s birthday celebration, her daughter entertained the royal court with a spectacular dance which made Herod very jubilant. In fact, he was so impressed by her that he asked her to make any request she wished. She then turned to her mother to ask what it was she should ask for. “Ask for the head of Yahya,” her mother smiled. The girl looked up at Herod and said, “I would like the head of Yahya handed over to me in a platter.” As reluctant as he was, Herod could not refuse the request and did as he was bidden.

The most surprising aspect of this incident was that no one from the

Bani Israeel made any protest when Herod assassinated Hazrat Yahya عليه السلام. It is still not certain where the exact location of his martyrdom was.

When Hazrat Isa عليه السلام learnt about the martyrdom of Hazrat Yahya عليه السلام, he started to preach publicly. The Qur'an makes it clear that together with their rebellion and insolence, the Jews were guilty of even assassinating their Ambiya عليه السلام.

Hazrat Wahab bin Munabbih (Rahimahullah) related that after the Jews killed Hazrat Yahya عليه السلام, they turned towards his father Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام to kill him as well. He managed to squeeze through a crack in a tree and hide himself. When they were unable to find him, shaytan led them to the hiding place. Rather than getting him out of the tree to execute him, the wretched people started to saw through the tree until both the tree and the noble Nabi of Allah ﷺ were cut in two.

Meeting on the Night of Mi'raj

In the narration describing the Mi'raj, Imam Bukhari (Rahimahullah) has quoted from Nabi ﷺ that when he reached the second heaven, he met Hazrat Yahya عليه السلام and Hazrat Isa عليه السلام, who were cousins (sons of sisters). Hazrat Jibra'eel عليه السلام informed Nabi ﷺ who they were and asked him to greet them both. Nabi ﷺ then greeted them and they replied to his greeting and said, "Welcome to a pious brother and a pious Nabi."

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT YA'QUB ﷺ



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HAZRAT YA'QUB ﷺ

Hazrat Ya'qub ibn Ishaq ibn Ibraheem ﷺ is mentioned by name sixteen times in the Qur'an. In Surah Yusuf he is mentioned an additional seven times, either through pronouns or description of him. In other Surahs he is mentioned through description.

The Qur'an draws attention to his being a prominent and eminent Nabi of patience and steadfastness. He was a chosen Prophet of Allah sent to the people of Can'aan (Palestine). He was involved in his prophetic duties for many years.

The Hebrew name of Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ is Israeel, which is mentioned several times in the Qur'an. The word Israa means servant or bondsman and the word Eel means Allah. Therefore, the name Israeel means 'the servant of Allah', just like Abdullah. The Qur'an refers to the Ahlul Kitab (Jews and Christians) as the Bani Israeel, meaning 'the children of Israeel, viz. the children of Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ'. Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ was the most well-known son of Hazrat Ishaq ﷺ and it was from the progeny of Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ that thousands of Ambiya ﷺ were born. They are all referred to as the Ambiya ﷺ of the Bani Israeel.

The Children of Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ

His twelve sons became the leaders of their tribes and had many children.

Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ was appointed by Allah to guide and reform the people of Can'aan and it was here that he spent his life. However, he went to Egypt during the end of his life to meet his son Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ as mentioned in Surah Yusuf, and it was there that he most probably passed away. His body was preserved and transported to Palestine where he was buried in a cave in the city of Hebron (Al-Khalil).

The Prophet's last Wish

Allah the Almighty says in the Glorious Qur'an:

"And who turns away from the religion of Ibraheem عليه السلام (Islamic Monotheism) except him who befools himself? Truly, We chose him in this world and verily, in the hereafter he will be among the righteous." (2:130)

When his Lord said to him: "Submit (be a Muslim)!" He said: "I have submitted myself (as a Muslim) to the Lord of the universe (mankind, jinn and all that exists)." (2:131)

And this (submission to Allah, Islam) was enjoined by Ibraheem عليه السلام upon his sons and by Ya'qub عليه السلام, (saying): "O my sons! Allah has chosen for you the true religion, then die not except in the faith of Islam (as Muslims - Islamic Monotheism)." (2:132)

Or were you witnesses when death approached Ya'qub عليه السلام? When he said unto his sons: "What will you worship after me?" They said: "We shall worship your Lord (Allah) and the Lord of your fathers, Ibraheem عليه السلام, Ismaeel عليه السلام, Ishaq عليه السلام, the Lord (who is One), and to Him we submit (in Islam)." (2:133)

"That was a nation who had passed away. They shall receive the reward of what they earned and you of what you earn. And you will not be asked of what they used to do." (2:134)

The Qur'an's way of confronting People of the Book

They say: "Be Jews or Christians, and then you will be guided." Say (to them O Muhammad): "Nay (we follow) only the religion of Ibraheem عليه السلام, Hanifah (Islamic monotheism, i.e., to worship none but Allah Alone, and he was not of the Al Mushrikeen (those who worshipped others along with Allah))." (2:135)

Say (O Muslims): "We believe in Allah and that which has been sent

down to us and that which had been sent down to Ibraheem عليه السلام, Ismaeel عليه السلام, Ishaq عليه السلام, Ya'qub عليه السلام and to Al Asbat (the twelve sons of Ya'qub عليه السلام, and that which has been given to Moses and Jesus and that which has been given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we have submitted (in Islam)." (2:136)

"So, if they believe in the like of that which you believe, then they are rightly guided, but if they turn away, then they are only in opposition. So, Allah, will suffice you against them. He is the All Hearer, the All Knower." (2:137)

(Our sibghah, religion is) the sibghah (religion) of Allah (Islam) and which sibghah (religion) can be better than Allah's. We are His worshippers. (2:138)

Say (O Muhammad, to the Jews and Christians): "Dispute you with us about Allah while He is our Lord and your Lord? And we are to be rewarded for our deeds and you for your deeds. We are sincere to Him in worship and obedience (i.e., we worship Him Alone and none else, and we obey His Orders)." (2:139)

Or say you that Ibraheem عليه السلام, Ismaeel عليه السلام, Ishaq عليه السلام, Ya'qub عليه السلام, and Al Asbat (the twelve sons of Ya'qub عليه السلام) were Jews or Christians? Say: "Do you know better or does Allah know better.... that they all were Muslims? And who is more unjust than he who conceals the testimony (to believe in the Prophet Muhammad, when he comes written in their books) he has from Allah? Allah is not unaware of what you do." (2:140)

In another surah Almighty Allah declared:

"O People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Why do you dispute about Ibraheem عليه السلام, while the Torah and the Gospel were not revealed till after him? Have you then no sense? Verily, you are those who have disputed about that of which you have no knowledge. Why do then dispute concerning that which you have no knowledge? It is Allah Who knows, and you know not.

