



2021

# Ramadan Quiz

## Answers and Commentary

### ‘Who Am I?’

[Women in the Qur’aan]



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# FOREWORD

Assalamu ‘alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh,

We pray this reaches you in the best of health and imaan.

Please find attached the answers and tafsir (commentary) for the Ramadan Quiz. All the tafsir (commentary) has been taken from Ma’ariful Qur’an and/or Tafsir Ibn Kathir. It is NOT written by us personally. We read through the commentary and extract whatever is specific to the question of the day and format it. We do not add to the text from ourselves.

Thus, if anyone is interested in further reading, the aforementioned two kitaabs will be useful insha’Allah.

Having said which, if you come across any mistakes or typing errors – then those are from us and we seek forgiveness for it. Please refer the mistake/error to us at: **info@acquiringknowledge.co.uk** referencing the page number and insha’Allah we will amend it.

Request for sincere du’as.

**ANSWER:** Sayyidatina Hannah ‘alayhas salaam

## **SURAH AL-IMRAN, VERSES 35-37**

**When ‘Imran’s wife said: “O my Lord, I have vowed what is in my womb to be exclusively for You. So, accept (it) from me. You, certainly You, are the All- Hearing, the All-Knowing.” [35] So, when she delivered her, she said: “O my Lord, I have delivered her, a female child” - and Allah knows better what she has delivered, and the male is not like the female -”and I have named her Maryam, and I place her and her progeny under Your shelter against Satan, the rejected.” [36] So, her Lord accepted her, a good acceptance, and made her grow, a good growth, and made Zakariyya her guardian. Whenever Zakariyya visited her in the Arch, he found with her some food. He said: ‘Maryam, from where has it come for you?’ She said: “It is from Allah. Surely, Allah gives whom He wills without measure.” [37]**

### **COMMENTARY**

In the religious code of earlier prophets, there was a method of worship through which a child, out of one’s children, could be freed from all worldly services and devoted exclusively for Allah. Following this practice, the mother of Sayyidah Maryam ‘alayhas salaam made a vow during her pregnancy that she would let the newborn serve Baitul-Maqdis in the way of Allah and that she would not put the child on worldly chores. Sayyidah Maryam’s mother thought that she will deliver a male child. But, when she delivered a girl, she was full of remorse thinking that a girl would not be able to do this duty. But Allah Almighty, out of His consideration for the sincerity of Sayyidah Maryam’s mother, accepted that very girl and thereby made her status distinct from any other girl of the world.

From here we learn that a mother holds a certain measure of guardianship over her child in respect of his or her education and training, for Sayyidah Maryam ‘alayhas salaam’s mother would have never vowed if the mother had no right of guardianship over her child. Similarly, it proves that a mother too has the right to give a name to her child. (al-Jassas)

In order to fulfil her vow, Sayyidah Maryam’s mother took her to the Mosque of Baitul-Maqdis and talked to the care-takers and worshippers at the Mosque, Sayyidna Zakariyya being one of them, and told them that she had vowed to dedicate the child in the service of God and therefore, she could not keep the child with her. She asked them to take her and keep her.

Sayyidna ‘Imran ‘alayhis salaam was the Imam of this Mosque. He had died during the pregnancy of Maryam ‘alayhas salaam’s mother, otherwise he would have been the most deserving person to have taken charge of the child, being the father and the Imam of the Mosque. Therefore, every keeper and worshipper of the Mosque wished to take her in his custody. Sayyidna Zakariyya pleaded his bid for custody by saying that his wife was Maryam’s aunt and she being next to her mother certainly deserved to keep her. But, people did not agree to prefer him over the others. Finally, everybody agreed to draw lots, which turned out to be fairly strange as it would appear later. Here too, it was Sayyidna Zakariyya ‘alayhis salaam who turned out to be the winner.

So, he got custody of Maryam. According to some reports, he employed a wet-nurse to have her suckled. Other reports say that she just did not need to be suckled. She grew up able to sit and walk and Sayyidna Zakariyya ‘alayhis salaam put her in a good house adjacent to the Mosque. When he went out, he locked the house and opened it on return. This has been stated briefly in the present verse.

## COMMENTARY – TAFSIR IBN KATHIR

### The Story of Maryam's Birth

The wife of `Imran mentioned here is the mother of Maryam, and her name is Hannah bint Faqudh. Muhammad bin Ishaq mentioned that Hannah could not have children and that one day, she saw a bird feeding its chick. She wished she could have children and supplicated to Allah to grant her offspring. Allah accepted her supplication, and when her husband slept with her, she became pregnant. She vowed to make her child concentrate on worship and serving Bayt Al-Maqdis (the Masjid in Jerusalem), when she became aware that she was pregnant. She said,

**(O my Lord! I have vowed to You what is in my womb to be dedicated for Your services, so accept this from me. Verily, You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knowing.)** meaning, You hear my supplication and You know my intention. She did not know then what she would give birth to, a male or a female.

**(Then when she gave birth to her, she said: "O my Lord! I have given birth to a female child, - and Allah knew better what she bore.)**

**(And the male is not like the female,)** in strength and the commitment to worship Allah and serve the Masjid in Jerusalem.

**(And I have named her Maryam,)** thus, testifying to the fact that it is allowed to give a name to the newly born the day it is born, as is apparent from the Ayah, which is also a part of the law of those who were before us.

Allah's statement that Maryam's mother said,

**("...And I seek refuge with You for her and for her offspring from Shaytan, the outcast.")** means, that she sought refuge with Allah from the evil of Shaytan, for her and her offspring, i.e., `Isa, 'alayhis salaam. Allah accepted her supplication, for `Abdur-Razzaq recorded that Abu Hurayrah radi'allahu 'anhu said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, *(Every newly born baby is touched by Shaytan when it is born, and the baby starts crying because of this touch, except Maryam and her son.)*

Abu Hurayrah radi'allahu 'anhu then said, *"Read if you will,*

*(And I seek refuge with You for her and for her offspring from Shaytan, the outcast)."* The Two Sahihs recorded this Hadith.

### Maryam Grows Up; Her Honor is with Allah

Allah states that He has accepted Maryam as a result of her mother's vow and that He, **(made her grow in a good manner)** meaning, made her conduct becoming, her mannerism delightful and He made her well liked among people. He also made her accompany the righteous people, so that she learned righteousness, knowledge and religion.

**(And put her under the care of Zakariyya)** meaning, Allah made Zakariyya 'alayhis salaam her sponsor. Allah made Zakariyya 'alayhis salaam Maryam 'alayhas salaam's guardian for her benefit, so that she would learn from his tremendous knowledge and righteous conduct. He was the husband of her maternal aunt, as Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Jarir stated, or her brother-in-law, as mentioned in the Sahih,

# DAY 1

*(I saw John and `Isa, who are maternal cousins.)*

We should state that in general terms, what Ibn Ishaq said is plausible, and in this case, Maryam ‘alayhis salaam was under the care of her maternal aunt. The Two Sahihs recorded that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ decided that `Amarah, the daughter of Hamzah, be raised by her maternal aunt, the wife of Ja`far bin Abi Talib, saying,

*(The maternal aunt is just like the mother.)*

Allah then emphasizes Maryam’s honor and virtue at the place of worship she attended,

**(Every time he entered the Mihrab to (visit) her, he found her supplied with sustenance.)**

Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Abu Ash-Sha`tha, Ibrahim An-Nakha`i, Ad-Dahhak, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, `Atiyah Al-`Awfi and As-Suddi said, “He would find with her the fruits of the summer during winter, and the fruits of the winter during summer.” When Zakariyya ‘alayhis salaam would see this;

**(He said: “O Maryam! From where have you gotten this”)** meaning, where did you get these fruits from

**(She said, “This is from Allah.” Verily, Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills, without limit.)**

This concludes the commentary for Day 1.

## DAY 2

**ANSWER:** The wife of Sayyidna Lut ‘alayhis salaam

**Note:** the full story of Sayyidna Lut ‘alayhis salaam is not given below but rather only the parts pertaining to the wife of Sayyidna Lut ‘alayhis salaam. Missing parts of the story are indicated with [...] and can be found in the kitaabs mentioned previously.

### **SURAH HUD, VERSES 74-81**

**So, when fear left Ibrahim and the happy news came to him, he started pleading before Us for the people of Lut. [74] Surely, Ibrahim is forbearing, very penitent, ever-turning to Allah. [75] O Ibrahim! Leave it, in fact, the command of your Lord has come, and there has to come upon them a punishment, not to be turned back. [76] And when Our emissaries (angels) came to Lut, he felt uneasy and was strained in his heart on account of them, and said, “This is a very hard day.” [77] And his people came to him, rushing upon him. And already they used to commit evil deeds. He said, “These are my daughters. They are far more clean for you. So, fear Allah and do not disgrace me in respect of my guests. Is there not a single right man among you.” [78] They said, “You know that we have no claim on your daughters, and you know well what we want.” [79] He said, “O that I had power over you or might have some strong support for refuge.” [80] They (the angels) said, “O Lut, we are emissaries of your Lord. They shall never reach you. So, move with your family in a part of night, and none of you shall turn to look back; except your woman. There has to befall her whatever befalls them. Their deadline is the morning. Is it not that the morning is near?” [81]**

### **COMMENTARY**

Surah Hud carries an account of different kinds of Divine punishments sent over past peoples because of their antagonism to prophets of the time. Described in the verses cited above is the moral condition of the people of Sayyidna Lut ‘alayhis salaam and the severe punishment given to them.

Besides being disbelievers, the people of Sayyidna Lut ‘alayhis salaam, were involved in the practice of such abject evil and immodesty as was not found in the world before them, something even wild animals hate. That a man would pollute his honor and dignity with another man is a curse the fallout from which is far more injurious than common fornication. Therefore, the harsh punishment that descended on these people had never hit known practitioners of common acts of immodesty.

The event relating to Sayyidna Lut ‘alayhis salaam as it appears in the cited verses tells that Allah Ta’ala sent some angels, including Sayyidna Jibra’il ‘alayhis salaam to execute the punishment against these people. They first went to Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam in Palestine, the account of which has appeared in previous verses. After that, they came to Sayyidna Lut ‘alayhis salaam whose abode was located at a distance of ten or twelve miles from there.

Certainly great is the majesty of Allah Ta’ala. When He seizes a people in punishment, the punishment that he makes descend upon them is chosen to be congruous to their misdeed. On this occasion too, these angels of Allah were sent in the form of handsome young men. When they reached the home of Sayyidna Lut ‘alayhis salaam he too took them to be visiting guests for they had come in human form. He found himself in a fix. If he backed out from entertaining guests, it would be against his dignity as a prophet. If he took them in as his guests, then, he knew how evil and dirty his people were. The danger was that they might storm his home and hurt the guests while he failed to defend them. So, in his heart, he said, ‘this is a very hard day.’



## DAY 2

Allah Ta'ala has, in His great design, made this world of ours an open gallery of lessons full of the countless exhibits of His perfect power and eloquent wisdom. He made His friend Sayyidna Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam come out as a prophet from the home of Azar, the idol-worshipper. In the home of the highly revered prophet, Sayyidna Lut 'alayhis salaam, there was that wife of his who worked in league with disbelievers and opposed her prophet husband. When these honored guests in the form of handsome young men came to stay at the home of Sayyidna Lut 'alayhis salaam, his wife passed on the information to perverted hoods from these people telling them about the kind of guests they had in their home on that day. (Qurtubi, Mazhari)

Things turned out as Sayyidna Lut 'alayhis salaam had first apprehended. This finds mention in the second verse (78): **(And his people came to him, rushing upon him)** - and they were already used to committing evil deeds.

It has been hinted here that such was the curse of their evil deed that they had lost all sense of modesty and propriety, so much so that they did not hesitate to storm even the home of Sayyidna Lut 'alayhis salaam for a purpose that sinister.

[...]

At that time, the angels under Divine command said to Sayyidna Lut 'alayhis salaam **(So, move with your family in a part of night)**. And asked him to instruct everyone in his family not to turn and look back with the exception of his wife because she was going to be hit by the same punishment that was to fall on his people.

This could also mean that he was not to take his wife along with him. And it could also mean that, being his wife, she was to go along as part of his family, but she would not obey the instruction of not looking back he would give to his family. According to some reports, this is what happened. This wife started off with others, but when she heard the big bang of the punishment given to her people, she looked back and felt sorry at their destruction. At that moment there came a splintered rock and finished her off like others. (Qurtubi, Mazhari)

### SURAH ASH-SHU'ARA, VERSES 160-171

**The people of Lut belied the messengers [160] when their brother Lut said to them, “Do you not fear Allah? [161] I am an honest messenger for you. [162] So fear Allah and obey me. [163] And I do not claim from you any reward for it. My reward is with none but with the Lord of the worlds. [164] Do you go to the males out of the whole universe, [165] and leave what your Lord has created for you, that is, your wives? in fact, you are a people who cross (all) limits.” [166] They said, “If you do not stop O Lut, you shall be included among the outcast.” [167] He said “Certainly, I am hateful to your act. [168] O my Lord, save me and my family from what they do.” [169] So We saved him and his family, all of them [170] except an old woman among those who remained behind. [171]**

### COMMENTARY

The word 'old woman' is used for the wife of Sayyidna Lut 'alayhis salaam, who was an infidel and was agreeable to the unnatural act of the people of Lut 'alayhis salaam. If the wife of Lut 'alayhis salaam was an old woman then the use of this word for her is quite clear, but if she was not old, then perhaps she was called 'old woman' for the reason that the prophet's wife is regarded like the mother of the Ummah, and to call a

## DAY 2

woman having many children as old is not unlikely.

### **SURAH AT-TAHIRM, VERSE 10**

**Allah has cited for the disbelievers the example of the wife of Nuh and the wife of Lut. Both were married with two of Our righteous slaves, but betrayed them. So they could not avail them at all, and it was said, “Enter the Fire along with those who enter.” [10]**

### **COMMENTARY**

Towards the end of this Surah, Allah has set forth examples of four women. The first example comprises two women who were the wives of two Holy Prophets ‘alayhum ‘as-salaam. They, in matters of religion, opposed their husbands and secretly sided with the unbelievers and pagans. As a result, they ended up in the abyss of Hell, and their marital relation with the prophets could not save them from the punishment. The name of the wife of Nuh ‘alayhis salaam is said to be Waghilah, while the name of the wife of Lut ‘alayhis salaam is said to be Walihah. [Qurtubi] Some scholars have attributed other names to them.

This concludes the commentary for Day 2.



**ANSWER:** Sayyidatina Asiyah bint Muzahim ‘alayhas salaam

## **SURAH AT-TAHRIM, VERSE 11**

**And Allah has cited for the believers the example of the wife of Fir’aun (the Pharaoh), when she said, “My Lord, build for me, near You, a house in the Paradise, and deliver me from Fir’aun and his deeds, and deliver me from the unjust people.” [11]**

### **COMMENTARY**

Towards the end of this Surah, Allah has set forth examples of four women [...] The third woman is the one who was the wife of the Pharaoh, the worst disbeliever and claimant of godhead, but she believed in Musa ‘alayhis salaam. She was given such a high rank by Allah that she was shown her place in the Paradise, right here in this world, and the infidelity of her husband did not prove to be an impediment in her achieving this high rank.

**(And Allah has cited for the believers the example of the wife of Fir’aun (the Pharaoh), when she said, “My Lord, build for me, near You, a house in the Paradise...66:11)** This is the example of the wife of Fir’aun (the Pharaoh) whose name was ‘Asiyah bint Muzahim. When Musa ‘alayhis salaam accomplished his task in defeating the sorcerers who embraced Mosaic faith, she too embraced the Mosaic faith and became a Muslim. Fir’aun ordered that she should be tortured severely and tormented harshly. According to some reports, her hands and feet were pegged with nails to the ground and a huge rock was placed on her chest, so that she might not be able to move. In this state she supplicated to Allah as mentioned in this verse. According to other reports, it was suggested that a huge rock be dropped on her. They had hardly dropped the rock and she prayed to Allah as quoted in the verse. Allah then showed Sayyidah ‘Asiyah radi’allahu ‘anha her house in Paradise. and while looking at this vision her soul departed. When the rock fell on her body, it was lifeless. [Mazhari].

[...]

Sayyidna Abu Musa radi’allahu ‘anhu narrates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Whilst many men have attained spiritual perfection, among women only Sayyidah ‘Asiyah, wife of Fir’aun, and Sayyidah Maryam, daughter of ‘Imran ‘alayhumaa-assalaam achieved this perfection.” [Bukhari and Muslim as quoted by Mazhari].

### **COMMENTARY - TAFSIR IBN KATHIR**

#### **The Disbelievers can cause no Harm to the Believers**

This is a parable that Allah made of the believers, in that, if they needed to, their association with the disbelievers will not harm them. Allah the Exalted said,

**(Let not the believers take the disbelievers as protecting friends instead of the believers, and whoever does that, will never be helped by Allah in any way, except you indeed fear a danger from them.)** (3:28) Qatadah said, “*Fir’awn was the most tyrannical among the people of the earth and the most disbelieving. By Allah! His wife was not affected by her husband’s disbelief, because she obeyed her Lord. Therefore, let it be known that Allah is the Just Judge Who will not punish anyone except for their own sins.*” Ibn Jarir recorded that Sulayman said, “*The wife of Fir’awn was tortured under the sun and when Fir’awn would finish the torture session, the angels would shade her with their wings. She was shown her house in Paradise.*” Ibn Jarir said that Al-Qasim bin Abi Bazzah said, “*Fir’awn’s wife used to ask, ‘Who prevailed?’ When she was told, ‘Musa and Harun prevailed’, she said, ‘I believe in the Lord*

## DAY 3

of Musa and Harun.' Fir`awn sent his aides to her and said to them, 'Find the biggest stone. If she insists on keeping her faith, throw the stone on her, otherwise she is my wife. When they came to her, she looked up to the sky and was able to see her house in Paradise. She persisted on the faith and her soul was then captured. The stone was thrown on her lifeless body.' This is the meaning of her statement,

**(My Lord! Build for me a home with You in Paradise, and save me from Fir`awn and his work,)** means, 'deliver me from him, because I am innocent of his actions,'

**(and save me from the people who are wrongdoers.)** Her name was Asiyah bint Muzahim, may Allah be pleased with her. Allah said,

[...]

Imam Ahmad recorded that Ibn `Abbas radi'allahu `anhu said, "*The Messenger of Allah ﷺ drew four lines on the ground and said,*

*(Do you know what these lines represent) They said, 'Allah and His Messenger know best.' He said,*

*(The best among the women of Paradise are Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, Fatimah bint Muhammad, Maryam bint `Imran and Asiyah bint Muzahim, wife of Fir`awn.)*

It is confirmed in the Two Sahihs from Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said,

*(Many men have reached the level of perfection, but none among women have reached this level except Asiyah (Fir`awn's wife), Maryam (the daughter of `Imran), and Khadijah (the daughter of Khuwaylid). And no doubt, the superiority of `A'ishah to other women is like the superiority of Tharid to other meals.)* In my book, Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah, I have mentioned these Hadiths using their various chains of narration in relating the story of Prophet `Isa and his mother Maryam, peace be upon them, all praise be to Allah. This is the end of the Tafsir of Surat At-Tahrim, all thanks and praise are due to Allah.

This concludes the commentary for Day 3.

**ANSWER:** Sayyidatina Hajar, wife of Ibrahim ‘alayhumas-salaam

## **SURAH IBRAHIM, VERSE 37**

**Our Lord, I have settled some of my children in a valley of no vegetation, close to Your sanctified House, so that, Our Lord, they may establish Salah. So make hearts of a number of people yearn toward them, and provide them with fruits, so that they may be grateful.**  
[37]

### **COMMENTARY**

Brimming with wisdom, there is another prayer of Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam which appears in the third verse (37) as follows: **‘Our Lord, I have settled some of my children in a valley of no vegetation [nor any other obvious life support system] close to Your sanctified House, so that, Our Lord, they may establish Salah. So, make hearts of a number of people yearn towards them [to make them familiar with each other], and provide them with fruits, so that they may be grateful.’**

The event which marks the making of this prayer by Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam goes back to the time when Allah Ta’ala intended to have the edifice of Baytullah which was destroyed in the Deluge during the time of Sayyidna Nuh ‘alayhis salaam reconstructed. He chose His ‘friend,’ Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam for this mission, arranging for him to migrate from Syria with wife, Sayyidah Hajira and son, Sayyidna Isma’il ‘alayhumas-salaam and settle down in that barren place. This he was appointed to do.

It appears in the Sahih of Al-Bukhari that Sayyidna Isma’il ‘alayhis salaam was an infant at that time. Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam, as ordered, had him and his mother, Sayyidah Hajira ‘alayhas salaam stay near the present Baytullah and the well of Zamzam. At that time, this place was an open and barren ground surrounded by hills. There was no water and no habitation in sight. Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam had thoughtfully put some food in a provision-bag and water in a water-bag.

Thereafter, Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam was commanded to return to Syria. The spot where he received this command was the spot from where he started his journey as commanded. That there was the natural effect of having to leave his wife and infant son in this wilderness on him will become evident from the prayer which he made a little later, but he did not tolerate the idea of making the least delay in carrying out the Divine command, not even for a few moments which he could have used to inform Sayyidah Hajira ‘alayhas salaam and say a few words of comfort to her.

As a result, when Sayyidah Hajira ‘alayhas salaam saw him going away, she repeatedly called from behind him wondering why would he leave them in that manner and in a place which had no human being around nor was there anything which could help them survive. But, the ‘friend’ of Allah did not look back. Thereupon, Sayyidah Hajira ‘alayhas salaam realized that one who is the ‘friend’ of Allah cannot betray them in that manner. Perhaps, this is nothing but a command from Allah Ta’ala. So, she called again and asked: ‘Has Allah Ta’ala commanded you to leave this place?’ Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam turned his face and said: ‘Yes.’ Hearing this, Sayyidah Hajira ‘alayhas salaam said: that is, ‘Now it does not matter. Our Master, who has commanded you to leave this place, will certainly not let us be wasted away.’

Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam kept going ahead until he reached close to a hill from where he could no more see Sayyidah Hajira and Sayyidna Isma’il ‘alayhumas-salaam. That was the time when he turned his attention towards Baytullah and prayed in the words mentioned in the verse (37). Many religious instructions

and rulings issue forth from this prayer of Sayyidna Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam. These are being taken up in some details as given below.

## **The wisdom of Sayyidna Ibrahim 'alayhis-salaam's prayer**

1. We see that Sayyidna Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam has accomplished two things very distinctly. On the one hand, he fulfills his obligation to his status as the Khalil or Friend of Allah. When and where he was commanded to leave for the country of Syria, he took no time in leaving his wife and infant son in a desolate wilderness. When he was saying yes to the Divine command, he did not show the least hesitation. He did what he was asked to do right away. He did not tolerate the idea of postponing or delaying even to the natural limit whereby he would first go to his blessed wife, say some words of comfort to her and tell her that he is under Divine orders to leave about which she should not worry. This he did not do. What he did was: When and where came the Divine command, he obeyed it and moved ahead right on.

On the other hand, he did not neglect the rights of his family on him and paid the debt of their love in his own way. Once he could see them no more from behind a hill on his way, he prayed before Allah Ta'ala that they be protected and blessed with peace. Thus, he had asked good life for them because he was confident, and at peace with himself. He knew that a prayer made after having carried out the Divine command first would never be rejected by the merciful Lord. And this is what happened actually. The helpless infant and his equally helpless mother found shelter. Not only that they settled there all alone and by themselves, a whole city flowered with people around them and for their sake; and furthermore, the matter did not end at the fulfillment of the needs of their lives lived in peace, but it is for their sake that the doors of all sorts of blessing are still open to the people of Makkah.

This is prophetic steadfastness, and the beauty of balance; when considering one aspect, they would never ignore the other. The prophets are not like common mystics who are overpowered by the state they are in (maghlub al-hal). Prophets educate. It is their education which goes on to make man perfect, universal.

Now, let us go to some significant statements made in this prayer. They are from verse 37 and are being taken up in the order they appear.

2. **(valley of no vegetation)**: When Sayyidna Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam was commanded by Allah Ta'ala that he should leave his infant son and his mother in that barren land and go to Syria, he had become certain from the command itself that Allah Ta'ala would not let them perish, instead, they would, at least, be provided with water somehow. That is why he did not say: (in a valley with no water). What he said was: (in a valley of no vegetation). Therefore, he requested that they be blessed with 'fruits' - even if they had to be brought in from somewhere else. This is the reason why Makkah al-Mukarramah does not have any significant areas of cultivation even to this day. But, fruits from all over the world, the produce and product of things of all sorts reach there in such numbers and variety that it would be difficult to find a similar arrangement in many cities. (Al-Bahr Al-Muhit)

3. The next sentence: **(close to Your sanctified House)** proves that the foundation of Baytullah had been laid out before the appearance of Sayyidna Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam as proved by the leading commentator, Al-Qurtubi on the authority of several narrations under his commentary on Surah Al-Baqarah. According to him, the structure of Baytullah was first raised by Sayyidna Adam 'alayhis salaam at the time when he was sent to the earth and was made to reach at this place from the Mountain of Sarandip through a miracle. Angel Jibra'il 'alayhis salaam directed him to the site of Baytullah. Accordingly, Sayyidna Adam 'alayhis salaam raised its structure. He and his children used to do Tawaf round it until came the Deluge during the time of Sayyidna Nuh 'alayhis salaam when the sacred Baytullah was raised up (as trust), but its

## DAY 4

foundations remained embedded under the earth. Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam was commanded to build the Baytullah anew on the already existing foundations. These were identified and shown to him by Sayyidna Jibra’ill ‘alayhis salaam. After that, when this Abrahimic structure collapsed during the age of Arab Jahiliyyah, the Quraysh of that period re-built it. When its construction work was in progress, Abu Talib along with the Holy Prophet ﷺ participated in it, which was before he was- made prophet. Here, Baytullah has been qualified as:: (muḥarram) which means ‘sanctified,’ but could also mean ‘protected.’ The great Baytullah has both attributes. It has always been sanctified and esteemed, and always protected from enemies as well.

4. The next statement: **(so that they may establish Salah)** is significant in that it was the first prayer he made soon after mentioning the helplessness of his infant son and his mother. His prayer was that they be made particular and punctual in their obligation of Salah as due because Salah is a cumulative receptacle of everything good and blissful in life, mortal or eternal. This tells us that there can be no greater concern, or love or desire for the betterment of children than that they be made to become particular and punctual with their Salah. Finally, there is something here we should not miss to note. Though, Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam had left behind at that time and at that place only a mother and her child, but the prayer he made was in the plural form. This tells us that Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam had come to know that this place will have a populated city of its own and the line of this child will flourish and go far in time. Therefore, he included all of them in his prayer.

5. In the next sentence: **(hearts of a number of people)**, the word: (af’idah) is the plural of: (fu’ad) which means heart. Here, the word: ‘af’idah’ has been introduced in its indefinite form along with the particle: (min) which is used for reducing, dividing and portioning. Hence, the meaning is: ‘make hearts of a number of people yearn towards them). Tafsir authority, Mujahid says: If this reductive particle was not there in this prayer, instead, said there would have been: (hearts of the people), then, Muslims, non-Muslims, Jews, Christians, virtually people of the whole world from the East to West would have converged on Makkah, which would have become a cause of inconvenience for them. It was in view of this reality that Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam, in his prayer, used the words: ‘make hearts of a number of people yearn towards them.’

6. In the next sentence: **(and provide them with fruits)**, the word: (ath-thamarat) is the plural of: (thamrah) which means fruit. Customarily, they refer to fruits which are eaten. Given that sense of ‘fruit,’ the prayer would mean: ‘provide them with all sorts of fruits to eat.’

However, thamrah or fruit is also used in the sense of outcome and produce which is more general than things edible. The outcome of everything beneficial can be called its thamrah or fruit. Thus, the fruits of industries would be their products. The fruit of a job or work would be the pay or wages received as a result. In a verse of Surah Al-Qasas, also used there is the expression: **(fruits [or produce] of all things - 28:57)**. Here, instead of using the word: (shajar: tree), what has been used is the word: (sha’ii: thing). Perhaps, this may be indicating that for these people Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam has not simply prayed for the provision of fruits to eat. Rather, the prayer he has made is for the end product of everything which includes the products and produce and use- worthy things of all kinds, and again, with earnest pleading and humble plaint along with the recounting of praises for Allah Ta’ala, then, this would be a manner in which it can be strongly hoped that the prayer will be answered.

