
THE PROPHETS (PEACE BE UPON THEM)

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(2:136) The Prophets of all Nations

Say ye: “We believe in Allah, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Isma’il, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to (all) prophets from their Lord: We make no difference between one and another of them: And we bow to Allah (in Islam).”

This verse also relates the cosmopolitan nature of Qur’ânic teachings. All Prophets of Allâh and all revelations coming from Him must be accepted; no distinction is to be made between one Prophet and any other. The Holy Qur’ân recognizes the Prophets of the Jews

and the Christians, and the Prophets of all the other nations. The Jews think that God revealed the truth only to the Israelites; The Christians think that the truth was revealed only to Jesus; The Hindus believe that God revealed the truth only to the sages of India and the Zoroastrian thinks that the truth was revealed to Zoroaster alone. It is a merit of Islam that it is the only major religion that recognizes the

Prophets of all countries and of all nations, and of all times. (The Holy Quran: Commentary and Reflections, pg. 380) The Prophets Archives – Islamic Web Library

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The people of the Scripture (Jews) used to recite the Torah in Hebrew and they used to explain it in Arabic to the Muslims. On that Allah’s Messenger (S) said, “Do not believe the people of the Scripture or disbelieve them, but say:– “We believe in Allah and what is revealed to us.” (2.136)

References:

NOORUDDÎN ,ALLÂMAH. (2015). Exegesis of The Holy Qur'ân
Commentary and Reflections. (surah 2 verse 75).

10:98 Prophet Jonah

Why was there not a single township (among those We warned), which believed, - so its faith should have profited it, - except the people of Jonah? When they believed, We removed from them the penalty of ignominy in the life of the present, and permitted them to enjoy (their life) for a while.

Qur'an 10:98 asks why no community benefited from accepting faith before the arrival of divine punishment, except the people of Prophet Jonah. When Jonah's people sincerely believed, God removed the humiliating worldly punishment that threatened them and allowed them to continue living for an appointed period (Qur'an 10:98).

This verse warns those who persistently reject the truth not to waste the opportunity for repentance available during their earthly lives. A person may still abandon disbelief and seek God's forgiveness before death or divine punishment becomes unavoidable. Once the punishment of the Hereafter becomes directly apparent, however, a declaration of faith will no longer be accepted. The account of Prophet Jonah and his people therefore illustrates the importance of responding to divine guidance while repentance remains beneficial (*Ma'ariful Qur'an*).

The Repentance of Jonah's People

When Jonah's people observed signs that divine punishment was approaching, they immediately believed, repented, and sought God's forgiveness. Because their repentance occurred before the punishment actually overtook them, God accepted it and removed the threatened suffering.

The central principle presented in this commentary is that the opportunity for repentance does not necessarily end when signs

of worldly punishment appear. Instead, repentance becomes unacceptable when the punishment has already seized a person or when death has reached its final stage. The punishment of the Hereafter becomes immediately present either at death or on the Day of Resurrection. At that point, belief is based on direct observation rather than voluntary faith and is therefore no longer spiritually beneficial (*Ma'arif Qur'an*).

The repentance of Jonah's people did not constitute an exception to divine law. Although they saw signs of punishment, they repented before it overtook them and before death became unavoidable. Their situation differed from that of Pharaoh, who declared his belief only after he had been overcome by the sea and faced imminent death. Pharaoh's declaration was not accepted because it occurred after the punishment had already seized him.

A comparable example appears in the account of the Children of Israel. When Mount Sinai was raised above them, they became fearful and renewed their commitment to God's revelation: "Hold firmly to what We have given you" (Qur'an 2:63). Their response was accepted because they repented after recognizing the threat but before destruction or death overtook them. Similarly, Jonah's people sincerely turned to God while they still possessed the opportunity to do so.

The Prophetic Protection of Jonah

The commentary rejects the argument that divine punishment was removed from Jonah's people because Jonah had failed to perform his prophetic responsibilities adequately. Mawdudi (1964), for example, suggested that Jonah may have become impatient and left his appointed place before completing his mission. According to this interpretation, divine justice prevented the people from being punished because the prophetic argument against them had not been fully established (p. 321).

The opposing interpretation maintains that this conclusion conflicts with the Islamic doctrine of prophetic protection, or *'ismah*. Muslim scholars have differed regarding whether prophets are protected from every minor error and whether such protection applies before prophethood. Nevertheless, the commentary argues that prophets are unanimously understood to be protected from betraying or neglecting the missions entrusted to them by God. Failing to communicate revelation would constitute a fundamental breach of prophetic responsibility rather than a minor personal error (*Ma'ariful Qur'an*).

Accordingly, passages that appear to criticize a prophet must be interpreted consistently with established Qur'anic teachings, authentic prophetic traditions, and the accepted theological status of the prophets. The Qur'an does not explicitly state that Jonah abandoned his people before fulfilling his duty. The claim that he neglected his prophetic mission depends on assumptions that are not directly supported by the Qur'an or authentic Hadith.

The removal of punishment from Jonah's people should not be understood as a violation or suspension of divine law. Their repentance was accepted precisely because it occurred before the punishment seized them. Classical commentators—including Abu Hayyan, Al-Qurtubi, Al-Zamakhshari, Qadi Thana'ullah, and Al-Alusi—generally interpreted the event as consistent with God's established practice of accepting sincere repentance before death or unavoidable punishment (*Ma'ariful Qur'an*).

Al-Qurtubi explained that the people's repentance was valid because they responded before the punishment fully materialized. Although Al-Tabari regarded their case as possessing a special distinction, Al-Zajjaj maintained that they had seen only the signs of punishment rather than the

punishment itself. Had they already been seized by it, their belief would not have benefited them. Al-Qurtubi preferred this interpretation because it corresponds with the principle that repentance remains acceptable until death reaches its final stage (*Ma'ariful Qur'an*).

The event is placed near the account of Pharaoh in Surah Yunus to demonstrate the difference between timely and untimely repentance. Jonah's people believed before punishment overtook them, whereas Pharaoh professed belief only after he had been seized and death had become certain. Their different outcomes therefore reflect a consistent divine principle rather than an arbitrary exception.

Jonah's Departure From His People

The Qur'an also does not state that Jonah left his people before communicating God's warning. The broader pattern of Qur'anic narratives indicates that prophets were normally instructed to leave their communities before punishment descended. For example, Prophet Lot was commanded to depart with his followers before his people were destroyed. In the same manner, Jonah appears to have left his community after delivering the warning that punishment would arrive within three days.

The displeasure mentioned in Surah Al-Anbiya and Surah Al-Saffat was therefore not caused by a failure to deliver the prophetic message. Instead, it concerned Jonah's decision to migrate from the region before receiving explicit divine permission to do so. After warning his people, Jonah left the area and expected the punishment to occur. When it was removed because of their repentance, he became concerned that the people would accuse him of lying and might subject him to punishment under their laws.

Jonah consequently decided to leave the country. Although his fear was understandable, prophets were expected not to migrate solely according to personal judgment. They normally waited for divine authorization. Thus, Jonah's action was not a deliberate act of disobedience or a neglect of his prophetic mission. It was an error in judgment that did not correspond to the exceptionally high standard expected of a prophet (*Ma'ariful Qur'an*).

Surah Al-Saffat describes Jonah as fleeing toward a heavily loaded ship (Qur'an 37:140). The Arabic term used in this passage can describe a servant who leaves without the permission of his master. Similarly, Surah Al-Anbiya refers to Jonah as "the man of the fish" who departed in anger and assumed that God would not constrain him (Qur'an 21:87). These passages criticize his departure without permission rather than suggesting that he failed to communicate God's message.

The commentary in *Ruh al-Ma'ani* similarly explains that Jonah left because of his people's persistent hostility and rejection after spending a considerable period inviting them to faith. His journey represented a form of migration, but it began before he received divine authorization. The divine displeasure associated with this action concerned premature migration, not negligence in performing his prophetic responsibilities (*Ma'ariful Qur'an*).

Reports derived from Israelite traditions should not be used to establish that Jonah failed in his prophetic mission. Muslim commentators sometimes recorded Israelite narratives for historical purposes without accepting them as reliable foundations for theology or Islamic law. Consequently, claims that Jonah neglected his mission cannot be established through such reports.

The People of Nineveh

The Qur'an, Hadith literature, and historical reports provide different parts of the account of Jonah and his people.

According to the traditional narrative, Jonah was sent to Nineveh, a city located near present-day Mosul in Iraq. The Qur'an indicates that the population numbered more than one hundred thousand people (Qur'an 37:147).

Jonah invited the people to worship God, but they initially rejected his message. He subsequently warned them that divine punishment would arrive within three days. Because the people had never known Jonah to lie, they took his warning seriously. They reportedly decided to observe whether he remained in the city. They believed that his departure would indicate that the punishment was certain to occur.

Jonah left during the night. The following morning, a dark cloud resembling smoke appeared above the people and seemed to move closer to them. Recognizing the signs of impending punishment, they became convinced that destruction was near.

The people searched for Jonah so that they could declare their faith and repentance in his presence. When they could not find him, they gathered in an open area and collectively appealed to God for forgiveness. Men, women, children, and even animals were brought together as the community openly expressed sorrow and repentance. God accepted their sincere return to Him and removed the threatened punishment, as stated in Qur'an 10:98.

Some historical reports associate this event with the tenth day of Muharram, known as Ashura. However, details not established by the Qur'an or authentic Hadith should be treated as historical reports rather than certain religious facts.

Jonah's Experience at Sea

Jonah remained outside the city expecting the punishment to descend. Because he did not initially know that the people had repented, he became concerned when the punishment failed to occur. He feared that the community would accuse him of making a false prediction and might threaten his life.

Although prophets are protected from deliberate sin and disobedience, they retain normal human emotions and temperaments. Jonah's distress therefore reflected a natural concern about how his people might respond. Acting upon this concern, he travelled toward the coast and boarded a ship.

When the ship experienced difficulty continuing its journey, the passengers drew lots to determine who would be cast overboard. Jonah's name was repeatedly selected. The Qur'an states that he participated in the drawing of lots and was among those who lost (Qur'an 37:141). He was then cast into the sea and swallowed by a large fish under God's command.

The fish was not permitted to harm Jonah. Instead, it became his temporary place of confinement. Reports differ regarding the length of his stay. Some suggest that it lasted 40 days, whereas others mention shorter periods. Because no definitive Qur'anic statement or universally authentic report establishes the duration, the exact length remains unknown.

While inside the fish, Jonah prayed:

“There is no deity except You. Glory be to You. I have certainly been among the wrongdoers” (Qur'an 21:87).

God accepted Jonah's prayer and delivered him safely onto the shore. The Qur'an states that God caused a gourd plant to grow over him, providing shade and assisting his recovery (Qur'an 37:145–146). Other details concerning his physical condition

and the means through which he received nourishment originate primarily from historical or exegetical reports.

Conclusion

The account of Prophet Jonah and his people emphasizes the importance of sincere and timely repentance. Jonah's people were saved because they recognized the signs of divine punishment and voluntarily returned to God before the punishment overtook them. Their acceptance was therefore consistent with the general divine principle that repentance remains available until death or irreversible punishment becomes directly present.

The account also distinguishes between neglecting a prophetic mission and making a judgment that does not correspond to the elevated standard expected of a prophet. Jonah fulfilled his responsibility by communicating God's message and warning his people. The divine correction he experienced concerned his decision to migrate before receiving permission, not a failure to deliver revelation.

Finally, the narrative demonstrates the importance of distinguishing between information established by the Qur'an and authentic Hadith and details derived from historical or Israelite traditions. The former may be accepted with certainty, whereas the latter should not be used independently to establish theological doctrines or Islamic legal rulings.

References:

Shafi, Muhammad (2008). Maariful Quran. (Vol .4 surah 10 verse 98).

11:28 Noah's resolve

He said: "O my people! See ye if (it be that) I have a Clear Sign from my Lord, and that He hath sent Mercy unto me from His own presence, but that the Mercy hath been obscured from your sight? shall we compel you to accept it when ye are averse to it?"

Noah's answer (like that of the Prophet of Allah who spoke in later ages in Makkah and Madinah) is a pattern of humility, gentleness, firmness, persuasiveness, truth, and love for his own people.

First, he meekly (not exultingly) informs them that he has got a Message from Allah. Secondly, he tells them that it is a Message of Mercy even in its warning, though in their arrogance the Mercy may be hidden from them. Thirdly, he tells them plainly that there can be no compulsion in Religion: but will they not accept with goodwill what is for their own benefit? He pleads with them as one of their own

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 11 verse 28).

11:31 I tell you not that with me are the treasures of Allah, nor do I know what is hidden, nor claim I to be an angel

“I tell you not that with me are the treasures of Allah, nor do I know what is hidden, nor claim I to be an angel. Nor yet do I say, of those whom your eyes do despise that Allah will not grant them (all) that is good: Allah knoweth best what is in their souls: I should, if I did, indeed be a wrong-doer.”

Quran 53:10:

So did (Allah) convey the inspiration to His Servant-(conveyed) what He (meant) to convey.

Lit., “whatever He revealed”: an allusion to the exceptional manifestation of the angel “in his true shape and nature” as well as to the contents of divine revelation as such. In its deeper sense the above phrase implies that even to His chosen prophets God does not entirely unveil the ultimate mysteries of existence, of life and death, of the purpose for which He has created the universe, or of the nature of the universe itself.

References:

Asad, Muhammad (1980). The Message of the Quran.

11:43 Noah said: This day nothing can save, from the command of Allah, any but those on whom He hath mercy!

The son replied: “I will betake myself to some mountain: it will save me from the water.” Noah said: “This day nothing can save, from the command of Allah, any but those on whom He hath mercy! “And the waves came between them, and the son was among those overwhelmed in the Flood.

The son of Noah who remained aloof in v. 42 is said to have been named Yām (IK, Z) or Kan‘ān (Z). From a spiritual point of view, his statement that he would take refuge on a mountain can be understood to refer to the false sense of security, stability, and permanence (symbolized by a mountain) that the disbelievers, in their state of denial of God, assign to the world.