Ibraheem ﷺ was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim Hanifan (Islamic Monotheism), to worship none but Allah Alone and he was not of the polytheists (he joined none in worship with Allah).

Verily, among mankind who have the best claim to Ibraheem ﷺ are those who followed him, and this Prophet (Muhammad) and those who have believed (Muslims). And Allah is the Wali (Protector and Helper) of the believers. (3:65-68 Qur'an)

Allah Ta'ala also affirmed:

" Then verily! Your Lord for those who do evil (commit sins and are disobedient to Allah) in ignorance and afterward repent and do righteous deeds, verily, your Lord thereafter to such is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Verily, Ibraheem ﷺ was an Ummah (a leader having all the good righteous qualities of a nation), obedient to Allah, Hanifan (to worship none but Allah), and he was not one of those who were Al Mushrikeen (polytheists, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah and those who joined partners with Allah). He was thankful for His (Allah's) Graces. He (Allah) chose him (as an intimate friend) and guided him to a Straight Path (Islamic Monotheism, neither Judaism nor Christianity). We gave him good in this world and in the Hereafter, he shall be of the righteous.

Then, We have inspired you (O Muhammad saying): "Follow the religion of Ibraheem ﷺ Hanifan (Islamic Monotheism to worship none but Allah) and he was not of the Mushrikeen (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah and His Messenger Muhammad, those who worship others along with Allah or set up rivals with or partners to Allah)." (16:119-123)

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT YUNUS عليه السلام



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HAZRAT YUNUS ﷺ

Hazrat Yunus ﷺ is mentioned in six Surahs of the Qur'an. While his name is mentioned in four Surahs, his titles of Zun Noon and Sahibul Hoot (man of the fish) are mentioned in the other two.

Surah Al-An'am mentions his name in a list of other messengers, whilst other Surahs provide some glimpses of his story.

Hazrat Yunus ﷺ was the son of Matta. Hazrat Yunus ﷺ belonged to the Bani Israeel, but was sent to Iraq to guide the Assyrian people. The capital of the Assyrian people at the time was Ninewa, the ruins of which are still evident today on the eastern banks of the Tigris River. It is close to the present city Mosul. The inhabitants numbered over a hundred thousand.

Rejection of the People

The people of Ninewa to which he was sent were idol worshippers and lived shameless lives. Yunus ﷺ spent a long period of time trying to preach to them. However, just like the many nations before them, they rejected the message of Tawheed and even mocked at him. The people disliked his interference in their way of worship, so they argued. "We and our forefathers have worshipped these gods for many years and no harm has come to us." He tried to convince them of the falsehood of idolatry and of the goodness of Allah's laws but they ignored him. He warned them that if they continued with their denial, Allah's punishment would soon follow. Instead of fearing Allah, they told Yunus ﷺ that they were not afraid of his threats. "Let it happen," they told him. Yunus ﷺ was disheartened. When they collectively resolved not to believe, Allah told him to warn the people that a severe punishment will afflict them after three days. "In that case, I will leave you to your misery!" so saying, he left Nineveh, fearing that Allah's anger would soon follow.

The People are Forgiven

The leaders of the community knew that Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام never lied and since this was the first time he had issued such a warning, they realised that this may be their end. They therefore convened and decided to watch what he does. If he left them, then the warning was certainly true, but if he did not, they had nothing to fear.

The night before the third day dawned, Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام left the city by the command of Allah and had travelled a distance by the time morning arrived. The punishment came as a dark cloud and started to draw close to the city and it looked like it was filled with fire. The people started to panic and were filled with fear by this sight. They recalled the destruction of the people of 'Aad, Thamud and Nuh. Was theirs to be a similar fate? Slowly faith entered their hearts. They knew that their destruction was imminent if they did not believe in what Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام conveyed to them. However, they were unable to find him, so they immediately repented for their past and declared their Iman in Allah. With humility and sincere repentance, the men, women and children all gathered in a nearby field and pleaded to Allah to forgive them and grant them His mercy. It was a momentous hour, filled with sincere repentance. Allah accepted their repentance, removed the punishment and showered His blessings upon them once again. When the threatening storm was lifted, they prayed for the return of Yunus عليه السلام so that he could guide them.

When Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام saw that the punishment had been removed, he was hesitant to return to the city because he would be executed for lying to them about the punishment. Little did he realise that they had all accepted Iman. He therefore decided to leave the area since he could think of no way of saving himself from execution.

The Storm at Sea

Yunus عليه السلام headed for the Euphrates River, where he boarded a boat that was full of people. It sailed all day in calm waters with a good wind blowing at the sails. As the boat reached midway across the

river, it suddenly stopped and would not move at all despite the efforts of the crew. When night fell, the weather suddenly changed. A gusty storm blew as if it were going to split the ship into pieces. The waves were rough. They rose up as high as mountains then plunged down like valleys, tossing the ship and sweeping over the deck. Behind the ship, a large whale was splitting the water and opening its mouth. A command had been issued from Almighty Allah to one of the huge whales of the sea to surface. It obeyed. The whale hurried to the surface of the sea and followed the ship as it had been commanded. The tempest continued and the chief crewman asked the crew to lighten the ship's heavy load. They threw their baggage overboard, but this was not enough. Their safety lay in reducing the weight further, so they decided among themselves to lighten their load by removing at least one person. The crew then made an announcement that since the boat sailed and stopped by the will of Allah it appeared that Allah had stopped it because there was a runaway slave on board. They pleaded to the guilty person to give himself up so that the rest of them may not suffer on his account.