### COMMENTARY - TAFSIR IBN KATHIR

(37. “O our Lord! I have made some of my offspring dwell in an uncultivable valley by Your



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**Sacred House in order, O our Lord, that they may perform Salah. So fill some hearts among men with love towards them, and (O Allah) provide them with fruits so that they may give thanks.)** This Ayah indicates that this was different supplication than the first one that Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam said when he left Hajar and her son Isma‘il in Makkah, before the Sacred House was built. This prayer, it appears, was said after the House was built, begging Allah and seeking His favor, and He is the Exalted and Most Honored. Ibrahim said here,

**(by Your Sacred House...)** then he,

**(O our Lord, that they may perform Salah.)** Ibn Jarir At-Tabari commented that this, “Refers to his earlier statement,

**(the Sacred...),”** meaning, ‘You have made this House Sacred so that people establish the prayer next to it,’

**(So fill some hearts among men with love towards them,)** Ibn ‘Abbas, Mujahid and Sa‘id bin Jubayr said, “*Had Ibrahim said, ‘The hearts of mankind’, Persians, Romans, the Jews, the Christians and all other people would have gathered around it.*” However, Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam said,

**(among men),** thus making it exclusive to Muslims only. He said next,

**(and (O Allah) provide them with fruits)** in order that they may be helped in obeying You, and because this is a barren valley; bring to them fruits that they might eat. Allah accepted Ibrahim’s supplication,

**(Have We not established for them a secure sanctuary (Makkah), to which are brought fruits of all kinds, a provision from Ourselves.) (28:57)** This only indicates Allah’s compassion, kindness, mercy and blessing, in that there are no fruit producing trees in the Sacred City, Makkah, yet all kinds of fruits are being brought to it from all around; this is how Allah accepted the supplication of the Khalil - Allah’s intimate friend, Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him.

This concludes the commentary for Day 4.



**ANSWER:** Sayyidatina Hafsa radi'allahu anha

**Note:** The narrations differ about who this person is. Any answer which coincides with any of the narrations will be accepted as correct insha'Allah.

## **SURAH AT-TAHRIM: VERSES 1-5**

**O Holy Prophet, why do you ban (on your self) something that Allah has made lawful for you, seeking the pleasure of your wives? And Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very Merciful. [1] Allah has prescribed (the way of) absolution from your oaths. And Allah is your protector, and He is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. [2] And (remember) when the Holy Prophet told one of his wives something in secret. So, when she disclosed it (to another wife), and Allah made it known to him, he told (the disclosing wife) part of it, and bypassed another part. So when he informed her about it, she said, "Who told you about this?" He said, "It is told to me by the All-Knowing, the All-Aware. [3] (O two wives of the Holy Prophet,) If both of you repent to Allah, then (your conduct calls for it, because) your hearts have diverted. And if you back each other against him (the Holy Prophet), then Allah is his supporter, and Jibra'il and righteous believers and, after all that, angels are his helpers. [4] It is hoped that, if he divorces you, Allah will give him in your place wives better than you, submissive to Allah, believing, devout, penitent, steadfast in worship, fasting, previously married and virgins. [5]**

## **COMMENTARY**

### **Cause of revelation**

It is recorded in Sahih of Bukhari and in other collection of Ahadith, on the authority of Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha that it was a daily practice of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to visit each of his wives after 'asr prayer for a short time inquiring about their welfare. Once he visited Sayyidah Zainab radi'allahu 'anha and spent more time with her than normal and had some honey offered by her. Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha says: "I developed some envy and in consultation with Hafsa radi'allahu 'anha decided that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would visit any one of us, she should say to him 'you have had Maghafir', (a herb that resembled gum with a slightly unpleasant smell.)" [1] They executed their plan. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "I have not had any Maghafir. I only had some honey." The Holy wife said: "It is possible that the honeybee might have sat on the Maghafir shrub and drank its nectar. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ because of his natural dislike for unpleasant odour, swore and promised not to take honey any more. However, he did not want the feelings of Sayyidah Zainab radi'allahu 'anha to be hurt, and therefore he said to his wife that the incident should be kept secret and should not be recounted to anyone else. But she told about it to another wife.

Some reports say that it was at the house of Sayyidah Hafsa radi'allahu 'anha that he was served with honey, and that the wives who planned were Sayyidah A'ishah, Sayyidah Saudah and Sayyidah Safiyyah radi'allahu anhunna. Other reports recount the incident in other ways. It is possible that many incidents of similar nature might have taken place and these verses were revealed after them. [Bayan-ul-Quran].

In brief, these verses tell us that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ banned a lawful thing [honey] on himself by swearing an oath. If such an act is done for a genuine need or expedience, [maslahah], it is permissible; it is not a sin. But the incident does not show that there was no such need for him to have the trouble of banning a lawful thing on himself. He had done this for the pleasure of his holy wives. In such circumstances, it was not necessary for him to have pleased them. Therefore, the verse, compassionately addresses the

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Holy Prophet ﷺ (**O Prophet, why do you ban (on your self) something that Allah has made lawful for you, seeking the pleasure of your wives? And Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very Merciful...66:1**) According to the principles of general stylistics, the Qur'an does not address the Holy Prophet ﷺ by his name but by his Prophetic title thus: '**O Prophet**' which is his special honour. Although this is a loving question posed by way of compassion, it could have created the misunderstanding that he has committed a major error and he is being questioned about it. The concluding phrase allays this suspicion: meaning that even if it would have been a sin (for the sake of argument), then 'Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very Merciful.'

[...]

In this incident, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ swore an oath to abstain from honey. After the revelation of the verse, he broke the oath and expiated for it. As reported in Ad-Durr-ul Manthur, he emancipated a slave in payment of his expiation. [Bayan-ul-Qur'an]

**(Allah has prescribed [the way of] absolution from your oaths... 66:2).** This verse reminds that where it is necessary or better to break the oath, Allah has prescribed a way to absolve oneself from the liability of the oath by expiation, the details of which are given in other verses.

**(And [remember] when the Prophet told one of his wives something in secret...66:3).** The Holy Prophet ﷺ confided a certain secret in one of his wives. According to most versions of the authentic report, the 'secret' in this verse refers to the ban the Holy Prophet ﷺ imposed on himself about honey, but at the same time he did not want Sayyidah Zainab's radi'allahu 'anha's feelings to be hurt and therefore he directed the wife to keep it secret from others, but the disclosing wife divulged the secret to another wife, as follows in the next verse. Although there are some other reports that explain the 'secret' in some other way, what has been mentioned above is in accordance with the most authentic narrations.

**(So, when she disclosed it [to another wife], and Allah made it known to him, he told [the disclosing wife] part of it, and bypassed another part ...66:3).** In other words, when the disclosing wife divulged the secret to another wife, and Allah disclosed this fact to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he complained to the disclosing wife about her disclosure, but he did not convey to her the whole information. Instead, he communicated part of it to her and withheld part of it. This was because of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ magnanimity and high morals. If he had disclosed the entire information he had received from Allah, it would have embarrassed her most profoundly. Who was the disclosing wife and who was the one to whom the secret was disclosed? The Qur'an is silent on their identity and does not name them. According to the best received it would appear that it was Sayyidah Hafsa radi'allahu 'anha whom the Holy Prophet ﷺ directed to keep the matter secret, and she divulged it to Sayyidah 'Aishah radi'allahu 'anha as recorded in Bukhari on the authority of Sayyidna Ibn 'Abbas radi'allahu 'anhu which will be narrated later.

Some narratives report that when Sayyidah Hafsa radi'allahu 'anha divulged the secret, the Holy Prophet ﷺ decided to divorce her, but Allah sent Jibra'il 'alayhis salaam to him, preventing him from divorcing her on the ground that she offered many prayers and kept fasts abundantly. Her name appears in the list of his wives in Paradise. [Mazhari]

**([O two wives of the Prophet] If both of you repent to Allah, then [your conduct calls for it, because] your hearts have diverted....66:4).** The reference here is made to two of his blessed wives who, as mentioned above in brief, contrived to draw the Holy Prophet ﷺ into swearing an oath and making the aforementioned promise to abstain from honey. Who are they? Bukhari and other collections

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of Traditions record a lengthy Tradition about this on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu who narrates that he was always on the look-out to enquire of Sayyidna ‘Umar radi’allahu ‘anhu as to who were the two wives to whom reference had been made in the above verse. So, when Sayyidna ‘Umar radi’allahu ‘anhu was on his way to pilgrimage, the former joined him. One day, in the course of the journey, the latter went to answer the call of nature. When he returned, the former had arranged water for the latter’s ablution. He poured water on his hands. Whilst pouring the water for ablution, he enquired as to who were the two wives to whom reference is made in the dual verb (If both of you repent) Sayyidna ‘Umar radi’allahu ‘anhu asked him in surprise: ‘Do you not know who they were?’ Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu said: ‘No!’ Sayyidna ‘Umar radi’allahu ‘anhu said they were Hafsa and ‘Aishah radi’allahu ‘anhuma and then proceeded to recount a lengthy story related to this incident which also contained some incidents that took place earlier. The details of the incident are available in Tafsir Mazhari. This verse addresses the two blessed wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and requires them to turn to Allah as their hearts have deviated, albeit what they did, stem from their love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ, but in the process they, in consultation with one another, adopted a way that hurt the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This is a sin for which repentance was necessary.

**(And if you back each other against him [the Prophet], then Allah is his supporter, and Jibril and righteous believers and, after all that, angels are his helpers....66:4).** The current verse warns the wives that if they do not repent and please the Messenger of Allah ﷺ they will not cause any loss to him, because Allah is his Protector, and so are Jibril, every right-acting believer and, furthermore, the other angels too will come to his support, and it will be the wives themselves who will suffer loss.

**(It is hoped that, if he divorces you, Allah will give him in your place wives better than you, submissive to Allah, believing, devout, penitent, steadfast in worship, fasting, previously married and virgins....66:5).** The verse refutes the possible thought of the wives that if they are divorced, the Holy Prophet ﷺ will probably not get women better than themselves. The verse under comment responds to their assessment of the situation. It purports to say that nothing is beyond Allah’s power. If he divorces them, Allah will give him in exchange better wives than he has at the moment. This does not necessarily imply that there were better wives than the present holy wives at that time. Possibly such women were not available at that point of time, but, should the need have arisen, He could make other women better than they are. These verses specifically dealt with the holy wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ their deeds, their moral reform, their discipline and their training. Similar injunctions are given in the verses that follow for the general body of Muslims and believers.

[1] It should be noted here that these words were spoken by them in an interrogative accent, and therefore it was not a false statement. (Muhammad Taqi Usmani).

This concludes the commentary for Day 5.

**ANSWER:** The mother of Musa ‘alayhis salaam

## **SURAH AL-QASAS: VERSES 7-11**

**And We inspired the mother of Musa saying, “Suckle him (Musa). Then once you fear about him, cast him in the river, and do not fear and do not grieve. Surely We are going to bring him back to you and appoint him one of (Our) messengers. [7] So the family of the Pharaoh picked him up, so that he becomes for them an enemy and a (cause of) grief. Indeed the Pharaoh, Haman and their armies were mistaken. [8] And the wife of the Pharaoh said, (to the Pharaoh about Musa) , “He may be a delight of eye for me and you. Do not kill him. It is hoped that he will be of benefit to us, or we will adopt him as a son.” And they were not aware (of what was going to happen). [9] And the heart of the mother of Musa became restless; indeed she was about to disclose this (the real facts about Musa), had We not strengthened her heart to remain among those who have firm belief (in Allah’s promise). [10] And she said to his sister, “Keep track of him.” So she watched him from a distance while they were not aware. [11]**

## **COMMENTARY – TAFSIR IBN KATHIR**

It was mentioned that when Fir`awn killed so many of the males of the Children of Israel, the Copts were scared that the Children of Israel would die out, and they themselves would have to do the heavy labor that the Children of Israel used to do. So they said to Fir`awn, “If this continues, and their old men die and the young men are killed, their women will not be able to do the work that the men are doing, and we will end up having to do it.” So Fir`awn issued orders that the boys should be killed one year, and left alone the following year. Harun, (peace be upon him) was born in a year when the boys were not killed, and Musa ‘alayhis salaam was born in a year when the boys were being killed. Fir`awn had people who were entrusted with this task. There were midwives who would go around and check on the women, and if they noticed that any woman was pregnant, they would write her name down. When the time came for her to give birth, no one was allowed to attend her except for Coptic women. If the woman gave birth to a girl, they would leave her alone and go away, but if she gave birth to a boy, the killers would come in with their sharp knives and kill the child, then they would go away; may Allah curse them. When the mother of Musa ‘alayhis salaam became pregnant with him, she did not show any signs of pregnancy as other women did, and none of the midwives noticed. But when she gave birth to a boy, she became very distressed and did not know what to do with him. She was extremely scared for him, because she loved him very much. No one ever saw Musa, (peace be upon him) but they loved him, and the blessed ones were those who loved him both as a natural feeling and because he was a Prophet. Allah says: **(And I endued you with love from Me)** (20:39).

When Musa ‘alayhis salaam’s mother became so worried and confused, it was inspired into her heart and mind what she should do, as Allah says: **(And We inspired the mother of Musa (telling): “Suckle him, but when you fear for him, then cast him into the river and fear not, nor grieve. Verily, We shall bring him back to you, and shall make him one of (Our) Messengers.”)** Her house was on the banks of the Nile, so she took a box and made it into a cradle, and started to nurse her child. When someone came to her that she was afraid of, she would go and put him in that box and put it in the river, and she would tie it with a rope. One day someone that she was afraid of came to the house, so she went and put the child in that box and put it in the river, but she forgot to tie it. The water carried him away, past the house of Fir`awn, where some servant women picked the box up and took it to Fir`awn’s wife. They did not know what was inside, and they were afraid that they would be in trouble if they opened it without her. When the box was opened, they saw it was a child with the most beautiful features. Allah filled her heart with love for him when she saw him; this was because she was blessed and because Allah wanted to honor



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her and cause her husband's doom.

**(Then the household of Fir`awn picked him up, that he might become for them an enemy and a (cause of) grief.)** Allah says: **(Verily, Fir`awn, Haman and their armies were sinners.)**

**(And the wife of Fir`awn said: "A comfort of the eye for me and for you...")** means, when Fir`awn saw him, he wanted to kill him, fearing that he was one of the Children of Israel. But his wife Asiyah bint Muzahim 'alayhas salaam came to the child's defense and tried to endear him to Fir`awn, saying, **(A comfort of the eye for me and for you.)** Fir`awn said: "For you he may be, but not for me. And this was indeed the case: Allah guided her because of him, and destroyed him at his hands.

**(perhaps he may be of benefit to us,)** This is indeed what happened in her case, for Allah guided her through him and caused her to dwell in Paradise because of him.

**(or we may adopt him as a son.)** She wanted to take him and adopt him as a son, because she had no children from Fir`awn.

**(And they perceived not.)** means, they did not know what Allah planned for them when they picked him up, by His great wisdom and definitive proof.

### **The intense Grief of Musa 'alayhis salaam's Mother, and how He was returned to Her**

Allah tells us how, when her child was lost in the river, the heart of Musa 'alayhis salaam's mother became empty, i.e., she could not think of any matter in this world except Musa 'alayhis salaam. This was the view of Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa'id bin Jubayr, Abu `Ubaydah, Ad-Dahhak, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Qatadah and others.

**(She was very near to disclose his (case),)** means, because of the intensity of her grief, she almost told people that she had lost a son. She would have disclosed her situation, if Allah had not given her strength and patience. Allah says:

**(had We not strengthened her heart, so that she might remain as one of the believers. And she said to his sister: "Follow him.")** means, she told her daughter, who was older and was of an age to understand things,

**(Follow him.)** means, follow his traces and look for information about him, try to find out about him around the city. So she went out to do that.

**(So she watched him from a far place (secretly),)** Ibn `Abbas said, "Off to the side." Mujahid said, "It means she looked from afar. Qatadah said: "She started to look at him as if she was not really interested." When Musa 'alayhis salaam had settled into the house of Fir`awn, after the king's wife had begun to love him and asked Fir`awn not to kill him, they brought to him the wet nurses who were to be found in their household, and he did not accept any of them, refusing to take milk from them. So they took him out to the marketplace, hoping to find a woman who would be suitable to nurse him. When (his sister) saw him in their arms, she recognized him, but she did not give any indication nor did they suspect her.

### **SURAH TAHA: VERSES 37-39**

**And We have bestowed Our favour on you once more, [37] when We revealed to your mother**

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**what was to be revealed, [38] that is, “Put him (the baby) in the chest, then cast it into the river, then let the river throw it by the shore and it will be picked up by one who is enemy to Me and enemy to him”. And I have cast love on you from Myself, and that you are fashioned under My eye. [39]**

### COMMENTARY

**(And We have bestowed Our favour on you once more - 20:37).** Having bestowed His gifts and special favours on Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam such as the honour of conversation with Allah, the grant of prophethood and miracles etc. Allah Ta’ala reminds him of the benefits and favours which He had showered on him throughout his life - from his birth uptil that time and how He had saved his life from numerous risks and hazards. In relation to time, these benefits (which will be discussed in the following pages) pertain to an earlier period.

**(When We revealed to your mother what was to be revealed - 20:38)** It means that the information given to the mother of Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam was about a matter which could be learnt only through Divine revelation. This was that the Pharaoh’s soldiers had orders to put to death all the male children belonging to the tribe of Bani Isra’ail. She was told by means of a revelation that in order to save the life of her son she should put him in a box and float it down the river. She was re-assured not to entertain any apprehensions about his safety because Allah Ta’ala would protect him and also return him to her. These are things which cannot be learnt by conjecture or guess work. The promise of Allah Ta’ala, and the divine scheme to save his life are beyond human conception and can be made known through Divine revelation only.

[...]

### **The name of the mother of Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam**

In Ruh ul-Ma’ani her name is given as Yuhannadhand in Itqan it is said that her name was Lihiyana daughter of Yasmad Ibn Lawi. Others say her name was Barkha and still others that it was Bazakht. Some people who dispense charms and amulets attribute strange properties to her name but according to Ruh ul-Ma’ani there is no basis for such a belief and probably it is nothing more than a hoax to entice innocent and ignorant people.

**(Then let the river throw it by the shore - 20:39.).** The word (Yamm) means river and here it refers most probably to the river Nile. In this verse the mother of Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam has been commanded by Allah Ta’ala to place the baby in a box and set him afloat in the river Nile. Simultaneously the river has been commanded to cast the box on its bank. But the question arises as to how a river can be commanded to do something while it has no sense or understanding.

Some scholars have answered this query with the argument that although here the word has been used in the imperative mood which implies a command, it is not really a command but is meant to convey the information that the river would cast the box on its bank. However some scholars have disputed this explanation and have claimed that the word is really a command and is addressed to the river Nile because everything that Allah Ta’ala has created possesses emotions and a sense of feeling and it is these properties, which according to the Qur’an, enable even trees and rocks to glorify the name of Allah Ta’ala. It is, nevertheless, a fact that except the human beings, the Jinns, and the angels no other created thing possesses feelings and emotions to a degree where the precepts of Halal (permissible) and Haram (forbidden) can be made binding on them. Maulana Rumi rahimahullahu ta’ala has expressed the same idea in the following verse:-



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*(Earth, wind, water and fire are all servants of Allah. To me and you they appear lifeless, but Allah knows that they too have life.)*

**(And it will be picked up by one who is enemy to Me and enemy to him - 20:39.)** It means that a person who is an enemy of Allah Ta'ala and also the enemy of Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam will rescue the child. Here the reference is to the Pharaoh who was the enemy of Allah Ta'ala because of his infidelity, but his enmity towards Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam needs some explanation since at that time he cherished no hostility towards the latter; rather he was incurring considerable expenditure on his upbringing. Perhaps it was due to his future enmity towards Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam which was even at that time in the knowledge of Allah Ta'ala. Or again it is possible that even at that time he was the enemy and had reluctantly agreed to bring up Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam for the sake of his wife 'Asiya. Yet when he felt the slightest suspicion about Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam he ordered his immediate execution and was prevented from carrying out his intention through the wise role of Sayyidah 'Asiya. (Ruh and Mazhari)

**(And I have cast love on you from Myself - 20:39)** The word “love” in this verse is in the sense of ‘being loved’, meaning thereby that Allah Ta'ala has bestowed upon Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam an attribute that will make people show love towards him. This is the interpretation given to this verse by Sayyidna Ibn 'Abbas and 'Ikrimah radi'allahu 'anhumaa (Mazhari).

**(And that you are fashioned under My eye - 20:39)** The word ‘sana'tu’ here means “good upbringing”. The Arabs have a common phrase ‘sana'tu farasi’ (I trained my horse well). ‘Alaa ‘ayni’ is used in the same sense as ‘alaa hifdhi’, i.e. it was Allah Ta'ala's will that Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam should be brought up under His own eye, and for this purpose He chose the Pharaoh, the supreme authority in Egypt, to bring up Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam in his own palace, unaware all the time that the child that he was raising was his enemy. (Mazhari)

This concludes the commentary for Day 6.

**ANSWER:** The wife of Sayyidna Ayyub ‘alayhis salaam, whose name is recorded as Layya daughter of Misha Ibn Yusuf ‘alayhumaa salaam (Ibn Kathir)

## **SURAH AL-ANBIYA: VERSES 83-84**

**And (remember) Ayyub, when he called his Lord saying, “Here I am, afflicted by pain and You are the most merciful of all the merciful.” [83] So, We answered his prayer and removed whatever pain he had, and gave him (back) his family and the like thereof alongwith them, as a mercy from Our own Self and as a lesson for the worshippers. [84]**

## **COMMENTARY**

### **Story of Sayyidna Ayyub ‘alayhis salaam**

The story of Sayyidna Ayyub ‘alayhis salaam is based mostly on Jewish legends. Those which are considered as historically reliable by scholars of hadith are being reproduced here. The Holy Qur’an tells us only that he suffered from some serious disease but he endured his suffering with fortitude. Ultimately he prayed to Allah for recovery which was granted. During his illness all his family members and friends disappeared. They either died or just abandoned him to his fate. Then Allah Ta’ala restored him to complete health and gave him back all his children and also an equal number in addition. The remaining elements of this story have come down to us either through authentic sayings or by way of historical accounts. Hafiz Ibn Kathir has recorded the story as follows:

Allah Ta’ala had bestowed upon Sayyidna Ayyub ‘alayhis salaam, in the early days of his life, all sorts of material comforts such as wealth, property, magnificent houses, children, servants and attendants. But later he faced a trial whereby the prophets are normally tested by Allah, and was deprived of all these comforts. Moreover he suffered from a serious disease which was like leprosy and which affected his whole body except the heart and the tongue. In this miserable condition too he spent his time in prayers and in giving thanks to Allah Ta’ala with his heart and tongue.

Because of this serious illness all his relatives, friends and neighbors avoided him and placed him near a dust heap outside the city. Nobody went near him except his wife who used to take care of him. She was either the daughter or granddaughter of Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam and her name was Layya daughter of Misha Ibn Yusuf (Ibn Kathir). All his wealth having been lost, she worked and earned a living for him and for herself and also nursed him in his illness.

The ordeal of Sayyidna Ayyub ‘alayhis salaam was nothing new, nor something to be wondered at. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said, that is, the prophets face the most severe tests, and then come the other believers according to their degree of piety. In another tradition it is reported that every man is tested according to his adherence and devotion to religion. The stronger his beliefs, the harder is the test to which he is subjected, so that his rewards are in proportion to his sufferings. Sayyidna Ayyub ‘alayhis salaam occupies a distinctive position among all the prophets for firmness in his devotion and endurance in his sufferings in the same manner as Dawud ‘alayhis salaam enjoyed distinction for offering thanks to Allah Ta’ala.

Sayyidna Ayyub ‘alayhis salaam is a model of endurance and fortitude in the most trying circumstances. Yazid Ibn Maisara reports that when Allah Ta’ala deprived him of all his worldly possessions and subjected him to a severe ordeal, he concentrated all his mind and efforts upon the sole purpose of remembering Allah Ta’ala and offering prayers to Him. While thanking Allah Ta’ala for all sorts of worldly comforts and children granted to him earlier and whose love had filled his heart completely, he also thanked Him for their total withdrawal because nothing remained to distract him from total devotion to Allah Ta’ala.

## **The invocation of Sayyidna Ayyub ‘alayhis salaam is not counter to patience**

The ordeal of Sayyidna Ayyub ‘alayhis salaam was very severe indeed. He not only lost all his worldly possessions but was also afflicted by a terrible disease because of which people avoided his company. He spent seven years and some months lying near a dust heap outside the city, but never once did he lose his heart nor did he ever utter a word of complaint about his fate.

His wife, Layya once asked him to pray to Allah for His Mercy as his sufferings had become unbearable, to which he replied that having enjoyed for seventy years the best of health surrounded by all the luxuries that money could buy, it would be unworthy of him to complain because a mere seven years has been spent in pain and poverty. His firm prophetic resolve, self-discipline and fortitude prevented him from beseeching Allah Ta’ala’s mercy on his condition, lest it should be construed as an act contrary to the unquestioning submission to the will of Allah Ta’ala (Although to invoke Allah’s Mercy for relief from sufferings does not mean absence of fortitude). Ultimately something happened which made him pray to Allah Ta’ala for His Mercy but as mentioned earlier this was just a prayer and did not express a sense of complaint. As such Allah Ta’ala has put His seal in acknowledgment of his extreme endurance in these words: **(Surely We found him a steadfast man – 38:44)**. There are numerous versions of this story which have been omitted for their length.

Ibn Abi Hatim has reported on the authority of Sayyidna ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu that when Sayyidna Ayyub ‘alayhis salaam’s supplication was granted, he was told to rub his heels on the ground and a stream of fresh and clear water would gush forth. He should then bathe himself in the water and also drink it, and the disease would disappear. Sayyidna Ayyub ‘alayhis salaam did as he was told and in no time his body, which was covered with boils and was reduced to skin and bones regained its original shape and health.

Allah Ta’ala sent him garments from Paradise which he wore and sat down in a corner away from the dust heap. His wife came to see him as usual and when she did not find him, she started crying. She did not recognize Ayyub ‘alayhis salaam who was sitting nearby in a corner because his appearance had changed completely. Then she turned to him and asked him if he had any information about the sick man who was lying there, and whether he had gone somewhere or had been eaten up by dogs and wolves. She spoke to him for some time without realizing that the man was none other than her husband. Then Sayyidna Ayyub ‘alayhis salaam revealed himself, but even then she did not recognize him and asked him why he was making fun of her. Sayyidna Ayyub ‘alayhis salaam then told her to look at him again and try to recognize him. He also informed her that Allah Ta’ala had healed his body after he invoked His Mercy. Sayyidna Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu reports that after this, Allah Ta’ala restored to him all his wealth and children and gave him more children equal in number to the children which he had before (Ibn Kathir).

Sayyidna Ibn Mas’ud radi’allahu ‘anhu says that Sayyidna Ayyub ‘alayhis salaam had seven sons and seven daughters but they all died while he was undergoing the ordeal. When his days of hardship were over, his children were brought back to life by Allah Ta’ala and his wife also gave birth to as many more children, to which the Qur’an refers to as **(and the like thereof alongwith them - 21:84)**. According to Tha’labi this version is closer to the text of the Qur’an. (Qurtubi)

Some scholars say that he was granted as many new children as he had before and the word ‘mithlu’ **(the like)** refers to an equal number of grandchildren. (Only Allah knows best).

## **COMMENTARY - TAFSEER IBN KATHIR**

He had plenty of livestock, cattle and crops, many children and beautiful houses, and he was tested in these things, losing every thing he had. Then he was tested with regard to his body, and he was left alone on the

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edge of the city and there was no one who treated him with compassion apart from his wife, who took care of him. It was said that it reached the stage where she was in need, so she started to serve people (to earn money) for his sake.

The Prophet ﷺ said: *(The people who are tested the most severely are the Prophets, then the righteous, then the next best and the next best).*

According to another Hadith: *(A man will be tested according to his level of religious commitment; the stronger his religious commitment, the more severe will be his test.)*

The Prophet of Allah, Ayyub, upon him be peace, had the utmost patience, and he is the best example of that. Yazid bin Maysarah said: *“When Allah tested Ayyub, upon him be peace, with the loss of his family, wealth and children, and he had nothing left, he started to focus upon the remembrance of Allah, and he said: ‘I praise You, the Lord of lords, Who bestowed His kindness upon me and gave me wealth and children, and there was no corner of my heart that was not filled with attachment to these worldly things, then You took all of that away from me and You emptied my heart, and there is nothing to stand between me and You. If my enemy Iblis knew of this, he would be jealous of me.’ When Iblis heard of this, he became upset. And Ayyub, upon him be peace, said: ‘O Lord, You gave me wealth and children, and there was no one standing at my door complaining of some wrong I had done to him. You know that. I used to have a bed prepared for me, but I forsook it and said to myself: You were not created to lie on a comfortable bed. I only forsook that for Your sake.’”* This was recorded by Ibn Abi Hatim.

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded from Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said: *(When Allah healed Ayyub, He sent upon him a shower of golden locusts, and he started to pick them up and gather them in his garment. It was said to him, “O Ayyub, have you not had enough” He said, “O Lord, who can ever have enough of Your mercy)* The basis of this Hadith is recorded in the Two Sahihs, as we shall see below.