References:

Nasr, Hossein (2015). Study Quran.

11:48 Noah's Flood: A Universal Flood?

The word came: "O Noah! Come down (from the Ark) with peace from Us, and blessing on thee and on some of the peoples (who will spring) from those with thee: but (there will be other) peoples to whom We shall grant their pleasures (for a time), but in the end will a grievous penalty reach them from Us."

Maurice Bucaille compares the biblical and Qur'anic accounts of Noah's flood and identifies a significant difference between the two narratives. According to Bucaille, the biblical account combines two separate traditions that present certain events differently. It describes the flood as a worldwide catastrophe and places it approximately 300 years before the time of Abraham.

Based on the commonly accepted historical period associated with Abraham, this chronology would place the flood around the twenty-first or twenty-second century BCE. Bucaille argues that the claim of a universal flood occurring during this period conflicts with established historical evidence. For example, civilizations continued to exist in ancient Egypt during the First Intermediate Period, which preceded the Middle Kingdom and the Eleventh Dynasty. Consequently, it would be historically difficult to maintain that all human civilizations were destroyed by a worldwide catastrophe at that time.

Bucaille further contends that these elements of the biblical account are inconsistent with modern historical and archaeological knowledge. In his view, this inconsistency demonstrates a substantial difference between the biblical and Qur'anic descriptions of the flood.

In contrast, the Qur'an does not explicitly describe Noah's flood as a global event. Rather, its account may be understood as referring to a catastrophe that affected Noah's people, who

were punished because of their persistent wrongdoing and rejection of divine guidance. This pattern resembles Qur'anic accounts of other communities that experienced punishment because of their unbelief and misconduct. The Qur'an also does not provide a specific historical date for the flood. Therefore, Bucaille concludes that the Qur'anic narrative does not present the same historical or archaeological difficulties associated with interpreting the flood as a universal event.

References:

Bucaille, Maurice. *The Quran and Modern Science*. (1995)

11:61 Prophet Salih

To the Thamud People (We sent) Salih, one of their own brethren. He said: “O my people! Worship Allah: ye have no other god but Him. It is He Who hath produced you from the earth and settled you therein: then ask forgiveness of Him, and turn to Him (in repentance): for my Lord is (always) near, ready to answer.”

The story of Salih and the Thamud people has been told from another point of view in 7:73-79. The difference in the point of view there and here is the same as in the story of Hud: see n. 1545 to 11:50.

Note how the story now is the same, and yet new points and details are brought out to illustrate each new argument.

Note, also, how the besetting sin of the 'Ad-pride and obstinacy -is distinguished from the besetting sin of the Thamud- the oppression of the poor, as illustrated by the test case and symbol of the She-camel: see n. 1044 to 7:73.

All sin is in a sense pride and rebellion; yet sins take particular hues in different circumstances, and these colours are brought out as in a most artistically painted picture- with the greatest economy of words and the most piercing analysis of motives.

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 11 verse 61).

11:64 The She-camel

“And O my people! This she-camel of Allah is a symbol to you: leave her to feed on Allah’s (free) earth, and inflict no harm on her, or a swift penalty will seize you!”

Salih does not merely take up a negative attitude. He puts forward the she-camel as a sign “Give up your selfish monopoly. Make Allah’s gifts on this free earth available to all. Give the poor their rights, including grazing rights on common lands. Show your penitence and your new attitude by leaving this shecamel to graze freely. She is a Symbol, and therefore sacred to you.”

But their only reply was to defy the appeal and hamstring the camel. And so they went the way of all sinners-to total perdition

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 11 verse 64).

11:70 The Messengers of Abraham

But when he saw their hands went not towards the (meal), he felt some mistrust of them, and conceived a fear of them. They said: “Fear not: We have been sent against the people of Lut.”

When Abraham saw that the hands of his guests did not extend to the meal he served, he at once realized that they had come with bad news. The guests however first gave Abraham the good news that his barren wife was to bear a son. The details of the bad news were given later. “Have no fear” (refers to the fear of Abraham before Allâh, and not from his guests.

References:

NOORUDDÎN ,ALLÂMAH. (2015). Exegesis of The Holy Qur’ân Commentary and Reflections. (surah 2 verse 75).

11:77 Prophet Lut

When Our messengers came to Lut, he was grieved on their account and felt himself powerless (to protect) them. He said: “This is a distressful day.”

Traditional Islamic discussions of this passage often address the regulation of sexual conduct. Within this interpretive framework, Islam prohibits sexual relations outside marriage and discourages conduct believed to lead toward unlawful sexual activity. The source also presents same-sex sexual acts as contrary to the divinely established moral and social order.

According to this interpretation, the widespread normalization of prohibited sexual conduct can weaken moral discipline and cause individuals to become governed by desire rather than ethical restraint. The Qur’anic account of the people of Prophet Lot is presented as an example of a community that repeatedly engaged in serious wrongdoing and rejected the guidance of its prophet. Lot condemned their conduct by asking why they approached men while abandoning the spouses God had created for them, describing them as people who had exceeded proper limits (Qur’an 26:165–166).

The account further emphasizes the people’s treatment of Lot’s guests. The visitors were angels appearing in human form, although the people were unaware of their true identity. Lot feared that his guests would be dishonoured and attempted to protect them. His people, who had previously committed immoral acts, hurried toward his home. Lot appealed to them to fear God, avoid humiliating him before his guests, and behave with moral responsibility. They rejected his appeal and openly declared their intentions. Feeling unable to restrain them, Lot expressed his wish for greater strength or powerful assistance. The angels then revealed their identity and assured him that the

people would not be able to harm him or his guests (Qur'an 11:77–81).

Classical Muslim jurists differed in their legal treatment of prohibited same-sex acts. Some compared the offence to unlawful heterosexual intercourse, whereas others proposed a more severe punishment for those involved. These legal opinions emerged within historical systems of Islamic jurisprudence that sought to preserve public morality and regulate conduct considered harmful to society. Such rulings should be understood as juristic interpretations developed within particular legal, social, and historical contexts rather than as punishments that individuals may independently impose.

References:

Al-Qaradawi, Yusuf (1960). *The Lawful and Prohibited in Islam*. (p. 164, 166).

12:100 The Fulfillment of Yusuf's Dream

And he raised his parents high on the throne (of dignity), and they fell down in prostration, (all) before him. He said: "O my father! this is the fulfilment of my vision of old! Allah hath made it come true! He was indeed good to me when He took me out of prison and brought you (all here) out of the desert, (even) after Satan had sown enmity between me and my brothers. Verily my Lord understandeth best the mysteries of all that He planneth to do, for verily He is full of knowledge and wisdom.

Certainly metaphorically: probably also literally.

By Eastern custom the place of honour at a ceremonial reception is on a seat on a dais, with a special cushion of honour, such as is assigned to a bridegroom at his reception.

To show his high respect for his parents, Joseph made them sit on a throne of dignity. On the other hand, his parents and his brothers, - all performed the ceremony of prostration before Joseph in recognition of his supreme rank in Egypt under the Pharaoh. And thus was fulfilled the dream or vision of his youth (12:4 above and n. 1633).

The ceremony of prostration for paying respect might have been allowed at the time of previous prophets, but with the advent of the complete and final revelation prostration before anyone other than Allah is a grave sin strictly prohibited.

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (Surah 12 verse 100).

12:101 The gift of Allah to Yusuf

“O my Lord! Thou hast indeed bestowed on me some power, and taught me something of the interpretation of dreams and events,- O Thou Creator of the heavens and the earth! Thou art my Protector in this world and in the Hereafter. Take Thou my soul (at death) as one submitting to Thy will (as a Muslim), and unite me with the righteous.”

Then he turns to Allah in prayer, and again his modesty is predominant. He held supreme power under the king, but he calls it “some power” or authority. His reading of events and dreams had saved millions of lives in the great Egyptian famine; yet he refers to it as “something of the interpretation of dreams and events”. And he takes no credit to himself, “All this,” he says, “was Thy gift, O Allah! For such things can only come from the Creator of the heavens and earth.”

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (Surah 12 verse 101).

12:102-104 The Story of Yusuf is the revelation of Allah

Such is one of the stories of what happened unseen, which We reveal by inspiration unto thee; nor wast thou (present) with them then when they concerted their plans together in the process of weaving their plots.

Yet no faith will the greater part of mankind have, however ardently thou dost desire it. And no reward dost thou ask of them for this: it is no less than a message for all creatures. Ibn Kathir writes,

This Story is a Revelation from Allah Allah says;

That is of the news of the Ghayb (Unseen) which We reveal to you. Allah narrated to Muhammad, peace be upon him, the story of Yusuf and his brothers and how Allah raised him over them, giving him the better end, triumph, the sovereignty and wisdom (i.e., Prophethood), even though they tried to harm and kill him.

Allah said, 'This and similar stories are part of the unseen incidents of the past, O Muhammad, (which We reveal to you) and inform you of, O Muhammad, because it carries a lesson, for you to draw from and a reminder to those who defy you.' Allah said next, 'You were not (present) with them, you did not witness their conference nor saw them, when they arranged their plan together, to throw Yusuf into the well, and (while) they were plotting. against him. We taught you all this through Our Revelation which We sent down to you.' Allah said in other Ayat, You were not with them, when they cast lots with their pens. And you were not on the western side, when We made clear to Musa the commandment... (28:44) until, And you were not at the side of the Tur when We did call. (28:46) Allah also said, And you were not a dweller among the people of Madyan, reciting Our verses to them. (28:45)

Allah states that Muhammad is His Messenger and that He has taught him the news of what occurred in the past, which carry lessons for people to draw from, so that they acquire their safety in their religious affairs as well as their worldly affairs. Yet, most people did not and will not believe, so Allah said, And most of mankind will not believe even if you desire it eagerly. Allah said in similar Ayat, And if you obey most of those on the earth, they will mislead you far away from Allah's path. (6:116) Verily, in this is an Ayah, yet most of them are not believers. (26:8)

Allah said next,

And no reward you ask of them for it;

Allah says, 'You, O Muhammad, do not ask them in return for this advice and your call to all that is good and righteous, for any price or compensation for delivering it. Rather, you do so seeking Allah's Face and to deliver good and sincere advice to His creatures, it (the Qur'an) is no less than a Reminder unto the 'Alamin (men and Jinn). with which they remember, receive guidance and save themselves in this life and the Hereafter.'

References:

Kathir, Ibn. Tafsir Ibn Kathir. (Surah 12 verses 102-104).

12:109 Who are the Prophets and Messengers?

Nor did We send before thee (as messengers) any but men, whom we did inspire,- (men) living in human habitations. Do they not travel through the earth, and see what was the end of those before them? But the home of the hereafter is best, for those who do right. Will ye not then understand?

It was men that Allah sent as His Messengers to explain Him to men. He did not send angels or gods. Into His chosen men He breathed His inspiration, so that they could see truer than other men. But they were men living with men, in men's habitations in town or country; not recluses or cenobites, who had no personal experience of men's affairs and could not be teachers of men in the fullest sense. Their deeds tell their own tale.

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (Surah 12 verse 109).

12:111 It is not a tale invented, but a confirmation of what went before it,- a detailed exposition of all things, and a guide and a mercy to any such as believe.

There is, in their stories, instruction for men endued with understanding. It is not a tale invented, but a confirmation of what went before it,- a detailed exposition of all things, and a guide and a mercy to any such as believe.

Their stories, i.e., the stories of Prophets or of the wicked; for the two threads inter-twine, as in Joseph's story.

A story like that of Joseph is not a purely imaginary fable. The People of the Book have it in their sacred literature. It is confirmed here in its main outline, but here there is a detailed spiritual exposition that will be found nowhere in earlier literature.

The exposition covers all sides of human life. If properly understood it gives valuable lessons to guide our conduct,-an instance of Allah's grace and mercy to people who will go to Him in faith and put their affairs in His hands.

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (Surah 12 verse 111). [1]Microsoft Word – 012 Yusuf.doc (quran4u.com)

12:21 Thus did We establish Joseph in the land, that We might teach him the interpretation of stories (and events)

The man in Egypt who bought him, said to his wife: “Make his stay (among us) honourable: may be he will bring us much good, or we shall adopt him as a son.” Thus did We establish Joseph in the land, that We might teach him the interpretation of stories (and events). And Allah hath full power and control over His affairs; but most among mankind know it not.

The Qur’an does not mention his name or position; but a later reference to him (in verse 30 below) as al-aziz (“the great [or “mighty”] one”) points to his having been a high official or a nobleman.

Lit., “sayings”. or “tidings” (ahddith). Most of the commentators assume that this refers specifically to Joseph’s future ability to interpret dreams; but Razi points out that in this context the term hadith (of which ahadith is the plural) may be synonymous with hadith (“something that newly comes into existence”, i.e., “an event” or “a happening”). This is, to my mind, much more convincing than a mere reference to dream-interpretation, the more so as the term ta’wil is often used in the Qur’an (e.g., in 3:7, 10:39 or 18:78) in the sense of “final meaning”, “inner meaning” or “real meaning” of a happening or statement or thing, as distinct from its outward, prima- facie appearance.

The use of the particle min (“of”) before the term ta’wil indicates that absolute knowledge of what a thing or event implies rests with God alone (cf. 3:7 – “none save God knows its final meaning”), and that even God’s elect, the prophets – albeit their vision is much wider than that of ordinary men – are granted only a partial insight into the mysteries of God’s creation.

References:

Asad, Muhammad (1980). The Message of the Quran.

12:4 Prophet Yusuf and Dreams

Behold! Joseph said to his father: “O my father! I did see eleven stars and the sun and the moon: I saw them prostrate themselves to me!”