Yunus ﷺ jumps into the Sea

Realising that he was the one who ran away without the permission of Allah, Hazrat Yunus ﷺ declared that he was the runaway slave and should therefore be thrown overboard. However, seeing his pious and noble countenance, the people refused to accept that he could be the guilty one. The captain directed: We will make lots with all of the travellers' names. The one whose name is drawn will be thrown into the sea. The lot was drawn and 'Yunus' appeared. Since they knew him to be the most honourable among them, they did not wish to throw him into the ferocious sea. Therefore, they decided to draw a second lot. Again Yunus's ﷺ name was drawn. They gave him a final chance and drew a third lot. Yunus's ﷺ name came up again. Yunus ﷺ realised that this was Allah's wish, Although Hazrat Yunus ﷺ did not commit a sin, he made an error of judgement by leaving without Allah's permission and this is regarded as a crime for someone of his calibre. The matter was over, and it was decided that Yunus ﷺ

should throw himself into the water. Yunus عليه السلام stood at the edge of the ship looking at the furious sea. It was night and there was no moon. The stars were hidden behind a black fog. But before he could be thrown overboard, Yunus عليه السلام kept mentioning Allah's name as he jumped into the raging sea and disappeared beneath the huge waves.

The Whale Swallows Yunus عليه السلام

While the boat started to sail on its way, a gigantic fish swam up to Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام and swallowed him whole and shut its ivory teeth on him as if they were white bolts locking the door of his prison. The whale dived to the bottom of the sea, the sea that runs in the abyss of darkness. Three layers of darkness enveloped him, one above the other; the darkness of the whale's stomach, the darkness of the bottom of the sea, the darkness of the night. Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام imagined himself to be dead, but his senses became alert when he found he could move. He knew that he was alive and imprisoned in the midst of three layers of darkness. His heart was moved by remembering Allah. While he was in the belly of the fish, Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام supplicated to Allah and said, "There is no deity but You (O Allah). You are Pure. I have certainly been from among the wrongdoers (so please forgive me and remove me from this fish)". This is the positive affirmation of Yunus عليه السلام known as Ayate Kareema.

Allah Almighty saw the sincere repentance of Yunus عليه السلام and heard his invocation in the whale's stomach. Allah commanded the whale to surface and eject him onto an island. The whale obeyed and swam to the farthest side of the ocean. The whale ejected Yunus عليه السلام onto a remote island. Due to his stay in the fish's belly, the body of Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام had become soft and sensitive just like that of a newborn fledgling. Extremely weak and suffering exposure, he lay on the water bank unable to move. Allah then made a tree grow over him for shade and instructed a mountain goat to come to him every morning an evening so that he could drink its milk.

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

Gradually he regained his strength and found his way to his hometown, Nineveh. He was pleasantly surprised to notice the change that had taken place there. The entire population turned out to welcome him. They informed him that they had turned to believe in Allah. Together they led a prayer of thanksgiving to their Merciful Lord.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT YUSHA BIN NUN ﷺ



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HAZRAT YUSHA BIN NUN ﷺ

Like the lineage of the other messengers of the Bani Israeel, the lineage of Hazrat Yusha ﷺ can be traced back to Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ. In fact, Hazrat Yusha ﷺ was from the progeny of Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ.

His name is not mentioned in the Qur'an directly, however in a hadith narrated by Hazrat Ubay bin Ka'b ؓ in Bukhari Shareef, it is reported that it is Yusha bin Nun who is referred to in Surah Kahf in two places as the young companion of Hazrat Musa ﷺ when he travelled in search of Hazrat Khidhr ؑ.

He was the special servant of Hazrat Musa ﷺ during his lifetime and after the death of Nabi Musa ﷺ and Harun ﷺ he became their successor.

Hazrat Yusha ﷺ was one of the two persons who were prepared to wage Jihad by the command of Allah when the Bani Israeel were instructed to do so, but refused. It was also under his command that the Bani Israeel eventually did wage Jihad against the tyrants occupying the holy lands. This took place under the leadership of Hazrat Yusha ﷺ forty years after the demise of Hazrat Musa ﷺ, when the Bani Israeel conquered Can'aan, Syria, the East of Jordan and the surrounding areas.

Entering the Blessed Land

Hazrat Yusha ﷺ was appointed as Nabi of the Bani Israeel after the demise of Hazrat Musa ﷺ. After he guided the Bani Israeel for forty years, Allah instructed him to lead his people in Jihad against the tyrannical tribes occupying the holy lands and His help will be with them.

Hazrat Yusha ﷺ conveyed the message to his people. The Bani Israeel then left the Valley of Teeh in the Sinai desert and marched on the largest city of Can'aan, which was Areeha (Jericho). They conquered the city after a fierce struggle and then went on with their

campaign until they conquered the whole land of Can'aan and all the other territories as well. They had once again become the owners of their forefathers' lands and managed to settle in peace.

The Torah relates that as the Bani Israeel fought these battles, Allah Ta'ala sent the casket (Taboot) with them, which contained items of blessings such as the staff of Hazrat Musa عليه السلام, the robe of Hazrat Harun عليه السلام, utensils containing some Manna and Salwa, as well as other relics of the past. Allah Ta'ala had instructed them to keep these relics as a reminder of the favours that Allah had blessed them with. This casket had been passed on from generation to generation and always guarded very closely.

Allama Ibn Atheer (Rahimahullah) has written that even during his lifetime, Hazrat Musa عليه السلام had appointed Hazrat Yusha عليه السلام as the commander of the army to reclaim the land of Palestine. Eventually, when Hazrat Yusha عليه السلام became the Nabi of the Bani Israeel, it was him who led the Bani Israeel in battle to cleanse the blessed land from disbelievers. While the Qur'an does not mention specifically which land it was that they conquered, Allama Ibn Katheer (Rahimahullah) explains that it was Al-Quds. Their conquests started with the fall of Jericho.

Fighting for Allah

The humble and obedient servants do not enter into battle for their own sake or their own elevation, but they fight against Allah's enemies who are evil and disobedient to bring an end to their injustices and rebellious nature, so that through their efforts justice should prevail and Allah's word becomes supreme. Hence when they are successful, they do not show their pleasure with arrogance and grandeur, but instead exhibit humility and fall in prostration and when they enter conquered lands, they enter with humility and gratitude.