**(and We restored his family to him (that he had lost) and the like thereof along with them)**

It was reported that Ibn `Abbas said: *“They themselves were restored to him.”* This was also narrated by Al-`Awfi from Ibn `Abbas. Something similar was also narrated from Ibn Mas`ud and Mujahid, and this was the view of Al-Hasan and Qatadah. Mujahid said: *“It was said to him, ‘O Ayyub, your family will be with you in Paradise; if you want, We will bring them back to you, or if you want, We will leave them for you in Paradise and will compensate you with others like them.’ He said, ‘No, leave them for me in Paradise.’ So they were left for him in Paradise, and he was compensated with others like them in this world.”*

**(as a mercy from Ourselves)** means, ‘We did that to him as a mercy from Allah towards him.’

**(and a Reminder for all those who worship Us.)** means, ‘We made him an example lest those who are beset by trials think that We do that to them because We do not care for them, so that they may take him as an example of patience in accepting the decrees of Allah and bearing the trials with which He tests His servants as He wills.’ And Allah has the utmost wisdom with regard to that.

This concludes the commentary for Day 7.

**ANSWER:** The wife of Sayyidna Zakariyya ‘alayhis salaam

## **SURAH MARYAM, VERSES 1-9**

**Kaf, Ha Ya, ‘Ain, Sad [1] This is a narration of your Lord’s mercy to His servant Zakariyya, [2] When he called his Lord in a low voice. [3] He said, “My Lord, here I am that bones within me have turned feeble, and the head has flared up grey with old age, and I never remained My Lord, unanswered in my prayer to You. [4] And I fear (my) kins after me, and my wife is barren, so bless me with an heir, from Your own side, [5] who inherits me and inherits the house of Ya’qub. And make him, O my Lord, a favorite one!” [6] (Allah said) “O Zakariyya, We give you the good news of a boy whose name is Yahya (John). We did not create any one before him of the same name.” [7] He Said, “My Lord, how shall there be a boy for me while my wife is barren and I have reached the extreme of old age?” [8] He said, “So it is; your Lord said ‘it is easy for Me, and I did create you before, when you were nothing.’” [9]**

### **COMMENTARY**

كهیص are letters known in Arabic as Huruf Muqatta’at whose meanings, like Mutashaabihaat are known only to Allah Ta’ala and people should not even attempt to probe their meanings.

نداء خفيا (**a low voice - 19:3**) tells us that it is better to beseech Allah in supplication in undertone. Sayyidna Sa’d Ibn Abi Waqqas radi’allahu ‘anhu has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ once said, *“Surely the best way to make supplication to Allah is in undertone and the best sustenance is that which is sufficient for one’s needs (i.e. neither more nor less than required)”* (Qurtubi)

**“Here I am that bones within me have turned feeble and the head has flared up grey with old age.” - 19:4** Human body becomes weak with the aging of bones, because it is the bones which keep the body firm and upright. When bones lose their strength, the whole body turns weak.

The literal meaning of ‘ishti’aal’ is a sudden burst of fire. Here the word is used as a simile for grey hair covering the head like a glow of fire.

### **Mention of one’s needs in supplication is desirable**

Here Sayyidna Zakariyya ‘alayhis salaam before making his supplication, mentioned about his weakness and old age by referring to his bones. One of the reasons for this was, as pointed out in the translation, that in his peculiar circumstances i.e. his old age and physical weakness, it was not appropriate for him to ask for a child. Another reason given by Imam Qurtubi in his commentary is, that for possible acceptance of supplication it is better to mention one’s weakness, destitution and inadequacy. For this reason religious scholars have emphasized that one should recount Allah Ta’ala’s blessings and his own exigency before making his supplication.

‘مَوَالِي’ is the plural of ‘مَوْلِي’. This word has many meanings in the Arabic language, one of them being a cousin, or other relations on the father’s side. Here the word has been used in this sense.

### **The Legacy of Prophets cannot be inherited**

**“Who inherits me and inherits the house of Ya’qub.” - 19:6.**

The religious scholars are all agreed that here the inheritance does not mean wealth, because in the first



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place, it has not been established that Sayyidna Zakariyya ‘alayhis salaam had much wealth. Hence, the question as to who would inherit the same, does not arise. Secondly, it is inconsistent with the exalted position of a prophet to concern himself with such matters. And thirdly, a saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which has been unanimously accepted by all religious scholars, says: *“Indeed the knowledgeable scholars are the inheritors of the prophets, because the prophets do not leave any material wealth. Their legacy is knowledge. One who has acquired knowledge has received great fortune.”*

The above saying of the Prophet ﷺ is also recorded in Al-Kafi, by Al-Kulaini, the well-known book of the Shi’ite school. It is narrated in Sahih Al-Bukhari through Sayyidah A’ishah radi’allahu ‘anha that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: *“No one inherits our (i.e. prophets’) wealth, because whatever wealth we leave behind is Sadaqah (Charity).”*

In the verse itself after *يَرِثُنِي* the addition of the words *يَرِثُ مِنْ آلِ يَعْقُوبَ* (19:6) confirms the view that here the material inheritance is not implied, because the son, Yahya ‘alayhis salaam, could not have inherited the material wealth of the family of Sayyidna Ya’qub ‘alayhis salaam, which could only be inherited by their near relations and not by Sayyida Yahya ‘alayhis salaam. It is against the law of inheritance for distant relations to receive any part of inheritance in the presence of close relatives.

Ruh ul-Ma’ani quotes the following from Al-Kafi, by Al-Kulaini, the well-known Shi’ah scholar: *“Sulayman ‘alayhis salaam was the heir of Dawud ‘alayhis salaam and Muhammad ﷺ was the heir of Sulayman ‘alayhis salaam.”*

It is quite obvious that the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not inherit any material wealth from Sulayman ‘alayhis salaam, nor did Sulayman ‘alayhis salaam receive any such inheritance from Dawud ‘alayhis salaam. Clearly the reference here is to the wisdom and the knowledge which all prophets of Allah possess.

**“We did not create any one before him of the same name.” – 19:7.**

The word *سَمِي* means “person having the same name.” It also means “similar.” If the first meaning is adopted here then it would suggest that no one else had the name Yahya before him. This fact also suggests that he possessed certain special attributes which were not granted to any one else before him. And if we take the second meaning of the word *سَمِي* then it will mean that some of his attributes and situations were such that they were peculiar to him and were not shared by any other prophet, and that he was unique in the possession of those special attributes, for instance his self abnegation and denial of worldly comforts (حُصُوء). However, it does not necessarily follow that he was superior to all the prophets who preceded him, for the superiority of Sayyidna Ibrahim Khalilullah and Sayyidna Musa Kalimullah ‘alayhumaa salaam over him is established and well known. (Mazhari).

The word *عَتِيًا* is derived from *عتو* which actually means ‘unresponsive’ or ‘insensitive’, and in the present context it means dryness of the bones. *سَوِيًّا* means healthy. This word has been added here to denote that Sayyidna Zakariyya ‘alayhis salaam’s loss of speech for three days was not due to any illness, for during this entire period of three days he could utter words of prayer and supplication. This special condition was a miracle and a sign from Allah Ta’ala about his wife’s pregnancy. *حَنَانًا* Literal meaning of this word is softheartedness, compassion and mercy, and these qualities were specially granted to Sayyidna Yahya ‘alayhis salaam.

### COMMENTARY – TAFSIR IBN KATHIR

Concerning Allah’s Statement, **(A reminder of the mercy of your Lord)** This means that this is a



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reminder of Allah's mercy upon His servant Zakariyya. Yahya bin Ya'mar recited it, (ذَكَرَ رَحْمَةَ رَبِّكَ عَبْدَهُ) (Zakariyya) *"He has reminded of your Lord's mercy to His servant Zakariyya."* The word Zakariyya in the Ayah has been recited with elongation and also shortened. Both recitations are well-known. He was a great Prophet from the Prophets of the Children of Israel. In Sahih Al-Bukhari, it is recorded that the Prophet ﷺ said about Zakariyya that He was a carpenter who used to eat from what he earned with his own hand through carpentry.

Concerning Allah's statement, **(When he called his Lord (with) a call in secret.)** He only made his supplication secretly because it is more beloved to Allah. This is similar to what Qatadah said concerning this Ayah, **(When he called out his Lord (with) a call in secret.)** *"Verily, Allah knows the pious heart and he hears the hidden voice."*

**(He said: "My Lord! Indeed my bones have grown feeble...")** meaning, "I have become weak and feeble in strength."

**(and gray hair has Ashta'al on my head,)** means the gray hair has burned into the black hair. The intent is to inform of weakness and old age, and its external and internal traces.

Concerning Allah's statement, **(and I have never been unblessed in my invocation to You, O my Lord!)** This means, "I have not experienced from You except that You would respond to my supplication and that You would never refuse me in whatever I ask of You."

Concerning His statement, **(And verily, I fear Mawali after me,)** Mujahid, Qatadah and As-Suddi, all said, *"In saying the word Mawali, he (Zakariyya) meant his succeeding relatives."* The reason for his fear was that he was afraid that the generation that would succeed him would be a wicked generation. Thus, he asked Allah for a son who would be a Prophet after him, who would guide them with his prophethood and that which was revealed to him. In response to this I would like to point out that he was not afraid of them inheriting his wealth. For a Prophet is too great in status, and too lofty in esteem to become remorseful over his wealth in this fashion. A Prophet would not disdain to leave his wealth to his successive relatives, and thus ask to have a son who would receive his inheritance instead of them. This is one angle of argument. The second argument is that Allah did not mention that he (Zakariyya) was wealthy. On the contrary, he was a carpenter who ate from the earnings of his own hand. This type of person usually does not have a mass of wealth. Amassing wealth is not something normal for Prophets, for verily, they are the most abstentious in matters of this worldly life. The third argument is that it is confirmed in the Two Sahihs, in more than one narration, that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, *(We (the Prophets) do not leave behind inheritance (of wealth). Whatever we leave behind, then it is charity.)* In a narration recorded by At-Tirmidhi with an authentic chain of narrations, he ﷺ said, *(We, Prophets do not leave behind inheritance (of wealth).)* Therefore, the meaning in these Hadiths restricts the meaning of Zakariyya's statement, *(So give me from yourself an heir. Who shall inherit me,)* inheritance of prophethood.

For this reason Allah said, **(and inherit (also) the posterity of Ya`qub.)** This is similar to Allah's statement, **(And Sulayman inherited from Dawud.) (27:16)** This means that he inherited prophethood from him. If this had meant wealth, he would not have been singled with it among his other brothers. There also would have been no important benefit in mentioning it if it was referring to wealth. It is already well-known and established in all of the previous laws and divinely revealed creeds, that the son inherits the wealth of his father. Therefore, if this was not referring to a specific type of inheritance, then Allah would not have mentioned it.

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All of this is supported and affirmed by what is in the authentic Hadith: (*We Prophets do not leave behind any inheritance (of wealth). Whatever we leave behind, then it is charity.*)

Mujahid said concerning his statement, **(Who shall inherit me, and inherit (also) the posterity of Ya'qub.) (19:6)** *"His inheritance was knowledge, and Zakariyya was one of the descendants of Ya'qub."* Hushaym said, *"Isma'il bin Abi Khalid informed us that Abu Salih commented about the Ayah: (who shall inherit me, and inherit (also) the posterity of Ya'qub.) "He would be a Prophet like his forefathers were Prophets."*

Allah's statement, **(and make him, my Lord, one with whom You are well-pleased!)** means "Make him pleasing to You (Allah) and your creation. Love him and make him beloved to your creatures, in both his religion and his character."

### The acceptance of Zakariyya 'alayhis salaam's supplication

This statement implies what is not mentioned, that his supplication was answered. It was said to him, **((Allah said:) "O Zakariyya! Verily, We give you the glad tidings of a son, whose name will be Yahya...")**

Similarly Allah, the Exalted, said; **(At that time Zakariyya invoked his Lord, saying: "O my Lord! Grant me from You, a good offspring. You are indeed the All-Hearer of invocation." Then the angels called him, while he was standing in prayer in the Mihrab, (saying): "Allah gives you glad tidings of Yahya, confirming (believing in) the word from Allah, noble, keeping away from sexual relations with women, a Prophet, from among the righteous.") (3:38-39)**

Allah said, **(We have given that name to none before (him).)** Qatadah, Ibn Jurayj and Ibn Zayd said, *"This means that no one had this name before him."* Ibn Jarir preferred this interpretation, may Allah have mercy upon him.

### Zakariyya 'alayhis salaam's amazement after the acceptance of his supplication

Zakariyya was amazed when his supplication was answered and he was given the good news of a son. He became extremely overjoyed and asked how this child would be born to him, and in what manner he would come. This was particularly amazing because his wife was an old woman who was barren and had not given birth to any children in her entire life. Even Zakariyya himself had become old and advanced in years [...].

The Answer of the Angel, **(He said:)** That is, the angel, in his response to Zakariyya and his was amazement, **("Thus says your Lord: 'It is easy for Me...")** Meaning the birth of the son will be from you and from this wife of yours and not from any other (woman).

**(easy)** Meaning, it is simple and easy for Allah to do. Then he (the angel) mentioned to him that which is more amazing than what he was asking about. The angel said that the Lord said,

**(Certainly I have created you before, when you had been nothing!)** This is similar to Allah's statement, **(Has there not been over man a period of time, when he was not a thing worth mentioning) (76:1)**

### SURAH AL-IMRAN, VERSES 38-40

**Thereupon, Zakariyya prayed to his Lord. He said: "O my Lord, grant me from Your own (power) a goodly progeny. Verily, You are the listener of the prayer!" [38] So then, the angels**

**called out to him, while he stood praying in the Arch, saying: “Allah gives you the good news of Yahya (John) who shall come to confirm a word of Allah and shall be a chief, abstinent (from women), a prophet and one of the righteous!” [39] He said: “O my Lord, how shall I have a boy when old age has come upon me and my wife is barren?” Said He: ‘That is how Allah does what He wills!’ [40]**

## COMMENTARY

1. While looking at the first sentence of this verse - **(Thereupon, Zakariyya prayed to his Lord)** - we should bear in mind that Sayyidna Zakariyya ‘alayhis salaam had no offspring up to that time. He had grown old and one usually does not have children in that age, although he firmly believed that Allah, in His ultimate power, could change the usual phenomenon and bless him with an offspring even at his advanced age. But he had not personally witnessed the unusual divine acts - such as he did when he saw unusual and out-of-season eatables provided for Sayyidah Maryam ‘alayhas salaam- and that was why he did not have the courage to extend his hand of prayer for an offspring. Now when he saw the miracle with his own eyes, he was persuaded for such prayer under the belief that Allah, who can provide a servant with out-of-season fruits, would also bless him with an offspring, even in this late age, and so he prayed.

The second sentence of the: **‘He said: “O my Lord, grant me from Your own (power) a goodly progeny.”’** - tells us that making prayers to have children is a blessed practice of the prophets and the righteous.

In another verse Allah Almighty has said: **“And We sent messengers before you and provided them with wives and children (13:38).** It means that children are among the blessings of Allah which were bestowed on the Holy Prophet ﷺ as well as on other prophets.

Now, should someone try to stop the birth of children, by any means, he will not only rebel against nature but will also deprive himself of having acted in harmony with the common and agreed practice of prophets alayhimus salaam. The Holy Prophet of Islam ﷺ has given great importance to the question of marriage and children, so much so that he did not allow anyone to avoid married life and children inspite of his capability, and refused to take such a person as a member of his community of followers. He said:

- (1) *Marriage is my sunnah (way).*
- (2) *So, whoever turns away from my sunnah, he is not from me.*
- (3) *Therefore, marry a woman who is loving and fertile, for I shall compete with other communities on the basis of your numbers.*

In another verse, Allah Almighty praises those who pray before Him to have a wife in marriage, have children and have them grow good and righteous. He says: **‘And those who say: “O our Lord, bless us with such among our wives and our children as be the delight of our eyes.’ (25:74)**

Hasan al-Basri rahimahullah says that the Qur’anic expression - ‘qurrata a’yun’ (literally: coolness or lustre of the eyes; meaning someone dearly loved and cherished) - here means that the maker of prayer sees his children and wife devoted in obedience to Allah.

It appears in a hadith that Umm Sulaym radiallahu anha requested the Holy Prophet ﷺ to pray for his attendant, Sayyidna Anas radiallahu ‘anhu. He made the following prayer for him: *‘O Allah, increase his wealth and his children and make him prosper in what You have bestowed on him.’* It was the outcome of this very prayer that Sayyidna Anas radiallahu ‘anhu had about a hundred children and was also blessed with an ample measure of wealth.

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The expression: 'a word of Allah' refers to Sayyidna 'Isa 'alayhis salaam. This term is used for him because he was created, in an unusual manner, simply by the will and command of Allah - without a paternal linkage.

2. The second quality of Sayyidna Yahya 'alayhis salaam has been described by the word, 'hasur' translated here as 'abstinent'. It means that he was very particular about keeping himself shielded from temptations, that is, from things one habitually enjoys. When we say one abstains from enjoyments of life, the statement includes abstinence even from fulfilling the desires of things allowed, for example, good food, good dress and marital life and things like these. Since the quality of abstinence has been mentioned here in a positive frame of reference, it obviously seems to suggest that this is the better way, although ahadith prove the higher merit of living in the bond of marriage. In this situation, the considered opinion is that one whose condition is similar to that of Sayyidna Yahya 'alayhis salaam and who is so absorbed in the thought of his life-to-come that he feels no need to have a wife nor has the time and frame of mind to fulfil the rights of his wife and children, then, for such a person this is the better choice. It is because of this particular reason that ahadith which describe the merit of marriage come up with a restrictive clause as well, that is, which means that one who can marry and is capable of fulfilling the due rights of his wife, should marry, for this is better for him; otherwise, he is not advised to marry. (Bayan al-Qur'an)

We have already seen that Sayyidna Zakariyya 'alayhis salaam believed in the absolute power of Allah and had seen its manifestation repeatedly and that he had himself made the prayer and knew of its acceptance as well, what then, did he mean by asking: 'how shall I have a boy?' The truth of the matter is that the question asked by him was not because of any doubt in the absolute power of Allah. Quite contrary to this, the purpose of the question was to find out the state in which this was to happen: whether the present extreme old age of both of them would remain just as it was, or would that state be changed. The eloquent reply given in **(That is how Allah does what He wills)** makes it clear that they were to remain at the same age and that they would have an offspring in that very state. This resolves any doubt that may be entertained at this point. (Bayan al-Qur'an).

This concludes the commentary for Day 8.



**ANSWER:** The wife of Abu Lahab

## SURAH LAHAB

**Perish the two hands of Abu Lahab, and perish he! [1] Neither his wealth availed him, nor what he earned. [2] He will soon enter a fire, full of flames, [3] and his wife as well, the wicked carrier of firewood. [4] In her neck there is a rope of twisted palm-fibre. [5]**

### COMMENTARY

#### The Fate of ‘Umm Jamil, the Wife of Abu Lahab

Verse [111:4] **(And his wife as well, the wicked, the carrier of firewood.)** As Abu Lahab was a vehement enemy of the Holy Messenger ﷺ, his wife too was supportive of her husband in his disbelief, rejection, obstinacy, and in persecuting the Holy Prophet ﷺ. She was a sister of Abu Sufyan, and daughter of Harb Ibn ‘Umayyah. Her nickname was Umm Jamil. The Qur’an makes plain in this verse that this wretched woman will also roast with her husband in the fire of Hell. She is described as **حَمَّالَةَ الْحَطَبِ** which literally means ‘the carrier of firewood’. Idiomatically, Arabs use this expression to refer to a ‘tale-bearer’, that is, one who gathers pieces of gossip and carries them between individuals and families in order to ignite the fires of discord and enmity between people, exactly as one would gather firewood to kindle the fire. This telltale woman improperly carried information concerning the private affairs of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the blessed Companions in an attempt to ignite and instigate trouble. In this verse too, the phrase ‘the carrier of firewood’ has been interpreted by Sayyidna Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu, Mujahid, ‘Ikrimah **رحمهما الله تعالى** a group of commentators to mean that ‘She was a tale-bearer’ while Ibn Zaid, Dahhak and other commentators **رحمهم الله تعالى** retain it in its original sense, and explain that she literally used to collect thorny branches from the jungle, and place them in the path of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in order to harm him - hence the description: ‘carrier of firewood’. [Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir].

Some scholars explain that just as she used to help her husband in this world to promote disbelief and tyranny and to assist him in harming the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, she will add to the torment of her husband in the Hereafter. She will collect the branches of zaqqum and other trees and add them as fuel to the fire of Hell in which her husband would be roasting. [Ibn Kathir].

#### Tale-Bearing: A Gravely Major Sin

It is recorded in the two Sahihs that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is reported to have said that a tale-bearer (to harm others) will not enter Paradise. Fudail Ibn ‘Iyad **رحمه الله تعالى** says that there are three evil deeds of man that destroy all his righteous actions. They are: [1] backbiting; [2] tale-bearing; and [3] lying. ‘Ata Ibn Sa’ib **رحمه الله تعالى** says that he asked Sha’bi **رحمه الله تعالى** about the Prophetic Tradition in which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is reported to have *“Three types of people will not enter Paradise: [1] a murderer; [2] a tale-bearer; and [3] a trader who is involved in usury.”* ‘Ata **رحمه الله تعالى** says that I cited this Tradition to Sha’bi and asked him in a surprising tone that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has equated ‘a tale-bearer’ with a murderer and a usurer. He replied: “Indeed tale-bearing is the root cause of murder and usurpation of wealth.” [Qurtubi]

Verse [111:5] **(In her neck there is a rope of twisted palm-fibre.)** The masd with the letter-s-bearing sukun [quiescence or rest] is an infinitive which means ‘to twist rope or cord, or to twist it strongly and tightly’. If the word is read as ‘masad’ with the letters m-s bearing fatha [= a-a], the word refers to fibres. It is also a rope made of ‘twisted fibres of palm tree’ or ‘tightly braided fibres of coconut tree’ or ‘cord that has been woven strongly’ or ‘coil or cable formed by winding iron strands together’. [al-Qamus]. Some scholars have preferred to translate it specifically as ‘a rope made of twisted fibres of palm tree’ and no other string or twine. This is in conformity with the general usage of the Arabs. Basically, it refers to any string or

twine or rope or cord or coil or cable formed by intertwining strands of any material. In keeping with this general sense of the word, Sayyidna Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu, ‘Urwah Ibn Zubair radi’allahu ‘anhu and others said that in this context the phrase حَبْلٌ مِّنْ مَّسَدٍ “rope of masad” refers to ‘rope formed by twisting iron strands’. This will be her condition in Hell where an iron-collar will be in her neck. Sayyidna Mujahid radi’allahu ‘anhu interprets min masad as min hadid, that is, ‘of iron’. [Mazhari].

Sha’bi, Muqatil and other commentators have taken the phrase min masad to refer to ‘a rope made of twisted fibres of palm tree’ and said that Abu Lahab and his wife were extremely wealthy and were looked upon as leaders of their nation but, on account of his wife’s mean disposition and miserliness, she used to collect firewood from the jungle, bind them together with a rope, place the bundle on her head and put its rope round her neck, so that it might not fall from her head. This practice of hers one day led to her destruction. She had a bundle of wood on her head and the rope in her neck. She felt tired and sat down. Then fell, was choked and died. According to this second interpretation, the verse describes her mean disposition and the disastrous consequences of her sadistic behavior. [Mazhari]. However, such a conduct in Abu Lahab’s family, especially of his wife, was hardly conceivable; therefore, most commentators have preferred the first interpretation. Allah knows best!

## COMMENTARY – TAFSIR IBN KATHIR

### The Destiny of Umm Jamil, the Wife of Abu Lahab

**(And his wife too, who carries wood.)** His wife was among the leading women of the Quraysh and she was known as Umm Jamil. Her name was ‘Arwah bint Harb bin Umayyah and she was the sister of Abu Sufyan. She was supportive of her husband in his disbelief, rejection and obstinacy. Therefore, she will be helping to administer his punishment in the fire of Hell on the Day of Judgment. Thus, Allah says,

**(Who carries wood. In her neck is a twisted rope of Masad.)**, meaning, she will carry the firewood and throw it upon her husband to increase that which he is in (of torment), and she will be ready and prepared to do so.

**(In her neck is a twisted rope of Masad.)** Mujahid and ‘Urwah both said, “From the palm fiber of the Fire.” Al-‘Awfi narrated from Ibn ‘Abbas, ‘Atiyah Al-Jadali, Ad-Dahhak and Ibn Zayd that she used to place thorns in the path of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Al-Jawhari said, “Al-Masad refers to fibers, it is also a rope made from fibers or palm leaves. It is also made from the skins of camels or their furs. It is said (in Arabic) Masadtul-Habla and Amsaduhu Masadan, when you tightly fasten its twine.” Mujahid said,

**(In her neck is a twisted rope of Masad.)** “This means a collar of iron.” Don’t you see that the Arabs call a pulley cable a Masad

### A Story of Abu Lahab’s Wife harming the Messenger of Allah ﷺ

Ibn Abi Hatim said that his father and Abu Zur’ah both said that ‘Abdullah bin Az-Zubayr Al-Humaydi told them that Sufyan informed them that Al-Walid bin Kathir related from Ibn Tadrus who reported that Asma’ bint Abi Bakr said, “When **(Perish the two hands of Abu Lahab and perish he!)**, was revealed, the one-eyed Umm Jamil bint Harb came out wailing, and she had a stone in her hand. She was saying, ‘He criticizes our father, and his religion is our scorn, and his command is to disobey us.’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sitting in the Masjid (of the Ka’bah) and Abu Bakr radi’allahu ‘anhu was with him. When Abu Bakr radi’allahu ‘anhu saw her he said, ‘O Messenger of Allah! She is coming and I fear that she will see you.’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied, (Verily, she will not see me.) Then he recited some of the Qur’an as a protection for himself. This is as Allah says, **(And when you recite the Qur’an, We put between you and those who believe not in the Hereafter, an invisible veil.)**



## DAY 9

**(17:45)** *So she advanced until she was standing in front of Abu Bakr and she did not see the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. She then said, 'O Abu Bakr! Verily, I have been informed that your friend is making defamatory poetry about me.' Abu Bakr radi'allahu 'anhu replied, 'Nay! By the Lord of this House (the Ka`bah) he is not defaming you.' So she turned away saying, 'Indeed the Quraysh know that I am the daughter of their leader.'"*

Al-Walid or another person said in a different version of this Hadith, "So Umm Jamil stumbled over her waist gown while she was making circuits (Tawaf) around the House (the Ka`bah) and she said, 'Cursed be the reviler.' Then Umm Hakim bint `Abdul-Muttalib said, 'I am a chaste woman so I will not speak abusively and I am refined so I do not know. Both of us are children of the same uncle. And after all the Quraysh know best.'"

This concludes the commentary for Day 9.

**ANSWER:** The daughter of Sayyidna Shu'ayb 'alayhis salaam

## **SURAH AL-QASAS, VERSES 22-28**

**And when he set out towards Madyan, he said, "I hope my Lord will guide me to the straight path". [22] And when he arrived at the waters of Madyan, he found a large number of people watering (their animals) and found, aloof from them, two women keeping back (their animals). He said, 'What is the matter with you?' They said, "We cannot water (our animals) unless the shepherds bring (their animals) back and our father is very old man." [23] So he (Musa) watered (their animals) for their sake, then he turned to a shade and said, "O my Lord, I am in need of whatever good you send down to me." [24] Then one of the two women came to him, walking with shyness. She said, "My father is calling you, so that he rewards you with something in return of your watering for us. So when he (Musa) came to him (the father of the women) and narrated to him the whole story, the latter said, "Do not fear; you have escaped from the wrongdoing people." [25] One of the two women said, "Dear father, hire him; the best man you hire is the one who is strong, trustworthy." [26] He (the father) said (to Musa), "I wish to marry one of these two daughters of mine to you on the condition that you serve me for eight years. Then if you complete ten (years) it will be of your own accord. And I do not want to put you in any trouble; you will find me, Inshallah (God-willing) one of the righteous." [27] He (Musa) said, "This is (done) between me and you. Whichever of the two terms I fulfill, there should be no excess against me, and Allah is witness to what we are saying!" [28]**

### **COMMENTARY**

**(Then one of the two women came to him walking with shyness. - 28:25).** In accordance with Qur'anic practice the story has been summarized here. The full story runs like this: When the two girls reached home earlier than usual, their father enquired the reason for that. So they related to him the whole incident. Their father thought that he should make up for the favour Musa 'alayhis salaam had done to his daughters. Hence he asked one of his daughters to bring him with her. She went to Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam and talked to him with an element of modesty. This shows that despite the fact that hijab was not enjoined by then, good women would not talk to men freely. She went to him with a need, so she talked with shyness. Some commentators have given the detail of her shyness that while talking she had raised her sleeve up to her face. The narrations as related in commentaries say that Musa 'alayhis salaam had asked her to walk behind him and guide him from the back. The objective was that he could not cast his eye on her. Perhaps for this reason she told her father about him to be trustworthy.

Who was the father of these two girls? Commentators have different views on this subject. But Qur'anic verses allude that he was Sayyidna Shu'aib 'alayhis salaam (7:85). (Qurtubi)

**(My father is calling you - 28:25).** It was possible at that time that the girl would have invited him on her own, but she did not do so. Instead, she conveyed her father's message to him, because it was against the modesty for a girl to invite a stranger at home.