The Arabic word translated as “stars,” *kawkab*, may also refer to planets or other luminous celestial bodies. Some commentators have interpreted the eleven stars, together with the sun and moon, symbolically rather than astronomically. Within the immediate Qur’anic narrative, these celestial bodies are generally understood to represent Joseph’s brothers and parents, whose later submission before him fulfilled the dream’s meaning. A broader spiritual interpretation may view the Earth as significant because it serves as the habitat of humanity. The Qur’an also repeatedly states that celestial and terrestrial phenomena, including the sun and moon, operate according to God’s command and have been made beneficial to human beings (Qur’an 13:2; 16:12; 31:20).

Dreaming presents an unusual dimension of human experience. Although the body remains largely inactive during sleep, an individual may experience movement, conversation, emotional events, and encounters that seem to occur within a brief period. These experiences may continue to affect the dreamer after awakening. Psychological theories, including those associated with Sigmund Freud, frequently explain dreams as expressions of subconscious desires, memories, impulses, anxieties, or past experiences. However, religious interpretations raise the additional question of how certain dreams appear to anticipate events about which the dreamer had no previous knowledge.

From a traditional spiritual perspective, the human spirit may experience a symbolic realm during sleep while maintaining a connection with the physical body. In this realm, ordinary

distinctions among the past, present, and future may not function in the same manner as they do during waking life. The dreamer may therefore encounter representations of past experiences or possible future events. Because such experiences often appear in symbolic form, they may require interpretation. For example, clear water may symbolize knowledge. The metaphors, parables, and symbolic expressions found in the Qur'an and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad may consequently provide interpretive principles for understanding dreams.

Islamic tradition generally distinguishes among different categories of dreams. Some dreams may be classified as "confused" or "jumbled dreams," an expression found in Qur'an 12:44. These may arise from emotional disturbance, imagination, ordinary thoughts, or memories of previously experienced events. The mind may reconstruct these materials in unfamiliar or distorted forms during sleep. Although such dreams may occasionally contain meaningful elements, their symbolism is often unclear and requires careful interpretation. The dreams described in Qur'an 12:43–49 illustrate the importance of distinguishing between confusing imagery and dreams containing coherent symbolic meaning.

Another category consists of dreams believed to communicate meaningful guidance. Such dreams may provide encouragement toward righteous action, convey glad tidings, or warn individuals about harmful conduct. These experiences are commonly referred to as true dreams and are often described as vivid, coherent, and memorable. According to an authenticated prophetic narration, true dreams constitute one of forty-six parts of prophethood. Traditional scholars have explained this statement by noting that Prophet Muhammad experienced true dreams during the first six months of his 23-year prophetic mission. Accordingly, true dreams may contain an element of

truthful inspiration, although they do not grant prophethood or establish religious law.

Popular historical accounts have also associated dreams with moments of scientific or technological insight. Elias Howe, for example, is sometimes said to have received inspiration for the design of the sewing-machine needle through a dream involving spears with openings near their pointed ends. After awakening, he reportedly applied this image to the development of a needle with an eye near its tip. Similarly, an often-repeated account claims that Niels Bohr envisioned an arrangement resembling planets orbiting the sun and later connected this image with an early model of atomic structure. Such examples are commonly presented to illustrate how dreams may assist creative thought by reorganizing ideas and problems that already occupy the mind.

The account of Joseph demonstrates that dreams can play an important narrative and spiritual role in the Qur'an. His childhood vision symbolically anticipated later events in his life and introduced the themes of divine guidance, patience, hardship, and eventual honour that unfold throughout the chapter. At the same time, Islamic teachings encourage a distinction between spiritually meaningful dreams and those arising from ordinary mental or emotional activity.

References:

Unal, Ali (2006). *The Quran with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English*. (surah 12 verse 4).

12:94 Jacob is informed by divine revelation of the news of Joseph

When the caravan left (Egypt), their father said: “I do indeed scent the presence of Joseph: Nay, think me not a dotard.” Rîh is derived from *rauh* meaning mercy.

Linguistically the word is related to the noun *rûh* the breath of life) and has the metonymic significance of *rahat* :expressed as “rest from grief and sadness” (Tâj). Jacob said, “I do scent the power of Joseph’ as if to say, I feel rest from the grief and sadness, and I sense good news involving Joseph and know that he is alive. The verse is usually translated to indicate that Jacob picked up the scent of Joseph; however, it does not have to be understood in a strict literal way. The Prophets of Allâh are always endowed with extraordinary powers of foresight and prophecy. The verse shows that Jacob knew by Divine Revelation that Joseph was alive and that he was in Egypt.

References:

NOORUDDÎN ,ALLÂMAH. (2015). Exegesis of The Holy Qur’ân Commentary and Reflections. (surah 2 verse 75).

17:95 Messengers are Prophets among the respective creatures

Say, “If there were settled, on earth, angels walking about in peace and quiet, We should certainly have sent them down from the heavens an angel for a messenger.”

The argument is that if angels inhabited this earth, an angel from heaven could be sent down as a messenger to them, as they could mutually understand each other, and the Message of Allah could be explained without difficulty.

But the earth is inhabited by men, and the men themselves are divided into races, or groups, or nations. To each Group is sent a prophet from among their brethren: to 'Ad, their brother Hud (11:50); to Thamud, their brother Salih (11:61); and so on.

As a matter of fact, with wicked men, constituted as they are, the appearance of an angel causes disturbance and an unseemly riot, as in the case of the angels that came to Lut (11:77-80).

In any case they cannot carry out an effective mission among men (6:8-9).

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 17 verse 95)

19:12 Yahya

(To his son came the command): “O Yahya! take hold of the Book with might”: and We gave him Wisdom even as a youth, Time passes. The son is born. In this section of the Surah the centre of interest is Yahya, and the instruction is now given to him.

’Keep fast hold of Allah’s revelation with all your might’: for an unbelieving world had either corrupted or neglected it, and Yahya (John the Baptist) was to prepare the way for, Jesus, who was coming to renew and re-interpret it

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 19 verse 12).

19:54 Isma'il

Also mention in the Book (the story of) Isma'il: He was (strictly) true to what he promised, and he was a messenger (and) a prophet. Isma'il was Dhabih Allah i.e., the chosen sacrifice for Allah in Muslim tradition.

When Abraham told him of the sacrifice, he voluntarily offered himself for it, and never flinched from his promise, until the sacrifice was redeemed by the substitution of a ram under Allah's commands.

He was the fountain-head of the Arabian Ummah, and in his posterity came the Prophet of Allah. The Ummah and the Book of Islam reflect back the prophethood on Isma'il.

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 19 verse 54).

Also mention in the Book the case of Idris: He was a man of truth (and sincerity), (and) a prophet:

Idris is mentioned twice in the Quran, viz.; here and in 21:85, where he is mentioned among those who patiently persevered. His identification with the Biblical Enoch, who “walked with God’ (Gen. 5:21-24), may or may not be correct. Nor are we justified in interpreting verse 57 here as meaning the same thing as in Gen. 5:24 (“God took him”), that he was taken up without passing through the portals of death.

All we are told is that he was a man of truth and sincerity, and a prophet, and that he had a high position among his people. It is this point which brings him in the series of men just mentioned; he kept himself in touch with his people, and was honoured among them. Spiritual progress need not cut us off from our people, for we have to help and guide them. He kept to truth and piety in the highest station.

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 19 verse 54).

20:134 The wisdom for sending the Messenger

And if We had inflicted on them a penalty before this, they would have said: “Our Lord! If only Thou hadst sent us a messenger, we should certainly have followed Thy Signs before we were humbled and put to shame.”

If the Sign mentioned in the last note did not convince them, it would mean that they were not true to their own faith. They were not straight with themselves. In justice they should have been punished for their falsehood. But they were given further respite.

Or they would again have argued in a circle, and said: “If only Allah had sent us a living messenger we should have believed!” The living messenger they flout because they want a Sign. The Sign they wish to ignore, because they want a living messenger!

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 20 verse 114).

21:62 They said, “Art thou the one that did this with our gods,
O Abraham?”

They said, “Art thou the one that did this with our gods, O
Abraham?”

They asked him the formal question. There was no mystery about it. He had already openly threatened to do something to the idols, and people who had heard his threats were there. He now continues his ironic taunt to the idol- worshippers. 'You ask me! Why don't you ask the idols? Doesn't it look as if this big fellow has smashed the smaller ones in a quarrel?'

If they do not ask the idols, they confess that the idols have not intelligence enough to answer! This argument is developed in verses 64-67.

Note that while the false worshippers laughed at his earnestness, he pays them out by a grim practical joke, which at the same time advances the cause of Truth.

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 21 verse 62).

21:64 Abraham's demonstration

So they turned to themselves and said, "Surely ye are the ones in the wrong!" Abraham's biting irony cut them to the quick. What could they say?

They turned to each other. Some among them thought he had the best of the argument. They were not keen on idolatry, and they told their fellows that it was useless arguing with Abraham. They all hung their heads in shame. But presently they thought they would face out Abraham, and take his words literally.

They said, "You know quite well that idols do not speak!" This was precisely what Abraham wanted them to say, and he delivered his final blow!

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 21 verse 64).

21:67 The Persecutors of Abraham

“Fie upon you, and upon the things that ye worship besides Allah! Have ye no sense?”..

As soon as they admitted in so many words that the idols could not speak, Abraham delivered his final attack:

‘Then why do you worship useless impotent creatures?’ After that, there remains nothing but the argument of violence, which they proceed to exercise, being the party in power. ‘Burn him at the stake’ is an easy cry!

But it was not Abraham that suffered: it was his persecutors (21:70).

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 21 verse 67).

21:69 The Miracle of the Fire

We said, “O Fire! be thou cool, and (a means of) safety for Abraham!”

This verse contains three subtle points:

First: Like every element in nature, fire performs a duty under God’s command. It did not burn Abraham, upon him be peace, for God commanded it not to do so.

Second: One type of heat burns through coldness. Through the phrase, Be peaceful, God Almighty commanded the cold: “Do not burn him.” An interpreter of the Qur’ān remarks:

“If He had not said ‘Be peaceful!, it would have burned him with its coldness.” Fire can simultaneously burn and be cold. Science has discovered a fire called “white heat” which does not radiate its heat. Instead, by attracting the surrounding heat, it causes the surrounding area to become cold enough to freeze liquids and, in effect, burns them through its cold. (Hell, which contains all degrees and sorts of fire, may well also have this intense cold.)

Third: Just as there is an immaterial substance like faith, and an armor like Islam, which Surah 21 Al-Anbiya (The Prophets) will remove the effects of Hellfire and prevent them from harming us, there must be a physical substance that will protect against and prevent the effects of fire. As the fire did not burn Abraham’s body or clothes, people can make a similar armor to protect them against fire. Thus, the verse suggests:

O nation of Abraham. Be like Abraham, so that your garments may be your guard against the fire, your greatest enemy, in both worlds.

Coat your spirit with faith, and it will be your

armor against Hellfire. Moreover, earth contains substances that will protect you from fire's evil. Search for them, extract them, and coat yourselves with them.

As an important step in our progress, humankind discovered a fire-resistant substance. But see how elevated, fine, and beautiful a garment this verse indicates, one which will be woven on the loom of purity of faith in and submission to God, and which will not be torn for all eternity (The Words, "The 20th Word,")

References:

Unal, Ali (2006). The Quran with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English. (surah 21 verse 69)

21:79 Prophet Solomon and David

To Solomon We inspired the (right) understanding of the matter: to each (of them) We gave Judgment and Knowledge; it was Our power that made the hills and the birds celebrate Our praises, with David: it was We Who did (all these things).

This verse indicates that God granted Prophet Solomon special insight into the matter under consideration, while both Solomon and David were endowed with wisdom, sound judgment, and knowledge. It also describes the mountains and birds as joining Prophet David in glorifying God.

According to the cited interpretation, God gave David's recitation and glorification an extraordinary degree of strength, beauty, and resonance. His praises were so powerful that the surrounding mountains appeared to respond to him. Like a vast natural sound system, the mountains echoed his words and participated in the glorification of God.

The ability of mountains to produce echoes provides a physical illustration of this concept. When a person calls out before a mountain, especially one containing caves or large rock formations, the sound may be reflected and repeated. From this perspective, the natural ability of mountains to echo human speech may be understood as one aspect of their capacity to "speak." The miraculous element in David's case, however, was that this natural ability was elevated and directed by God in an exceptional manner.

David was granted both prophethood and political authority. The interpretation suggests that God developed the mountains' latent capacity to respond as a miracle supporting David's comprehensive mission and powerful sovereignty. The mountains are described metaphorically as soldiers, students, or followers gathered around him. Under his direction, they repeated his praises and joined him in glorifying the Creator.

Modern communication technology offers an analogy for understanding this idea. A military commander, for example, can use communication systems to instruct forces dispersed throughout mountainous regions to make the same declaration simultaneously. Their voices may then reverberate throughout the landscape. If an ordinary human leader can coordinate such an event through technological means, the interpretation argues that a prophet supported by divine power could be granted an even greater ability to cause the mountains to participate in glorification.

The passage also presents each mountain as possessing a collective identity and a distinctive form of worship. Mountains may glorify God through the echoes of human voices, but they may also praise Him in a manner appropriate to their own created nature. Therefore, their glorification should not be limited to the repetition of David's words. Rather, all created things may be understood as worshipping the Creator through their existence, natural functions, and obedience to the laws established for them (*The Words*, "The Twentieth Word," p. 271).

References:

Unal, Ali (2006). *The Quran with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English*. (surah 21 verse 79)

21:82 Solomon's army

And of the evil ones, were some who dived for him, and did other work besides; and it was We Who guarded them.

The literalists and the rationalists take different views.

The former say that Solomon had power over supernatural being of evil, whom he compelled to dive for pearls and do other hard tasks.

Rationalists refer this to hostile unruly races whom he subjected to his sway. 38 It was Allah's power ultimately, Who granted him wisdom. Solomon tamed the Jinns with Wisdom.

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 21 verse 82).