Ingratitude of the Bani Israeel

When Allah blessed the Bani Israeel with the conquest of Palestine, they were instructed not to enter the city of Quds with pride and arrogance, but to enter with humility and repentance as a token of gratitude to Allah Ta'ala. They were ordered to enter the city with a specific sentence on their lips. However, once they had tasted victory and they could raise their heads once again, the old traits of the Bani Israeel swiftly returned and they disobeyed the command. They entered the city with pride and arrogance and substituted the words of repentance with words of insolence. Displeased with their brazen ingratitude, Allah immediately struck them with a severe punishment. While the words of the Qur'an do not specify the type of punishment, Imaam Qurtubi (Rahimahullah) writes that it was a plague that claimed the lives of seventy thousand of them. Not all of the Bani Israeel were destroyed, as the violation had not been committed by all.

A narration of Bukhari Shareef states that the Bani Israeel mockingly said "Habbatun fi Sha'ratin" in place of Hitta. Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood ؓ said that the Bani Israeel dragged themselves on their buttocks as they entered to mock the command of Allah that demanded they enter in humility.

We see that when Rasulullah ﷺ victoriously entered Makkah, he hung his head low as he sat on his camel and his hair touched the saddle. He then proceeded straight to the Ka'bah Shareef to perform eight Rakahs Salah as gratitude to Allah.

The same happened when Hazrat Umar ؓ entered the city of Quds and the territory of the Persians as victor. He immediately performed Salah as gratitude to Allah.

Lessons

Acknowledging the Bounties of Allah

It is a person's human and ethical duty that when he has been saved from a great trial or calamity and later reaches his intended aim successfully, he should not become caught up in the trap of becoming proud and arrogant. He should not consider the achievement to be his own but should be grateful to Allah Ta'ala as he would not have achieved success without Allah's help. He should realise his own weakness and should lower his head asking Allah to have mercy on him in this world as well as in the Hereafter. By being grateful he will be blessed with even more bounties.

Divine Retribution

When a nation is blessed with clear signs as a bounty to them and they then instead of being grateful and obedient are disobedient and express ingratitude, Allah's punishment swiftly reaches them. This is because their ingratitude and disobedience takes place after themselves observing clear and great signs of Allah's grace unto them. Allah Ta'ala made it clear that the punishment that came to the Bani Israeel was because of their ingratitude.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT YUSUF عليه السلام



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HAZRAT YUSUF ﷺ

Yusuf ﷺ is mentioned twenty-seven times by name in the Noble Qur'an and an entire surah is named after him.

Nabi ﷺ said, "The noblest of people was Yusuf, who was the son of a Nabi of Allah, Ya'qub ﷺ, who was the son of a Nabi of Allah, (Ishaq ﷺ), who was the son of the Khaleel (friend) of Allah, Ibraheem ﷺ."

The story of Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ is replete with lessons and advices.

Yusuf ﷺ's Dream

Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ saw a dream in which eleven stars, the sun and the moon are prostrating before him. When he related this dream to his father, Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ immediately realised what it meant and warned Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ not to relate it to his brothers in case shaytan uses it as a means to spur them into harming him.

The Killer Plot

The brothers approached Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ and said to him in a very loving and caring tone, "Dear father! Please allow Yusuf to join us for an outing. He is still a child and would love to be with us to enjoy himself and to play. They assured Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ that they only meant well and would do everything to protect Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ.

Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ permitted the youth to take Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ with them. They took Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ into the forest with the intention of disposing of him and after deliberation, forced him into a well. The brothers reddened the shirt of Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ with the blood of some animal and returned home that night crying and wailing. They told Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ in one voice that they had been racing with each other and had left Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ behind. It was then that a wolf attacked and devoured him. They presented the shirt as evidence and said that he would not believe them despite them speaking the truth.

When Hazrat Ya'qub عليه السلام saw the shirt still intact, he said to his sons, "What an intelligent wolf it must have been to devour Yusuf without even tearing his shirt?!" Hazrat Ya'qub عليه السلام then told them that Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام was not eaten by any wolf, but that they had devised a plot against him. He then chose to bear the hardship with patience and continued praying to Allah for help.

A Slave in the Royal Mansion

A caravan halted at this well for water. A man lowered in his bucket and as he pulled the rope up, he was stunned to see a handsome young lad clinging to it. He immediately called the others and told them the good news of a beautiful young lad he had found. They decided to hide Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام and then sell him as a slave in Egypt.

Eventually, the chief minister of Egypt, outbid all the others and took Yusuf عليه السلام to his mansion. He gave instructions to his wife to care for and honour the lad since he saw great potential in him. He even considered the probability of adopting him as a son since he had no children of his own.

A Most Trying Test

When Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام grew into a handsome young man, whose beauty was incomparable, Zulaykha, the wife of the minister became attracted to him. She devised a plan to seduce him and be alone with him for herself. When she shut all the doors of the room and tried to seduce him, Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام sought the protection of Allah. He then tried to advise her to fear Allah, but to no avail.

Yusuf عليه السلام immediately started to run away from Zulaykha. She then started to run after him and, as she grabbed at his shirt, she ripped off a portion of it as he broke away. He had just managed to run out of the door, when the Chief minister appeared. When Zulaykha saw her husband in front of them, she pleaded innocence and pinned the blame on Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام.

She was now accusing Yusuf ﷺ of molesting her, to give the impression that she was innocent and a victim of Yusuf ﷺ's sexual desire. Though bewildered, Yusuf ﷺ denied it. Allah caused an infant child to testify in favour of Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ. When the witnesses looked at the shirt and found that it was torn at the back, and not the front, they realised that she was guilty.

The Beauty of Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ

The women of the town found out that Zulaykha had become infatuated with Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ. They began teasing her for falling for her slave. Eager to defend herself, she contrived a plan. She invited all the women to a banquet and arranged that Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ enter the room at a time when the women were busy cutting fruit. As soon as they saw him, their jaws dropped and they were so astonished by his appearance that they cut their hands and exclaimed in one voice, "This cannot be a human (because no human can possibly be so handsome)! He must surely be a noble angel".