**(The best man you hire is the one who is strong, trustworthy - 28:26),** One of the daughters of Sayyidna Shu'aib 'alayhis salaam pleaded to her father that as he needed the services of a man to help him in his daily work at home, he might consider hiring him for this purpose. In support of her suggestion she said further that two qualities are required in a servant. One, that he should be strong, and the second, that he should be trustworthy. The girl pointed out that she had seen his strength when he removed the stone

from the mouth of the well, and his integrity when he made her walk behind him.

## **Two important conditions for hiring a person, and assigning a job**

Allah Ta'ala made the daughter of Sayyidna Shu'aib 'alayhis salaam say something of great wisdom. In the present set up of employment, great emphasis is laid at the time of interviews on scrutinizing the degrees and experience of a candidate, but no attention is paid to ascertain his integrity and trustworthiness. As a result of this, there is neither efficiency nor honesty of purpose in the offices. On the contrary bribery and nepotism are so common that there seems to be no law in operation. If people could pay heed to this Qur'anic verse, many a problems would be solved automatically.

**(He (the father) said (to Musa), "I wish to marry one of these two daughters of mine to you on the condition that you serve me for eight years. - 28:27).** Sayyidna Shu'aib 'alayhis salaam made the proposal of marriage of his daughter to Musa 'alayhis salaam on his own. It shows that the guardian of girls need not wait for the proposal to come from the boy's side. If a suitable good match is available, the girl's guardian may take the lead, for this has been the practice of the prophets. To quote an example, Sayyidna 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab radi'allahu 'anhu had offered his daughter, Sayyidah Hafsa radi'allahu 'anha, for marriage to Sayyidna Abu Bakr radi'allahu 'anhu and to Sayyidna 'Uthman radi'allahu 'anhu when she became widow. (Qurtubi)

**(one of these daughters of mine - 28:27).** Sayyidna Shu'aib 'alayhis salaam did not make the selection of one or the other girl for the proposal of marriage, rather he kept it vague. It was not the formal nikah, that requires offer and acceptance in presence of two witnesses, but only a discussion to have his consent to work for eight years in lieu of marriage with a girl. Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam agreed to the proposal, and got married to one of the girls. The Holy Qur'an does not describe every detail of a story, the happening of which is obvious from the context. Therefore, it cannot be doubted here that without pinpointing the bride and without the presence of witnesses how the nikah was solemnized. (Ruh, Bayan ul Qur'an)

**(on the condition that you serve me for eight years. - 28:27).** Eight years service and employment was regarded the mahr (dower)(the dower) of marriage. Scholars have different points of view on the issue, whether a service rendered to one's wife can be taken as a valid mahr (dower) or not. The subject is dealt with in detail in Ahkamul-Qur'an in Arabic language, under Surah Al-Qasas. Those who are interested can study the details there. For the common man it is enough to understand that if it is not allowed in the Muhammadi law, it might have been permitted in the code of law followed by Shu'aib 'alayhis salaam. is not uncommon to have minor differences in the laws (Shari'ah) brought by various prophets.

Imam Abu Hanifah rahimahullah has ruled in his Zahir-ur-Riwayah that the service rendered for one's wife cannot be considered as a valid mahr (dower). But in a later ruling by the scholars it is elaborated that though it is against the honour and dignity of husband to serve his wife in lieu of mahr (dower), but any duty performed outside the house, such as grazing of cattle or trading, can be made a substitute for it, provided a time frame is agreed upon before hand, as was in the case of Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam, where the parties had agreed before hand on eight years period of service. The reason is that the remuneration of the husband payable by his wife in this case will be treated as mahr (dower). (Bada'i, from Nawadir Ibn Sama'ah).

Another question that arises here is that the mahr (dower) is the right of wife, and if it is paid to her father or any other relative without her consent, it will be taken as not paid. In this incident the words **أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي** are a proof enough that Shu'aib 'alayhis salaam had hired him for his duty. So, the benefit of service went to him.

## DAY 10

In that situation how could this be regarded as mahr (dower) of the wife? The answer to this question is that it is quite probable that the herd of goats was the property of the girls, and therefore, the benefit of service went to his wife. Alternatively, if the goats belonged to the father and the wages were due from him, then the money of the wages payable by the father belonged to the wife, as her mahr (dower). It is lawful for a father to spend the money of his daughter with her permission. It is quite obvious that this whole deal was carried out with the consent of the girl.

### Ruling

The word **أُنكِحَكَ** (I wish to marry...with you) has proved that the father had arranged the nikah. Jurists are unanimous that it should be done as such. It is the father's duty and privilege to make arrangements of daughter's marriage. A girl should not arrange her own marriage. But there is difference of opinion between jurists on the issue whether the nikah is lawful or not, if a girl arranges her own marriage due to some need or pressure. Imam Abu Hanifah rahimahullah has ruled that it is lawful. However, this verse is silent on the issue.

### COMMENTARY – TAFSIR IBN KATHIR

[**Note:** only some extractions from the tafsir have been reproduced below, i.e. that which is not already covered above]

**(Verily, the best of men for you to hire is the strong, the trustworthy.)** her father said to her, 'What do you know about that' She said to him, 'He lifted a rock which could only be lifted by ten men, and when I came back with him, I walked ahead of him, but he said to me, walk behind me, and if I get confused about the route, throw a pebble so that I will know which way to go.'" `Abdullah (Ibn Mas`ud) said, *"The people who had the most discernment were three: Abu Bakr's intuition about `Umar; the companion of Yusuf when he said, 'Make his stay comfortable'; and the companion of Musa, when she said: (O my father! Hire him! Verily, the best of men for you to hire is the strong, the trustworthy)."*

This concludes the commentary for Day 10.

**ANSWER:** The sister of Sayyidna Ya'qub 'alayhis salaam/the paternal aunt of Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam

## **SURAH YUSUF, VERSE 77**

**They said, "If he commits theft, then, a brother of his has committed theft before." So Yusuf kept it (his reaction) to himself and did not reveal it to them. He said, "You are even worse in position. And Allah knows best of what you allege." [77]**

### **COMMENTARY**

It was stated in the previous verses that, while in Egypt, a royal bowl was concealed in the baggage of Benjamin, the younger brother of Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam. Then, by recovering it as planned, a charge of theft was levelled against him.

As in the first of the verses cited above, when the stolen property was recovered from Benjamin's baggage before the brothers of Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam they were so ashamed that they said in irritation; that is if he has committed a theft, it is not much of a surprise, for he had a brother who, like him, had committed a theft before. The sense was that he was not their real brother. He was their step brother. And he had a real brother who had also committed a theft.

On this occasion, the brothers of Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam accused him too of a theft, which refers to an event which took place during his childhood when the way a conspiracy was hatched here to blame Benjamin for theft, a similar conspiracy was staged against Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam at that time with him being totally unaware of it. As for his brothers, they were fully aware of the fact that he was totally free from this blame. But, being angry with Benjamin on this occasion, they have made out that event too as of theft and have put its blame on his brother, Yusuf 'alayhis salaam.

What was that event? Reports differ about it. Referring to Muhammad ibn Ishaq and Tafsir authority, Mujahid, Ibn Kathir has reported that soon after the birth of Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam, Benjamin was born. This birth of his became the cause of his mother's death. When both Yusuf 'alayhis salaam and Benjamin were left without their mother, they were raised by their paternal aunt. Allah Ta'ala had blessed Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam from his very childhood with such an attractive personality that whoever saw him became deeply attached to him. His paternal aunt was no exception. She would not let him disappear from her sight at any time. On the other hand, no different was the condition of his father who was very fond of him. But, being a minor child, it was necessary that he be kept under the care of a woman. Therefore, he was put under the care of his paternal aunt. When he had learnt how to walk, Sayyidna Ya'qub 'alayhis salaam thought of having him come to live with him. When he talked to his paternal aunt, she showed her reluctance to let him go. After that, having been under compulsion, she somehow handed Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam over to his father, but she did make a plan to take him back. She had an antique waist-band which had come to her as the legacy of Sayyidna Ishaq 'alayhis salaam and was highly valued. Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam's paternal aunt tied this band on his waist underneath his dress.

After he had gone, she spread the news around that her waist-band has been stolen by someone. When searched for, it turned out to be with young Yusuf 'alayhis salaam. According to the Shari'ah of Sayyidna Ya'qub 'alayhis salaam, the paternal aunt now had the right to keep him as her slave. When Sayyidna Ya'qub 'alayhis salaam saw that the paternal aunt has become the owner of Yusuf 'alayhis salaam on the authority of the religious law of the land, he handed young Yusuf 'alayhis salaam over to her. Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam kept living with her as long as she was alive.



## DAY 11

This was the event in which the blame of theft was imputed to Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam following which the truth came to light and everybody found that he was free of even the least doubt of theft. It was the love of his paternal aunt for him that had made her conspire to keep him. The brothers knew this truth all too well. Given this reason, it did not behove them that they would attribute theft to him. But, of the series of excesses inflicted on Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam by his brothers, this too was the last.

Now in the second sentence of the first verse (77) it was said: that is, Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam heard what his brothers had to say and kept it in his heart for they still seemed to be after him and were now blaming him for theft. But, he kept his reaction to himself and did not let his brothers know that he had heard what they had said and was affected by it in any way.

Said in the next and last sentence of the verse was: that is, ‘Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam said (in his heart): ‘You are even worse in position (as you accuse your brother of theft, falsely and knowingly). And Allah knows best of what you allege (whether what you are saying is true or false).’ The first sentence has been uttered in the heart. The other sentence may possibly have been said publicly as his response to what his brothers had said.

This concludes the commentary for Day 11.

**ANSWER:** Sayyidatina Khawlah bint Tha'labah radi'allahu 'anha

## **SURAH AL-MUJADALAH, VERSES 1-6**

**Allah has heard the talk of the woman who was debating with you about her husband, and was complaining to Allah. And Allah was hearing the conversation between both of you. Indeed, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. [1] Those of you who declare zihar\* against their wives, they are not their mothers. Their mothers are but only those who have given birth to them. And undoubtedly they utter an evil word and a lie. And Allah is surely Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful. [2] And those who declare zihar against their wives, then retract what they said, obligated on them is to free the neck (of a slave) before the two (spouses) touch one another. This is what you are advised with, and Allah is Well-Aware of what you do. [3] But whoever does not find (a slave) has to fast for two consecutive months before the two (spouses) touch one another. Then the one who is not able to do so has to feed sixty indigent persons. This is (laid down) so that you believe in Allah and His Messenger. And these are the limits set by Allah. And for the disbelievers there is a painful punishment. [4] Surely those who oppose Allah and His Messenger shall be disgraced, just as those before them were disgraced. And We have sent down clear verses, and for the disbelievers there is a humiliating punishment [5] on the Day when Allah will raise all of them, and will tell them what they did; Allah has its full account, while they have forgotten it. And Allah is witness to everything. [6]**

### **COMMENTARY**

#### **Cause of Revelation**

The initial verses of this Surah refer to a particular incident: Sayyidna Aṣṣ Ibn Samit radi'allahu 'anhu said to his wife Sayyidah Khawlah bint Tha'labah radi'allahu 'anha أَنْتَ عَلَيَّ كَظْهَرِ أُمِّي which, literally, means 'You are to me like the back of my mother.' Its underlying meaning is 'You are unlawful to me for cohabitation just like my mother.' Such an utterance, in the days of ignorance, amounted to divorce - even worse because it was taken to imply that the husband is rescinding all marital ties with his wife and, in addition, he is classifying her within the prohibited degree or permanently forbidden women like his mother. According to pre-Islamic custom, reunion with the wife was possible after divorce, but not after zihar, as she became permanently and absolutely forbidden. When this incident took place, the aggrieved lady went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ complaining about her husband and seeking redress for her problem according to Shari'ah. Up to that point in time the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had not received any revelation concerning that legal issue. Therefore, he pleaded his inability to do anything to help her in the absence of a revealed ordinance and said to her: "I have not yet received any ordinance regarding your matter." However he expressed his opinion according to common custom and said: "In my opinion, you have become forbidden to him." Having heard this ruling, she pleaded: "O Allah's Messenger! He spent my wealth, exhausted my youth and my womb bore abundantly for him. When I became old, unable to bear children, he pronounced the zihar formula on me. Where shall I go and how will my children do their living?" According to another version, she said: "My husband did not mention the word 'divorce', so how can this be counted as 'divorce'?" According to another version, she pleaded to Allah: "O Allah! I direct my complaint to You. This was the cause of the revelation of verses [1-6] (Al-Durarul Manthur and Ibn Kathir) which clearly state that Allah heard Sayyidah Khawlah's radi'allahu 'anha complaint and revealed the rule of Shari'ah to redress her grievances. Allah not only made matters easy for her, but the rule has been eternally enshrined in the Holy Qur'an for all sensible people to follow.

The noble Companions greatly respected Sayyidah Khawlah radi'allahu 'anha because her case has been

the cause of the revelation of the current set of verses, which abolished once and for all the long-standing social evil that was practiced in Arabia. Once Sayyidna ‘Umar Faruq, the Great radi’allahu ‘anhu was on his way with some of the blessed Companions when he came across a woman who stopped him. He instantly stopped and listened attentively to her with his head bent down. He did not move till she completed what she wanted to say. Some of the noble Companions said: “O Commander of the Faithful! You have held back such a large group of people for such a long time on account of this old lady!” Sayyidna ‘Umar radi’allahu ‘anhu said: “Do you know who this lady is? She is Sayyidah Khaulah radi’allahu ‘anha, the lady whose complaint was heard in the seventh heaven. So, how can ‘Umar not listen to her? She should be heard for a longer period of time and with greater attention. By Allah! If she did not take leave of her own accord, I would have stood with her here till the nightfall.” [Ibn Kathir]

**(Allah has heard.... 1)** The reference in the verse is to Sayyidah Khaulah radi’allahu ‘anha, the wife of Sayyidna Aus Ibn Samit radi’allahu ‘anhu, as mentioned above. Thus this verse and the rest of the verses lay down not only the rule of Shari’ah pertaining to zihar and redress the grievances of women placed in such awkward situation, but the first verse also is in honour of the pleading lady which consoles her, in that it says that Allah was listening to her words when she was pleading her case. The word mujadalah means ‘to plead, argue or dispute consistently and convincingly about one’s problem or case’. According to some narratives, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ pleaded his inability to do anything for her, as noted above, the aggrieved lady uttered spontaneously that ‘you receive ordinances in all matters, then how is it that no ordinance was revealed to you in my case?’ Thus the verse was revealed: “...and was complaining to Allah... [1]”. [Qurtubi]

Sayyidah ‘Aishah radi’allahu ‘anha is reported to have said: “*Pure is He, Whose hearing encompasses all things. I heard what Khaulah bint Tha’labah said about her husband while some of it I could not hear despite being so close to her in the same room, but Allah heard all her conversation and said ‘Allah has heard...’.*” [Bukhari, Ibn Kathir].

## Zihar

**(Those of you who declare zihar against their wives...58:2)** The aorist yuzahiruna is derived from zihar. There was a cruel custom in pre-Islamic Arabia, as pointed out earlier, where the husband would utter the zihar formula أَنْتَ عَلَيَّ كَظْهَرِ أُمِّي ‘You are to me as my mother’s back’, and thus she would become permanently and absolutely unlawful to him for cohabitation like the mother. Here the word zahr (back) metonymically refers to batn ‘stomach or womb’. [Qurtubi]

## Definition of zihar and its effect in Shari’ah

In order to understand the definition of zihar in terms of Shari’ah, it should be noted first that there are some women who are permanently forbidden for a man, such as mother, sister, daughter and others in the prohibited degree. Although looking at such women is permissible in general, yet looking at some parts of their body is not permissible, (like abdomen, back etc.) Now the definition of zihar is ‘to compare one’s wife with any of such parts of the body of such prohibited women’. According to the old Arab custom all conjugal relations ceased permanently between a man and his wife when he would use these words; rather it was worse than divorce. In the case of divorce, it was possible to retract and take back the wife. But in the case of zihar, according to the old Arab custom, it was not at all possible to restore the conjugal rights.

The current set of verses brought about reform in the custom in two ways: [1] zihar has been declared a sinful act. If a person is placed in a situation where he needs to separate from his wife, he must choose the method of ‘divorce’. Zihar should not be resorted to for this purpose, because the utterance of zihar formula is absurd, nonsense and false. Obviously, their wives are not their mothers, the Quran reads thus: “... **Their mothers are but only those who have given birth to them... [58:2]**”. وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَقُولُونَ مُنْكَرًا مِّنَ الْقَوْلِ وَزُورًا further says: “...**and undoubtedly they utter an evil word and a lie... [58:2]**” In other

words, their utterance is false, meaning ‘calling one’s wife mother’ is contrary to truth and fact, and also a heinous sin.

[2] The second reform the Qur’an brought about is as follows: If an ignorant person or a person unacquainted with the legal formalities of Islam were to utter the zihar formula, his wife does not become permanently unlawful to him, nor does he have an open licence to do as he wishes - like enjoying intimacy with her. The guilty person will have to pay a penalty for uttering such evil, false and obnoxious words. He cannot take back his wife without first paying the prescribed expiation. The following verse prescribes this expiation.

### The Expiation for Zihar

**(And those who declare zihar against their wives, then retract what they said, ...58:3).** The preposition lam in the phrase “**...retract what they said...**” is used in the sense of ‘an [from]’. Sayyidna Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu interprets ‘retract’ in the sense of ‘regret’: ‘they regret what they said and wish to be intimate or cohabit with their wives’. [Mazhari]

The verse shows that the penalty has been imposed on the husband for the purpose of making the wife lawful - without it she cannot become lawful to him. Zihar per se is not the cause of the expiation. In fact, zihar is a heinous sin for which repentance and seeking pardon and forgiveness is absolutely necessary. The concluding part of verse [2] “**...Allah is surely Most-forgiving, Very-Merciful.**” points to this fact. In other words, Allah in His great mercy has made allowance for man’s weaknesses and He is always ready to forgive his lapses, provided he comes to Allah with a penitent heart and makes amends. However, if a person did commit zihar and does not wish to take back his wife and enjoy intimacy with her, expiation is not obligatory on him. However, destroying a wife’s conjugal rights is unlawful. If she demands, it is obligatory for him to pay the expiation and take her back, should he wish to do so; or if she demands, he must divorce her and set her free from the bond of marriage. If he does not divorce her and set her free, then she has the right to apply to a Qadi or an Islamic court to compel him to either pay the expiation and take her back or to divorce her and set her free so that she could contract a second marriage. Islamic works on jurisprudence set down details of the laws pertaining to zihar.

The penalty for zihar is obligatory, which is given in this and the next verse. There are three options: [1] **(...obligated on them is to free the neck [of a slave]...)** [2] If a person cannot afford to do that, he must keep fast for two consecutive months; and [3] if he is so weak or ill that he cannot fast, then he must feed sixty poor people. The expiation will be fulfilled if one poor person is given two meals for sixty days. Alternatively, it is possible to give two meals to sixty poor persons on a single day. In each case, the poor should be fed to their fill. Another possible alternative is to give to a poor person about 1.6 kg wheat or 2.12 kg dates or barley for sixty days or the equivalent price of these food items may be given. The details of the law appertaining to zihar and its expiation are available in the texts of Islamic jurisprudence.

It is recorded in Traditions that when Sayyidah Khaulah radi’allahu ‘anha complained to Allah’s Messenger ﷺ about her husband and pleaded her case to Allah, verses relating to zihar and its expiation were revealed. So, Allah’s Messenger ﷺ called for the husband. When he came, the Holy Prophet ﷺ noticed that he was a weak-sighted old man. He recited to him the verses resolving his case, and commanded him to emancipate a slave, he said that he does not have the means to do that. The Holy Prophet ﷺ then asked him to fast two successive months, to which he replied: “By Him Who has sent you as the true Messenger, if I do not have two or three meals a day, I lose my sight completely.” The Holy Prophet ﷺ said “Then feed sixty poor people”. He said ‘I do not have the ability for that either, unless you help me’. The Holy Prophet ﷺ gave him some food grain, and also other people gathered more food grain for him, which amounted to the

measure of sadaqatul-fitr for sixty poor men, and in this way the expiation was made. [Ibn Kathir]

**(...This is [laid down] so that you believe in Allah and His Messenger. And these are the limits set by Allah. And for the disbelievers there is a painful chastisement. 58:4)** This part of the verse contains the phrase ‘so that you believe’. Belief here implies ‘to act upon the sacred laws, ordinances and injunctions or obey the commandments of Allah and His Messenger’. Then the verse says that the laws of expiation are limits set by Allah. It is prohibited to exceed them. It indicates that in matters of marriage, divorce, incestuous comparison and so on, Islam has abolished all traces of pre-Islamic pagan elements of customs and practices, and set down the just and approved code of conduct. Man is required to stick strictly to the parameters of Islam. Those who oppose and deny the Divine limits will be tormented most severely.

### **The Fate of those who Challenge Allah and His Apostle**

**(Surely those who oppose Allah and His Messenger shall be disgraced, just as those before them were disgraced....58:5)** In the preceding verse, stress was laid on keeping to Divine limits and to the sacred laws of Islam. The current verse warns those who oppose or reject them. Their profane designs shall be foiled and they shall be humiliated in this world and a condign torment shall be inflicted on them in the Hereafter.

**(...Allah has its full account, while they have forgotten it....58:6)** Man is very forgetful. He persists in committing sins and transgressions, but because he treats them as trivial and insignificant, he is unable to remember and recall them. However, they are all recorded and kept safely with Allah, even though the humans have done the actions and forgotten them. Allah will call them to give an account of them on the Day of Resurrection and chastise them.

\* Zihar is a term denoting a custom of the Arabs in the days of Ignorance. In case of disagreement with their wives they used to say to them, “You are for me like the back of my mother.” After saying this, they used to take their wives as their real mothers in being prohibited for them, and the ties of marriage were held to have been broken for good, with no possibility of their restoration. These verses have been revealed in a similar case where a husband (Aus ibn. Samit radi’allahu ‘anhu) had declared zihar against his wife (Khawlah radi’allahu ‘anha) who approached the Holy Prophet ﷺ and complained about her husband. The custom of the days of Ignorance was condemned, and the rules of Shari’ah about zihar were laid down by these verses. (Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

This concludes the commentary for Day 12.



**ANSWER:** Sayyidatina Sarah ‘alayhas salaam, wife of Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam

**Note:** the commentary is long today but it contains informative lessons on etiquettes and rules on social living, which is why we have kept the guidance within the commentary.

## **SURAH HUD, VERSES 69-73**

**And Our messengers came to Ibrahim with the good news. They said, “Salam (peace).” He said, “Salam.” Then he made no delay in bringing a roasted calf. [69] So, when he noticed their hands not reaching for it, he found them strange and felt a bit of fright from them. They said, “Be not frightened. We have been sent to the people of Lut.” [70] And his wife was standing (nearby). She laughed, so, We gave her the good news about Ishaq, and about Ya’qub after Ishaq. [71] She said, “Woe is to me! Shall I give birth to a child while I am an old woman and this is my husband, an old man? This is something strange, indeed.” [72] They said, “Do you marvel at Allah’s command? Allah’s mercy and His blessings are upon you, the people of the house. Surely, He is praiseworthy, glorious.” [73]**

### **COMMENTARY**

In these five verses, an event relating to Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam has been mentioned. Allah Ta’ala sent some angels to give him the good news of a birth in his family because Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam had no children from his wife, Sayyidah Sarah and he wished he had. But, they were much advanced in years. Obviously, there was no hope. Then, Allah Ta’ala sent the good news through the angels and that too of the nature that the new born would be a male child and even proposed the name of the child as Ishaq. Then, he was also told that he would live, have children and that the name of his son will be Ya’qub, and both of them would be the messenger and prophet of Allah. Since these angels had come in human form, Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam took them to be normal guests and lost no time in offering his hospitality. He placed a dish of roasted calf before them. But, they were really angels, free of eating and drinking. Therefore, despite the food being before them, they did not extend their hands towards it. When Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam noticed this, he was concerned. They did not look like guests, may be they had come to create some problem for him. The angels scented his concern and disclosed their identity. They told him that they were angels of Allah Ta’ala. There was no need for him to be frightened. They had been sent to give him the good news of a birth in his family, as well as to accomplish another mission, the mission of bringing Divine punishment on the people of Lut ‘alayhis salaam. Sayyidah Sarah, the wife of Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam was listening to this conversation from behind a curtain. When she found out that they were angels, not human beings, there was no need for the otherwise essential hijab. She laughed at the good news of the birth of a child in old age and said, ‘shall I give birth to a child while I am an old woman and my husband, an old man?’ The angels said as to why would she marvel at the command of Allah Ta’ala who has everything within His power. Was it not that, as a member of the prophet’s family, she has been witnessing that this was a family on which extraordinary Divine mercy and blessing descends all the time, which is mostly above and beyond the obvious chain of causes? So, what was there to wonder about? This was a gist of the event. Let us now go to details as they appear in the text of the verses cited above.

The first verse (69) tells us that these angels had come to Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam with some good news. The good news has been mentioned later in the third verse (71): **(so, We gave her the good news about Ishaq).**

Sayyidna ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbas said that the three angels were Jibra’il, Mika’il and Israfil ‘alayhum salaam. (Qurtubi). They came in human form and greeted Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam with ‘salam.’ Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam responded to their salam greeting and, taking them to be human, offered the usual

hospitality.

Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam is the first human being who introduced the custom of honoring guests by offering hospitality to them. (Qurtubi) It was his routine that he would never eat alone. Instead, when came the time for meals, he would be looking out for a guest so that he could eat with him.

Al-Qurtubi has reported from Isra’ili narratives that, on a certain day, Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam started looking for a guest at the time for meals. The man he met was a stranger. When he sat down to eat, Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam said to him, ‘say: I begin with the name of Allah.’ He said, ‘I do not know Allah. Who and what is He?’ Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam asked him to leave the dining-spread on the floor. When he went out, Sayyidna Jibra’il ‘alayhis salaam came in and said, ‘Allah Ta’ala says: As for him, We gave sustenance to him throughout his life despite his disbelief and as for you, you were wary about giving him even one morsel of food.’ Hearing this, Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam went after him and called him back. He said, ‘unless you tell me the reason why you turned me out first and why are you asking me to come in again, I will not go with you.’

When Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam told him the episode, the episode itself became the reason for his becoming a believer. He said, ‘the Lord who made you do this is very noble. I believe in Him.’ Then he went in with Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam, behaved like a true believer and ate his food after having recited Bismillah first.

So, Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam, true to his habit of entertaining guests, welcomed angels who had come in human form. Naturally, to him they were human, and guests. The host did his most, lost no time and placed a roasted calf before them.

In the second verse (70), it was stated that the angels had, though, come in the human form and it was also possible that they could have been given human characteristics of eating and drinking at that particular time. But, the wiser choice for them was no other but that they should not eat so that the secret that they were angels comes out in the open. Therefore, their angelic characteristics were allowed to remain, even in their human form, because of which they did not extend their hands towards the food.

According to some reports, they had some arrows in their hands. They started poking the heads of their arrows into the roasted meat. When they acted in that manner, Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam apprehended them to be his enemies, because, according to the social custom known to him, if a guest refused to eat, it was a sign of mischief to be made from his side. (Qurtubi) His apprehension was quashed when the angels themselves disclosed their identity and said that they were angels, therefore, they do not eat. So, there was no danger for him to bother about.

## INJUNCTIONS AND RULES

Many injunctions and important rules of guidance regarding social living appear in the verses under study. Imam al-Qurtubi has discussed them in detail in his Tafsir.

### The Sunnah of Salam

The words of verse 69 (**They said, “Salam.” He said, “Salam.”**) - teach us that it is a Sunnah for Muslims that, when they meet each other, they should offer Salam. The guest coming in should say it first while others should respond.

That people say some words to greet each other when they meet is a custom found in all communities. But,

the teaching of Islam is unique in this matter for the masnun word of salam is: As- Salamu ‘Alaikum. It carries the name of Allah with it. So it is both a Dhikr of Allah, and a prayer for peace and protection from Him - in addition to being a guarantee of the protection of life, property and honor from one’s own side. (When we equate As-Salamu ‘Alaikum with ‘peace on you’ we go by the anatomy and leave the spirit that is essential to it - tr.)

At this place in the Qur’an, it has been said that the angels said (salam) and Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam responded with (salam). Obviously, here it was not considered necessary to mention salam in its complete form - as customary in usage when it is said that a person said salam to someone where it is presupposed that he said the whole greeting of As-Salamu ‘Alaikum. Similarly, at this place, salam stands for the full masnun greeting which has been taught to his community by the Holy Prophet ﷺ through his word and deed, that is, saying: (As-Salamu ‘Alaikum) at the beginning of salam, and: (wa’alaikumu-s-salam, or wa’alaikumu-s-salamu wa rahmatu-l-lah to be more generous) while responding to the salam.