And (remember) Isma'il, Idris, and Zul-kifl, all (men) of constancy and patience;

Dhu al Kifl would literally mean "possessor of, or giving, a double requital or portion"; or else, "one who used a cloak of double thickness," that being one of the meanings of Kifl.

The Commentators differ in opinion as to who is meant, why the title is applied to him, and the point of his being grouped with Isma'il and Idris for constancy and patience.

I think the best suggestion is that afforded by Karsten Niebuhr in his *Reisebeschreibung nach Arabian*, Copenhagen, 1778, ii. 264-266, as quoted in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* under "Dhul-Kifl".

He visited Meshad 'All in 'Iraq, and also the little town called Kefil, midway between Najaf and Hilla (Babylon). Kefil, he says, is the Arabic form of Ezekiel. The shrine of Ezekiel was there, and the Jews came to it on pilgrimage.

If we accept "Dhul al Kifl" to be not an epithet, but an Arabicised form of "Ezekiel", it fits the context, Ezekiel was a prophet in Israel who was carried away to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar after his second attack on Jerusalem (about B.C. 599). His Book is included in the English Bible (Old Testament). He was chained and bound, and put into prison, and for a time he was dumb (Ezekiel, 3:25-26).

He bore all with patience and constancy, and continued to reprove boldly the evils in Israel. In a burning passage he denounces false leaders in words which are eternally true: "Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves!

Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken etc. (Ezekiel, 34:2-4).

Dhu al Kifl is again mentioned in 38:48 along with Isma'il and Elisha.

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 21 verse 85).

27:45 Salih

We sent (aforetime), to the Thamud, their brother Salih, saying, “Serve Allah”: But behold, they became two factions quarrelling with each other.

The main story of the Thamud, who were broken up into two factions, the rich oppressing the poor and keeping them out of the good things of life and the test case of the She-camel, will be found in 26:141-159 and the notes thereon.

The point here is the secret plot of the nine men against the Prophet of Allah, whose teaching, they thought, brought them ill-luck; but what they called ill-luck was the just punishment from Allah for their own ill-deeds.

Their plot was foiled, and the whole community, which was involved in evil, was destroyed. (R).

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 27 verse 45).

27:49 The Struggle

They said: “Swear a mutual oath by Allah that we shall make a secret night attack on him and his people, and that we shall then say to his heir (when he seeks vengeance): ‘We were not present at the slaughter of his people, and we are positively telling the truth.’”

This precisely was the kind of plot which the Makkan chiefs of the clans were devising against the Prophet (peace be upon him), and they devised the same ultimately on the occasion of migration (Hijrah) to kill him. They decided that men from all the clans would attack him in a body so that the Bani Hashim could not hold any one of the clans as responsible for the murder, and, therefore, would find it impossible to fight all of them at one and the same time.

References:

Maududi, Abul Ala (2010). Tafhim ul Quran.

27:50 The End of Salih's people

They plotted and planned, but We too planned, even while they perceived it not.

That is, "Before they could make the night attack on the Prophet Salih (peace be upon him) at the appointed time, Allah sent down His scourge which destroyed their whole nation completely. It appears that they made this plot after hamstringing the she-camel. According to Surah Hud, 11:65 , when they had killed the she-camel, Prophet Salih (peace be upon him) gave them a notice to enjoy life in their houses for three more days, for then they would be seized by the torment. At this they might have thought that the torment with which Salih (peace be upon him) threatened them might come or might not, but they must take the vengeance on Salih himself. Therefore, most probably they chose the same night for the attack which Allah had appointed for sending down the torment, and thus were struck down by Allah even before they could touch the Prophet Salih (peace be upon him)."

References:

Maududi, Abul Ala (2010). Tafhim ul Quran.

7:111-122 Prophet Moses vs the Sorcerers

They said: “Keep him and his brother in suspense (for a while); and send to the cities men to collect (7:111) And bring up to thee all (our) sorcerers well- versed.” (7:112)

So there came the sorcerers to Pharaoh: They said, “of course we shall have a (suitable) reward if we win!” (7:113) He said: “Yea, (and more),- for ye shall in that case be (raised to posts) nearest (to my person).” (7:114)

They said: “O Moses! wilt thou throw (first), or shall we have the (first) throw?” (7:115)

Said Moses: “Throw ye (first).” So when they threw, they bewitched the eyes of the people, and struck terror into them: for they showed a great (feat of) magic. (7:116)

We put it into Moses’s mind by inspiration: “Throw (now) thy rod”:and behold! it swallows up straight away all the falsehoods which they fake! (7:117)

Thus truth was confirmed, and all that they did was made of no effect. (7:118)

So the (great ones) were vanquished there and then, and were made to look small. (7:119) But the sorcerers fell down prostrate in adoration. (7:120)

Saying: “We believe in the Lord of the Worlds,- (7:121) “The Lord of Moses and Aaron.” (7:122)

Qur’an 7:111–122 describes the public confrontation between Prophet Moses and Pharaoh’s sorcerers. After witnessing Moses’ staff transform into a serpent and his hand shine with a brilliant light, Pharaoh and his officials refused to accept these signs as evidence of his prophethood. Instead, they accused

Moses of being a highly skilled sorcerer who intended to remove them from their land and seize political authority.

Pharaoh's officials advised him to postpone any immediate action against Moses and Aaron and to send representatives throughout the cities to gather the most accomplished sorcerers. Because magic was highly respected in Egyptian society, Pharaoh believed that trained sorcerers could defeat Moses publicly and discredit his message.

Miracles Appropriate to Their Historical Context

The commentary explains that God granted prophets miracles appropriate to the knowledge and cultural interests of their respective societies. During the time of Moses, magic and sorcery were prominent practices. Moses was therefore given signs that publicly demonstrated the superiority of divine power over magical deception.

A similar principle is illustrated through the miracles of Prophet Jesus. Since medicine was highly developed and respected during his time, Jesus was granted the ability, by God's permission, to heal individuals who were blind from birth and cure those suffering from leprosy. Likewise, the Arabs living during the time of Prophet Muhammad placed great value on eloquence, poetry, and linguistic excellence. The Qur'an was therefore revealed as his greatest miracle, surpassing the Arabs in language, composition, and rhetorical power.

These examples suggest that prophetic miracles were designed to confront the leading forms of knowledge or expertise within particular societies. They allowed people to distinguish divine revelation from ordinary human achievement.

The Sorcerers' Demand for Compensation

When the sorcerers arrived before Pharaoh, they asked whether they would receive a reward if they defeated Moses. Pharaoh assured them that they would not only be compensated but would also be elevated to positions close to him (Qur'an 7:113–114).

Their concern with financial and political reward reflected their worldly motivations. Before agreeing to participate, they wanted assurance that their performance would benefit them materially. This attitude contrasts with that of the prophets, who repeatedly stated that they sought no payment from the people for communicating God's message. As expressed elsewhere in the Qur'an, the prophets declared that their reward belonged solely to the Lord of the worlds (Qur'an 26:109).

Historical and exegetical reports provide widely varying estimates regarding the number of sorcerers who participated. Some reports place their number in the hundreds, whereas others suggest that they numbered in the hundreds of thousands. Reports also state that an enormous quantity of ropes and staffs was gathered for the contest. Because these numerical details are not established by the Qur'an, they should be treated as traditional reports rather than confirmed historical facts.

The Public Contest

The confrontation was arranged to take place in a large public area on a festival day after sunrise. Moses stated, "Your appointed time is the day of the festival, and let the people be assembled in the morning" (Qur'an 20:59). Holding the contest publicly ensured that a large audience would witness the outcome.

Some exegetical reports suggest that Moses spoke with the leader of the sorcerers before the contest and asked whether they would believe if he defeated them. The sorcerer reportedly

expressed confidence that their magical abilities could not be overcome but agreed that they would openly accept Moses' faith if he proved victorious. Because this detail is based on exegetical reports rather than an explicit Qur'anic statement, it cannot be regarded with the same certainty as the Qur'anic account.

At the beginning of the contest, the sorcerers asked Moses whether he wished to cast his staff first or allow them to begin. Their question may have demonstrated confidence in their abilities while also expressing a preference to perform first. Moses calmly instructed them to cast their objects before him (Qur'an 7:115–116).

According to Ibn Kathir, Moses' polite treatment of the sorcerers may have contributed to their willingness to accept the truth after their defeat. His instruction did not constitute approval of sorcery. The sorcerers were already determined to perform their magic, and the only issue under discussion was which side would begin. By permitting them to act first, Moses allowed them to demonstrate their full abilities before the entire audience. This made the difference between their illusion and his divine miracle unmistakably clear.

The Nature of the Sorcerers' Magic

When the sorcerers cast their ropes and staffs, they bewitched the eyes of the spectators and caused them to experience great fear. The people perceived the ropes and staffs as moving snakes, even though the objects themselves may not have physically changed (Qur'an 7:116).

The wording of the verse suggests that their performance involved visual deception or psychological influence. Their magic manipulated the perceptions of the observers, causing them to imagine that the ropes and staffs were alive and

moving. This phenomenon may be compared with illusion, mesmerism, hypnosis, or highly skilled sleight of hand.

Nevertheless, the commentary cautions against concluding that every form of magic is necessarily limited to optical illusion. The term *magic* may be applied to different unusual practices, including deception, psychological influence, telepathic claims, and apparent transformations. Although some individuals have argued that magic can physically transform one object into another, the commentary maintains that decisive evidence regarding such claims is unavailable.

Moses' Staff and the Triumph of Truth

God then inspired Moses to cast down his staff. When he did so, it became a great serpent and swallowed the objects and illusions produced by the sorcerers (Qur'an 7:117). The sorcerers' ropes and staffs had created only deceptive appearances, whereas Moses' staff represented an authentic miracle produced through divine command.

The public nature of the event was significant. The sorcerers were allowed to display their abilities completely before Moses responded. Consequently, no one could claim that they had been prevented from presenting their strongest performance. When Moses' staff swallowed what they had produced, their deception was exposed before the assembled population.

The Qur'an explains that truth was established and everything the sorcerers had produced was rendered ineffective. Pharaoh and his supporters were defeated and humiliated in the very contest they had organized to discredit Moses (Qur'an 7:118–119).

The Sorcerers' Recognition of the Truth

As experts in magic, the sorcerers immediately recognized that Moses' action could not have resulted from sorcery. They

understood the technical limits of their own profession and therefore knew that the transformation of Moses' staff represented a genuine divine sign.

Overcome by the miracle, the sorcerers fell in prostration and declared their belief in the Lord of the worlds, specifically identifying Him as the Lord of Moses and Aaron (Qur'an 7:120–122). Their prostration may indicate both their voluntary submission and God's guidance leading them to accept the truth.

The phrase "the Lord of Moses and Aaron" clarified the identity of the Lord in whom they believed. Pharaoh claimed supreme authority and expected his subjects to recognize him as their highest lord. By identifying God as the Lord worshipped by Moses and Aaron, the sorcerers openly rejected Pharaoh's claim to divinity and affirmed that the true Lord of the universe was the God who had sent the two prophets.

Conclusion

The confrontation between Moses and Pharaoh's sorcerers illustrates the distinction between divine miracles and human deception. The sorcerers manipulated the perceptions of the spectators, whereas Moses' sign occurred through divine command and completely invalidated their performance.

The narrative also presents a contrast between worldly ambition and sincere faith. Initially, the sorcerers participated because they desired wealth, status, and closeness to Pharaoh. After recognizing the truth, however, they abandoned these motivations and publicly submitted to God.

Their immediate conversion demonstrates that individuals with expert knowledge may be especially capable of recognizing when an event exceeds the limits of ordinary human skill. Because the sorcerers understood magic better than the general audience, they were among the first to recognize that Moses

had not defeated them through superior sorcery but through a genuine sign from the Lord of the worlds.

References:

Shafi, Muhammad (2008). Maariful Quran. (Vol .4 surah 7 verses 111-122).

The Splitting of the sea as tall as a Mountain by Moses (peace be upon him)

Quran 26:61-63:

And when the two companies saw one another, the companions of Moses said, “Indeed, we are to be overtaken!” (verse 61)
[Moses] said, “No! Indeed, with me is my Lord; He will guide me.” (verse 62)

Then We inspired to Moses, “Strike with your staff the sea,” and it parted, and each portion was like a great towering mountain. (verse 63)

According to Maududi’s commentary, the Arabic word *tawd* literally refers to a high or massive mountain. When Prophet Moses struck the sea with his staff, the waters separated and rose on both sides like enormous mountains. The sea remained divided long enough for the large Israelite community to cross safely and for Pharaoh and his forces to enter the passage and reach its central area (Maududi, n.d., note 47).

Maududi argues that this event cannot be adequately explained as the result of an ordinary natural occurrence. Even an exceptionally powerful windstorm would not normally cause a sea to divide into two towering bodies of water and remain in that condition for an extended period. Moreover, Qur’an 20:77 states that Moses was commanded to create a dry path through the sea for the Israelites. This suggests that the event involved not only the separation of the waters but also the formation of a firm and dry passage without mud or marshy ground.

Qur'an 44:24 further indicates that, after Moses and the Israelites had crossed, he was instructed to leave the sea in its divided state because Pharaoh and his army were destined to drown there. Maududi interprets this command as implying that Moses could have struck the sea again and caused the divided waters to reunite, but he was specifically instructed not to do so until Pharaoh's forces had entered the passage.

On this basis, Maududi concludes that the parting of the sea was a divine miracle rather than a natural phenomenon. In his view, the Qur'anic description of the towering waters, the dry pathway, and the timing of the sea's closure does not support interpretations that attempt to explain the event solely through natural causes (Maududi, n.d., note 47).

Reference

References:

Maududi, Abul Ala (2010). Tafhim ul Quran. (note 47).

29:14 Meaning of Noah's long age

We (once) sent Noah to his people, and he tarried among them a thousand years less fifty: but the Deluge overwhelmed them while they (persisted in) sin.