Zulaykha was overjoyed to have proven to the women that she was no fool for trying to seduce such a man and then said to them, "This is what you were criticising me for. Indeed, I attempted to seduce him against his will, but he escaped. If he does not do as I command him, he shall certainly be imprisoned and he will definitely be humiliated".

Many years in Prison

Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ was sent to prison to safeguard the public image of the Chief minister's wife, even though he was innocent of committing any crime.

Allah Ta'ala blessed Yusuf ﷺ with an extraordinary gift; the ability to interpret dreams. It so happened that two men were then brought to prison with Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ. One was the cupbearer of the king; the other was the king's cook. Both men had vivid dreams, and they were anxious to have them explained. The king's cook dreamed that he

stood in a place with bread on his head, and two birds were eating the bread. The cupbearer dreamed that he was serving the king wine. The two went to Yusuf عليه السلام and told him their dreams, asking him to give them their meaning.

First, Yusuf عليه السلام called them to Allah. Then he said that the cook would be crucified and that the cupbearer would return to the service of the king. Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام then proceeded to inform the innocent one that he should speak to the king about setting him free since he was jailed unlawfully. After the cupbearer returned to service, shaytan made him forget to mention Yusuf عليه السلام's name to the king. Therefore, Yusuf عليه السلام remained in prison for a few more years, but he was patient while praying to Allah.

The King's Dream

It then happened that the king himself saw a dream which disturbed him greatly. He saw seven lean cows swallowing seven fat cows and also saw seven fresh ears of corn being consumed by seven dry ears of corn. When he consulted those around him to interpret this dream for him, they brushed it off as a dream that had no meaning. The news reached the cupbearer and Yusuf عليه السلام came to mind. The king sent the cupbearer to ask Yusuf عليه السلام about the dream.

He told them that they would have seven years of prosperity, during which time they were to use only that much of grain as they required. The rest was to be stored for seven years of drought that were to follow. Thereafter, they would have a year of abundance once more and they would enjoy the fruits of the earth. The seven lean cows and seven dry ears of corn therefore represented the seven years of drought.

Yusuf عليه السلام's is proven Innocent

The king was impressed with what he heard; he commanded that Yusuf عليه السلام be set free from prison and presented to him at once. When

the king's messenger went to the prison to get Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام, He refused to leave the prison unless his innocence was proven.

The king therefore summoned the women and demanded that they speak the truth. They declared, "We do not know of any evil in him (he is innocent)". When Zulaykha saw that the women would not stand with her, she was forced to admit, "The truth is now out. I attempted to seduce him against his will and he is of the truthful (he did not try to seduce me)".

The king then met Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام, was very pleased to meet him and appointed him as one of his ministers.

Yusuf عليه السلام meets his Brothers

When the drought struck, Hazrat Yauqub عليه السلام sent ten of his sons, all except Bin Yaameen, to Egypt to purchase provisions. When the ten brothers arrived before Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام, they did not recognise him although he recognised his brothers.

Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام told them that if they ever needed to return for more grains, they would have to bring their step-brother along with them. They assured him that they would gladly fulfil his command but that they would have to get their father's permission. As an inducement to return with their brother, Yusuf عليه السلام ordered his servant to secretly place the money they had paid, into one of their grain sacks.

When the brothers discovered the money in their luggage, they told their father that their monies must have been returned in error and they needed to return it as soon as possible. They then begged Hazrat Ya'qub عليه السلام to send Bin Yaameen as well to collect another load, promising that they would protect him. Hazrat Ya'qub عليه السلام decided to send Bin Yaameen as well. He reminded them: "Allah is witness to your pledge." He then advised them to enter the city through several different gates.

When they arrived in Egypt, Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام was overjoyed to see that his brothers had kept their word to bring Bin Yaameen along.

When the brothers were ready to leave, Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام ordered one of his attendants to place a cup secretly in Bin Yaameen's luggage. When the brothers were ready to set out, the gates were locked, and the court crier called out: "O you travellers, you are thieves!" Surprised, the brothers asked what it was that was stolen. The announcer informed them that a valuable cup had been stolen and anyone who found it would receive a camel's load of goods as a reward.

Bin Yameen held back in Egypt

The brothers assured the man that they were not thieves. However, the man asked what punishment was acceptable to them if they were found guilty. The brothers replied that the thief himself would be handed over as recompense. The chief officer ordered his soldiers to start searching the caravan. He had given instructions for Bin Yameen's bag to be the last to be searched. In their rage, the brothers insolently exclaimed, "If he has stolen then surely his brother before him must have also stolen". However, Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام maintained his composure and kept silent.

When the brothers realised that they had failed to honour their pledge to their father to bring Bin Yaameen back, they tried to beg Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام to forgive Bin Yaameen and to rather take one of them in his place. However, Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام told them that it would be unjust to punish someone for the crime of another and this was therefore impossible.

It was then that the eldest brother refused to return with the rest and told the others: "We promised our father in the name of Allah not to fail him. I will, therefore, stay behind and will only return if my father permits me to do so."

Hazrat Ya'qub's ﷺ Grief

The father was deeply hurt. Only prayer could comfort him and strengthen his faith and patience. Weeping all those years for his beloved son Yusuf ﷺ - and now one more of his best sons had been snatched from him - Ya'qub ﷺ almost lost his sight. Allah inspired Ya'qub ﷺ with the thought of instructing his sons to search for Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ. When they arrived Yusuf ﷺ asked the brothers if they remembered what they had done to Yusuf and his brother when they were still ignorant. When they heard this question, they were perplexed to know that the minister should know what they had done to Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ, unless he was Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ. Realising that they had been wrong, all they could do was admit their guilt and acknowledge that Allah had indeed favoured him by raising him from the depths of the well to the height of the throne of Egypt. Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ forgave all that they did. He then instructed them to return home and to cast his shirt over the face of their father, which would restore his eyesight. They were then to bring the entire family to settle in Egypt.

The Fragrance reaches Ya'qub ﷺ

The caravan was on route to Egypt when Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ declared that he could smell the fragrance of Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ. When the people in the household of Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ heard him say this, they chided him for entertaining such hopes and assumed that he was speaking out of senility. However, they were surprised when the caravan arrived and the vision of Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ was restored. He then reminded the people that he knew things that they did not know. The brothers then sought forgiveness from Hazrat Ya'qub ﷺ and he promised to make dua for their forgiveness.