### Some Rules for Guests and Hosts

It has been said in the last sentence of verse 69: **(Then he made no delay in bringing a roasted calf).**

This tells us a few things:

1. It is a part of the etiquette of hospitality that the host should, soon after the arrival of the guest, bring out something to eat, or drink, something he has on hand and which could be offered quickly and conveniently. Then, if the host is a man of means, he can arrange for additional hospitality later. (Qurtubi)
2. A host should not worry about making too many formal arrangements for a guest. Anything good available easily is good enough. Let him put it before the guest. Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam, had some domestic animals at home. Therefore, he slaughtered a calf, had it roasted quickly and offered it to his guests. (Qurtubi)
3. Receiving guests and offering hospitality to them is a part of the essential etiquette of Islam, in fact, a hallmark of high morals. This is the blessed habit of prophets and the righteous. Is it necessary (wajib) to entertain guests? Or, is it not? ‘Ulama’ have difference of opinion in this matter. According to the majority of them, it is a sunnah, and desirable, but not wajib (necessary, obligatory). Some of them say that it is wajib on village people that they should offer hospitality to a person who stays in their village because a stranger has no arrangement for his meals there. Since such arrangements are possible through a hotel in cities, therefore, it is not wajib on those who live in cities. Al-Qurtubi has reported all these different views in his Tafsir.

In verse 70, it was said: **(So, when he noticed their hands not reaching for it, he found them strange and felt a bit of fright from them).**

From here we learn that there are rules of etiquette for guests as well. A guest should accept whatever is offered. Let him partake from it a little bit to please the host, even if not willing to eat because of unfavorable taste or apprehended harm.

This very sentence also tells us that the host should not consider himself absolved after having placed the food before the guest. Instead, he should be benignly watching whether or not the guest is partaking of the food, as was done by Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam when he noticed that the angels were not eating.

But, this watching has to be discreet, not something like staring at the guest while he is eating. A casual look is enough, because looking at the morsels of food being eaten by the guest is contrary to the etiquette of

entertainment and certainly very humiliating for the invited guest. This is illustrated by an incident relating to Khalifah Hisham ibn 'Abd ul-Malik. On a certain day, the Khalifah was sharing his food- spread with a rustic Arab. The morsel of food being eaten by the Arab had a strand of hair in it. When Khalifah Hisham noticed it, he told the Arab about it. The Arab instantly rose in a huff saying, 'we never eat with a person who watches our morsels.'

Al-Tabari reports at this place: When the angels abstained from eating the first time, they had said that they do not eat free meals. If they were to accept payment for it, they would. Sayyidna Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam said, 'Yes, there is a price for it that you can pay. The price is: Say 'with the name of Allah' when you begin, and praise Him when you finish.' Hearing this, the archangel Jibra'il 'alayhis salaam told his companions, 'That Allah Ta'ala calls him His friend is correct. He deserves it.'

This tells us that saying: (bismillah: With the name of Allah) when beginning to eat, and saying: (alhamdulillah: Praise belongs to Allah) at the end of it is Sunnah.

## COMMENTARY - TAFSEER IBN KATHIR

### The Coming of the Angels to Ibrahim and Their Glad Tidings to Him of Ishaq and Ya`qub 'alayhumaa salaam

[...]

**(and conceived a fear of them. )** As-Suddi said, "When Allah sent the angels to the people of Lut, they set out walking in the form of young men, until they came to Ibrahim and they were hosted by him. When Ibrahim saw them, he rushed to host them.

(Then he turned to his household, and brought out a roasted calf.)51:26( He slaughtered it (the calf), roasted it on hot stones and brought it to them. Then, he sat down with them. when he placed it before them. (saying): 'Will you not eat' They said, 'O Ibrahim! Verily, we do not eat food without a price.' Ibrahim then said, 'Verily, this food has a price.' They said, 'What is its price' He said, 'You must mention the Name of Allah over it before eating it and praise Allah upon finishing it.' Jibril then looked at Mika'il and said, 'This man has the right that his Lord should take him as an intimate friend.'

**(But when he saw their hands went not towards it (the meal), he mistrusted them,)** When Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam saw that they were not eating, he became scared and frightened by them. Then, when Sarah 'alayhas salaam looked and saw that he was honoring them, she began to serve them and she was laughing. She said, 'What amazing guests we have. We serve them ourselves, showing them respect and they do not eat our food.'" Then, concerning Allah's statement about the angels,

**(They said: "Fear not,")** They were saying, "Do not be afraid of us. Verily, we are angels sent to the people of Lut in order to destroy them." Then, Sarah 'alayhas salaam laughed in delight of the good news of their destruction. This is because they had caused much corruption and their disbelief was severe. For this reason, she was rewarded with the glad tidings of a son, even after her despair. Concerning Allah's statement,

**(and after Ishaq, of Ya`qub.)** This means that the son that she was going to have would have a son (her grandson) who would succeed him and beget many children. For verily, Ya`qub was the son of Ishaq, just as Allah says in Surat Al-Baqarah, **(Or were you witnesses when death approached Ya'qub When he said unto his sons, "What will you worship after me" They said, "We shall worship your**



**God, the God of your fathers, Ibrahim, Isma`il, Ishaq, One God, and to him we submit.”)** (2:133) From this point in this verse there is an evidence for those who say that Isma`il was the son of Ibrahim who was to be sacrificed. It could not have been Ishaq, because the glad tidings were given that he would have a son born to him named Ya`qub. So how could Ibrahim be commanded to sacrifice him when he was a small child and there had not been born to him a child yet, named Ya`qub, who was promised The promise of Allah is true and there is no breaking of Allah’s promise. Therefore, it is not possible that Ibrahim was to sacrifice this child (Ishaq) with the condition being as it was. This makes it clear that Isma`il was the son that was to be sacrificed and this is the best, most correct and clearest evidence of that. And all praise is due to Allah.

**(She said (in astonishment): “Woe unto me! Shall I bear a child while I am an old woman, and here is my husband an old man”)** Allah speaks of her statement in this verse, just as He spoke of her action in another verse.

**(Then his wife came forward with a loud voice: she smote her face, and said: “A barren old woman!”)** (51:29) This was the custom of the women in their speech and actions when they were expressing amazement.

**(Then said: “Do you wonder at the decree of Allah”)** This means that the angels were saying to her, “Do not be amazed at the command of Allah, for verily, whenever He wants something, He merely says ‘Be’ and it is. So do not be amazed at this, even though you are old and barren and your husband is a very old man. Verily, Allah is able to do whatever He wills.”

**(The mercy of Allah and His blessing be on you, O the family (of Ibrahim). Surely, He (Allah) is All-Praiseworthy, All-Glorious.)** This means that He is the Most Praiseworthy in all of His actions and statements. He is praised and glorified in His Attributes and His Self. For this reason, it is confirmed in the two Sahihs that they (the Prophet’s ﷺ Companions) said, *“Verily, we already know how to greet you with Salam (peace), but how do we send Salah (prayer) upon you, O Messenger of Allah” He said, (Say, “O Allah, send prayers upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, just as You have sent prayers upon Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim. And bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, just as You have blessed the family of Ibrahim. Truly, You are the All-Praiseworthy, All-Glorious.”)*

## SURAH ADH-DHARIYAT, VERSES 24-30

**Has there come to you the story of the honoured guests of Ibrahim? [24] When they entered unto him and said, “We greet you with salam.” He said, “salam on you.” (And he said to himself,) “(They are) unknown people.” [25] Then he slipped off to his home, and fetched a fattened calf. [26] So he brought it close to them (to eat, but being angels, they refrained.) He said, “Would you not eat?” [27] So he felt some fear in his heart. They said, “Be not scared.” And they gave him the good news of (the birth of) a knowledgeable boy. [28] So his wife came forward with a clamour and slapped her own face and said, “(How can I have a child when I am) a barren old woman?” [29] They said, “This is how your Lord has said. Surely, He is All-Wise, All-Knowing.” [30]**

## COMMENTARY

**Comforting the Messenger of Allah ﷺ**

**(“We greet you with salam.” He said, “salam on you.” 51:25)** The angels greeted him with salaman in the accusative case, whereas Holy Prophet Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam responded to the greeting in



the nominative case thus: salamun. The nominative case in Arabic is a nominal sentence which carries the sense of greater strength, continuity and persistence. The Qur'anic injunction is that 'when you are greeted with a salutation, greet one better than it...', so Holy Prophet Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam, the Friend of Allah chose a better reply, implementing Allah's command: reciprocating the greeting with the term salamun is stronger than the greeting using the term salaman.

**(“[They are] unknown people.”... 51:25).** The word *munkar*, the letter [m] carrying dammah and the letter [k] carrying fath means “unknown”. As sin or sinful work is unknown in Islam, it is also referred to as munkar. The angels came to Holy Prophet Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam in the image of handsome young wonderfully graceful men; therefore he could not recognize them. He thought to himself that these are strangers and said to himself 'They are unknown to me'. Or it is possible that he might have mentioned this to the guests in the form of a question and the purpose might have been to find out who they were.

**(Then he slipped off to his home - 51:26).** *Ragha* is derived from *rawgh* which means to slip out quietly. In other words, Holy Prophet Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam discreetly went in the house in haste to arrange for meal for his guests, so that they do not sense it. Otherwise they would have stopped him.

### Rules of Entertaining Guests

Ibn Kathir says that this verse indicates proper manners for entertaining guests: Holy Prophet Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam, the host, did not first mention that he would make food for them. He slipped out quietly, and brought the food to his guests quickly, while they were unaware that it was being prepared for them. Rather, he discreetly had it prepared and placed before them. He prepared the best kind of food he had, a young, fat roasted calf. Moreover, he did not place the food far from them and invite them to come close to it to eat. Rather, he placed it close to them, 'brought it close to them' and refrained from ordering them to eat. Instead he invited them politely, kindly and cordially to partake thus, 'Would you not eat?' This statement in the form of a question is similar to one of us saying to a guest, 'Would you kindly partake of it - even if you are not hungry, at least for my sake?'

**(So he felt some fear in his heart...51:28).** When the guests did not eat the food, the Holy Prophet Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam conceived fear of them. In those days it was the custom of the noble people to entertain the guests who were expected to accept the hospitality of the host. If they did not, the host would become apprehensive that there is some danger - probably they are enemies who came to cause some kind of trouble for them. In those days, even the rogues and wrongdoers had the noble quality that they would not cause any harm to anyone whose food they had eaten. Hence refusing to eat was a sign of hostility or danger.

**(So his wife came forward with a clamour,...51:29).** The word *sarrah* means vociferation or clamour or most vehement clamour of crying. *Sarir* is the sound of a pen when it is writing. When Sayyidah Sarah 'alayhas salaam heard that the angels were giving good news to her husband Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam of the birth of a son, she thought that this news was as good to her as it was to her husband, for the son would be theirs, and therefore, they both were getting some good news. As a result, she involuntarily screamed loudly, she struck herself upon her forehead as women do when confronted with an amazing thing and said: and slapped her own face and said, "A barren old woman?" meaning 'How can I give birth while I am an old woman? And even when I was young I was barren and could not have children.' The angels replied that Allah has power over all things and therefore this would happen even so: "This is how your Lord has said." Thus when Holy Prophet Ishaq 'alayhis salaam was born, Sayyidah Sarah radi'allahu 'anha was ninety-nine years old and Holy Prophet Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam was one hundred years old. (Qurtubi)

This concludes the commentary for Day 13.

**ANSWER:** The daughters of Sayyidna Lut ‘alayhis salaam

## **SURAH HUD, VERSES 78-83**

**And his people came to him, rushing upon him. And already they used to commit evil deeds. He said, “These are my daughters. They are far more clean for you. So, fear Allah and do not disgrace me in respect of my guests. Is there not a single right man among you.” [78] They said, “You know that we have no claim on your daughters, and you know well what we want.” [79] He said, “O that I had power over you or might have some strong support for refuge.” [80] They (the angels) said, “O Lut, we are emissaries of your Lord. They shall never reach you. So, move with your family in a part of night, and none of you shall turn to look back; except your woman. There has to be- fall her whatever befalls them. Their deadline is the morning. Is it not that the morning is near?” [81] So, when Our command came, We turned its highest into the lowest, and We rained on it stones of hard clay, one over another [82] marked, with your Lord. And it is not far from the transgressors. [83]**

### **COMMENTARY**

When Sayyidna Lut ‘alayhis salaam realized that it was difficult to protect his guests, he tried to divert the attention of his people from their evil advances by telling them that he would give his daughters in marriage to their chiefs, if they were to stop their evil-mongering. The marriage of a believing girl with a disbelieving man was permissible at that time. The practice had continued up to the early period of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, therefore, he had given two of his daughters in marriage to ‘Utbah ibn Abi Lahab and Abu al-’As ibn al-Rabi’, though both of them were disbelievers. Later came the verses that prohibited the marriage of Muslim women with disbelieving men as haram. (Qurtubi)

According to some commentators, ‘my daughters’ at this place means the daughters of the whole community because every prophet is like a father to his people and the whole community is his spiritual progeny. It is supported by the noble verse: **(The Prophet comes first with the believers against their own selves and his wives are (like) their mothers - 33:6)**. This should be seen with the additional words: (and he is [like] a father for them) as they appear in the rendition (Qira’ah) of Sayyidna ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ud radi’allahu ‘anhu where the Holy Prophet ﷺ has been identified as a father to the entire Muslim Ummah. According to this Tafsir, the statement of Sayyidna Lut ‘alayhis salaam, would mean, ‘you leave this evil habit of yours, behave like gentlemen, marry girls from your people and have them as your wives.’

After that, it was to warn them against Divine punishment that Sayyidna Lut ‘alayhis salaam said: **(So, fear Allah)**. Then he pleaded with them **(do not disgrace me in respect of my guests)** and then wondered: **(Is there not a single right man among you?)**, someone who would listen to his plaint.

But, there was no trace of gentility or even humanness left in any of them. So, in acid wickedness, they all responded: **(You know that we have no claim on your daughters, and you know well what we want.)**

Totally exasperated, what Sayyidna Lut ‘alayhis salaam could say at that time was: That is, ‘only if I had enough strength in me to stand against this onslaught by my people, or that I had the backing of some strong group who would have helped me get rid of these oppressors.’

Seeing this anxiety of Sayyidna Lut ‘alayhis salaam, the angels disclosed their identity and said, ‘do not worry. Your group is very strong and very powerful. We are angels of Allah. They cannot touch us. We have

come to execute the punishment for them.'

It appears in a Hadith of the Sahih of al-Bukhari that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said about it, 'may Allah Ta'ala have mercy on Lut 'alayhis salaam. He was compelled to seek the protection of some strong group.' And the report in Tirmidhi carries another sentence with it, 'after Sayyidna Lut 'alayhis salaam, Allah Ta'ala sent no prophet whose clan or tribe was not his supporter.' (Qurtubi) This was true in the case of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The disbelieving Quraysh did everything they could against him, but his entire clan supported him - though, they did not agree with him religion-wise. This was the reason why Bani Hashim as a whole sided with the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the boycott imposed by the Quraysh disbelievers whereby they had cut off essential supplies to him.

During this episode, as reported from Sayyidna 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas radi'allahu 'anhu, when the people of Sayyidna Lut 'alayhis salaam mobbed his home, he had closed the entrance door. The conversation with these wicked people was going on from behind it. The angels too were inside. The mob was threatening to jump the walls, barge in and break the door. Thereupon, came these words on the lips of Sayyidna Lut 'alayhis salaam. When the angels saw this anxiety of Sayyidna Lut 'alayhis salaam, they disclosed their real identity and asked him to open the door. It was time that they took over and gave the miscreants a foretaste of the Divine punishment. When the door was opened, archangel Jibra'il 'alayhis salaam pointed his 'Feather' towards their eyes. They turned blind and started running.

At that time, the angels under Divine command said to Sayyidna Lut 'alayhis salaam **(So, move with your family in a part of night)**. And asked him to instruct everyone in his family not to turn and look back with the exception of his wife because she was going to be hit by the same punishment that was to fall on his people.

This could also mean that he was not to take his wife along with him. And it could also mean that, being his wife, she was to go along as part of his family, but she would not obey the instruction of not looking back he would give to his family. According to some reports, this is what happened. This wife started off with others, but when she heard the big bang of the punishment given to her people, she looked back and felt sorry at their destruction. At that moment there came a splintered rock and finished her off like others. (Qurtubi, Mazhari)

The angels had also told Sayyidna Lut 'alayhis salaam that: **(The deadline [of the punishment] is the morning)**. He said that he wished the punishment would come sooner. Thereupon, the angels said: **(Is it not that the morning is near?)**

After that, the Qur'an portrays the occurrence of the punishment by saying: So, when Our command came, We turned whatever there was in their habitat upside down raining such stones over it as had the names of everyone there marked on it.

Reports say that these habitations were composed of four major towns where those people lived. These very habitations have been named as 'al-mu'tafikat' (the towns overturned) elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an **(9:70, 69:9)**. When the Divine command came, the archangel Jibra'il al-Amin 'alayhis salaam dissected the base of the land mass holding all those towns on top of it with his wing, raised all of it upwards in a way that everything stayed where it was, even water in a water vessel. It was in the backdrop of human, animal and canine voices coming from the sky that he heaved all these habitations straight up towards the sky and, then, threw the whole thing back upside down - as appropriate to and as called for by the evil they indulged in.

## DAY 14

At the end of the verse (83), after having mentioned the actual punishment that hit the people of Sayyidna Lut ‘alayhis salaam, it was to warn the contemporary peoples of the world that it was said: **(And it is not far from the transgressors)**. It means that people who insist upon indulging in this shameful act should not consider themselves very far from this punishment. It can come even today. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, ‘even in my Ummah, some people will do what the people of Lut ‘alayhis salaam used to do. When this starts happening, then wait, for they too would be subjected to the same punishment that was inflicted on the people of Lut ‘alayhis salaam.’

This concludes the commentary for Day 14.

**ANSWER:** Sayyidatina Hawwa ‘alayhas salaam

## **SURAH AL-BAQARAH, VERSES 35-36**

**And We said, “O Adam, dwell, you and your wife, in Paradise, and eat at pleasure wherever you like, but do not go near this tree or you shall join the transgressors.” Then, Satan caused them to slip from it, and brought them out of where they had been. And We said, “Go down, you all, some of you enemies of some; and on the earth there will be for you a dwelling place and enjoyment for a time.”(Verses 35-36)**

### **COMMENTARY**

This is a continuation of the story of Adam ‘alayhis salaam. When his superiority over the angels and his fitness for the role of viceregent had been announced to the angels and been acknowledged by them, and Iblis had been condemned as an infidel and expelled from Paradise on account of his pride and his defiance of divine authority, Adam and Hawwa ‘alayhumaa salaam (Eve), his wife, received a command from Allah to live in Paradise and enjoy its blessings. But they were also instructed not to eat the fruit of a particular tree. Now, having been disgraced because of Adam ‘alayhis salaam, Iblis or Satan had an account to settle with him, and as soon as he got the opportunity, he tricked them into eating from this tree. Because of this error on their part, they too were ordered to leave Paradise, and to go down and live on the earth. They were at the same time warned that their existence on the earth would no longer be full of perpetual bliss as it had been in Paradise, but that there would be dissension and enmity among men, their progeny, which would spoil the joy of earthly life.

Since these events took place after Adam ‘alayhis salaam had been created and the angels had been commanded to prostrate themselves before him, some scholars have concluded from it that the creation of Adam ‘alayhis salaam and the prostration of the angels took place somewhere outside Paradise, and that he was sent there later on. But the words of the Holy Qur’an do not exclude the other interpretation that both the events took place in Paradise, but that he had not been told at that time where he was to live, which was done later.

When Adam and Hawwa ‘alayhumaa salaam were sent to live in Paradise, they were allowed to eat whatever they liked ‘at pleasure’ - the Arabic word in the text being ‘Raghadan’, which signifies provision for which one does not have to work, and which is never exhausted nor falls short. Thus, their life was totally free from all care.

They were commanded not to go near a certain tree - which was an emphatic way of asking them not to eat its fruit. The tree has not been given a specific name either in the Holy Qur’an or in the Hadith. Some commentators say that it was wheat, others say that it was a fig-tree or a grape-vine. But it is not really necessary to make specific what the Holy Qur’an has left vague. (See Qurtubi)

According to the Holy Qur’an, it was Satan who ‘caused them to slip’ (azallahuma). It clearly shows that the error and disobedience of Adam and Hawwa ‘alayhumaa salaam was not of the kind which technically constitutes a sin, but arose out of a misunderstanding produced by Satan. They ate the forbidden fruit, because Satan had cleverly deceived them.\*

\* We may note that in the previous episode the Holy Qur’an used the name Iblis - a word which comes from the root Balas, ‘to be disappointed’, and hence signifies “one who has lost all hope of receiving the grace of Allah.” In the present episode he has been called Al-Shaytan - a word which comes from the root Shatn, “to



be far away”, and hence signifies “one who has been removed far away from the mercy of Allah.” Iblis is a proper name, while Shaytan is the name of a genus. When the Holy Qur’an speaks of Al-Shaytan, it always refers to Iblis. But the common noun Shaytan, or its plural Shayatin refers to the genus, which includes men and jinns both. It would be interesting to add that the root Shayt means ‘the excess of anger and rage’, and may possibly be the basis of the word Shaytan.

A question arises here as to how Satan got into Paradise for seducing Adam and Hawwa ‘alayhumaa salaam, when he had already been expelled from there for refusing to prostrate himself. There are many possible ways in which he can have played his trick. Possibly he never met them, but planted the suggestion in their minds from afar - a thing which Satan can always do, and of which we have a specimen in the work of the hypnotists. It is equally possible that Satan, being one of the jinns whom Allah has given certain unusual powers denied to man, assumed the shape of a snake or of something else, and thus succeeded in entering Paradise. Perhaps it was because of this disguise that Adam ‘alayhis salaam did not remember Allah’s warning that Satan was his enemy. According to the Holy Qur’an, Satan assured them on oath that he was one of their well-wishers (7:21). It apparently suggests that he did actually meet them, and speak to them face to face.

The Holy Qur’an says that Satan: **“brought them out”** of the state in which they had been living. In actual fact, they were ‘brought out’ under a divine command, but since Satan served as a means and as an intermediary, the action has been attributed to him.\*

\* The words of the Holy Qur’an do not in the least imply that Satan had any power whatsoever to act on his own. So, any Manichean dualism is totally out of the question.

In commanding Adam and Hawwa ‘alayhumaa salaam to go down from Paradise, Allah also said, : **‘Some of you (shall be the) enemies of some.’** If Satan had not been turned out of the skies till then, he is included in this address, the implication being that the enmity between Satan on the one hand, and Adam and Hawwa’ ‘alayhumaa salaam and their progeny on the other, would continue on the earth too. But if Satan, as some scholars maintain, had already been expelled, then the addresses are Adam and Hawwa’ ‘alayhumaa salaam and their progeny; the implication would now be that Adam and Hawwa’ ‘alayhumaa salaam would have to undergo a double punishment, firstly that of being banished from Paradise, secondly that of seeing enmity arise among their children which must make life unpleasant for parents. (Bayan al-Qur’an).

They were also told that the earth would be a temporary dwelling-place for them, and that they would have to leave it too, which also meant that they would not find real peace of mind there.

### **Adam and Hawwa ‘alayhumaa salaam in Paradise**

(1) In allowing Adam and Hawwa ‘alayhumaa salaam, to eat at pleasure, and in forbidding them to go near the tree, Allah used, according to the text of the Holy Qur’an, the verbs for the dual number, thus including both in the address. But in asking them to live in Paradise Allah did not address both of them, but said: “You and your wife.” This form of address yields two legal principles: (a) the husband is responsible for providing a dwelling-place for his wife (b) for the purpose of dwelling the wife is dependent on the husband, and she must live in the house in which her husband lives.

(2) In this context the Arabic word ‘uskun (live) suggests that their stay in Paradise was to be temporary, not permanent which is a usual condition for the ownership of a house. Allah did not say that Paradise had been given to them, but only asked them to live there, for Allah knew that certain things were going to happen on

account of which they would have to leave this dwelling-place. Moreover, the right to 'own' a dwelling-place in Paradise is earned through Iman (faith) and good deeds, which one can acquire only after the Day of Judgment. The Fuqaha' (jurists) have derived from it the principle that, if a man asks someone to live in his house, the other man does not thereby acquire the ownership of the house nor the right to a permanent stay. (Qurtubi)

(3) In allowing Adam and Hawwa 'alayhumaa salaam to eat at pleasure, Allah used the verb for the dual number, and said: "أَكْلَا" meaning 'eat both of you'. This indicates that in the matter of food the wife is not subservient to her husband, but can eat whatever she needs or likes, as can the husband.

(4) Allah also allowed them to eat from wherever they liked. This shows that man has the right to move freely from one place to another according to his needs or wishes.

(5) Allah did not want them to eat the fruits of a certain tree, but as a precautionary measure He commanded them not to approach it even. It is from here that the Fuqaha' have derived one of the basic principles of Islamic law, which requires that the things or actions which are likely to serve as means to sin or as its instruments are equally forbidden. That is to say, there are certain things which are not forbidden in themselves, but when there is a danger that in making use of them a man would become involved in an unlawful activity, they too have to be forbidden.

### **The Prophets are innocent of all sins**

(6) As we have seen here, Adam 'alayhis salaam had been forbidden to eat the fruit of a certain tree, and had also been warned against the machinations of his enemy, Satan, and yet he had eaten the forbidden fruit. It is seemingly a sin, while the Holy Qur'an, the Hadith and rational arguments too establish the innocence and sinlessness of all the prophets. There is an absolute consensus of the four great Imams of Islamic law and of all the authentic scholars on the doctrine that each and every prophet is innocent of and protected against all sins, major or minor. Some people have suggested that prophets are not protected against minor sins, but the majority of authentic scholars does not agree with this opinion. (Qurtubi) It is necessary for prophets to be thus protected, because they are sent down to be the guides of men - if a guide can go against the commandments of Allah and commit a sin, major or even minor, people would no longer be ready to trust his word or deed. If one cannot have trust and faith even in the prophets, how can the work of spiritual guidance be possible? Hence the necessity of prophets being sinless.

The Holy Qur'an does, however, relate certain incidents which tend to suggest that a certain prophet committed a sin, and drew upon himself the displeasure of Allah. The story about Adam 'alayhis salaam eating the forbidden fruit is one such instance. According to the consensus of the authentic scholars, in all cases a prophet comes to commit an error through a misunderstanding or just forgetfulness, and it is never a deliberate and wilful transgression of divine commandment. As is well-known, a Mujtahid is one who possesses the necessary qualifications for finding out through analogical deduction the rule for a case regarding which no specific commandment is present in the Holy Qur'an or the Hadith; if he makes a mistake in determining the rule, he still receives a reward from Allah for having made the effort. The mistake made by a prophet is always of this nature, or is due to oversight and hence pardonable, and cannot be called a 'sin' in the technical sense. Moreover, a prophet, being under the protection of Allah, can never show oversight or forgetfulness in things which are directly concerned with his prophetic and legislative function, but only in personal matters. (See al-Bahr al-Muhit)

The station of the prophets, however, is so exalted, that even a little oversight on the part of a great man is considered to be a great error. That is why such slips on the parts of certain prophets have been described

in the Holy Qur'an as 'sins', and Allah has shown his displeasure too, although they are not 'sins' in their nature.

As for the error committed by Adam 'alayhis salaam commentators have advanced several explanations:-

(a) A certain tree was pointed out to Adam 'alayhis salaam as being forbidden. But it was not this particular tree alone that was intended, but all the trees of this kind. The Hadith too relates a similar case. Holding a piece of silk and some gold in his hand, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said that those two things were forbidden to the men in his Ummah. Obviously the ban does not apply to these very pieces of silk and gold alone, but to silk and gold as such. But it is quite possible for someone to imagine that only the particular pieces which the Holy Prophet ﷺ held in his hand were forbidden. Similarly, Adam 'alayhis salaam thought that the prohibition applied only to the particular tree which had been pointed out to him. Satan exploited this misunderstanding, and assured him on oath that, being a well-wisher, he could never advise him to do something which was wrong or harmful, and that the forbidden tree was quite different, and not the one from which he was asking him to pluck a fruit.

(b) Satan may have suggested to Adam 'alayhis salaam that the prohibition was valid only upto a period after he had been created, just as infants are denied heavy food till they have grown up, and that since Adam 'alayhis salaam had now grown stronger, the ban too had been lifted.

(c) It is equally possible that, when Satan told him that if he ate this fruit, the eternal bliss of Paradise would be guaranteed for him, Adam forgot the prohibition. This verse of the Holy Qur'an seems to give credence to such a possibility: **"Adam forgot, and We did not find him steadfast."** (20:115)

Anyhow, the essential point is that Adam 'alayhis salaam did not deliberately and wilfully disobey Allah; all that he did was an act of oversight or the kind of mistake which a Mujtahid can make. The error was not, properly speaking, a sin, but Adam 'alayhis salaam being so close to Allah, and in view of his station of a prophet, even this lapse was regarded as very serious, and described as a 'sin' in the Holy Qur'an. But the Holy Qur'an tells us that when he repented and prayed for pardon, Allah forgave him.