The age of a reformer stands for the length of his dispensation and teaching. Therefore, the period 950 years is not the span of Noah's personal physical life (cf. 21:8 or 21:34). In describing the limit of Noah's age two words are used here—Sanah and 'Âmâ. ٱ The root of the former word gives a sense of badness, while the latter carries sense of goodness. It shows that the first fifty years of Noah's dispensation were years of all-around spiritual progress and regeneration, and that after that period moral degeneration set in. Sanatin, which has been translated as “year,” is used also for ٱ seasons, i.e., one quarter of a year (Tâj; Lisân).

References:

NOORUDDÎN ,ALLÂMAH. (2015). Exegesis of The Holy Qur'ân Commentary and Reflections. (surah 2 verse 75).

2:259 “Oh! how shall Allah bring it (ever) to life, after (this) its death?

Or (take) the similitude of one who passed by a hamlet, all in ruins to its roofs. He said: “Oh! how shall Allah bring it (ever) to life, after (this) its death?” but Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised him up (again). He said: “How long didst thou tarry (thus)?” He said: (Perhaps) a day or part of a day.” He said: “Nay, thou hast tarried thus a hundred years; but look at thy food and thy drink; they show no signs of age; and look at thy donkey: And that We may make of thee a sign unto the people, Look further at the bones, how We bring them together and clothe them with flesh.” When this was shown clearly to him, he said: “I know that Allah hath power over all things.”

Yusuf Ali writes,

C304. This incident is referred variously;

1. to Ezekiel’s vision of dry bones (Ezekiel, 37:1-10).
2. to Nehemiah’s visit to Jerusalem in ruins after the Captivity, and to its re-building (Nehemiah, 2:12- 20):
and
3. to Uzair, or Ezra, or Esdras, the scribe, priest, and reformer, who was sent by the Persian King after the Captivity to Jerusalem, and about whom there are many Jewish legends. As to 1, there are only four words in this verse about bones. As to 2 and 3, there is nothing specific to connect this verse with either. The wording is perfectly general, and we must understand it as general. I think it does refer not only to individual, but to national, death, and resurrection.

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the
Quran. (pg. 184). [1]Microsoft Word – 002 Baqarah.doc
(quran4u.com)

34:12 Solomon's Kingdom

And to Solomon (We made) the Wind (obedient): Its early morning (stride) was a month's (journey), and its evening (stride) was a month's (journey); and We made a Font of molten brass to flow for him; and there were Jinns that worked in front of him, by the leave of his Lord, and if any of them turned aside from our command, We made him taste of the Penalty of the Blazing Fire.

Some former commentators have taken this to mean that a spring from the earth had erupted for the Prophet Solomon (peace be upon him) from which molten copper flowed out instead of water. But another Interpretation of this verse can be that in the time of the Prophet Solomon (peace be upon him) the work of melting and molding copper for different uses was done on a very large scale and the same has been referred to here as the flowing of a spring of molten copper for him. (21:74) .

The subjection of satans has been explained in Surah Saba Ayats 12 and 13 34:12 . Incidentally, these verses of the Quran clearly show that the satans and jinns who worked for Prophet Solomon belonged to quite a different genus from human beings. Therefore, it is wrong to pervert the Quran to prove that they were human beings as some modernist commentators have tried to do. It is obvious from the wording of the Quran and the context in which the story of the jinns has been related, that they were not human beings. Had they been so this would have been no special favor to Solomon, because human beings had already built the gigantic monuments like the pyramids of Egypt.

References:

Maududi, Abul Ala (2010). Tafhim ul Quran.

34:14 Prophet Sulaiyman's Death

Then, when We decreed (Solomon's) death, nothing showed them his death except a little worm of the earth, which kept (slowly) gnawing away at his staff: so when he fell down, the Jinns saw plainly that if they had known the unseen, they would not have tarried in the humiliating Penalty (of their Task).

Qur'an 34:14 describes the death of Prophet Solomon and explains that the jinn remained unaware of his death until an earthly creature gradually ate through the staff supporting his body. When the staff finally broke and Solomon fell, it became evident that the jinn did not possess knowledge of the unseen. Had they known that Solomon had died, they would not have continued performing their burdensome and humiliating labor.

The statement that the condition of the jinn "became clear" may be understood in two related ways. First, the jinn themselves realized that any claim to possessing knowledge of the unseen was false. Second, the people who believed that the jinn possessed supernatural knowledge discovered that this belief had no foundation. In both interpretations, the event demonstrates that knowledge of the unseen belongs exclusively to God.

The Literal Account of Solomon's Death

The Qur'anic description presents Solomon as having died while standing or sitting with the support of a staff. Because his body remained upright, the jinn continued carrying out the duties assigned to them, believing that he was still alive and supervising their work. An earthly creature, commonly understood as a woodworm or termite, gradually consumed the staff from within. When the weakened staff finally collapsed,

Solomon's body fell, revealing that he had been dead for some time.

The jinn's continued labor demonstrates that they had no independent knowledge of Solomon's death. They became aware of it only through an observable physical event. Their ignorance therefore refutes the belief that they could perceive hidden realities or know events beyond ordinary observation.

Rejection of the Allegorical Interpretation

Some modern commentators have interpreted the verse symbolically. According to this view, Solomon's staff represented his political power, the creature that consumed it represented the weakness or incompetence of his son Rehoboam, and the fall of Solomon's body symbolized the collapse of his kingdom. The jinn, under this interpretation, represented frontier tribes that had been subdued under Solomon's rule but rebelled after his death.

The commentary rejects this interpretation because it does not correspond with the direct wording of the Qur'an. The verse describes a specific sequence of events: Solomon died while supported by his staff, a creature consumed the staff, his body fell, and the jinn consequently discovered that he had died. There is no textual indication that the staff symbolized royal authority, that the creature represented an unworthy successor, or that Solomon's fall represented the political disintegration of his kingdom.

If the intended meaning had concerned the weakness of Rehoboam and the rebellion of subject tribes, the Arabic language possessed clear and direct expressions through which these ideas could have been communicated. The Qur'an does not normally present essential historical or theological teachings through riddles that its original audience would have been unable to understand.

The Identity of the Jinn

The interpretation of the jinn as frontier tribes is also considered inconsistent with the purpose of the verse. The concluding statement specifically concerns their ignorance of the unseen. For the tribal interpretation to be valid, it would be necessary to demonstrate that these tribes claimed knowledge of hidden realities or that the Arab polytheists regarded them as possessors of supernatural knowledge. No such connection is established by the text.

The verse instead refers to the jinn as a distinct category of created beings. Either they were thought to possess knowledge of the unseen, or people falsely attributed such knowledge to them. Their failure to recognize Solomon's death exposed the falsity of this belief. Although they remained physically near him and continued serving under his apparent supervision, they did not know that he had died until his body fell.

The attempt to reinterpret the jinn as human tribes may arise from discomfort with acknowledging the existence of an unseen creation within a materialistic intellectual framework. However, the Qur'anic account should be understood according to its clear wording rather than reshaped to conform to philosophical assumptions that reject the unseen.

Pre-Islamic Beliefs Concerning the Jinn

The Qur'an indicates that the polytheists of Arabia held several false beliefs about the jinn. They regarded them as partners of God, imagined a relationship between God and the jinn, and sought their protection. Qur'an 6:100 states that people associated the jinn with God even though He had created them. Qur'an 37:158 condemns the claim that a relationship existed between God and the jinn, while Qur'an 72:6 refers to human beings who sought refuge with members of the jinn.

Another widespread belief was that the jinn possessed knowledge of hidden matters. People therefore consulted them or turned to them for information concerning the unseen. The account of Solomon's death directly refutes this belief. If the jinn had truly possessed such knowledge, they would have immediately known that Solomon had died and would not have continued their difficult labor under the mistaken impression that he remained alive.

Theological Significance

The account emphasizes that neither jinn nor human beings possess independent knowledge of the unseen. Such knowledge belongs to God alone and may be communicated to created beings only to the extent that He chooses to disclose it. The jinn's ignorance of Solomon's death demonstrates the limitations of created beings, regardless of the unusual abilities they may possess.

The event also challenges superstitious beliefs that assign divine or near-divine qualities to unseen creatures. The jinn may possess abilities that differ from those of human beings, but they remain created, limited, and dependent upon God. Their inability to recognize an event occurring directly before them establishes that they cannot serve as reliable sources of hidden knowledge.

References:

Maududi, Abul Ala (2010). *Tafhim ul Quran*.

38:39 The legacy of Solomon and his kingdom

“Such are Our Bounties: whether thou bestow them (on others) or withhold them, no account will be asked.”

Allah bestowed such abundant powers and bounties on Solomon that they could not be counted or measured: and he was free to give away anything he liked or keep anything he liked. In this was great temptation for an ordinary man. Solomon as a prophet withstood it and asked to be forgiven for power and such a kingdom as others might not be able to use lawfully. His earthly kingdom went to pieces after his death. But his name and fame endure. And what is more, he obtained a place among the Nearest Ones to Allah.

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 38 verse 39).

37:103 Abraham and Ismail: The Sacrifice

So when they had both submitted their wills (to Allah), and he had laid him prostrate on his forehead (for sacrifice),

Note that the sacrifice was demanded of both Abraham and Ismail. It was a trial of the will of the father and the son. By way of trial the father had the command conveyed to him in a vision. He consulted the son. The son readily consented, and offered to stand true to his promise if his self-sacrifice was really required.

The whole thing is symbolical. Allah does not require the flesh and blood of animals (22:37), much less of human beings. But he does require the giving of our whole being to Allah, the symbol of which is that we should give up something very dear to us, if Duty requires that sacrifice. (R).

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 37 verse 103).

37:107 And We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice

And We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice:

The adjective qualifying “sacrifice” here, ’azim, (great, momentous) may be understood both in a literal and a figurative sense. In a literal sense it implies that a fine sheep or ram was substituted symbolically. The figurative sense is even more important. It was indeed a great and momentous occasion, when two men, with concerted will, “ranged themselves in the ranks” of those to whom self-sacrifice in the service of Allah was the supreme thing in life. In this sense, said Jesus, “he that loseth his life for my sake shall it”. (Matt, 10:39). (R).

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 37 verse 107). [1]Quran Arabic with English Translation & Commentary (Tafsir) by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Free Download (quran4u.com)

37:123 Elias

So also was Elias among those sent (by Us).

Elias is the same as Elijah, whose story will be found in the Old Testament in I Kings 17-19. and 2 Kings 1-2.

Elijah lived in the reign of Ahab (B.C. 896-874) and Ahaziah (B.C. 874-872), kings of the (northern) kingdom of Israel or Samaria. He was a prophet of the desert, like John the Baptist, - unlike our holy Prophet, who took part in, controlled, and guided all the affairs of his people.

Both Ahab and Azariah were prone to lapse into the worship of Baal, the sun-god worshipped in Syria. That worship also included the worship of nature-powers and procreative powers, as in the Hindu worship of the Lingam, and led to many abuses.

King Ahab had married a princess of Sidon, Jezebel, a wicked woman who led her husband to forsake Allah and adopt Baal-worship.

Elijah denounced all Ahab's sins as well as the sins of Ahaziah and had to flee for his life. Eventually, according to the Old Testament (4 Kings, 2:11) he was taken up in a whirlwind to heaven in a chariot of fire after he had left his mantle with Elisha the prophet. (R)

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 37 verse 123).

38:44 Ayyub's Resolve

“And take in thy hand a little grass, and strike therewith: and break not (thy oath).” Truly We found him full of patience and constancy. How excellent in Our service! ever did he turn (to Us)!

In the Hebrew Bible we learn that Job was patient when afflicted with suffering but that his wife was bitter and even taunted him. (See Job 2:9-10). Islam has a different take on her behavior, finding her more noble than that. Commentators of this verse, using traditions of the Prophet to guide them, have understood that during the darkest hour of his affliction, Job, in his frustration with his wife (when she was apparently tricked by Satan into saying something spiteful to him), swore that he would hit her 100 times with a stick if he ever recovered from the loss of his children, health and fortune. (Ahmad) During his many years of suffering, however, his wife remained by his side and cared for him, so how could he keep such a foolish oath? When God blessed him with more than he had before (as a reward for his patience,) Job felt remorseful for his hasty promise. God gave Job a way to fulfill his oath without actually physically hurting his wife, as no prophet of God would ever hurt a woman so. Thus, he would hit her with “a few harmless blades of grass.” (Ibn Kathir)

References:

Emerick, Yahiya. The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an in Today's English (p. 829). Unknown. Kindle Edition.

3:161-163 No prophet could (ever) be false to his trust

No prophet could (ever) be false to his trust. If any person is so false, He shall, on the Day of Judgment, restore what he misappropriated; then shall every soul receive its due,- whatever it earned,- and none shall be dealt with unjustly.

Is the man who follows the good pleasure of Allah Like the man who draws on himself the wrath of Allah, and whose abode is in Hell? - A woeful refuge!

They are in varying gardens in the sight of Allah, and Allah sees well all that they do.

An allegation of the hypocrites

This verse answers the allegations of the hypocrites against the Prophet, peace be upon him, after the defeat in the battle of Uhud. In order to cause frustration among the Muslims, they alleged that the Prophet, peace be upon him, had misused their trust in him and that he had exposed their lives and properties to unnecessary risk for personal ambition. They also said that they had advised the Prophet to fight against the enemy from within the walls of the city but he ignored their advice as he held their lives in very low estimation.

Moreover, he had led them out of the city to a completely inappropriate place and caused the loss of so many lives. This was, they alleged, a clear act of ill will to the people, treachery and dishonesty.

There are references to this allegation in the above verses, and it is further elucidated in the verses below. The Qur'ān repudiates this allegation declaring it to be a wrong and completely baseless accusation. No prophet is ever dishonest or disloyal to his community.