The Grand Reunion

The family travelled to Egypt and when everyone had met and settled, Hazrat Yusuf ﷺ arrived and took his seat of honour, all the

courtiers and ministers bowed before him in reverence. It was then that Hazrat Ya'qub عليه السلام and his family also did the same. When they did this, Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام exclaimed, “O my beloved father! This is the (realisation of the) interpretation of my past dream. Allah has surely made it come true”.

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HAZRAT ZAKARIYA ﷺ

Zakariya ﷺ is mentioned by name seven times in the Qur'an in four Surahs. He is mentioned by name in one Surah as being amongst the prophets and in the other three more details are mentioned about his life.

Lineage

The Zakariya mentioned in the Torah is not the Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ mentioned in the Qur'an. The Zakariya (Zachariah) mentioned in the Torah lived during the reign of Darius. The Torah states, "It was in the 8th month of Darius's second year that the word of God reached Zachariah, the son of Barachias (Barkhiyah), who was the son of Addo (also spelt Ido)."

The Persian King Darius lived approximately 500 years before Hazrat Isa ﷺ and ascended the throne of Persia in the year 521 B.C. The Zakariya referred to in the Qur'an was Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ, who was the guardian of Hazrat Isa's ﷺ mother Maryam (Radiyahallahu Anha). He was therefore a contemporary of Hazrat Isa ﷺ and also the father of Hazrat Yahya ﷺ.

Historians differ about the name of the father of Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ. Hafiz Ibn Hajar (Rahimahullah), Allamah ibn Katheer (Rahimahullah) and the historian Ibn Asakir have listed various opinions. What is certain, however, is that he was from amongst the descendants of Hazrat Sulayman ﷺ.

His Noble Life

Some parts of the life of Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ have been mentioned in the Qur'an and much has also been reported in the books of history. There were priestly men from each tribe of the Bani Israeel who were specially appointed to enact the rites that took place in Masjidul Aqsa. These men were greatly revered by the people and took turns

to do their duties. Amongst them was Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام, who is listed amongst the high-ranking messengers عليهم السلام in the Qur'an.

Allamah ibn Katheer (Rahimahullah) states that Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام was indeed from the progeny of Hazrat Dawud عليه السلام and his wife Eesha (Elizabeth) was from the progeny of Hazrat Harun عليه السلام.

It has always been the practice of the messengers to earn their own living even so that the people should never have to bear the burden of supporting them. It is for this reason that the Qur'an quotes them as saying to the people, "I do not ask you for any payment for this (for preaching Tawheed to you). My payment (reward) is the responsibility of Allah, the Rabb of the universe".

A Hadith related from Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه makes it evident that Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام earned his living as a carpenter.

Guardian of Masjid Aqsa

There was a pious man from the progeny of Hazrat Sulaiman عليه السلام by the name of Imraan bin Naashi. He and his wife Hanna bint Faaqood were pious people but had no children. She therefore made a vow to devote the child she bears to the service of the Masjid. When a daughter was born to her, her husband had already passed away. The child therefore had to be handed over in custody to one of the guardians appointed to serve the Masjid. The guardians clamoured to have custody of this blessed little girl, so lots had to be drawn to decide who will have the privilege. Each time lots were drawn, it was drawn in favour of Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام. He was also best suited to be her guardian because his wife Eesha (Elizabeth) was the real sister of Hanna. Hazrat Maryam عليها السلام therefore grew up in the care of her maternal aunt.

When Hazrat Maryam عليها السلام came of age of understanding, Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام allocated a room close to the Masjid for her to use as a place of seclusion for the purpose of Ibadah and from where she could go to spend time with her aunt Hazrat Zakariya's عليه السلام wife. One day he

noticed that there was fruit in her room, which was not in season. When he asked her where the fruit had come from, she replied that it was from Allah, Who provides as He pleases (and is not restricted to seasons).

Du'a for Children

The years had rolled on and taken their toll on Zakariyah عليه السلام. He was now old and bent with age, in his seventies. Despite his feebleness, he went to the Masjid daily to deliver his sermons. Zakariyah عليه السلام was not wealthy, but he was always ready to help those in need. His one disappointment in life was that he had no children, for his wife was barren and there appeared to be no hope of them ever having a child. This worried him, for he feared there was no one after him to carry out his work. The people needed a strong leader, for it they were left on their own, they would move away from Allah's teachings and change the Holy Laws to suit themselves.

During one of his visits to the masjid, he went to check on Maryam (Radiyallahu Anha), who was living in a secluded room of the temple. He was surprised to find that Allah provided fresh out of season fruit in her room. Besides him, no one had entry to her room. This completely contradicted the norms. When he inquired, she told him that the fruit was from Allah. She found it every morning. But why was he so surprised, she asked him. Did he not know that Allah provides without measure for whom He wills?

This noble girl had opened his eyes to a startling idea. Could he not ask his Lord to bless him with a child in his old age? Even if his wife was past childbearing age, nothing was impossible for his Gracious Lord!

It was then that he made du'a to Allah saying, "O my Rabb! My bones have weakened (aged) and my hair has turned white because of old age. I have never (before) been unfortunate (unsuccessful) in my du'a to You (I therefore have great hopes that this du'a will also be accepted). I fear for my relatives after me (I fear that they may forsake the Deen after I die). My wife is barren (unable to bear

children), so grant me an heir (a son to help me in propagating the Deen), who can inherit (my knowledge) from me and inherit from the family of Ya'qub ﷺ (so that he can guide my people if they stray from their Deen). And, O my Rabb, make him beloved unto You, (by making him a person who practises the knowledge of Deen that he possesses)".

The du'a of a Nabi is never self-centred. This du'a of Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ was made for the benefit of his people since they required someone to continue the work of reformation and Da'wah. This du'a was accepted by Allah and an angel delivered the good news to him when he was engaged in Ibadah that he shall have a son by the name of Yahya. Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ asked the angel how the du'a will reach fulfilment since this could be done by his wife made fertile or by him regaining the vigour of youth. The angel advised that the details were not important, but that it was certain that the child will be born because Allah had decreed it. Furthermore, such a task, as strange as it may seem, was very easy for Allah to accomplish.