## COMMENTARY – TAFSEER IBN KATHIR

### Allah tests Adam 'alayhis salaam

Allah's statement to Adam, 'alayhis salaam (**but come not near this tree**) is a test for Adam 'alayhis salaam. There are conflicting opinions over the nature of the tree mentioned here. Some said that it was the grape tree, barley, date tree, fig tree, and so forth. Some said that it was a certain tree, and whoever eats from it will be relieved of the call of nature. It was also said that it was a tree from which the angels eat so that they live for eternity. Imam Abu Ja'far bin Jarir said, *"The correct opinion is that Allah forbade Adam and his wife from eating from a certain tree in Paradise, but they ate from it. We do not know which tree that was, because Allah has not mentioned anything in the Qur'an or the authentic Sunnah about the nature of this tree. It was said that it was barley, grape, or a fig tree. It is possible that it was one of those trees. Yet, this is knowledge that does not bring any benefit, just as being ignorant in its nature does no harm. Allah knows best."* This is similar to what Ar-Razi stated in his Tafsir, and this is the correct opinion.

Allah's statement, (**Then the Shaytan made them slip therefrom**) either refers to Paradise, and in this case, it means that Shaytan led Adam and Hawwa' 'alayhumaa salaam away from it, as 'Asim bin Abi An-Najud recited it. It is also possible that this Ayah refers to the forbidden tree. In this case, the Ayah would mean, as Al-Hasan and Qatadah stated, "He tripped them." In this case,

## DAY 15

**(Then the Shaytan made them slip therefrom)** means, “Because of the tree”, just as Allah said, **(Turned aside therefrom (i.e. from Muhammad and the Qur’an) is he who is turned aside (by the decree and preordainment of Allah)) (51:9)** meaning, the deviant person becomes turned aside - or slips - from the truth because of so and so reason.

This is why then Allah said, **(And got them out from that in which they were)** meaning, the clothes, spacious dwelling and comfortable sustenance.

**(We said: “Get you down, all, with enmity between yourselves. On earth will be a dwelling place for you and an enjoyment for a time.”)** meaning, dwelling, sustenance and limited life, until the commencement of the Day of Resurrection

### **Adam ‘alayhis salaam was very Tall**

Ibn Abi Hatim narrated that Ubayy bin Ka’b said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, **(Allah created Adam tall, with thick hair, just as a date tree with full branches. When Adam ate from the forbidden tree, his cover fell off, and the first thing that appeared was his private area. When he saw his private area, he ran away in Paradise and his hair got caught in a tree. He tried to free himself and Ar-Rahman called him, ‘O Adam! Are you running away from Me’ When Adam heard the words of Ar-Rahman (Allah), he said, ‘No, O my Lord! But I am shy.’)**

### **Adam ‘alayhis salaam remained in Paradise for an Hour**

Al-Hakim recorded that Ibn ‘Abbas said, “Adam was allowed to reside in Paradise during the time period between the ‘Asr (Afternoon) prayer, until sunset.” Al-Hakim then commented this is “Sahih according to the Two Shaykhs (Al-Bukhari and Muslim), but they did not include it in their collections.” Also, Ibn Abi Hatim recorded Ibn ‘Abbas saying, “Allah sent Adam to earth to an area called, Dahna, between Makkah and At-Ta’if.” Al-Hasan Al-Basri rahimahullah said that Adam ‘alayhis salaam was sent down to India, while Hawwa’ ‘alayhas salaam was sent to Jeddah. Iblis was sent down to Dustumaysan, several miles from Basra. Further, the snake was sent down to Asbahan. This was reported by Ibn Abi Hatim. Also, Muslim and An-Nasa’i recorded that Abu Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, **(Friday is the best day on which the sun has risen. On Friday, Allah created Adam, admitted him into Paradise, and expelled him from it.)**

This concludes the commentary for Day 15.



**ANSWER:** The sister of Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam

## **SURAH TAHA, VERSE 40**

**(Remember) when your sister was going (to the family of the Pharaoh) and was saying, “Shall I point you to one who nurses him?” Thus We brought you back to your mother, so that her eyes might be cooled and she does not grieve. And you had killed a person, then We brought you out of the trouble; and We tested you with a great ordeal. Then you lived a number of years amidst the people of Madyan. After all this, you came O Musa, to a point, destined. [40]**

### **COMMENTARY**

**(When your sister was going - 20:40).** The story of the sister of Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam following the box along the river and the subsequent events are alluded to in this verse, which ends with the words **(We tested you with a great ordeal - 20:40)**. According to Sayyidna Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu these words mean “We tried you repeatedly”, while Dahhak rahimahullahu ta’ala has translated them as “We subjected you to severe trials”. Full details of this story have been given in a long Hadith reported by Imam an-Nisa’i rahimahullahu ta’ala in his book on the authority of Sayyidna Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu. This story is as follows:

### **Detailed Story of Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam**

In Kitab-ut-Tafsir of his Sunan, Imam Nisa’i rahimahullahu ta’ala has reported a long Hadith known as (Hadith-ul-Futun) on the authority of Sayyidna Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu. Ibn Kathir has also reproduced the whole of it in his commentary and then has added that Sayyidna Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu thought that it was (Marfu), in other words, it was a statement of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Ibn Kathir has confirmed this view with the words: (I too believe that this Hadith is Marfu), and also gave reason in support of his opinion. However, he has admitted that the version of this story given by Ibn Jabir and Ibn Abi Hatim rahimahullahu ta’ala is the statement of Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu and not of the Holy Prophet ﷺ while it contains some parts which were stated by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It appears that Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu has learnt this story from Ka’b al-Ahbar as has happened in many other cases. Be that as it may, the critics like Imam Nasa’i and Ibn Kathir rahimahullahu ta’ala hold it to be marfu’ (statement of the Holy Prophet Nabi ﷺ) and even those who do not accept it as such have never challenged its contents, while a major part of this story is also mentioned in the Holy Qur’an itself. Therefore, we would like to give full translation of this Hadith which has many beneficial points having academic and practical value. Imam Nisa’i rahimahullahu ta’ala has related this story which he learnt from Sa’id bin Jubair radi’allahu ‘anhu that he (Sa’id Ibn Jubair radi’allahu ‘anhu) asked Sayyidna ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu to explain to him the meaning of the expression **وَفَتَّكَ فَتُونًا**, specially the word **فَتُونًا** which occurs in the verse relating to Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam. Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu said it was a long story which he would tell him (Sa’id Ibn Jubair radi’allahu ‘anhu) if he comes to him early the next morning. This he did and Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu told him the story which runs as follows:

One day the Pharaoh and his companions were talking about Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam and the promise which Allah Ta’ala had made to him to raise prophets and Kings from his progeny. Some of those present said that the Bani Isra’il were indeed expecting the birth of a prophet in their community and were in no doubt that Allah Ta’ala’s promise would be fulfilled. In the beginning they thought that Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam was the prophet promised by Allah Ta’ala but when he died they said he was not the prophet promised to Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam and that there must surely come another prophet whose arrival would fulfill Allah Ta’ala’s promise. This information upset the Pharaoh who feared that if



ever a prophet was born in the Isra'ili community, whom he held in bondage, he (the prophet) would try to liberate them from their servitude. He, therefore, asked his friends to advise him how such a catastrophe could be avoided. After much deliberation they came to the unanimous conclusion that the only way to meet this contingency was to put to death every male child born in an Isra'ili family. In pursuance of this decision, armed soldiers were sent out with orders to search every Isra'ili house and kill all male children.

This blood-shed continued for some time but then the Egyptians realized that all their work was done and arduous duties performed by the Bani Isra'il and if the process of killing their male children continued then a time would come when, their old men having died a natural death, no young men would be left to serve them, and they themselves would have to perform all the hard and toilsome work. In order to overcome this problem they came up with another proposal according to which all male children born in one year should be put to death while all those born in the following year should be spared. Such a device would ensure the availability of a continuous supply of labour force of young Isra'ilis who could replace the older men, yet at the same time their number would not be large enough to pose a threat to the Pharaoh's authority. Everybody approved of this proposal and a law was passed for its implementation. (And now the wisdom and power of Allah Ta'ala demonstrated itself in the following way). Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam's mother gave birth to Sayyidna Harun 'alayhis salaam in the year when, according to the law of the Pharaoh, male Isra'ili children were spared and there was no danger to his life. But when Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam was conceived, his birth was expected in the year when the Pharaoh's decree required that all male Isra'ili children be put to death. His mother was, therefore, greatly distressed at the thought of losing her son after its birth.

Here Sayyidna Ibn 'Abbas radi'allahu 'anhu paused in his story and said, "O Ibn Jubair! This was the first test (فتون) to which Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam was put in that his life was at risk even before he was born."

Then Allah Ta'ala, by means of (Divine inspiration) told the mother of Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam to set her mind at rest - **Do not fear and do not grieve, surely We are going to bring him back to you and appoint him one of (Our) messengers - 28:7.**

When Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam was born Allah Ta'ala commanded his mother to put him in a box and float him down the river Nile, which she did. After she had completed this task the Satan tried to perplex her with the suggestion that she had made a mistake by floating her son down the river because even if he had been put to death by the order of the Pharaoh she would at least have had the satisfaction of burying him with her own hands. Now there is no hope for him and he would probably be eaten up by the river animals. While the mother of Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam was greatly worried at what the Satan had told her, the waves cast the box upon a rock where the Pharaoh's slave girls used to come for bathing and washing. When they saw the box they wanted to open it, but one of them said that if the box contained some valuable articles and they opened it, then the Pharaoh's wife would suspect that they had kept back some of these for themselves and nothing that they could say would satisfy her. Accordingly, they brought the box unopened to the Pharaoh's wife.

When the Pharaoh's wife opened the box she found a boy and she instinctively felt a sudden surge of love for him - something which she had never experienced before. This was just as Allah Ta'ala had told him: **(And I have cast love on you from Myself).** On the other hand, the mother of Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam, in a state of puzzle caused by the Satan forgot the promise made to her by Allah Ta'ala and was so overwhelmed by grief that all happiness forsook her heart leaving it an empty shell. **(And the heart of the mother of Musa became restless - 28:10).** At the same time the Pharaoh's soldiers learnt about the

presence of an Isra'ili boy in the palace and they rushed with knives in their hands, and asked the Pharaoh's wife to surrender the boy so that they could put him to death.

Here Sayyidna Ibn 'Abbas radi'allahu 'anhu paused again and said, "O Ibn Jubair! This was the second test (فتون) to which Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam was exposed."

The Pharaoh's wife remonstrated with the soldiers. "What?" She said, "Do you think this small and frail baby, if allowed to live, can ever increase the strength of Bani Isra'ail? You wait here and I will go to the Pharaoh and plead for his life. I hope the Pharaoh will spare his life. If not, then I will not stand in your way and you can take him." Saying so, she went to the Pharaoh and said to him, "This child is the joy of my heart and yours also." The Pharaoh replied, "Yes, I know that he is the joy of your heart, but as for me, I do not need him."

At this point of the story Sayyidna Ibn 'Abbas radi'allahu 'anhu quoted the Holy Prophet ﷺ as saying, "*I swear by Allah that if on that occasion the Pharaoh had also admitted to Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam being the joy of his heart, as his wife did, Allah Ta'ala would have guided him along the path of the True Faith as He guided his wife.*"

(However, on account of his wife's urgent pleas the Pharaoh spared the life of the child). Now she needed a woman to nurse him. Many women offered their services but he would not suck from any of them **(And We had already barred him (Musa) from (accepting) any suckling woman - 28:12)**. The Pharaoh's wife was in a real predicament. How will the child live if he was not nursed? She sent him with her servants to the market place to find any woman whose milk he would draw.

While these events were taking place in the Pharaoh's palace, the mother of Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam was concerned by anguish at the fate of her son. She asked her daughter to go out and make inquiries about the box and the child that whether he was still alive or was he eaten up by the river animals. The promise which Allah had made to her when she was pregnant that he would protect her child and return him to her after a brief separation had completely escaped her memory. And then a miracle happened. As soon as the sister of Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam came to the market place she met the Pharaoh's female servants who held Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam in their arms and were looking for a woman who could nurse him. She also noticed that the child would not accept milk from any woman which caused them great anxiety and distress. So she said to them, "I can take you to a family where there is a woman whose milk, I hope, the child will accept and who will bring him up with great love and affection." Thereupon the servants held her on the suspicion that she was, perhaps, the mother or a close relation of the child and for that reason spoke with such a confidence that the proposed family is well-wisher of and sympathetic to this child.

Here Sayyidna Ibn 'Abbas radi'allahu 'anhu stopped and told Ibn Jubair radi'allahu 'anhu that this was the third test (فتون) (for the sister of Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam was naturally frightened at being held like that but she kept her pose and told the servants that when she said that the family would love the child and serve him with devotion what she meant was that they would do so in the hope of getting access to the Pharaoh's court and thus obtaining some material benefit for themselves. This explanation satisfied the servants and they released her. She hurried back home and informed her mother of what had happened. Then both of them went to the market place where the servants stood with the baby. The mother took him in her arms and put him to her breast, and he sucked greedily until he was satiated. The Pharaoh's wife was overjoyed when she was informed that at last a woman had been found whose milk the child would take and ordered her to be brought to her. On arrival the mother of Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam sensed that the Pharaoh's wife needed her and her services badly. At the same time she remembered Allah's promise to her that her son would be re-united to her after a brief separation. So she decided that she would offer her

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services on her own terms. The Pharaoh's wife told her that she was extremely fond of the child and could not bear parting from him for a moment. Therefore she should come and live in the palace and nurse the child. But Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam's mother declined to do so. She said she had a child of her own who too had to be nursed and fed and therefore it was not possible for her to leave her home. However, if the child was entrusted to her care she would keep him with her and nurse him. She assured the Pharaoh's wife that if she agreed to her proposal no effort shall be wanting on her part to give him the best care and attention. There was no choice for the Pharaoh's wife and she accepted this arrangement. Thus the child was, re-united to his mother and Allah's promise to her was fulfilled.

After some time when Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam grew comparatively stronger, the Pharaoh's wife asked the mother of Musa 'alayhis salaam to bring the child to her so that she may see him (as she was longing for him). She also told all the courtiers that the child was coming to their home and they must show him due respect and offer him gifts. She warned them that she would watch what they would do with the child. So when Musa 'alayhis salaam came out with his mother from her home, he was showered with gifts and presents right from that moment. The Pharaoh's wife was delighted to see him and gave him many expensive presents on her own and delivered all these presents to the mother of Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam. She then took him to the Pharaoh hoping that he too would give him presents. The Pharaoh took the child in his arms who suddenly clutched at his beard and pulled it causing his head to bow down. The courtiers were horrified and said to the Pharaoh: "We warned you about the promise of Allah to Sayyidna Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam that a prophet will be born in the tribe of Bani Isra'il who will inherit your Kingdom and your wealth and will defeat and overthrow you. You have seen with your own eyes the first signs of the fulfillment of Allah's promise". The Pharaoh took the warning and ordered his soldiers to put the child to death.

Here Sayyidna Ibn 'Abbas radi'allahu 'anhu stopped again in his narration and said, "O Ibn Jubair radi'allahu 'anhu! This is the fourth test (فتون) for Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam where death seemed so near".

The Pharaoh's wife at once came to the child's rescue and addressed her husband thus, "You have given this child to me. He is all mine. So what is all this fuss about?" The Pharaoh said, "Can't you see that by his action this child is warning me that one day he would overthrow me and deprive me of my Kingdom?" His wife replied, "I know a sure means of ascertaining whether his action was the action of an uninformed and innocent child or he deliberately intended to defy and challenge your authority. You order a servant to bring two trays. Put two live coals in one and two shining pearls in the other and place both the trays in front of the child. If he picks up the coal, that would be proof enough that he is totally unaware of the consequences of his action because nobody with any sense would put his hand in fire." The Pharaoh agreed to this test and when the two trays were placed before Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam he picked up the coal. (However there is another tradition that he wanted to reach for the pearls but Jibra'il 'alayhis salaam guided his hand and placed it on the coal). When the Pharaoh saw this he snatched away the coal from the child's hand to save him from harm. Thus the Pharaoh's wife was proved right. She turned to him and said, "O King! Now you know the truth." Thus Allah once again saved his life because He had chosen him for a very special mission.

(And so Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam continued to enjoy the favours of the Pharaoh and the great love of his mother until he grew to full manhood).

[**Note:** the hadith in the commentary continues for many pages to narrate the story of Musa 'alayhis salaam but we have paused here as this is all that is relevant to today's commentary insha'Allah].

### SURAH AL-QASAS, VERSES 10-13

**(10. And the heart of the mother of Musa became empty. She was very near to disclose his (case), had We not strengthened her heart, so that she might remain as one of the believers.)**

**(11. And she said to his sister: “Follow him.” So she watched him from a far place (secretly), while they perceived not.)**

**(12. And We had already forbidden foster suckling mothers for him, until she said: “Shall I direct you to a household who will rear him for you, and look after him in a good manner”)**

**(13. So We restored him to his mother, that her eye might be comforted, and that she might not grieve, and that she might know that the promise of Allah is true. But most of them know not.)**

## **COMMENTARY – TAFSIR IBN KATHIR**

### **The intense Grief of Musa’s Mother, and how He was returned to Her**

Allah tells us how, when her child was lost in the river, the heart of Musa’s mother became empty, i.e., she could not think of any matter in this world except Musa. This was the view of Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr, Abu `Ubaydah, Ad-Dahhak, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Qatadah and others.

**(She was very near to disclose his (case),)** means, because of the intensity of her grief, she almost told people that she had lost a son. She would have disclosed her situation, if Allah had not given her strength and patience. Allah says:

**(had We not strengthened her heart, so that she might remain as one of the believers. And she said to his sister: “Follow him.”)** means, she told her daughter, who was older and was of an age to understand things,

**(Follow him.)** means, follow his traces and look for information about him, try to find out about him around the city. So she went out to do that.

**(So she watched him from a far place (secretly),)** Ibn `Abbas said, “Off to the side.” Mujahid said, “It means she looked from afar. Qatadah said: “She started to look at him as if she was not really interested.” When Musa `alayhis salaam had settled into the house of Fir`awn, after the king’s wife had begun to love him and asked Fir`awn not to kill him, they brought to him the wet nurses who were to be found in their household, and he did not accept any of them, refusing to take milk from them. So they took him out to the marketplace, hoping to find a woman who would be suitable to nurse him. When (his sister) saw him in their arms, she recognized him, but she did not give any indication nor did they suspect her. Allah says:

**(And We had already forbidden foster suckling mothers for him,)** Because of his honored status with Allah, it was forbidden by divine decree. It was decreed that no one should nurse him except his own mother, and Allah caused this to be the means reuniting him with his mother so that she could nurse him and feel safe after having felt such fear. When (his sister) saw that they were confused over who should nurse the child,

**(she said: “Shall I direct you to a household who will rear him for you, and look after him in a good manner”)** Ibn `Abbas said: When she said that, they had some doubts about her, so they seized her and asked her, How do you know these people will be sincere and will care for him” She said to them,

## DAY 16

“They will be sincere and will care for him because they want the king to be happy and because they hope for some reward.” So they let her go. After what she said, being safe from their harm, they took her to their house and brought the baby to his mother. She gave him her breast and he accepted it, so they rejoiced and sent the glad tidings to the wife of Fir`awn. She called for Musa `alayhis salaam’s mother, treating her kindly and rewarding her generously. She did not realize that she was his real mother, but she saw that the baby accepted her breast. Then Asiyah `alayhas salaam asked her to stay with her and nurse the baby, but she refused, saying, “I have a husband and children, and I cannot stay with you, but if you would like me to nurse him in my own home, I will do that.” The wife of Fir`awn agreed to that, and paid her a regular salary and gave her extra gifts and clothing and treated her kindly. The mother of Musa `alayhis salaam came back with her child, happy that after a time of fear Allah granted her security, prestige, and ongoing provision. There was only a short time between the distress and the way out, a day and night, or thereabouts -- and Allah knows best. Glory be to the One in Whose hands are all things; what He wills happens and what He does not will does not happen. He is the One Who grants those who fear Him, a way out from every worry and distress, Allah said:

**(So We restored him to his mother, that her eye might be comforted,)** means, by him,

**(and that she might not grieve,)** means, for him.

**(and that she might know that the promise of Allah is true.)** meaning, ‘We had promised her to return him to her and to make him one of the Messengers.’ When he was returned to her, she realized that he was one of the Messengers, so as she brought him up, she treated him both as a child (with kindness) and as a Messenger (with respect).

**(But most of them know not.)** means, they do not know the wisdom of Allah in His actions and their good consequences, for which He is to be praised in this world and the Hereafter. For a thing may happen that people do not like, but its consequences are good, as Allah says: (and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you) (2:216). (it may be that you dislike a thing and Allah brings through it a great deal of good) (4:19).

This concludes the commentary for Day 16.



**ANSWER:** The wife of Sayyidna Nuh ‘alayhis salaam

**Note:** As requested, we’ll briefly explain each line of the riddle in a few words. Detail can be found in the commentary.

Lines 1 and 2: The wife of Nuh ‘alayhis salaam used to tell the oppressive people whenever any person embraced the faith with Nuh ‘alayhis salaam

Lines 3 and 4: The wife of Nuh ‘alayhis salaam ended up in the abyss of Hell and therefore she will not find the companionship of her husband Nuh ‘alayhis salaam, as she betrayed him by not following his religion.

## **SURAH AT-TAHIM, AYAH 10**

**Allah has cited for the disbelievers the example of the wife of Nuh and the wife of Lut. Both were married with two of Our righteous slaves, but betrayed them. So they could not avail them at all, and it was said, “Enter the Fire along with those who enter.” [10]**

### **COMMENTARY**

Towards the end of this Surah, Allah has set forth examples of four women. The first example comprises two women who were the wives of two Holy Prophets ‘alayhum ‘as-salaam. They, in matters of religion, opposed their husbands and secretly sided with the unbelievers and pagans. As a result, they ended up in the abyss of Hell, and their marital relation with the prophets could not save them from the punishment. The name of the wife of Nuh ‘alayhis salaam is said to be Waghilah, while the name of the wife of Lut ‘alayhis salaam is said to be Walihah. [Qurtubi] Some scholars have attributed other names to them.

### **COMMENTARY – TAFSIR IBN KATHIR**

**The Disbeliever shall never benefit from His Believing Relative on the Day of Resurrection**

Allah the exalted said, **(Allah sets forth an example for those who disbelieve)** meaning, the disbelievers who live together in this life with Muslims, their mixing and mingling with Muslims will not help the disbelievers, nor will it avail them with Allah, until and unless they gain faith in their hearts. Then Allah mentioned the parable, saying,

**(the wife of Nuh and the wife of Lut. They were under two of our righteous servants,)** means, they were the wives of two of Allah’s Messengers and were their companions by day and night, eating with them and sleeping with them, as much as any marriage contains of interaction between spouses. However,

**(they both betrayed them.)** meaning, in the faith, they did not adhere to the faith sent through their husbands nor accepted their message. Therefore, all the intimate knowledge of their husbands neither helped them nor prevented punishment, hence Allah’s statement,

**(So, they availed them not against Allah)** means, because their wives were disbelievers,

**(and it was said)** meaning, to these wives,

**(Enter the Fire along with those who enter!)** The part of the Ayah that reads,

**(but they both betrayed them)** [...] Al-`Awfi reported from Ibn `Abbas, *“They betrayed them by not following their religion. The wife of Prophet Nuh used to expose his secrets, informing his oppressive people whenever any person embraced the faith with Nuh...”*

This concludes the commentary for Day 17.

**ANSWER:** Sayyidah Zainab bint Jahsh radi'allahu 'anha

## RIDDLE

Line 1: The marriage between Sayyidna Zayd radi'allahu 'anhu and Sayyidatina Zainab radi'allahu 'anha did not work out

Line 2: i.e. divorce

Line 3: There was a custom amongst the Arabs whereby an adopted son was regarded as a real son and recognised as such in all rules and regulations. Therefore, there was an erroneous notion of marriage being unlawful with the divorced wife of an adopted son

Line 4: Broken by the marriage of Sayyidatina Zainab radi'allahu 'anha to Nabi ﷺ

## SURAH AL-AHZAAB, VERSES 36-39

**And it is not open for a believing man or a believing woman -- once Allah and His messenger have decided a thing-- that they should have a choice about their matter. And whoever disobeys Allah and His messenger, he indeed gets off the track, falling into an open error. [36] And (remember) when you were saying to the one who was favored by Allah and favored by you," Keep your wife to your self, and fear Allah." And you were concealing in your heart what Allah was going to reveal. and you were fearing people, while Allah is more entitled to be feared by you. So, when Zaid finished his desire for her, We gave her into your marriage, so that there may not be a problem for the believers in marrying wives of their adopted sons, when they finish their desire for them. And Allah's decree had to be enforced. [37] There is no problem for the prophet in (doing) what Allah has prescribed for him, a customary practice of Allah in the case of those who have gone before--- And Allah's command is pre-determined by destiny----. [38] those who convey the messages of Allah and have awe of Him and have no awe of anyone except Allah. And Allah is sufficient to take account (of everyone). [39]**

## COMMENTARY

It has been repeatedly explained earlier that the majority of injunctions appearing in Surah Al-Ahzab relate to the reverence, love and perfect obedience of the Holy Prophet ﷺ or to the prohibition of causing any pain to him. The verses cited above have also been revealed in connection with some incidents of this nature.

One such incident related to Sayyidna Zayd Ibn Harithah radi'allahu 'anhu who was the slave of someone. It was during the days of Jahiliyyah that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had bought him from the famous bazaar of 'Ukaz. He was still very young at that time. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had freed him after purchasing him, and further honored him by adopting him as his son as was the common practice under the Arab custom of the time and went on to bring him up. In Makkah al-Mukarramah, he was called by the name of Zayd Ibn Muhammad radi'allahu 'anhu. The Qur'an declared it to be an erroneous custom of the Jahiliyyah and prohibited the calling of the so-called or adopted son of a person as his 'son' and ordered that he should be attributed to his real father. Revealed in this connection were verses that have appeared earlier within this Surah: **(Call them by (the name of) their (real) fathers - 5)** After the revelation of these injunctions, the noble Sahabah radi'allahu 'anhum abandoned the practice of calling him by the name of Zayd Ibn Muhammad radi'allahu 'anhu and started attributing him to his father, Harithah.

[...]

**A lesson to remember**

This, in a nutshell, was the reality of slavery at the advent of Islam when slaves were educated and trained till they became achievers and whoever from them proved his class and capability was given the rank of leaders.

When Zayd Ibn Harithah radi'allahu 'anhu grew to be a young man, the Holy Prophet ﷺ chose Sayyidah Zainab bint Jahsh, the daughter of his paternal aunt for marriage with him. A formal proposal of marriage was sent. Since Sayyidna Zayd radi'allahu 'anha was branded with the conventional label of being a freed slave, Sayyidah Zainab and her brother, 'Abdullah Ibn Jahsh rejected this proposal on the basis that they were nobler than him in terms of family and lineage.

Revealed upon this incident was the verse: **(And it is not open for a believing man or a believing woman - 36)**. The instruction given there is: When the Holy Prophet ﷺ orders someone to do something as an obligation, it becomes obligatory for that person to do it. The choice of not doing it does not remain valid under Islamic Law - even if the required act may not be obligatory or necessary in its origin. But, once he does order someone to do that, it become incumbent and obligatory on him. And should someone not do so, his or her action has been termed as open error at the end of the verse.

When Sayyidah Zainab bint Jahsh and her brother heard this verse, they retracted from their rejection and agreed to the proposal of marriage. Thus, the marriage was solemnized. The dower of the bride was paid by the Holy Prophet ﷺ on behalf of Sayyidna Zayd radi'allahu 'anhu which was ten dinars [equal to approximately 4 tolas of gold), sixty dirhams (equal to approximately 18 1/2 tolas of silver), one beast of burden, complete pair of ladies dress, 15 mudd (approximately 25 kilos) of flour and 10 mudd (approximately 5 kilos) of dates (Ibn Kathir). The well-known event in the background of the revelation of this verse is, according to the majority of commentators, no other but this very account of the marriage of Sayyidah Zainab bint Jahsh radi'allahu 'anha (Ibn Kathir, Qurtubi and Mazhari).

Ibn Kathir and some other commentators have also reported two additional events of this nature. There too, it has been said that the cited verse has been revealed in the background of those events. One of these events is about Sayyidna Julaibib radi'allahu 'anhu whose proposal to marry the daughter of an Ansari Sahabi was turned down by the father and his family. When this verse was revealed, they agreed and the marriage was solemnized. The Holy Prophet ﷺ made a du'a (prayer) for extended means of livelihood for them. The noble Companions say that Allah had placed such barakah in their home that it was known to be the most generously kept home of Madinah at-Tayyibah. Later, Sayyidna Julaibib radi'allahu 'anhu met with his shahadah in a Jihad. The Holy Prophet ﷺ bathed and shrouded his body with his own blessed hands.