Whatever he does, and whatever course he follows is always in search of the pleasure of Allah in accordance with the

commandments revealed to him. A prophet is well aware that all cases of dishonesty and disloyalty will be presented before Allah and will be fully requited. Those who sincerely seek God's pleasure and those who incur His wrath are not similar and cannot be treated alike. The two groups will have separate and different ranks and abodes ever dared accuse him of any minor or major financial dishonesty. In the Days of Ignorance as well as in Islam, he was universally known, as al-Amīn, the honest one, and his friends as well as his enemies were equally impressed by his honesty. Some foolish people, who spoke against him concerning financial matters, never implied any dishonesty on his part; the nature of a complaint was about his giving more to some than to others. On all such occasions, his accusers were deeply remorseful when the real situation was explained to them, as for instance, what happened after the liberation of Makkah and the battle of Ḥunayn.

Therefore, it is incomprehensible that the hypocrites would accuse him of dishonesty about a trivial thing like a piece of cloth. They could, however, understandably plant doubts in the minds of the weaker Muslims through launching a whispering campaign that Muḥammad, peace be upon him, was, God forbid, not truly a well-wisher of his community and was ready to sacrifice them at the altar of his personal ambition. The defeat of Uḥud had given them an opportunity for such poisonous propaganda and they used it as far as they could, especially because they were opposed to fighting the enemy outside the city and because their opinion had not found acceptance by the Prophet, peace be upon him, and his faithful companions.

References:

Islahi, Amin Ahsan. *Pondering Over The Qur'an: Surah Ali Imran* (pp. 294-296). Islamic Book Trust. Kindle Edition

52:40 The prophets of Allah ask for no reward to preach the Message of Allah

Or is it that thou dost ask for a reward, so that they are burdened with a load of debt?-

The prophets of Allah ask for no reward to preach the Message of Allah and direct men to the right Path. Why then do men shun them and persecute those who seek to bring blessings to them?

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 52 verse 40.

77:11 The Messengers and their communities

And when the messengers are (all) appointed a time (to collect);-

The Resurrection will be established. In the world which will then have passed away, inspired Prophets had been sent in succession at different times to all nations. Now they will be gathered together in one place before the Judgment-seat to bear witness as to the righteous or the evil ones within their respective spheres of work.

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 77 verse 11)

77:5 The Prophets

Then spread abroad a Message,

If we understand the reference to Prophets or Messengers of Allah, or the verses of Revelation which would be particularly appropriate for verses 5-6, we also get a satisfactory solution of the Allegory.

1. The Prophets have followed one another in a series: the verses of the Quran came, one after another as needed; in both cases it was for man's spiritual profit;
 2. they caused great disturbance in a spiritual decadent world; they pulled down evil institutions root and branch, and substituted new ones;
 3. they proclaimed their truths far and wide, without fear and without favour;
 4. through them were sorted out men of Faith and rebels against Allah's Law; and
 5. they gave a Message, through which just men were justified through repentance, and evil men were warned of their sins.
- Some Commentators take one or other of these allegories, and some apply one allegory to a few of these verses, and another to another few. In my opinion the Allegory is wide enough to comprehend all the meanings which I have sketched. I wish a translation could do justice to those marvelously terse sentences in the original

References:

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. Translation and Commentary of the Quran. (surah 77 verse 5)

Abraham and the Birds

The following excerpt is taken from “The Holy Quran in Today’s English” under the translation of the above verse note #246:

Even Abraham had once asked, “My Lord, show me how You bring the dead to life.” replied, “Don’t you believe (that I can do it)?” “Of course!” answered Abraham. “I’m only asking for my own satisfaction.” So (God) said, “Take four birds, and train them to come to you (when you call); then divide them up, placing them on separate hills. Call to them, and they’ll come swiftly to you. (In this lesson), know that God is powerful and wise.” [260]

According to note 246 in *The Holy Quran in Today’s English*, the central lesson of the passage is that God can restore the dead to life through a simple divine command, just as the trained birds responded immediately when Abraham called them. This interpretation reflects the Qur’anic teaching that when God wills something to occur, He merely commands it to “Be,” and it comes into existence (see also Qur’an 3:47).

Many classical commentators interpret the verse differently. They maintain that Abraham was instructed to kill the birds, divide their bodies, and place their remains on separate hills. When he later called them, the birds miraculously reassembled, returned to life, and flew back to him. According to this view, the event provided Abraham with a direct demonstration of bodily resurrection.

The author of *The Holy Quran in Today’s English*, however, considers this interpretation less persuasive. The author argues that if the birds were intended to be killed and subsequently restored to life, Abraham’s prior efforts to train them to respond to his call would have served no essential purpose.

Their taming would therefore appear unnecessary to the demonstration.

For this reason, the author favors an alternative interpretation held by some commentators. Under this reading, Abraham was instructed to train the birds and then release or distribute them among different hills. When he called them, they immediately returned to him. The purpose of the event was therefore not necessarily to demonstrate the physical reassembly of dead birds, but to illustrate the effectiveness of command. Just as the birds responded to Abraham's call, the dead will respond to God's command when He raises them to life.

This interpretation emphasizes divine authority rather than the physical process of resurrection. The passage reassures Abraham that God's power over life and death is absolute and that resurrection requires no effort from Him beyond the expression of His will.

References:

Emerick, Yahiya. *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an in Today's English* (p. 827). Unknown. Kindle Edition.

Archaeological evidence of the story of Prophet Nuh (Noah)

Quran 11:36:

And it was revealed to Noah that, “No one will believe from your people except those who have already believed, so do not be distressed by what they have been doing.

Quran 11:37:

[2]

And construct the ship under Our observation and Our inspiration and do not address Me concerning those who have wronged; indeed, they are [to be] drowned.”

In note 1061 of *The Holy Quran in Today's English*, Yahiya Emerick considers whether evidence for the story of Noah and the flood exists outside the Qur'an and the Bible. He points to ancient Mesopotamian literary records from civilizations such as the Sumerians, Akkadians, and Babylonians. These texts describe a destructive flood that affected the region, although the names, theological details, and sequence of events vary among the surviving versions.

One of the earliest Mesopotamian flood traditions identifies the central figure as Ziusudra, whose name is sometimes rendered as Xisouthros. He is described as a ruler of Shuruppak who received a divine warning that a catastrophic flood would occur. He was instructed to construct a large vessel in order to preserve himself, his family, and other living creatures. The name Ziusudra has been interpreted as meaning “he of long life” (Kramer, 1961).

In later Akkadian and Babylonian versions, the flood survivor is known by different names. In the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, he is called Utnapishtim, a name commonly interpreted as meaning

“he found life.” Another version, associated with the *Atrahasis Epic*, refers to the survivor as Atrahasis. Despite their differences, these narratives share several important elements, including a divine warning, the construction of a boat, the preservation of life, a devastating flood, and a sacrifice offered after the waters receded.

Ancient clay tablets discovered in Mesopotamia preserve portions of the Sumerian flood narrative. In this account, Ziusudra receives a warning through a wall that a divine assembly has decreed the destruction of humanity by flood. He is commanded to build a boat, abandon his possessions, preserve life, and bring living creatures aboard. After the flood continues for several days, the waters subside, and Ziusudra offers a sacrifice in gratitude (Jacobsen, 1987).

These Mesopotamian accounts provide important documentary evidence that flood traditions circulated in the ancient Near East. However, they do not by themselves constitute direct archaeological proof of every detail found in the Qur’anic or biblical narratives. Rather, they demonstrate that ancient societies preserved memories or traditions concerning a major flood and a divinely warned survivor who escaped by means of a boat.

The presence of multiple deities in the Mesopotamian versions differs significantly from the monotheistic account presented in the Qur’an. Emerick suggests that such differences may reflect the transmission, adaptation, and embellishment of an older narrative over many centuries. From an Islamic perspective, the Qur’anic account may therefore be understood as presenting the story within a strictly monotheistic framework, emphasizing Noah’s prophethood, the moral corruption of his people, divine judgment, and the preservation of those who believed.

References:

Emerick, Yahiya. The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an in Today's English (p. 827). Unknown. Kindle Edition.

Jesus and the Clay Bird

Quran 3:49:

And [make him] a messenger to the Children of Israel, [who will say], 'Indeed I have come to you with a sign from your Lord in that I design for you from clay [that which is] like the form of a bird, then I breathe into it and it becomes a bird by permission of Allah. And I cure the blind and the leper, and I give life to the dead – by permission of Allah. And I inform you of what you eat and what you store in your houses. Indeed in that is a sign for you, if you are believers.

In note 295 of *The Holy Quran in Today's English*, Yahiya Emerick presents two principal interpretations of the clay-bird account. According to the first interpretation, Jesus performed a literal miracle by shaping a bird from clay and bringing it to life through God's permission. The event served as a visible sign of his prophethood and demonstrated that his miraculous abilities were granted by God rather than exercised independently.

A second interpretation understands the clay bird metaphorically. According to this view, the bird represents the spiritual condition of the Jewish community at the time of Jesus. The community had become spiritually lifeless, and Jesus' mission was intended to restore vitality to its religious and moral life. His teachings and reforms therefore symbolically "breathed life" into a community in need of spiritual renewal.

Emerick also draws attention to a similar account found in the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*, an early Christian apocryphal text commonly dated to approximately the second century CE. In this narrative, the young Jesus forms birds from clay on the Sabbath. When questioned about his actions, he commands the birds to depart, and they fly away. The observers are astonished

and report the event to their religious leaders. A comparable story also appears in another early Christian work commonly known as the *First Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus Christ*.

These early Christian traditions demonstrate that the story of Jesus and the clay birds circulated among some Christian communities before the development of the later biblical canon. However, such infancy writings were not ultimately included in the New Testament and are generally classified as apocryphal literature.

The Qur'anic account differs in its repeated emphasis that Jesus performed his miracles only "by Allah's permission." This qualification reinforces the Islamic understanding that Jesus was a prophet and servant of God rather than an independent divine being. The clay-bird miracle therefore functions as a sign of God's power and of the divine authority supporting Jesus' prophetic mission.

References:

Emerick, Yahiya. *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an in Today's English* (p. 827). Unknown. Kindle Edition.

Musa and Al-Khadir

Quranic Narrative:

In [2]Sura 18, [3]ayat (verses) 65–82 Al Kahf, Moses meets the Servant of God, referred in the Quran as “one of our slaves whom We had granted mercy from Us and whom We had taught knowledge from Ourselves”. [4][26] Muslim scholars identify him as [5]Nabi Khadra, although he is not explicitly named in the Quran and there is no reference to him being immortal or being especially associated with esoteric knowledge or fertility. [6][27] These associations come in later scholarship on al-Khidr. [7][28]

The Quran states that they meet at the junction of the two seas (i.e., the two sources of salt and fresh water described elsewhere in the Quran) and Moses asks for permission to accompany the Servant of God so Moses can learn “right knowledge of what [he has] been taught”. [8][29] The Servant informs him in a stern manner that their knowledge is of different nature and that “Surely you [Moses] cannot have patience with me. And how canst thou have patience about things about which thy understanding is not complete?” [9]

[30] Moses promises to be patient and obey him unquestioningly, and they set out together. After they board a ship, the Servant of God damages the vessel. Forgetting his oath, Moses says, “Have you made a hole in it to drown its inmates? Certainly you have done a grievous thing.” The Servant reminds Moses of his warning, “Did I not say that you will not be able to have patience with me?” and Moses pleads not to be rebuked.

Next, the Servant of God kills a young man. Moses again cries out in astonishment and dismay, and again the Servant reminds Moses of his warning, and Moses promises that he will not violate his oath again, and that if he does he will excuse

himself from the Servant's presence. They then proceed to a town where they are denied hospitality. This time, instead of harming anyone or anything, the Servant of God restores a decrepit wall in the village. Yet again Moses is amazed and violates his oath for the third and last time, asking why the Servant did not at least exact "some recompense for it."

The Servant of God replies, "This shall be separation between me and you; now I will inform you of the significance of that with which you could not have patience. Many acts which seem to be [10]evil, malicious or somber, actually are merciful. The boat was damaged to prevent its owners from falling into the hands of a king who seized every boat by force. And as for the boy, his parents were believers and we feared lest he should make disobedience and ingratitude to come upon them. God will replace the child with one better in purity, affection and obedience. As for the restored wall, the Servant explained that underneath the wall was a treasure belonging to two helpless orphans whose father was a righteous man. As God's envoy, the Servant restored the wall, showing God's kindness by rewarding the piety of the orphans' father, and so that when the wall becomes weak again and collapses, the orphans will be older and stronger and will take the treasure that belongs to them."

Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) : Meaning of the phrase
'The Friend of Allah'

Quran 4:125:

And who is better in religion than one who submits himself to Allah while being a doer of good and follows the religion of Abraham, inclining toward truth? And Allah took Abraham as an intimate friend.

The following is taken from under the commentary of the above verse:

“And who can be better in religion than one who submits his face (himself) to Allah (SWT); and he is a good-doer and follows the religion of Abraham (AS), the upright.”

This ayah describes the characteristics of a true believer of Allah's (SWT) religion. They are those who submit their whole self to Allah (SWT) i.e. follow His religion of Islamic monotheism with utmost dedication and firm faith, perform good deeds and follow the faith of Abraham (AS) Hanifa i.e. the upright one.

“And Allah (SWT) did take Abraham (AS) as a friend.”

This is the highest degree of closeness to Allah (SWT) that one can reach i.e. attaining the level of becoming His Khalil, the highest degree of love. Allah chose him to be his friend.

Regarding the statement, “And Allah took Ibrahim as an intimate friend”, the authors of the 'Study Quran' write: “Here Abraham is famously identified as the intimate friend of God (khalīl).

Of all the laudatory comments made about Abraham in the Quran, it is his identification here as God's intimate friend that gives Abraham his most well known honorific title in Islam,

Khalīl Allāh. Although this particular honorific is used primarily for Abraham, some argue that it is a quality belonging to all the prophets, including Muhammad (ﷺ). Khalīl indicates a friendship so close that one loves and hates whatever one's friend loves and hates and thus chooses allies and enemies in accordance with the allies and enemies of one's friend (ﷺ). The Quran indicates that this is the ideal relationship that all believers should have with God, since it warns that the enemies of God should also be the enemies of the believers, and that the believers should not take the enemies of God as their friends (see, e.g., 60:1).