Request for a Sign

Hazrat Zakariya ﷺ then asked Allah to show him a sign to indicate that the process has begun. Allah then informed him that the sign would be when he will be unable to talk to anyone for three days. His only means of communication during the time will be by making gestures to people. When this sign appeared, he was to increase glorifying and praising Allah.

The day came when he was unable to speak for three days. The people assumed that he was fasting since a fast of silence was a common form of Ibadah during those days. During these days he continued to exert himself in Ibadah and also managed to instruct the people using gestures and signs. This occurrence was a source of tremendous joy for him as well as for the Bani Israeel because it would ensure that they have someone after him to continue his efforts.

A Sunnah of the Messengers

Despite the fact that the messengers were the most pious and abstinent of people, they also desired to have children as all people do. However, it is not just an empty desire for children that one should have, but a desire for pious children. It is for this reason that Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام prayed for pure (pious) children who will fulfil all the injunctions and responsibilities of Deen. People who believe that having wives and children conflicts with piety are misinformed.

A Fine Point

The incident of Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام being blessed with a child reveals that Allah gives those who ask from Him. However, Allah also grants His favours to those who do not ask from. If Allah gave only when people asked, then there would have been tremendous shortages in this world and people's lives would be severely constrained.

When Hazrat Zakariya عليه السلام made du'a for a child at the end of his life, his focus was upon the power of Allah and not on the apparent means and resources, since these were all opposed to his wish.

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The Great Messengers

HAZRAT ZUL KIFL عليه السلام



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HAZRAT ZUL KIFL ﷺ

Hazrat Zul Kifl ﷺ has been mentioned in two Surahs of the Qur'an only by his name in a list of other messengers. The Qur'an and the Ahadith do not mention any details about him. However, there are narrations in the books of Tafseer that shed some light upon his life.

Hazrat Zul Kifl also belonged to the Bani Israeel

He supported his people to suffice their needs and administered justice among them. That is why he was called Zul Kifl. (Zul Kifl literally means "possessor of, or giving a double requital or portion".)

All that can be said with certainty about him is that he was one of Allah's chosen messengers who was sent to guide some nation and, like all the messengers, he suffered hardships and trials. Allah rewarded him by enveloping him in His mercy and including him in the list of the esteemed messengers.

He was sent to guide the people a colony that Nebuchadnezzar had established for the slaves of the Bani Israeel, called Tilabeeb. He suffered much harassment in the course of his Da'wah here, which was then multiplied when he started to preach to the leaders of Jerusalem. It is therefore possible that he received the title of Zul Kifl because of the tremendous amount of patience he had to endure.

The lengthy narration of Imam Mujahid (Rahimahullah) states that When Hazrat Yasa ﷺ grew old, he thought to himself, "I wish I could appoint someone worthy of continuing my duty after me." He therefore called people to him and said to them, "I wish to appoint someone as my successor, but he needs to fulfil three conditions; (1) He should fast every day, (2) pray every night and (3) never lose his temper."

When an unknown man volunteered, Hazrat Yasa ﷺ repeated the conditions and sought assurance that he would fulfil them. The man assured him that he would fulfil them, but Hazrat Yasa ﷺ turned him

back on that day. When he repeated the same announcement the second day and all others kept quiet, the same man volunteered yet again. Hazrat Yasa ﷺ appointed him as his successor.

Satanic Effort to Derail the Successor

Once the man was appointed successor, Iblees gathered shayateen and instructed them to do all they could to make the man break his undertaking. However, as much as they tried, they could not get him to forsake the fasting, the Ibadah or get him to lose his temper. Eventually Iblees decided to do it himself. He therefore disguised himself as an unkempt old man and approached the man at the time of siesta. Since the man did not sleep all night, he did not get any sleep except during the time of siesta. When Iblees knocked the door and the man asked who it was, Iblees said: “A poor old man who has been wronged!” The pious man got up and opened the door. Iblees started telling him the story, saying, “There has been a dispute between my people and I and they have perpetrated every injustice to me.” He then prolonged the story until the time for siesta had passed by. The man then said, “Come see me in the evening and I will address your problem then.”

However, when he went to his court that evening and looked for the old man, he was nowhere to be seen. The next morning when he was again judging people’s disputes, he waited yet again for the old man, but he did not turn up. However, when it was time for siesta and he went home to sleep, the old man arrived and knocked the door. “Who is at the door?” he asked. “The old man who has been wronged,” came the reply. He opened the door and said, “Did I not tell you that you should come to me when I sit in my court?” The old man replied, “My people are the worst of people. When they knew that you are sitting in the court, they told me that they would give me my right, but when you left your court, they again refused to do so.” He then continued talking until the time for siesta ended. The man then said, “You may go now, but ensure that you come to me when I am in court this evening. I will then settle this dispute between you and your

people.” The old man then left with apologies and prayers for the man.

Since he was unable to get any rest for two consecutive days, the man was exhausted. He then went to his court and again waited for the old man. However, the old man was not there. The same thing happened in the morning when he sat in his court. The man thought that the old man had perhaps come to some settlement with his people, so because he was feeling drowsy and tired that afternoon, he said to one of his household: “Do not let anyone in because I desperately need to have some sleep today.” However, the old man appeared again at his usual time and knocked the door. When the person watching the door refused to open because of the instruction, the old man said, “I had been coming to him for the past two days for my need and he told me to come at this time.”

However, the person at the door insisted that he would not permit anyone in. A moment later, the people in the house were startled to see the old man inside the house, knocking on the man’s room door. When the man opened his room door and saw the old man there, he shouted to his house people, asking why they had let the man in. They assured him that they had not. Noticing that they were truthful since the door was still locked, he immediately realized who the old man was. He therefore said, “O enemy of Allah! You must be Iblees!” The old man replied, “Yes, I am. When my army and I failed at every attempt, I resorted to this last effort to get you to lose your temper. However, you have frustrated me yet again.”

Allah therefore called him Zul Kifl, because he took the responsibility of doing something and he fulfilled it.