A similar event relating to Umm Kulthum bint 'Uqbah Ibn Abi Mu'ait has been reported in Hadith narrations (Ibn Kathir, Qurtubi) and there is no contradiction in them. It is possible that several events of this nature may have been the cause of the revelation of the verse.

### **The Injunction to consider the principle of (kuf) in marriage**

The reason why Sayyidah Zainab bint Jahsh and her brother 'Abdullah had initially rejected the proposal of marriage with Sayyidna Zayd Ibn Harithah was that the two of them had no familial and lineal homogeneity, which is desirable even in the sight of the Shari'ah. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said that girls should be married in their (kuf': equal, alike, matching) (to be explained later). Therefore, a question arises here as to why the excuse of Sayyidah Zainab and her brother was not accepted in this case?

The answer is that the equality, rather equalness (kafa'ah) and likeness of spouses in their religion is certainly incumbent and necessary for the validity of the marriage. The marriage of any Muslim girl with any

disbeliever is not halal (lawful) under the consensus of the Muslim ummah - even if the girl agrees to it. The reason is that this is not simply the right of a woman which may be dropped at her pleasure. Instead, it is the right of Allah and a Divinely imposed duty. On the contrary, equality of the spouses in financial and lineal status is the right of the girl and in the matter of lineal equality, the guardians too have right alongwith the girl. If a sane and adult girl, despite being from a wealthy family, were to drop her right by agreeing to marry some pauper, the choice is hers. And in lineal equality, if the girl and her guardians, all of them, abandon this right for the sake of some other major expedient consideration and agree to the proposal of marriage from a person who is lesser than them in terms of lineage and family status, then, they have the right to do so. In fact, should this be in view of higher religious consideration, the act of surrendering this right is most desirable and praiseworthy. It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has, on several occasions, recommended that this right should be ignored and marriage should be solemnized because of higher and more beneficial religious considerations.

And clear indicators set forth in the noble Qur'an prove that the right of the Holy Prophet ﷺ on the men and women of his ummah is more than that of anyone else. In fact, it is more than that of their own self – as the Qur'an says: that is, **'The Prophet is closer to the believers than their own selves - 33:6.'** Therefore, in the case of Sayyidah Zainab and her brother, 'Abdullah, when the Holy Prophet ﷺ advised them to ignore their right to lineal equality and ordered them to agree to the marriage with Sayyidna Zayd Ibn Harithah, it was their duty to bypass their personal opinion and their own rights in the face of this prophetic order. Therefore, it was on this refusal from them that this injunction of the Qur'an was revealed.

As for the lineal consideration in marriage, one may ask when it was worthy of consideration in the sight of the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself, why would he himself not go by it? The answer to this doubt is already clear from the earlier submission, that is, this consideration is worth surrendering in favour of other higher and more beneficial religious considerations. During the blessed period of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, several marriages were solemnized among non-equals (ghayr-kuf) as based on these very kinds of beneficial religious considerations which do not violate the principle.

### **The Issue of Equality in marriage (Kafa'ah)**

Marriage (nikah) is a matter in which the absence of homogeneity in the temperaments of the spouses disturbs the purpose of marriage, disturbs the process of fulfilling each other's rights and breeds mutual disputes. Therefore, the Shari'ah has ordered that kafa'ah (mutual likeness) should be taken into consideration. But, it never means that a man of high family background starts taking a man from a family lesser than him as low and mean. In Islam, the criterion of low and high is based on Taqwa and love for one's faith. Whoever does not have it, no matter how noble his family is, he yet has no status in the sight of Allah. So, this order to take kafa'ah (mutual equality) into consideration in marriages has been given only to keep the management of matters smooth and straight.

In a Hadith, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has been reported to have said that the nikah (marriage) of girls should invariably be through their guardians (that is, it is not appropriate even for a pubescent girl that she settles the transaction of her nikah (marriage) all by herself. Modesty demands that this matter should be handled by her parents and guardians). And he said that the nikah of girls should invariably be solemnized within their kuf' (equal, like). Though, the authority of this Hadith is weak but, with the support from the reports and sayings of the noble Sahabah, it becomes worth being used as an argument. In Kitab ul-'Athar, Imam Muhammad has reported Sayyidna 'Umar saying: "I shall issue an operative order that no girl from some high and recognized family should be given in marriage to another having a lesser status." Similarly, Sayyidah 'Aishah radi'allahu 'anha and Sayyidna Anas radi'allahu 'anhu have also stressed that kafa'ah (likeness) should be taken into consideration in nikah (marriage) - as reported from several authorities. Imam



Ibn Humam has also written about it in details in Fath al-Qadir.

Hence, the outcome is that the consideration of kafa'ah (equality and likeness) in nikah (marriage) is desirable in religion, so that the spouses live in accord and harmony. But, should some other important consideration, more important than this kafa'ah, come up, then, it is permissible for the woman and her guardians that they surrender this right of theirs and marry in ghayr kuf: that is, other than equal and like. Particularly so, when there is some religious consideration in sight - if so, it is better and more merit worthy to do so, as proved from several events pertaining to the noble Sahabah. Incidentally, from this we also know that these events do not negate the basic premise of the issue of kafa'ah. Allah knows best.

## The Second Event

As ordered by the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the marriage of Sayyidah Zainab bint Jahsh radi'allahu 'anha was solemnized with Sayyidna Zayd Ibn Harithah radi'allahu 'anhu. But, their temperaments did not match and merge with each other. Sayyidna Zayd used to complain about the sharpness of her tongue, the airs she assumed because of her inborn lineal nobility and her failure to listen to him. On the other side, the Holy Prophet ﷺ was informed through revelation that Zayd would divorce her whereafter she would be married to him. On a certain day, Sayyidna Zayd presented these very complaints before the Holy Prophet ﷺ and showed his intention to divorce her. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had, though, come to know through Divine revelation that things would transpire in a way that Zayd would divorce her after which she would be married to him, but it was for two reasons that he stopped Sayyidna Zayd from giving a divorce. Firstly, because giving a divorce, though permissible in the Shari'ah of Islam, it is not desirable. In fact, it is the most detested and repugnant of things permissible - and the happening of something as a creation (Takwini) imperative does not affect the operative religio-legal order (al-hukm at-tashri'i). Secondly, also crossing his blessed heart there was the thought: If Zayd were to give divorce and Zainab were to be married to him consequently, the Arabs would, very much in line with their custom of the Jahiliyyah, throw taunts on him that he had married the wife of his son. Although, the Qur'an has already demolished this custom of Jahiliyyah in the previous verse of this very Surah Al-Ahzab, following which there was no danger for a believer, even no scruple about it. But disbelievers, who reject the authority of the Qur'an itself, would still come out with their taunts because of their pagan custom of taking an adopted son as the real son in all aspects of the Law. This very apprehension also became the cause of his prohibiting Sayyidna Zayd from divorcing his wife. Revealed thereupon was an endearing reprimand from Allah Ta'ala in the following verses of the Qur'an: **And (remember) when you were saying to the one who was favored by Allah and favored by you, "Keep your wife to your self, and fear Allah." And you were concealing in your heart what Allah was going to reveal, and you were fearing people, while Allah is more entitled to be feared by you. (33:37)**

The 'one favored' referred to here means Sayyidna Zayd and the first favour bestowed on him by Allah was that he was made a Muslim and secondly, that he was given the honor of staying in the company of the Messenger of Allah. As for the favour done to him by the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the first thing he did was that he gave him his freedom from slavery. Secondly, he favored him by grooming and training him under his personal charge, he made him into a person who was respected even by the greatest of the great among the Sahabah. Onwards from here appears what he said to Sayyidna Zayd: **(Keep your wife to your self and fear Allah)**. It means: 'Hold your wife in your bond of marriage, and do not divorce her and fear Allah.' The order to fear Allah at this place could also be taken to mean that divorce is a detested and repugnant act from which he should abstain. And it could also be taken in the sense that once he decides to hold her in his nikah, let not his temperamental distaste become a cause of falling short in the fulfilment of her due rights. What the Holy Prophet ﷺ said was correct and sound in its place. But, after having learnt about the event as it would transpire through Divine revelation and after the intention of nikah with Sayyidah Zainab



having emerged in his heart, this advice of not divorcing given to Sayyidna Zayd had remained at the level of a sort of formal expression of good wishes - something not appropriate to the station of a messenger of Allah, particularly so because, alongwith it, included therein was the apprehension of taunts from the people. Therefore, in the cited verse, the admonition was revealed in the words which mean, 'you were concealing in your heart what Allah was going to reveal.' When the information about his marriage with Sayyidah Zainab was conveyed to him from Allah and the intention of marriage had already crossed his heart, then, the act of hiding this intention and indulging in such formal remarks was not appropriate to his station. As for the apprehension of taunts from people, it was said, **'and you were fearing people, while Allah is more entitled to be feared by you - (37)**. In other words, 'when you knew that this thing is going to take place as a matter destined by Allah Ta'ala - without there being any apprehension or danger of His displeasure in that case - then, simply because of the apprehension of taunts from people, such remarks were not appropriate.'

The details of this event appearing above have all been taken from Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Qurtubi and Ruh ul-Ma'ani. As for the particular tafsir of the verse: **(you were concealing in your heart what Allah was going to reveal - 37)** that is, 'the thing that he kept to himself was the intention that should Zayd give the divorce, he would marry her in accordance with the Divine decree' - this tafsir was reported by Tirmidhi, Ibn Abi Hatim and other Hadith experts from a narration of Sayyidna 'Ali Ibn Husain Zain ul-'Abidin. Its words are as follows:

Allah Ta'ala had informed the Holy Prophet ﷺ through revelation that Zainab is going to be divorced by Zayd and after that she was to be married to him - Ruh ul-Ma'ani from Tirmidhi.

And Ibn Kathir has reported the following words with reference to Ibn Abi Hatim: Allah Ta'ala had made His prophet know that she (Sayyidah Zainab) will also become one of his blessed wives. After that, when Zayd came to him with a complaint against her, he said, 'Fear Allah, keep your wife, do not divorce her.' Thereupon, Allah Ta'ala said, 'I had made it known to you that I shall have her married to you, and you were concealing in your heart the thing that Allah was going to disclose.'

The majority of commentators - Zuhri, Bakr Ibn al-'Ala', al-Qushairi and Qadi Abu Bakr Ibn al-'Arabi - have adopted this very tafsir, that is, the mention of the thing he was keeping to himself was but this intention of marriage under Divine revelation. Counter to this there are narrations in which the words, **"and you were concealing in your heart"** have been explained as love for Zainab. About this tafsir, Ibn Kathir has said, 'we did not like to mention these narrations as none of these is sound.'

Then the words of the Qur'an themselves lend support to this very tafsir mentioned above on the authority of Sayyidna Zain ul-'Abidin because, in this verse, Allah Ta'ala has Himself said very clearly that the thing hidden in the heart was what Allah Ta'ala is going to disclose - and the thing that Allah Ta'ala disclosed in the next verse (37) is nikah or marriage with Sayyidah Zainab as said in: **(We gave her into your marriage -37)** (Ruh ul-Ma'ani)

### **To protect oneself against taunts thrown by people is praiseworthy unless it affects some objective of the Shari'ah**

A question arises here as to why the Holy Prophet ﷺ chose to conceal this matter which became the cause of Divine displeasure only to avoid the taunts of a hostile people? To answer that, it can be said that there is an essential general rule in this matter which stands proved from the Qur'an and Sunnah. According to this rule, when doing an act may cause misunderstanding among people or may invite their taunts, then, in order to protect the faith of people and save them from the sin of throwing taunts, it is permissible to avoid

that act, subject to the condition that this act itself should not be one of the objectives of the Shari'ah, and no religious injunction of halal and haram is related with it - even though, the act in itself be praiseworthy. In this matter, a precedent exists in the Hadith and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who said: When the Baytullah was constructed during the period of Jahiliyyah, several things have been done contrary to the original structure laid out by Sayyidna Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam. First of all, some part of Baytullah was left outside the constructed area. Then, there were two doors for people to enter inside the Baytullah in the original foundational plan of Sayyidna Ibrahim 'alayhis salaam, one towards the East and another towards the West because of which there used to be no difficulty with the entry in and exit from Baytullah. The people of the Jahiliyyah made two unwarranted changes in it. They blocked the Western door totally and raised the Eastern door which used to be at ground level so high that no one could enter inside it without the help of a ladder. The purpose was to let only those they permitted go in.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: ***'Had there been no danger of throwing neo-Muslims into misunderstanding, I would have raised the Baytullah once again in accordance with the Abrahimic foundation.'*** This Hadith is present in all authentic books. From this we know that it was to save people from misunderstanding that the Holy Prophet ﷺ abandoned this intention of his, an intention which was, otherwise, praiseworthy in the light of the Shari'ah. And against this there came no admonition from Allah which also shows that this conduct of his was acceptable with Him. But, this matter of reconstructing the Baytullah in accordance with the Abrahimic foundation was not something among the objective of Shari'ah, nor something relating to the precepts of halal and haram.

As for the event of the marriage of Sayyidah Zainab radi'allahu 'anha, there was an Islamic legal objective to be achieved therewith, that is, to refute an evil custom of the Jahiliyyah and to dispel, practically and openly, the erroneous notion of marriage being unlawful with the divorced wife of an adopted son. The reason is that eradication of wrong customs, dragging on and on among peoples for ages, becomes actually possible only when it is implemented practically and demonstrated openly. The Divine command had unfolded to fulfill this objective in a perfect manner in the case of the marriage of Sayyidah Zainab radi'allahu 'anha. On the basis of this deposition, the apparent dichotomy between the abandonment of the reconstruction of Baytullah and the implementation of the marriage of Sayyidah Zainab as Divinely ordaired stands resolved, and answered.

And it seems that the Holy Prophet ﷺ took the oral communication of this injunction which has appeared in the earlier verses of Surah Al-Ahzab (Verses 4 & 5) as sufficient for declaring the law, while the need and wisdom of its practical demonstration escaped his attention. Therefore, he let it remain concealed despite the knowledge and intention. Allah Ta'ala put it right and said: (So that there may not be a problem for the believers in marrying wives of their adopted sons, when they finish their desire for them - 37). It means: We gave Zainab in marriage to you so that Muslims do not have to face any practical difficulty in marrying the divorced wives of adopted sons.

And the statement: زَوَّجْنَاهَا literally means: 'We solemnized her nikah with you' or 'We gave her into your marriage.' This tells us that Allah Ta'ala blessed this nikah with such distinction that He Himself solemnized it - which makes it exempt from the usual conditions of nikah or marriage. And it could also mean: 'We gave the command for this nikah, now you marry her in accordance with the Islamic rules and conditions.' Some of the commentators have preferred the first probability while some others have gone by the second.

As for the saying of Sayyidah Zainab radi'allahu 'anha before other women, *"Your nikah was done by your parents. My nikah was done by Allah Ta'ala Himself on the heavens,"* which appears in Hadith narrations, it turns out to be true both ways. Under the first probability, it is very clear while the other one too is not contrary to it.

## Prefacing an answer to doubts and objections

The opening sentence of verse 38: **(a customary practice of Allah in the case of those who have gone before--- And Allah's command is pre-determined by destiny - 38)** is a preface to doubts to be encountered in the wake of this marriage, particularly about why so much concern was shown in the case of this marriage despite there being other wives in the household. It was said: 'This is a sunnah of Allah (His customary practice not restricted to Muhammad al-Mustafa ﷺ). It has continued to be so in the case of earlier prophets as well, that is, under the dictate of beneficial religious considerations, permission was given for multiple marriages. Well recognized among them are Sayyidna Dawud 'alayhis salaam and Sayyidna Sulaiman 'alayhis salaam. Sayyidna Dawud 'alayhis salaam had one hundred wives in his nikah and Sayyidna Sulaiman 'alayhis salaam, three hundred. Now, if permission came for the Holy Prophet ﷺ to have several marriages under beneficial religious considerations - this nikah being included therein - why should it be taken as something far-fetched? Neither is it contrary to the dignity and status of a prophet and messenger of Allah, nor against the norms of zuhd and taqwa. In the last sentence, it was also said that the matter of nikah (marriage) too, like that of rizq or sustenance, is Divinely decided as to who will be married to whom. That which is written in the eternal destiny has to occur. In this event relating to Sayyidna Zayd radi'allahu 'anhu and Sayyidah Zainab radi'allahu 'anha, the factors of their mutual temperamental difference, the displeasure of Sayyidna Zayd and then his resolve to divorce her were all chains of this very creational and destined imperative.

Mentioned next are particular attributes of the prophets عليهم السلام about whom we have learnt a while ago that they were permitted to have several wives in earlier times. It was said: **(those who convey the messages of Allah and have awe of Him and have no awe of anyone except Allah - 39)**, that is, all these esteemed prophets, may peace be upon them, convey the messages of Allah to their respective communities without fear of anyone.

## A wise consideration

Perhaps, in this, there may be a hint towards the wisdom behind the multiplicity of marriages allowed to the noble prophets عليهم السلام in that all their sayings and doings must necessarily reach their communities, while being men, they spend a substantial part of their time in the section of the house where women and children live. During this time, if there comes a revelation or the prophet himself gives some order or does something, it all becomes a property held by their wives in trust on behalf of the community which can be transferred to it through wives alone. Other alternates are not free of difficulties. Therefore, should prophets have several wives, it would become easier to convey accounts of their words and deeds and their personal character in family life. Allah knows best.

The second attribute of the noble prophets has been described as: **(and have awe of Him and have no awe of anyone except Allah - 39)**. It means that these prophets keep fearing Allah and fear none but Allah. It is also included there that they, if appointed to preach something by practicing it as based on beneficial religious consideration, never fall short in it - and if some people throw taunts at them for doing so, they do not fear it.

## A doubt and its answer

Here, while mentioning the prophets, it has been said that they do not fear anyone except Allah. But, in the verse previous to it while referring to the Holy Prophet ﷺ it was said: **(you fear people - 37)**. How would this be correct? The answer is that, in the cited verse, this matter of prophets not fearing anyone other than Allah has been mentioned in connection with the conveying of Divine messages while the Holy Prophet ﷺ, faced the fear of being taunted in a matter which was obviously of a worldly nature. It had nothing to do with his mission and prophethood. But, as soon as it became clear to him from the cited verses that this

## DAY 18

marriage too was a part of the practical aspect of his mission and prophethood, no fear of taunts, thereafter, from anyone stopped him from doing what he had to. And this marriage took place despite the objections raised by many disbelievers - which they still keep doing.

This concludes the commentary for Day 18.

**ANSWER:** The sister-in-law of Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam

## **SURAH AL-QASAS, VERSES 22-24**

**And when he set out towards Madyan, he said, “I hope my Lord will guide me to the straight path”. [22] And when he arrived at the waters of Madyan, he found a large number of people watering (their animals) and found, aloof from them, two women keeping back (their animals). He said, ‘What is the matter with you?’ They said, “We cannot water (our animals) unless the shepherds bring (their animals) back and our father is very old man.” [23] So he (Musa) watered (their animals) for their sake, then he turned to a shade and said, “O my Lord, I am in need of whatever good you send down to me.” [24]**

### **COMMENTARY**

**(And when he, set out towards Madyan - 28:22)** Madyan is the name of a city in Sham (a large territory now consisting of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine) which was named after Madyan, the son of Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam. This area was outside the empire of the Pharaoh. It was eight days journey from Egypt. When Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam was taken over by the natural fright of the pursuing army of the Pharaoh, which was not in conflict either with the prophethood or with trust in Allah, he resolved to leave Egypt. Perhaps he decided to proceed toward Madyan because it was a habitation of the descendants of Sayyidna Ibrahim ‘alayhis salaam, and he was also his progeny.

When Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam left Egypt, he was in a condition that he had neither any provisions for the journey nor any baggage, and also he did not know the route. In this state of helplessness he turned to Allah Ta’ala and asked **(I hope my Lord will guide me to the straight path - 28:22)**, Allah Ta’ala accepted this prayer. Scholars have observed that the only food Musa ‘alayhis salaam had during this journey was the leaves of trees. Sayyidna Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu has said that this was the first trial and test of Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam. Details of trials and tests of Musa ‘alayhis salaam have already been described under Surah Taha while quoting a lengthy hadith.

**(And when he arrived at the waters of Madyan, he found a large number of people watering (their animals) – 28:23)** (waters of Madyan) refers to the well from where people of that place used to make their animals drink water. **(found, aloof from them, two women keeping back (their animals) - 23)**. That is he saw two girls stopping their goats from going to the water, so that they did not get mixed up with other goats. **(He said, “What is the matter with you?” They said, “We cannot water (our animals) unless the shepherds bring (their animals) back and our father is very old man.” - 28:23)**. The word *Khatb* means “matter”. The sense is that Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam asked the two girls ‘What was it that you are stopping your goats from coming to the well for drinking water like other goats? The two girls answered that, in order to avoid mixing with men-folk, they used to make their goats wait until men had left the place after watering their animals. The question arose here whether they did not have any male member in the family to do this job. The girls answered this question on their own by saying that their father was very old and could not perform this job. This is why they were doing the job.

Some very important points are learnt by this incident. One, that it was the practice of the prophets to help the weak. Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam saw that two girls had brought their goats for drinking water, but they were unable to find room because of the rush of people. Therefore, he asked them about their problem. Two, that there is no harm to talk to stranger women, if no mischief is involved. Three, that although this incident had happened when hijab was not enjoined, a situation that continued even in the early days of



Islam (hijab was enjoined in Madinah after the Hijrah), but the underlying spirit of hijab, i.e the natural instinct of modesty and bashfulness, was there even in those days. Because of this natural instinct the two girls preferred hardship rather than getting mixed with men-folk. Four, that it was not considered desirable for women even in those days to go out and perform such type of duties. It was for this reason that they put forward the justification that their father was very old and weak.

**(So he (Musa) watered (their animal) for their sake - 28:24).** That is Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam took pity on the girls and drew out water from the well and satiated their goats. It is reported in some narrations that the shepherds after making their cattle drink water used to place a very heavy stone on the mouth of the well to make it unusable, and hence these girls would have only the left over water for their herd. The stone was so heavy that ten men together could move it, but Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam removed it all by himself, and drew water from the well. Perhaps for this reason one of the two girls reported to her father that Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam was very strong. (Qurtubi)

**(Then he turned to a shade and said, “O my Lord, I am in need of whatever good you send down to me.” - 28:24).** Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam did not have any food for the last seven days. He came under the shade of a tree and prayed to Allah describing his condition and need in an exquisite manner. The word *Khair* is sometimes used for wealth as in the case of **(he leaves some wealth - 2:180)**. Sometimes it is used for strength like **(Are they better, or the people of Tubba – 44:37)** and sometimes for food as in the verse under reference. (Qurtubi)

## COMMENTARY – TAFSIR IBN KATHIR

**(And when he went towards (the land of) Madyan,)** means, he took a smooth and easy route -- and he rejoiced because of that.

**(he said: “It may be that my Lord guides me to the right way.”)** meaning, the most straight route. And Allah did indeed do that, for He guided him to the straight path in this world and the Hereafter, and caused him to be guided and to guide others.

**(And when he arrived at the water (a well) of Madyan,)** means, when he reached Madyan and went to drink from its water, for it had a well where shepherds used to water their flocks,

**(he found there a group of men watering, and besides them he found two women who were keeping back.)** means, they were stopping their sheep from drinking with the sheep of those shepherds, lest some harm come to them. When Musa, (peace be upon him) saw them, he felt sorry for them and took pity on them.

**(He said: “What is the matter with you”)** meaning, ‘why do you not water your flocks with these people’

**(They said: “We cannot water until the shepherds take...”)** meaning, ‘we cannot water our flocks until they finish.’

**(And our father is a very old man.)** means, ‘this is what has driven us to what you see.’

**(So he watered (their flocks) for them, )**

**(then he turned back to shade, and said: “My Lord! Truly, I am in need of whatever good**

**that You bestow on me!’’)**

**(to shade,)** Ibn `Abbas, Ibn Mas`ud and As-Suddi said: *“He sat beneath a tree.”* `Ata’ bin As-Sa’ib said: *“When Musa said: (**“My Lord! Truly, I am in need of whatever good that You bestow on me!”**) the women heard him.”*

## COMMENTARY

[Here we will continue Hadith-ul-Futun which was produced under Day 16, under the commentary of Surah Taha, Verse 40] as it relays the story of the events leading up to Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam finding himself in Madyan]

(And so Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam continued to enjoy the favours of the Pharaoh and the great love of his mother until he grew to full manhood). Knowing in what esteem the royal family held him, the people of the Pharaoh did not dare to insult and torment Bani Isra’ili as they used to do previously. One day he was out for a stroll in the city when he came across two persons who were quarrelling over some matter. One of them was a man of the Pharaoh and the other was an Isra’ili. The latter called out to Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam to help him. Musa ‘alayhis salaam got very angry at the Pharaoh’s man. How dare he bully an Isra’ili in his presence knowing that he held a place of honour in the royal court, and also that he was full of sympathy for the Isra’ilies (on account of the harsh treatment to which they were constantly subjected by the Egyptians). People in general thought that his sympathy for the Isra’ilis was due to his being nursed and brought up by an Isra’ili woman. It is also possible that Allah Ta’ala may have informed him through his mother or by some other means that he himself was an Isra’ili and that the woman who had nursed him was in fact his own mother.

Anyway, being in extreme anger, Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam hit the Egyptian with such force that he died on the spot. There were no witnesses to this incident except the Isra’ili, and Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam was certain that he (the Isra’ili) would not inform against him.

The Egyptian’s death filled Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam with remorse and he said: **(This is some of Satan’s act, He is indeed a clear enemy who misleads - 28:15)**. Then he prayed to Allah. **O my Lord! I have wronged myself, so forgive me. So He forgave him. Indeed He is the Most-Forgiving, Very-Merciful- 28:16.**

After this incident Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam made secret inquiries about the reaction of the Egyptian about the murder and whether the matter was reported to the Pharaoh. He learned that the report that was made to the Pharaoh merely said that an Isra’ili had killed an Egyptian for which their tribe should make full retribution, and that no mercy should be shown to them.

The Pharaoh asked them to apprehend the murderer and produce him with full proof of his guilt because although he was their own king he did not think it was right to punish someone without sufficient evidence. He assured them that if they produced the offender with sufficient proof of his guilt he would not be spared. Thereupon people went out in search of the murderer but found no clue which could lead them to him.

The next day as Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam came out of his house he saw the same Isra’ili again fighting with an Egyptian. On seeing Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam he again called to him for help. But Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam who was full of remorse at what had happened the day before was very angry and blamed the Isra’ilie for picking up fights. However, he wanted to stop the man of Pharaoh from attacking the Isra’ili, and at the same time reproached the Isra’ili for being so quarrelsome. The Isra’ili, seeing Musa

## DAY 19

‘alayhis salaam in anger was frightened and feared that he would kill him too. So he called out, “O Musa! Will you kill me too as you killed a man yesterday”?

And so they parted, but the Egyptian hastened to inform the people who were on the look out for the murderer that the Isra’ili himself had accused Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam of having murdered a man the day before. The Pharaoh who was informed of this latest development at once sent his soldiers to apprehend Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam and to execute him. The soldiers were confident that there was no way for Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam to escape and therefore they took the main road of the city searching for him. Somehow a follower of Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam who lived in a far flung area of the city got wind of the Pharaoh’s order to kill him and managed to reach Musa ‘alayhis salaam through smaller streets to warn him of the impending danger.

At this point in his narration, Sayyidna Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu paused again and said, “*O Ibn Jubair! This was the fifth test (فتون) for Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam when death had overcome him but Allah Ta’ala saved his life*”.

Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam at once left the city and headed for Madyan. All his life was spent in comfort and luxury and he had never undertaken a task involving physical exertion. He was also unfamiliar with the surrounding areas and the roads connecting them. But he had full faith in Allah (**I hope my Lord will guide me to the in Allah straight path - 28:22**).

As he approached Madyan, he stopped at a well where people had gathered and were drawing water for their animals. There he saw two girls standing away from the crowd with their goats. He asked them why they stood apart to which they replied that being unable to contend with men for water they were waiting until they had finished watering their animals and then, if any water was left, they would give it to their goats, Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam was moved to pity for the girls and being physically a strong man he pushed forward and in no time he watered their goats. The girls went home with their herd and he sat under the shade of a tree and prayed: (**O my Lord, I am in need of whatever good you may send down to me - 28:24**). By this prayer he sought Allah’s help in providing him something to eat and a place to stay.

Now when the girls returned home with their herd earlier than usual their father was surprised, but the girls told him how a kind man had helped them and watered their goats. The father asked one of the girls to bring the man home which she did, and when he heard the story of Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam, he said: (**“Do not fear, you have escaped from the wrongdoing people.” - 28:25**).

[**Note:** the hadith in the commentary continues for many pages to narrate the story of Musa ‘alayhis salaam but we have paused here as this is all that is relevant to today’s commentary insha’Allah].

This concludes the commentary for Day 19.