Abraham demonstrates this himself, according to the statement in 9:114, which says that he used to pray for forgiveness for his father, but when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of God, he repudiated him. Sufi authors and commentators understand khalīl as referring to a fullness of love (maḥabbah) and say that Abraham was called Khalīl Allāh because love of God permeated (takhallala, from the same root as khalīl) every aspect of his being (Aj; Ibn 'Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, faṣṣ 5)."

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The Greatest Prophet (peace be upon him)

The following is taken from “Faizan-e-Madina” pg. 35:

Almighty Allah has said:

These (aforementioned Prophets) are the ones whom Allah guided; so follow their path. [Kanz-ul-Iman (translation of Quran)] (Part 7. Surah Al-Anaam, Ayah 90)

Commenting on the above verse, Imam Fakhruddin Razi stated:

On the basis of this blessed verse, respected Islamic scholars have proved the ruling that Holy Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (peace be upon him) is greater than all other respected Prophets (peace be upon them). Allah has bestowed marvellous traits and superior attributes too different blessed Prophets. Having mentioned those traits and attributes, Almighty Allah ordered His Beloved Prophet (pbuh) to gather [i.e. adopt] all of those attributes and marvels. Non-fulfillment of the Divine commandment by the Holy Prophet (pbuh) is not possible at all. Therefore, it has been proved that the Holy Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (peace be upon him) has gathered [i.e. adopted] all good attributes which have been separately bestowed upon other blessed Prophets (peace be upon them). Therefore, he is the greatest of all Prophets.

(Tafseer-e-Kabeer, vol. 5. Pp. 7)

Imam-e-Ahl-e-Sunnat Imam Ahmad Raza Khan stated: Our Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) has been blessed with every such sign and miracle that is similar to or better than the ones bestowed upon any other Prophet. (Fatawa Razawiyyah, vol. 24, pp.595) A leading scholar of Shariah Mufti Amjad Ali Azami stated:

All those marvels that have been separately bestowed upon others have been gathered [bestowed] upon the Holy Prophet

(peace be upon him). In addition, he has also been blessed with such marvels in which no one else has any share (Bahr-e-Shari'at, vol. 1, pp. 63)

The Prophethood of Historical Adam (peace be upon him) according to the Quran and Sunnah

The Quran:

Indeed, Allah chose Adam and Noah and the family of Abraham and the family of 'Imran over the worlds – (Quran 3:33)

Those were the ones upon whom Allah bestowed favor from among the prophets of the descendants of Adam and of those We carried [in the ship] with Noah, and of the descendants of Abraham and Israel, and of those whom We guided and chose. When the verses of the Most Merciful were recited to them, they fell in prostration and weeping. (Quran 19:58) According to Ghulam Ahmad Pervez:

'It is believed that Adam, supposedly the first man created by Allah, (whose story is narrated in the Quran regarding his exit from Jannah) was the first Rasool. This is not supported by any verse of the Holy Quran, neither is the name of Eve (Hawwa) mentioned in the Quran.

The story is narrated in a symbolic form and does not pertain to a particular person or a couple; in fact this is the story of mankind and Adam is its representative. The word Adam occurs 25 times in the Quran and only in one place (3:32) it appears that Adam was also the name of a chosen person.' (Exposition of the Quran, p. 1141.)

“In the Qur'an, “Adam” is stated seventeen times. The word of Adam has a connotation of proper noun in the Ayat where it is mentioned alone. We prefer that the word of “Adam” comes from the word of “edim” in Arabic, meaning “interior, inner surface, inner layer,” and we think accordingly that a person

has an internal, spiritual, feature in addition to his dimension of being a bashar or insan.

That is to say:

Surah Al-Hajj 75, 76:

Allah chooses messengers from among the harbinger Ayat and from among the mankind. Indeed, Allah is the One Who hears best, sees best, He knows that which is between their hands and behind them. And all matters will be returned only to Allah.

Surah Ali Imran 33, 34:

Indeed, Allah favored Adam, Noah, family of Abraham and family of Imran -being from each other's lineage- over the people of the time. And Allah is the One Who hears best, knows best.

Adam is a prophet: He was chosen from among humans.”
(Creation of the Universe and Man according to the Quran, p. 31-32)

“In the Qur'an, there is also the expression of “Benî Adam” (Sons of Adam). This expression takes place seven times. What are meant here are not the sons of Adam but lineage of Adam. This expression, while warning people, states that they are not ordinary persons but the lineage of a knowledgeable and conscious ancestor with spiritual aspect subjected to Wahy (revelation) and that they must be the persons that deserve their ancestors. That is to say, an art of Reference is exhibited through these expressions and first Prophet Adam is reminded.” (Ibid, p, 33)

El Najjar writes,

Who Was Adam?

The following seven verses from the Holy Quran tell us that Adam, peace be upon him, was the best of God's human creation. Allah, praise to Him, CHOSE him to represent humanity in the contest with the angels, because of his ability to learn, build, and choose, as explained in Chapter 5.

First, Verse 7: 11 clearly states that Allah, praise to Him, created humans (khalaqnakum, in plural), then fashioned them in the image He wanted (sawarnakum, also in plural form). These two verbs refer to the first and fourth stages of the first creation, as mentioned in Chapter 4 of this Book. The use of the word "then" indicates the passage of a long period between the two stages.

And We created you (humans, in plural form), then fashioned you (made you in the image you are, also addressing humans in plural form), then said to the angels: Prostrate to Adam! And they prostrated, all except Iblis (another name for Satan), who was not of those who made prostration (Al-A'araf, 7: 11)

When Allah, praise to Him, decided that humans have reached the level of being trustworthy of the mandate to be His caliphs on Earth, He chose Adam to represent them in front of the skeptical angels. When he won the contest, the angels were ordered to prostrate to him, as an acknowledgement of his winning and his worth to receive God's mandate.

Second, Verse 3: 59 states that both of 'Eissa (Jesus) and Adam, peace be upon them, were alike in that they were created of the Earth soil. We know for sure that Jesus was created in his mother's womb, which means that the verse is referring to the first creation of life on Earth, out of clay (which is water and soil together). The verse tells us that this also

applies to the creation of Adam, which is another reference to Adam as one of the humans, not the first of them.

The example of 'Eissa (Jesus) for Allah is as that of Adam. He created him from the earth soil. Then, He said to him: "Be". And he was (Al-'Imran, 3: 69).

Third, Verse 3: 33 states that Allah, praise to Him, CHOSE (Istafa in Arabic) Adam, Noah, the family of Ibrahim (Abraham), and the family of 'Imran above people of all the worlds (throughout the centuries). This means that Adam was chosen as the best human of his time, just like the others were in their times. If he were the first and only human being, then there would be no choice. Thus, the use of the verb "chose" in this verse is a piece of evidence that Adam was the best human, not the first one.

Allah chose Adam, Noah, the family of Ibrahim (Abraham), and the family of 'Imran, above the worlds (Al-'Imran, 3: 33).

The same Arabic verb (Istafa), used in Verse 3: 33 is also used in Verse 3: 42, in reference to Maryam, the mother of 'Eissa (Jesus), peace be upon both of them. Allah, praise to Him, mentions that He CHOSE her from among the women of all the worlds. For sure, there were many women in the world for Allah, praise to Him, to choose from, to be a mother for 'Eissa (Jesus). This further explains the use of the same verb in Verse 3: 33, which confirms that Allah, praise to Him, CHOSE Adam, to represent humanity in the majestic contest with the angels.

And (mention) when the angels said, "O Mary, indeed Allah has chosen you, purified you, and chosen you above the women of the worlds (Al-'Imran, 3: 42).

Fourth, the reference to immortality, in Verses 20: 120 and 7: 20, gives more support for the interpretation that Adam was not the first human. The verses show that he knew that humans were mortals. He could not know that if he never saw other humans dying at his time. Then, the Shaytan (Satan) whispered to him, saying: O Adam! Shall I lead you to the tree of eternity and a dominion that does not decay? (Ta Ha, 20: 120)

Then, the Shaytan (Satan) whispered to both of them, in order to manifest to them that which was hidden to them of their shame (nakedness), and he said: Your Lord forbade you from this tree to prevent you from becoming angels or becoming of the immortals (Al A'araf, 7: 20).

Finally, Verse 38: 75 mentions God's direct intervention in the creation of Adam (and humanity in general, in the stages of the first creation), with His Own Hands. This was mentioned in an exclamatory rebuking style, to emphasize the Iblis (Satan) disobedience abomination.

(Allah) said: O Iblees (Satan), what prevented you from prostrating to that which I created with My Hands? Were you arrogant, or were you among the haughty? (Saad, 38: 75).

(The above excerpt has been taken from "Islam: A Scientific View of God" by Hassan el Najjar under chapter 6) See also:

Verily, in the sight of God, the nature of Jesus is as the nature of Adam, whom He created out of dust and then said unto him, "Be" – and he is (Quran 3:59)

Muhammad Asad, explaining this verse, writes:

Lit., "The parable of Jesus is as the parable of Adam...", etc. The expression *mathal* (rendered above as "nature") is often metaphorically employed to denote the state or condition (of a person or a thing), and is in this sense – as the commentators have pointed out – synonymous with *sifah* (the "quality" or

“nature” of a thing). As is evident from the sequence, the above passage is part of an argument against the Christian doctrine of the divinity of Jesus. The Qur’an stresses here, as in many other places, the fact that Jesus, like Adam – by which name, in this context, the whole human race is meant – was only a mortal “created out of dust”, i.e., out of substances, both organic and inorganic, which are found in their elementary forms on and in the earth. Cf. also 18:37, 22:5, 30:20, 35:11, 40:67, where the Qur’an speaks of all human beings as “created out of dust”. That “Adam” stands here for the human race is clearly implied in the use of the present tense in the last word of this sentence.

The following excerpt is my personal opinion and no one is obliged to follow:

“Another interpretation of this comparison between Jesus (peace be upon him) and Adan can be with regards to the historical first Prophet Adam (peace be upon him). As historical Adam was the first prophet sent to the Banu Adam (the children of Adam or fully developed human beings), his status was a unique prototype of all human prophets. It is an Islamic principle that the creation of prophets is a miracle and that Allah Himself intervenes to create them. Adam, being divinely raised as the first prophet, guided the Banu Adam (the original human community) from disorder to perfect order. Thus he became an answer to the skeptical angels in 2:30 (will you create on the Earth one who will spread corruption and shed blood?). In this way, prophet Adam was the first example of prophetic order, a miracle never seen before in the history of the Earth. By saying Jesus is like Adam is to say that the creation and guidance of the first prophet was a miracle; similarly the creation and guidance of Jesus was a miracle. In other words, Jesus is a human prophet created miraculously like Adam, the first prophet.”

T.O. Shanavas writes,

“Ordinary humans become prophets only when God reveals His wisdom to them. So, God elevated Adam to become the first of His long chain of prophets by teaching him “knowledge of the nature and reality of all things and everything.” (Qur’an 2:31)

Then God blessed them to live in a spiritual “Garden” of ease, happiness, and innocence. Muslims believe that Islam is the religion of all of the prophets. This belief is based upon the following verses:

The Religion before God is Islam. (Qur’an 3:19)

Say: We believe in God, and what has been sent down to us, and what has been revealed to Abraham, Ismael, Isaac, Jacob, and their progeny, and that which was given to Moses and Christ, and to all other prophets by the Lord: We make no distinction among them, we submit to Him (Qur’an 2:136)

No; Abraham in truth was not a Jew, neither a Christian but he was a Muslim. (Qur’an 3:67)

According to these verses, all prophets preached Islam and so they are all Muslims. Adam being the first prophet of God preaching Islam, he and his mate became the original spiritual parents of all humans. If Adam was the first prophet, he must have had a human community to whom to preach the divine message.”

According to Suhaila Smith,

“They were religiously accountable people who worshiped God in accordance with their circumstances, their capabilities and their comprehension.”

The following excerpt is taken from “The Study Quran” under the commentary of the following verse:

Mankind was one community; then God sent the prophets as bearers of glad tidings and as warners. And with them He sent down the Book in truth, to judge among mankind concerning that wherein they differed. And only they who were given it differed concerning it, after clear proofs came to them, out of envy among themselves. Then God guided those who believe to the truth of that wherein they differed, by His Leave. And God guides whomsoever He will unto a straight path. (Quran 2:213)

The authors of the “Study Quran” write:

“Another interpretation is that the initial history of humanity was one without the need for the commands and prohibitions of religion, and the sending of prophets mentioned in this verse refers to a later time when prophecy became necessary (Th). Al-Rāzī disapprovingly relates an opinion he attributes to Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ (d.544/1149), a prominent Mālikī jurist and theologian, that the first period was one in which human beings acted according to the intellect (both theoretical and practical); that is, they knew that there was a Creator, that one should be good to others, that lying and oppression are bad, that one should be just, and so forth.

Pride, envy, and other vices eventually crept in and led to division, which then necessitated the sending of prophets. But such a view would have to take into account that Adam was the first prophet according to Islamic belief, and the clear proofs would have begun with him and continued throughout history. It is useful to recall here that in discussing 3:19 (Those who were given the Book differed not until after knowledge had come to them), many commentators point out that after several generations the Jews and Christians came to differ each within their own group, and an analogy can be made with Adam and

the initial one community, whose members began as one, but then came to differ among themselves over the truth.”