Because this narration of Imam Mujahid (Rahimahullah) does not have a sound chain of narrators, it will not be regarded as anything more than a story. It cannot be used to prove anything about his life.

Hazrat Shah Abdul Qadir (Rahimahullah) has written that Hazrat Zul Kifl عليه السلام was the son of Hazrat Ayub عليه السلام and had to suffer imprisonment

because he took the burden of someone else's responsibility for the pleasure of Allah.

It is interesting to note that on mount Qasiyun, which overlooks Damascus from the North, is a place that has been named Zul Kifl.

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HAZRAT ZUL QARNAIN

In Surah Kahf there is mention of a king who had the appellation 'Zul Qarnain'. The preferred view of the scholars is that Zul Qarnain was a pious and just king and not a messenger. He conquered many lands and established peace and justice there. Allah has granted him the means to do whatever he needed to do. Amongst his travels was a journey to the far East, another to the far West and another in a Northerly direction. It was during this journey to the North that he built a great wall to protect the people of the area from the marauding Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj tribes.

Background

The Qur'an discusses the incident of Zul Qarnain in response to the question posed by the Jews. Muhammad bin Ishaq (Rahimahullah) has reported from Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas  that the Quraysh of Makkah once dispatched Nadhr bin Harith and Uqba bin Abi Mu'et to meet with some Jewish scholars in Madinah (then known as Yathrib). The message to the scholars was, "You people call yourselves the people of the book and claim to have knowledge of the previous prophets that we have do not have. We therefore ask you whether your scriptures say anything about the claim to prophethood that Muhammad is making?"

When the Jews were given the message, they replied, "Forget everything else. We shall give you three questions to pose to him. If he responds correctly to these questions, then you may rest assured that he is certainly the true Nabi of Allah and it would be compulsory for you to follow him. If he cannot reply to them, then he is a fraudster and you may do with him as you please. The three questions are:

1. Who is the person who conquered lands in the east and in the west?
2. What happened to the youngsters who hid in a cave for fear of their

king?

3. What is the soul?”

When the Quraysh received the reply, they said, “Now we shall be able to easily make a decision concerning Muhammad ﷺ. This was because it could only be through the help of Allah that an unlettered person such as Nabi ﷺ could reply to such questions. They then posed the questions to Nabi ﷺ and it was in response to these questions that Allah revealed Surah Kahf, thereby responding to all the queries.


Was Zul Qarnain Alexander of Macedonia?

It is incorrect that the title Zul Qarnain refers to the Macedonian king known as Alexander the Great. All the early and latter-day scholars unanimously agree that Alexander was not Thul Qarnain. While the Qur'an describes Zul Qarnain as a just and pious Muslim king, Alexander was known to be a Greek mushrik and a tyrant.

Furthermore, in his discussion of the messengers, Imam Bukhari (Rahimahullah) has narrated the Hadith concerning Zul Qarnain before the Ahadith of Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام. This makes it evident that Zul Qarnain lived even before the time of Hazrat Ibraheem عليه السلام and could therefore not be Alexander of Macedon, who lived barely 300 years before Hazrat Isa عليه السلام and who had Aristotle as his tutor and adviser.

However, Hazrat Ali رضي الله عنه said, “Zul Qarnain was neither a Nabi nor an angel, but a man who loved Allah and who Allah loved.” After sanctioning this Hadith, Hafidh Ibn Hajar (Rahimahullah) has stated that he heard this narration reported with an authentic chain of narrators from the book Mukhtarah by Hafidh Hadith Ziyaa'ud Deen Maqdasi (Rahimahullah). Nonetheless, most scholars believe that Zul Qarnain was a king.

Apart from Hazrat Ali رضي الله عنه, Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas رضي الله عنه also believed that was a pious king, whose actions Allah loved, thereby earning him

praise in the Qur'an and victory in his expeditions. This opinion was shared by Hazrat Abu Hurairah  as well. Allamah Ibn Katheer (Rahimahullah) has quoted all the relevant Ahadith and concluded by saying, "The most correct opinion is that he (Zul Qarnain) was a king from amongst the just kings."

The title of Zul Qarnain (the one with two horns) was given for several reasons:

Some say that it was because he reigned over both Rome and Persia, each represented by a horn. Imam Zuhri (Rahimahullah) stated that the two horns referred to the east and the west, since he reigned over territories on both sides.

Some Mufasireen state that the horns refer to the two centuries during which he reigned and therefore depicts his extended age.

The Qur'an does not deem it necessary to provide details concerning times, places and identities.

The Wall Erected by Zul Qarnain

The Qur'an states that he reached where between two mountain ranges there was a pass where he met a people who were unable to understand his language. They somehow explained to him that the tribes of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj come through the pass to trouble and harass them and to commit mischief in the land. They asked him to accept tribute from them and to close up the pass to prevent Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj from crashing over. He told them that what Allah gives is sufficient for him and there is no need for them to pay him. However, he is prepared to help them if they were prepared to help him. They gathered pieces of iron and from that Zul Qarnain built a wall between the mountains from iron and then melted copper with which to strengthen the wall. In spite of Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj being such strong tribes, they were unable to break down this wall. Neither could they come over it to launch further attacks and so the people were saved from their attacks.

The Need for History

Just as it is necessary to have knowledge of language, Ahadith, narrations of the Sahabah ﷺ and other sciences to understand the meaning of the Qur'an, so too is it necessary to have knowledge of history. This is because there are certain parts of the Qur'an (such as the episode of Zul Qarnain) that can be understood only with the knowledge of history.

A Just Leader

It has been a known fact throughout the ages that the cornerstone of a just government was serving the people. The just king would therefore spend freely from the state treasury whatever was needed for the benefit of the people, while taking for himself only what was necessary. Furthermore, he would never burden the people with unreasonable taxation. On the contrary, a tyrannical regime would focus on personal luxuries and remain indifferent towards the needs of the people. If the state spent on the people, there would always be some personal agenda. Such governments levy burdensome taxes on people and almost always end up in bankruptcy.

Since Zul Qarnain was a just king, he refused to take any payment from the people when he built them the wall and made it clear that Allah had given him all he needed. In fact, Allah had given him so much because he utilised it all for the benefit of the people.

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