The following excerpt is taken from “And God Said: Let There Be Evolution” under the section by

T.O. Shanavas pg. 147:

Then verses 7:10–11 describe the creation and the settlement of the initial human community on the earth before the creation of the Prophet Adam. The verses state: “Certainly We have established you [humankind] in the earth and made in it means of livelihood for you; little it is that you give thanks. We who created you, and fashioned you, then told the Angels: fall ye prostrate before Adam! And they fell prostrate, all save Iblis (Satan), who was not of those who make prostration.” (Qur’an 7:10–11)

Regarding these two verses (7:10-11), T.O. Shanavas comments:

“The grammatical construction of the verses with the plural in (established you), (made in it), (created you), and (fashioned you) is the confirmation that the initial part of the verse does not speak of the creation and the settlement of Adam on the earth, but of the creation and settlement of the initial human community. God blessed the original community of human species with the Prophet Adam as their guide and only “then ” God asked angels and jinn to prostrate themselves before Adam.”

Finally he quotes another verse of the Quran describing an identical concept (Ibid, pg. 154):

“Mankind was but one community; then they differed; and had it not been for a word that had already gone forth from thy Lord it had been judged between them in respect of that wherein they differ.” (Qur’an 10:19)

Within the context of the Qur'an, the very first known organized nation or human community was under the guidance of the Prophet Adam. Islam was the guiding principle for the community. Later, they "differed" and formed "nations and tribes."

According to T.O. Shanavas,

"As the interpretations of the early Muslim scholars do not find credence within a realistic biological model, I offer a third interpretation. This interpretation is compatible with the modern scientific understanding. Returning to the verses 2:35-36, initially Adam and Eve are addressed while in the Garden as "you" in the dual grammatical form when God offered to enjoy the "Garden". Adam was nevertheless deemed a Prophet. Adam must have had contemporary human beings by whom he was ordained to convey the Divine message. God ordered them to "get you down" from their paradisiacal mental state of perfect ease and happiness when the Prophet Adam and his congregation, the trustees of God on the earth, violated the divine guidance. The use of the plural form ("get you down"), in the divine command suggests the presence of a generation of human beings along with Adam and Eve. Then, the Quran states, "Some of you are enemies to others." The use of the plural form, (some of you), referring to a group of human beings is another reason to suppose that there were other human beings with Adam and Eve. So, based on Quranic verses 2:35-36 and

7:10-11, God peopled the world of Adam and Eve with rich genetic diversity so that His vicegerents would not go extinct due to the population bottleneck until the end of the world."

(Islamic Theory of Evolution, p. 160)

The Sunnah:

T.O. Shanavas explains,

Islam's greatest historiographer, Abd-ar-Rahman Muhammed ibn-Khaldun, believed that the creation of mankind was gradual and that it evolved from the world of apes. In an earlier section of this work, we have seen many other pre-Darwin Muslims echoing the same belief. How, then, did the Judeo-Christian belief that God created Eve from Adam's rib become a part of the Muslim faith? The Muqaddimah supports the argument that the story was not based on the Qur'an, but was incorporated into Muslim belief through Jewish and Christian converts to Islam. Ibn-Khaldun maintains that the sources for this story can be traced back to early Muslims, contemporaries of the Prophet Muhammad and to men who belonged to the generation that succeeded him. Records preserved by these men involved both reliable and unreliable materials. The reason for that, according to Ibn-Khaldun, is that the early Arabs "had no books or scholarship [and] desert attitude and illiteracy prevailed among them. When they wanted to learn certain things that human beings are usually curious to know, such as the reasons for existing things, the beginning of creation, and secrets of existence, they consulted earlier People of the Book (Jews and Christians)."

Ibn-Khaldun maintains that when these men converted to Islam, they clung to some of their Judeo-Christian beliefs, such as the beginning of creation. He asserts that converts such as Ka'b ul-ahbar, Wahb ibn Munabbiah, Abdullah Ibn Slam, and others "filled the Qur'anic commentaries with such materials, which originated . . . with the people of the Torah," and therefore such information was neither sound nor verifiable. In Ibn-Khaldun's view, their interpretations were accepted because they were "people of rank in [their] religion and religious community." In the light of the testimony of Ibn-Khaldun, one of Islam's greatest historiographers and a devout Muslim, we can see that Muslims incorporated the story of the creation of Eve from Adam's rib not through the authority of

the Qur'an, but through information they acquired from Jewish and Christian converts. There is no Qur'anic, historical, or scientific basis to accept the contemporary Muslim belief that Adam and Eve were created ex nihilo.

The Qur'an tells us that all races, tribes, and nations are the children of Adam and Eve. God addresses us as such: "O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other. (Qur'an: 49:13) 20 He also tells us: "Mankind was one single nation." (Qur'an: 2:213)

Modern scientific research has come to the same conclusion. (Creation And/Or Evolution chapter 8)

Usaama al-Azami writes: "My own suggestion to Muslims grappling with such an issue is to recognize that when it comes to what we believe, science and religion address two kinds of truth: empirical and revealed. Empirical (observation-based) truth is the stuff of science. It's contingent on our sense perception, and humanity's current state of knowledge. It's truth with a lower-case t. It's relative to what the human senses can access at a given point in time, and makes no claims to being absolute. This is not to belittle it, as most empirical truths are what we consider facts, like the fact that the spherical earth goes around the sun. Revealed truth, by contrast, is based upon revelation which, if you believe it, is Truth with a capital T. For the believer, it is absolute, not relative. Our knowledge of empirical truth can and has improved over time; just as the once held 'fact' that the sun goes around the earth has been corrected with the passage of time. No reasonable person believes this 'fact' today; though the ancients may have been justified in thinking it was genuinely scientific. Revealed truth, on the other hand, claims to be constant, absolute, and unchangeable. Problems of this kind are nothing new for

Muslim theologians. An example is the statement of the Prophet that: after the sun sets, it goes to the Throne of God and prostrates, before rising again from the East. This statement is recorded in multiple collections of Prophetic statements including the respected Sunni collections of Bukhari and Muslim. Muslims additionally believe that such statements from the Prophet constitute revealed truth. The reality is that virtually no Muslim theologian has ever taken such revealed truths to be statements of empirical truth. In such an instance, a Muslim will believe in the revealed truth, but not think this means that the empirical truth is wrong. Rather, the two kinds of truth address different domains, the moral and the empirical (what is observable through the senses). The first addresses what Muslims should believe as a matter of faith, and how they should behave; and the other is whatever a reasonable person believes about the observable world based on the current state of human knowledge.” See also:

Ibn Kathir quotes the following hadith in favor of the view of historical Adam [pbuh] (Tafsir Ibn Kathir surah 2 pg. 116): “The believers will gather on the Day of Resurrection and will say, ‘We should seek a means of intercession with our Lord.

They will go to Adam and say, ‘O Adam! You are the father of all mankind, Allah created you with His Own Hand, ordered the angels to prostrate for you and taught you the names of everything. Will you not intercede for us with your Lord, so that he relieve us from this gathering place.’ “

There is a consensus among all Muslim scholars that the believers will make this request to all the prophets (peace be upon them) mentioned in the Quran until they finally reach Muhammad (peace be upon him).

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The Trials of Prophet Ibrahim (Peace be upon him)

Quran 2:124:

And [mention, O Muhammad], when Abraham was tried by his Lord with commands and he fulfilled them. [Allah] said, “Indeed, I will make you a leader for the people.” [Abraham] said, “And of my descendants?” [Allah] said, “My covenant does not include the wrongdoers.”

This verse presents Prophet Ibrahim’s appointment as a leader of humanity as the result of his faithfulness during a series of divine trials. It also establishes that spiritual leadership is based on righteousness and obedience rather than ancestry alone.

Ibrahim’s Successful Completion of the Divine Trials

According to *Maariful Quran*, Qur’an 2:124 introduces the account of the various ways in which Allah tested Prophet Ibrahim. Ibrahim successfully completed these trials and was consequently rewarded with the position of an imam, or leader, for humanity. This leadership may refer to his prophethood, his role as a religious guide, or the large community of believers who would follow his example. When Ibrahim asked whether this distinction would also be granted to his descendants, Allah explained that the covenant would not include those among them who were unjust or disobedient. Thus, the verse establishes a general principle that divine leadership is granted on the basis of justice, obedience, and moral integrity rather than family lineage (*Maariful Quran*, n.d., Vol. 1, pp. 309–310).

The Nature of Ibrahim’s Tests

The precise meaning of the “words” or commands through which Ibrahim was tested has been interpreted in different ways. One interpretation is that these words referred to the message of divine unity that Ibrahim was commanded to

proclaim to his people. His mission required him to openly reject idolatry and call his society toward the exclusive worship of Allah. As a result, he experienced rejection from his community and even from his own father. His people persecuted him and attempted to kill him by throwing him into a fire. From this perspective, the words of his religious mission constituted a severe test because of the opposition and suffering that resulted from proclaiming them (*Tafsir As Saranbi*, n.d., pp. 203–205).

Another interpretation is that the words referred to religious commands and moral responsibilities that Allah instructed Ibrahim to fulfill. These may have included humility in prayer, avoidance of useless speech, protection of chastity, and other acts requiring discipline and spiritual effort. Both interpretations may be valid because proclaiming the divine message and fulfilling Allah's commands involve sacrifice, patience, and perseverance. Ultimately, Allah knows the exact nature of these tests (*Tafsir As Saranbi*, n.d., pp. 203–205).

The central lesson of the verse, however, is not necessarily the identification of every individual test. Rather, its primary message is that Ibrahim fulfilled all that Allah required of him. His obedience demonstrates that believers should strive to respond faithfully to the trials and responsibilities placed before them. Instead of becoming excessively concerned with details that have not been definitively revealed, believers should concentrate on Ibrahim's example of perseverance, submission, and commitment to earning Allah's pleasure (*Tafsir As Saranbi*, n.d., pp. 203–205).

Ibrahim as a Leader and Role Model

As a consequence of Ibrahim's successful completion of these trials, Allah declared that He would make him an imam for humanity. In this context, the term *imam* can refer both to a leader and to an exemplary model whose conduct should be

followed. Ibrahim was therefore appointed not merely as the leader of a particular family or nation, but as a guide whose faith and conduct would influence humanity more broadly (*Tafsir As Saranbi*, n.d., pp. 203–205).

Ibrahim lived in a social environment in which idolatry was widespread and many communities had abandoned the worship of Allah. In the midst of this spiritual corruption, he became a source of guidance by calling people toward monotheism and urging them to dedicate their lives exclusively to Allah. His willingness to challenge false beliefs, despite intense opposition, made him both a religious leader and a moral example. Those who later invite people to worship Allah and follow His guidance may therefore be understood as continuing along the path established by Ibrahim (*Tafsir As Saranbi*, n.d., pp. 203–205).

His appointment as an imam was a special distinction granted because of his obedience during hardship. The verse therefore suggests that meaningful religious leadership is not merely inherited or claimed; rather, it is associated with faithfulness, sacrifice, justice, and the successful fulfillment of divine responsibilities.

Ibrahim's Concern for His Descendants

After Allah informed Ibrahim that he would become a leader for humanity, Ibrahim immediately asked about his descendants. This request demonstrates that he was not concerned solely with his own spiritual status. He was also deeply concerned about the religious and moral condition of future generations.

Having personally witnessed the prevalence of idolatry, moral corruption, and human susceptibility to temptation, Ibrahim understood how easily people could be led away from the worship of Allah. His question may therefore be understood as

an expression of concern that his children and descendants remain guided and become worthy of continuing his religious mission (*Tafsir As Saranbi*, n.d., pp. 203–205).

Allah responded that His covenant would not extend to the wrongdoers. This answer indicates that Ibrahim's descendants could participate in his spiritual legacy only if they remained righteous. Biological descent from a prophet would not, by itself, qualify an individual for divine leadership or guarantee Allah's approval.

The Meaning of the Divine Covenant

The covenant mentioned in the verse may be understood as the responsibility and honor of guiding humanity toward Allah. It includes calling people toward faith, justice, and conduct that is pleasing to Him. Such a responsibility cannot properly be carried by those who deliberately persist in injustice or place their personal desires above obedience to Allah.

However, the statement that the covenant does not include the wrongdoers should primarily be understood as excluding persistent wrongdoers from the divinely sanctioned position of religious leadership. The verse does not necessarily mean that sinful individuals are permanently prevented from repentance, reform, or participation in good works. Rather, it emphasizes that injustice and deliberate disobedience are incompatible with legitimate spiritual authority.

Righteousness Rather Than Ancestry

Muhammad Asad explains that this passage challenges the belief that physical descent from Prophet Ibrahim automatically grants a community a uniquely chosen or spiritually privileged status. Ibrahim's exalted position resulted from his faith, obedience, and successful completion of Allah's tests. His distinction could not automatically be transferred to

all his biological descendants, particularly those who acted unjustly or rejected divine guidance (Asad, n.d., Note 101).

The verse consequently establishes that divine favor is not determined by race, ethnicity, tribe, or family connection. A person's relationship with Allah is based upon faith, righteousness, justice, and obedience. Although belonging to the family of a prophet may be historically significant, ancestry cannot replace moral responsibility.

Conclusion

Qur'an 2:124 presents Prophet Ibrahim as an enduring model of faith, obedience, and perseverance. He was tested through difficult commands and circumstances, yet he fulfilled the responsibilities entrusted to him. As a result, Allah appointed him as a leader and example for humanity.

At the same time, the verse clarifies that Ibrahim's spiritual authority would not automatically belong to all his descendants. Allah's covenant excludes those who persist in wrongdoing, regardless of their ancestry. The passage therefore teaches that genuine religious leadership must be grounded in righteousness, justice, submission to Allah, and successful perseverance through divine trials.

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Zakariya

(This is) a recital of the Mercy of thy Lord to His servant Zakariya.

Zachariah was a family elder and religious leader. He held his fractious relatives together on the path of faith by sheer force of his personality. Like parents everywhere, when he became old he began to look down the path of the future and worry about all those generations who would come after him. Since he had no son of his own whom he could groom to be a leader after him, he called upon God to bless him with one. The knowledge he inherited from his forefathers, going all the way back to Jacob, could then be passed on to his satisfaction. The Prophet said that Zachariah was a carpenter by trade and that

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