**ANSWER:** The women that cut their hands when they saw Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam

## **SURAH YUSUF, VERSES 30-35**

**And women in the city said, “The wife of the governor is seducing her youthful slave. The love for him has arrested her. Surely, we see her in open error.” [30] So, when she heard of their crafty comments, she extended an invitation to them and arranged for them a comfortable place (to sit and dine) and gave everyone a knife and said (to Yusuf): “come in before them.” So when they saw him, they found him great and (were so bewildered that they) cut their hands and said, “Oh God! He is no human being. He is but a noble angel.’ [31] She said, “This is he you blamed me for. Yes, I seduced him, but he abstained. And should he not follow my command, he shall be imprisoned and will be disgraced.” [32] He said, “My Lord, the prison is dearer to me than what these women invite me to. And unless You do not turn their guile away from me, I shall get inclined towards them and shall be among the ignorant.” [33] So, his Lord accepted his prayer and turned their guile away from him. Surely, He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. [34] Later on, even after having seen the signs, they deemed it proper to imprison him for a time. [35]**

### **COMMENTARY**

In the verses which will follow, mentioned there is another event which is connected with the story narrated earlier. There it has been said that this event, despite the effort to keep it concealed, spread around among women in the families of the courtiers. These women started blaming the wife of the ‘Aziz of Mizr. Some commentators have said that these were five women, all wives of officials close to the ‘Aziz of Mizr. (Qurtubi, Mazhari)

These women were talking among themselves. They were saying: Look, how regrettable it is that the wife of the ‘Aziz of Mizr, despite enjoying a status so high, had become enamoured with her young slave and was looking for the fulfillment of what she wanted from him. In this, we think, she is in a grave error. The word used in the verse (30) is: (fataha) translated as ‘her youthful slave’. Fata denotes someone youthful. In customary usage, a boy slave when small is called a ghulam. If in his youth, the boy is called fata, and the girl, fatah. Here, Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam has been referred to as the slave of Zulaikha either because that which is owned by the husband is also customarily called as that which is owned by the wife; and/or because Zulaikha had taken Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam from her husband as gift. (Qurtubi)

Having explained the linkage of verse before the beginning of the present verses, we can now turn to the explanation of individual verses.

Said in verse 32 was: **(So, when she heard of their crafty comments, she extended an invitation to them).**

Here, Zulaikha refers to the talking of women as their ‘makr’ or craftiness - though they had obviously planned no trick against her. But, since they spoke ill about her secretly, it was identified as ‘makr.’ As for the expression: which follows immediately and has been translated as ‘and arranged for them a comfortable place’ is inclusive of the comfort of special pillows for hand and back rest placed there for relaxation.

Then, it was said: **(and gave everyone a knife)**. It means when these women came in and sat down, different foods and fruits were served, some of which needed a knife to peel and cut, therefore, also given to each one of them was a sharp knife. The obvious purpose of this was to cut fruits. But, concealed in her

heart was what comes next - that is, these women will lose their senses at the sight of Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam and would go on to cut their hands with the knife.

After having made all these arrangements, to Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam, who was in some other quarter of the house, Zulaika said: **(come in before them)**. Since, Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam was not aware of her vain intention, he came out into this sitting.

That which happened then has been described in: **'So, when they saw him, they found him great and [were so bewildered that they] cut their hands** [that is, when cutting their fruit, they saw this object of wonder, the knife unconsciously ran over their hand - as it occasionally happens when one's thought is diverted to something else] **and said, 'Oh God! He is no human being. He is but a noble angel.'** [by which they meant that one exuding such light can only be an angel].'

Then, in verse 32, it was said: **'She [Zulaikha] said: 'So, [see] this is the one you blamed me for. Yes, I seduced him, but he abstained. And should he [in future] not follow my command, he shall be [surely] imprisoned and shall be disgraced [too].'**

When Zulaikha realized that her secret lay disclosed before those women anyway, she started threatening Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam right before them. At that time, according to some commentators, all these women too started telling Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam that Zulaikha was their benefactor, therefore, he should not oppose her.

And some words of the Holy Qur'an which appear later **(33)** also support it, for example: **(yad'unani: these women invite me)** and: **(kaidahunna: their guile)** where the statement of some women has been mentioned in the plural form.

When Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam saw that these women were also supporting Zulaikha and there remained no other visible way to stay safe against their guile, he turned to his ultimate resort, to Allah jalla sha'nuhu, and before Him, he said: My Lord, the prison is dearer to me than what these women invite me to. And unless You turn their guile away from me, I shall get inclined towards them and shall be among the ignorant.

Here, the statement of Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam that 'the prison is dearer to me' does not reflect any desire or wish to be detained in a prison, instead of that, it is an expression which shows that he would find it easier to face this temporal hardship as compared to that of falling in sin. According to some narrations, when Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam was confined to the prison, a revelation from Allah Ta'ala told him: You have put yourself into the prison by what you yourself had said: **(the prison is dearer to me)** and had you asked for well-being ('afiyah), you would have been blessed with perfect well-being. From here we come to know that, to stay safe from a major hardship, saying in prayer that one better be subjected to some minor hardship in lieu of it is not appropriate. Instead of doing that, one should, when under the threat of any hardship, problem or distress, pray to Allah Ta'ala for nothing but 'afiyah (well-being). Therefore, the Holy Prophet ﷺ prohibited a man from praying for sabr (patience) saying that sabr is done when one faces distress and hardship. So, rather praying to Allah for sabr, pray for 'afiyah. (Timidhi) The uncle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Sayyidna 'Abbas radi'allahu 'anhu asked him: Teach me a prayer I should make. He said: Pray for 'afiyah (well-being) from your Rabb. Sayyidna 'Abbas radi'allahu 'anhu says when he, after a period of time, once again asked him to be advised of some dua' he should be making, he said: Pray to Allah Ta'ala for 'afiyah in dunya and 'akhirah. (Mazhari from Tabarani)



## DAY 20

As for the saying of Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam: **'And unless you do not turn their guile away from me, I shall get inclined towards them,'** this is not contrary to the concept of the 'Ismah of prophethood (a prophet's state of being Divinely protected from sin) - because the very outcome of 'Ismah is that Allah Ta'ala would, by arranging to keep a person safe from sin as a creation imperative, protect him from falling into it. Though Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam had this desired cover by virtue of his being a prophet, yet he was compelled to make this du'a because of the great awe he had for Him in his heart. This also tells us that no one can, without the help and support of Allah Ta'ala, stay safe from sin. And it also makes it clear that every act of sin is caused by ignorance (jahalah), the opposite of which is knowledge ('ilm), and 'Ilm (knowledge) demands abstention from sins. (Qurtubi).

After that, said in verse 34 was: **So, his Lord accepted his prayer and turned their guile away from him. Surely, He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.**

To protect him from the guile of these women, Allah Ta'ala made his own wise arrangements. Though the 'Aziz of Misr and his inner circle was already convinced of the great spiritual qualities of Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam, his piety, fear of Allah and chastity, but rumours of the incident had started circulating in the city. To put a check on this, they found it expedient to confine Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam into the prison for a certain period of time so that there remains no source of any doubt in the concerned family, and that the talk of the town too dies out in due course. So, said at the end of the verse (35) was:

**Later on, even after having seen the signs, they [the 'Aziz of Misr and his advisers] deemed it proper [or expedient] to imprison him for a time.**

Thus, to the prison he was sent.

This concludes the commentary for Day 20.

# DAY 21

**ANSWER:** Bilqis, Queen of Sheba

**Note:** Since this story is quite long, only some of the commentary of the story specific to the riddle have been reproduced below.

## RIDDLE

Lines 1 and 2: Bilqis' father had married a jinni woman

Line 3: Bilqis investigated the truth of Sayyidna Sulaiman 'alayhis salaam (i.e. was he 'alayhis salaam really a prophet of Allah), and Sayyidna Sulaiman 'alayhis salaam tested her with regard to her throne

Line 4: Bilqis accepted Islam when she saw for herself what Allah had given Sayyidna Sulaiman 'alayhis salaam and how majestic his position was. Sayyidna Sulayman 'alayhis salaam had commanded the Shayatin to build for her a huge palace of glass beneath which water was flowing. Anyone who did not know the nature of the building would think that it was water, but in fact there was a layer of glass between a person walking and the water

## SURAH AN-NAML, VERSES 22-26

**Then the bird did not take long and said (to Sulaiman), "I have discovered what you did not, and have brought to you a sure information from Saba' (Sheba). [22] I have found a woman ruling over them and she has been given of everything (she needs) and she has a great throne. [23] I have found her and her people prostrating to the sun, instead of Allah, and the Satan has beautified their deeds for them and has prevented them from the way, so they do not take the right path, [24] that is, they do not prostrate to Allah who brings forth what is hidden in the heavens and the earth and who knows whatever you conceal and whatever you reveal, Allah! There is no god but He, the Lord of the Great Throne! [26] He (Sulaiman) said, 'We shall see whether you have told the truth or you are one of the liars. [27] Go with this letter of mine and deliver it down to them, then turn back from them and see what they return.' [28]**

## COMMENTARY

**"And have brought to you a sure information from Saba' (Sheba)". 27:22**

Saba' (Sheba) is a well-known city of Yemen, and its other name is Ma'arib. The distance between San'a', the capital of Yemen, and Saba' is three day's journey.

## **I have found a woman ruling over them, - 27:23**

The name of this woman is given in the history as Bilqis, daughter of Sharahil. But in some other narrations, it is mentioned that her mother was a jinni whose name was Bal'amah, daughter of Shisan. (Wuhaib b. Jarir has reported this from Khalil Ibn Ahmad, Qurtubi) Her grandfather, Hudahud, was a great king and controlled the entire land of Yemen. He had forty sons. All these sons became kings. Her father, Surah, had married a jinni woman, who gave birth to her (Bilqis). Different reasons are given for his marriage to a jinni. One of them being that he used to say with arrogance "No one from you is a match for me; hence I will not marry. It is because I do not like marrying outside my matching clan". As a result of this, people got him married to a jinni woman. (Qurtubi) Perhaps it was his conceit that he deemed his own people as not his equal. This did not go well with the Divine writ and he was made to marry a jinni woman, who was neither from his family nor his kind or race.

## **She has been given of everything – 23**

It means that whatever services are needed to a king or an aristocrat according to their time, they all were available to her. It is, however, obvious that those things that were not invented by then, their unavailability is

not in conflict with this verse.

## **And she has a great throne - 23**

Literal meaning of 'Arsh is throne of the empire. A narration is attributed to Sayyidna Ibn 'Abbas radiallyahu 'anhu that the length of the throne of Bilqis was eighty yards, its breadth was forty yards and height thirty yards. It was profusely decorated with pearls, red rubies, topaz and olivine, and its legs were studded with precious stones and pearls. Its curtains were made of silk and fine cloth. The throne was secured within seven buildings, one within the other, all well protected and locked.

## **I have found her and her people prostrating to the sun - 27:24**

This shows that her people were star-worshippers and used to worship the sun. Some believe that they were Zoroastrians, who worship fire and all forms of light.

## **“they do not prostrate to Allah who bring forth what is hidden” - 25.**

This sentence is linked with the previous one, **“The Satan has beautified their deeds - 26”** and the sense is that the Satan had engrained in their minds that they should not bow down before Allah, or had prevented them from the righteous path so that they should not prostrate before Allah Ta'ala.

## **SURAH AN-NAML, VERSES 29-37**

**She (the queen) said (to her officials after receiving the letter), “O chieftains, there has been delivered to me an esteemed letter. [29] It is from Sulaiman and it is (in the following words:) With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful. [30] Do not rebel against me and come to me in submission.” [31] She said, “O chieftains, advise me in the matter I have (before me). I am not the one who decides a matter absolutely unless you are present with me.” [32] They said, “We are powerful and tough fighters, and the decision lies with you; so consider what command you should give.” [33] She said, “In fact when the kings enter a town, they put it to disorder and put its honorable citizens to disgrace, and this is how they normally do. [34] And I am going to send a gift to them, then see, what response the envoys will bring back!” [35] So when he (the envoy) came to Sulaiman, he said, “Are you extending a financial aid to me? So what Allah has given me is much better than what He has given to you. But you yourselves are proud of your gift. [36] Go back to them, and we will bring to them forces they have no power to face, and we will certainly drive them out from there in humiliation while they are disgraced!” [37]**

## **COMMENTARY**

### **Reaction of Queen Bilqis on the letter of Sulaiman**

After having consulted the functionaries of her government and gaining their confidence, she herself developed a strategy that she should initially test out the real intention of Sayyidna Sulaiman 'alayhis salaam and to find out whether he was actually a prophet and messenger of God, and whether he was really conveying the message of God or he was aspiring for a greater empire. The purpose behind this strategy was to find out that if he was a prophet in reality, then his command should be followed and no hostility be adopted against him. On the other hand if he was only a king and wished to expand his empire by subjugating her kingdom, then a different plan be worked out to face the challenge. To test out the real intention of Sayyidna Sulaiman 'alayhis salaam she adopted the tactic of sending to him precious gifts and presents. If he becomes satisfied after receiving the gifts, then it would indicate that he was only a king and had approached her with mundane motives. On the other hand, if he was actually a prophet then he would not agree on any thing other than acceptance of Islam. Ibn Jarir has reported this explanation from

Sayyidna Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allah ‘anhu Mujahid, Ibn Juraij, and Ibn Wahb rahimahumallahu ta’ala , with several chains of narrators. The same subject is elaborated in the following verse: **And I am going to send a gift to them, then see, what response the envoys will bring back.” 27:35.**

### **Appearance of envoys of Bilqis in the court of Sulaiman**

Historical Isra’ili legends describe in great detail the incident of the visit of the envoys of Bilqis and the gifts they had taken with them. All versions of the legends agree on that the gifts included some gold bricks, some precious stones, one hundred slaves and one hundred slave girls. But the slave girls were dressed in men’s clothes and the slaves were dressed in ladies outfits. There was also a letter from Bilqis, in which there were some questions for testing Sayyidna Sulaiman ‘alayhis salaam. In the selection of gifts also, his test was intended. Allah Ta’ala had passed on detailed information of gifts to Sulaiman ‘alayhis salaam even before their arrival. Sayyidna Sulaiman ‘alayhis salaam commanded the Jinns to lay out a floor of gold and silver bricks over a thirty miles stretch from his court, and that strange looking animals be lined up on either side of this pathway. Their excrement of bowels was also to be placed on the floor of gold and silver. Similarly, his court was decorated with special attention. Four thousand chairs of gold were placed on the left side and four thousand on the right side of the main hall for the scholars, ministers, and other officials of the court. The entire hall was bedecked with precious stones. When Bilqis’s envoys saw animals standing on the floor of gold bricks, they were embarrassed with the gifts they had brought with them. It is reported in some narrations that they threw away their gold bricks. Then as they proceeded, they saw rows of beasts and birds on either side of the pathway. After that they came across the rows of jinns. Seeing them, they were browbeaten. Ultimately, when they reached the court and stood before Sayyidna Sulaiman ‘alayhis salaam, he received them with dignity, and entertained them with veneration. But he returned all their gifts and presents, and answered all the questions sent up by Bilqis. (Qurtubi)

### **Return of the presents of Bilqis by Sayyidna Sulaiman ‘alayhis salaam**

**“Are you giving me an aid of wealth? So what Allah has given me is much better than He has given to you. But you yourselves are proud of your gift. 27:36.**

When Bilqis’s envoys reached the court of Sayyidna Sulaiman ‘alayhis salaam with the gifts and presents sent by her, he said to them ‘Do you wish to help me with wealth? Whatever wealth and bounties I have been given by Allah is much better than your wealth and material. Therefore, I do not accept your presents of wealth. You better take them away, and enjoy them yourself.

[...]

Bilqis took the rejection of her presents by Sayyidna Sulaiman ‘alayhis salaam as a sign of his prophethood - not because the acceptance of gifts from disbelievers is not permissible - but she had purposefully sent those presents as a bribe, in order to save herself from any attack from him.

### **SURAH AN-NAML, VERSES 38-44**

**He said, “O chieftains, which one of you will bring her throne to me before they come to me submissively?” [38] An ‘ifrit (stalwart) from the Jinns said, “I will bring it to you before you rise up from your place, and for this (task) I am powerful, trust-worthy”. [39] Said the one who had the knowledge of the book, “I will bring it to you before your glance returns to you!” So when he saw it (the throne) well-placed before him, he said, ‘This is by the grace of my Lord, so that He may test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful. And whoever is grateful is grateful for his own benefit, and whoever is ungrateful, then my Lord is Need-Free, Bountiful’. [40] He said, ‘Disguise the throne for her, and we will see whether she discovers**

the truth or she is one of those who have no guidance.” [41] So when she came, it was said (to her), “Is your throne like this?” She said, “It seems to be the same, and knowledge (of truth) was given to us even before this and we have already submitted.” [42] And she was prevented (from submitting before) by that which she used to worship instead of Allah. Indeed she was from a disbelieving people. [43] It was said to her, “Enter the palace.” Then once she saw it, she thought it to be flowing water and uncovered her legs. He (Sulaiman) said, “This is a palace made of glasses!” She said, “My Lord, I had surely wronged myself, and now I submit, along with Sulaiman, to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.” [44]

## COMMENTARY – TAFSEER IBN KATHIR

### The Test of Bilqis

When Sulayman brought the throne of Bilqis before she and her people arrived, he issued orders that some of its features should be altered, so that he could test her and see whether she recognized it and how composed she would be when she saw it. Would she hasten to say either that it was her throne or that it was not? So he said:

**(Disguise her throne for her that we may see whether she will be guided, or she will be one of those not guided.)** Ibn `Abbas said: *“Remove some of its adornments and parts.”* Mujahid said: *“He issued orders that it should be changed, so whatever was red should be made yellow and vice versa, and whatever was green should be made red, so everything was altered.”* `Ikrimah said, *“They added some things and took some things away.”* Qatadah said, *“It was turned upside down and back to front, and some things were added and some things were taken away.”*

**(So when she came, it was said: “Is your throne like this?”)** Her throne, which had been altered and disguised, with some things added and others taken away, was shown to her. She was wise and steadfast, intelligent and strong-willed. She did not hasten to say that this was her throne, because it was far away from her. Neither did she hasten to say that it was not her throne, when she saw that some things had been altered and changed. She said,

**((It is) as though it were the very same.)** This is the ultimate in intelligence and strong resolve.

**(Knowledge was bestowed on us before her, and we had submitted to Allah.)** Mujahid said, *“This was spoken by Sulayman.”*

**(And Saddaha that which she used to worship besides Allah has prevented her, for she was of a disbelieving people.)** This is a continuation of the words of Sulayman -- according to the opinion of Mujahid and Sa`id bin Jubayr, may Allah be pleased with them both -- i.e., Sulayman said:

**(Knowledge was bestowed on us before her, and we had submitted to Allah.)** and what stopped her from worshipping Allah alone was

**(that which she used to worship besides Allah, for she was of a disbelieving people.)** What Mujahid and Sa`id said is good; it was also the view of Ibn Jarir. Then Ibn Jarir said, “It could be that the subject of the verb.

**(And Saddaha)** refers to Sulayman or to Allah, so that the phrase now means:

**(She would not worship anything over than Allah.)**



## DAY 21

**(for she was of a disbelieving people.)** I say: the opinion of Mujahid is supported by the fact that she declared her Islam after she entered the Sarh, as we shall see below.

**(It was said to her: “Enter As-Sarh” but when she saw it, she thought it was a pool, and she (tucked up her clothes) uncovering her legs.)** Sulayman had commanded the Shayatin to build for her a huge palace of glass beneath which water was flowing. Anyone who did not know the nature of the building would think that it was water, but in fact there was a layer of glass between a person walking and the water.

**Verily, it is a Sarh Mumarrad of Qawarir Sarh means a palace or any lofty construction.**

Allah says of Fir`awn -- may Allah curse him -- that he said to his minister Haman: **(Build me a Sarh that I may arrive at the ways.) (40:36-37)** Sarh is also used to refer to the high constructed palaces in Yemen. Mumarrad means sturdily constructed and smooth.

**(of Qawarir)** means, made of glass, i.e., it was built with smooth surfaces. Marid is a fortress in Dawmat Al-Jandal. What is meant here is that Sulayman built a huge, lofty palace of glass for this queen, in order to show her the greatness of his authority and power. When she saw for herself what Allah had given him and how majestic his position was, she submitted to the command of Allah and acknowledged that he was a noble Prophet, so she submitted to Allah and said:

**(My Lord! Verily, I have wronged myself,)** meaning, by her previous disbelief and Shirk and by the fact that she and her people had worshipped the sun instead of Allah.

**(and I submit, together with Sulayman to Allah, the Lord of all that exists.)** meaning, following the religion of Sulayman, worshipping Allah alone with no partner or associate, Who created everything and measured it exactly according to its due measurements.

This concludes the commentary for Day 21.

**ANSWER:** Sayyidatina A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha

**Note:** The commentary to this story is several pages long. As such, we have only included the story and not the commentary of the specific verses. The latter can be read in Ma'ariful Qur'an, Volume 6, Pages 380-393 insha'Allah.

## RIDDLE

Lines 1-3: Concerning the incident of Ifk: Allah Ta'ala has asked Aisha radi'allahu 'anha not to consider this incident as bad for her, rather it was a blessing. What could be a greater blessing than this, that Allah Ta'ala has confirmed her purity in no less than ten verses, which will be recited until the Dooms Day. Further, Tafsir al-Qurtubi has related that when Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam was falsely accused, Allah Ta'ala exonerated him through the evidence of a baby by granting him speech, and when Sayyidah Maryam 'alayhas salaam was falsely accused, Allah Ta'ala exonerated her through the evidence of her son, Isa 'alayhis salaam, but when false accusation was leveled against Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha, then Allah Ta'ala sent down ten verses of the Holy Qur'an to declare her exoneration, which has further enhanced her respect and stature

Line 4: Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha had herself said that she was quite confident that Allah Ta'ala would exonerate her and clarify her position through a Wahy

## SURAH AN-NUR, VERSES 11-20

**Those who have come up with the false imputation are a gang among you. Do not think it is bad for you; rather, it is good for you. Everyone of them is liable for what he earned of the sin. And the one who undertook the major part of it, for him there is a mighty punishment. [11] Why - when you (O believers) heard of it - did the believing men and the believing women not think well on their own selves and (why did they not) say, 'This is a manifest lie'. [12] Why did they (the accusers) not bring four witnesses to prove this? So, as they did not bring the witnesses, they are the liars in the sight of Allah. [13] And had it not been for the grace of Allah upon you, and His mercy in this world and in the Hereafter, a great punishment would have reached you for what you got indulged in - [14] when you were welcoming it with your tongues and were saying with your mouths something of which you had no knowledge, and were taking it as a trivial matter, while in the sight of Allah it was grave. [15] And why, when you heard of it, did you not say, 'It is not for us to speak about this. Pure are You (O Allah). This is a terrible calumny.' [16] Allah admonishes you never to repeat something like this, if you are believers. [17] And Allah makes the signs clear to you. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. [18] Surely, those who like that shamelessness spreads among the believers, for them there is painful punishment in this world and the Hereafter. And Allah knows and you do not know. [19] And had it not been for the grace of Allah upon you, and His mercy and that Allah is Very-Kind, Very-Merciful (you would have been destroyed). [20]**

## COMMENTARY

### Interconnection of verses

As has been mentioned earlier, the major part of Surah An-Nur is in connection with those injunctions which are related with protection and security of chastity and continence. Diametrically to that, any attempt to debase the chastity and honour would be in violation of the injunction, for which the punishment in the world and the torment in the Hereafter are enjoined. In this connection, first the maximum punishment of adultery, then the punishment for false accusation and after that the process of *li'an* have already been described. False accusation of adultery against a chaste woman, without the support of four eyewitnesses, is

held to be a great sin, and for such a person the punishment of eighty stripes is prescribed. This injunction is in regard to common chaste Muslim women. But the case of Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha was quite different and grave, when the hypocrites fabricated a false slander against her in 6th Hijra, and some Muslims also indulged in mentioning it. Indeed it was a much serious and grave situation than for an ordinary chaste Muslim woman, hence Allah Ta'ala revealed ten verses at that point exonerating her from the accusation and to project her purity and chastity. These verses announce the exoneration of Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha on one hand and a warning of severe punishment to all those who were involved in the slander in any way. This incident of imputation is called the episode of *Ifk* (false imputation) in the Qur'an and Hadith. The word *Ifk* means worst type of lie, imputation or slander. In order to understand the explanation of these verses it is necessary to know the background of the incident of *Ifk*. Therefore, it will be in order to give a brief account of this episode to begin with.

## The incident of Ifk and the slander

This incident has been narrated with extra ordinary details in the Sahih's and other books of Hadith. However its brief version is as follows: When the Holy Prophet ﷺ went for the battle of Bani Mustaliq, also known as battle of Muraisi', in the 6th Hijra, Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha amongst the mothers of believers, was also accompanying him. The common practice was that first she would sit in her litter and then it was placed on the back of the camel. It was because by that time the injunction in regard to hijab had been revealed. After the battle was over and the caravan was returning to Madinah it stopped for camping to spend the night. Towards the end of the night an announcement was made to the effect that the caravan would soon be departing, so that people should get ready after completing the necessities. Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha felt the call of nature and went out to ease herself. There the string of her necklace was broken and it fell down. It took her some time to locate it, so she got a little late. By the time she returned to the camp, the caravan had departed. As for her camel, her litter was mounted on it's back without realizing that she was not sitting in it. This happened because she was so young and frail at that time that her absence from the litter was not noticed; and also because the litter was covered. On her return to the camp when she did not find the caravan there, she did not panic nor ran helter-skelter to locate it. Instead, she acted very prudently and sat down at the camping place after wrapping herself. She did this knowing the Holy Prophet ﷺ very well that when he will not find her in her litter he will send out men to locate her at the camping place, and if she were gone some other place to locate them, it will only complicate things for the searching party. So, it was best to wait for them there, at the camp. Since it was still dark and she was tired, she fell asleep.

On the other hand, it so happened that Sayyidna Safwan Ibn Mu'attal radi'allahu 'anhu, whom the Holy Prophet ﷺ had assigned the duty to stay behind the caravan and pick up things if forgotten by anyone in a hurry, reached the camp at dawn. He saw someone sleeping. So he went there and recognized Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha, whom he had seen before the injunction of hijab was revealed. Seeing her there like that, he was extremely dismayed and uttered *إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ*. On hearing his voice she was awakened, and covered her face. Then Sayyidna Safwan radi'allahu 'anhu brought his camel near her and made it sit down. Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha sat on the camel's back and rode on, while he was holding the string of the camel and walking in front. 'Abdullah Ibn Ubbayy was a very wicked hypocrite and enemy of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He got hold of this news and the wretched man fabricated shameless imputation against her. Unfortunately, some naive Muslims also narrated the gossip on hearsay; for instance Sayyidna Hassan and Mi'stah radi'allahu 'anhuma among the males and Sayyidah Hamnah radi'allahu 'anha from the females. (Tafsir Ad-Durr-al-Manthur has reported this version with reference to Ibn Mardu'ayh on the authority of Sayyidna Ibn 'Abbas radi'allahu 'anhu)

When this slander of the hypocrite was publicized, the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself was also very hurt. As for

Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha, it was but obvious to get hurt extremely. Even ordinary Muslims were also extremely pained on the spread of this totally false and fabricated slander. This went on for about a month, but at last Allah Ta'ala revealed these verses to exonerate her and condemn those who were involved in its fabrication or spread, in any way. The commentary on these verses will follow soon.

In accordance with the Qur'anic injunction, which has been detailed above under the heading of punishment for false accusation, those who were involved in the spread of false slander were asked to produce the evidence in support of their accusation. Since that was a totally unfounded accusation, they could not produce any evidence whatsoever. As a consequence, the Holy Prophet ﷺ awarded the punishment of false accusation to them, and each one of them was flogged with eighty stripes. Bazzar and Ibn Marduwaih have reported on the authority of Sayyidna Abu Hurairah radi'allahu 'anhu that the Holy Prophet ﷺ awarded the punishment to three Muslims, namely, Mistah, Hamnah and Hassan radi'allahu 'anhum, while Tabarani has reported on the authority of Sayyidna 'Umar radi'allahu 'anhu that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had awarded double the punishment of false accusation to 'Abdullah Ibn Ubayy, the hypocrite, who had fabricated this slander. After that the Muslims repented, but the hypocrites remained as they were. (Bayan ul Qur'an)

## Commentary

### Unique proficiency of Sayyidah 'A'ishah's radi'allahu 'anha, and the remaining part of the incident of *Ifk*

The enemies of the Holy Prophet ﷺ did their best to harm him, and did every thing they could possibly think to afflict him. Amongst all the afflictions which were perpetrated by the infidels, perhaps the most severe and emotionally torturous was to pass slander on the most exalted, proficient, learned, and respected mother of the believers amongst all his pure wives. With the contemptible false slander the respected name of Sayyidna Safwan Ibn Mu'attal radi'allahu 'anhu was also maligned by the hypocrite 'Abdullah Ibn Ubayy. The hypocrites gave the slander different colours and then spread it. The most distressful thing in this episode was that some simple Muslims were carried away by the unfortunate slander and started narrating it as well. The unfounded slander would have been exposed by the truth in a few days time, but for compensating the emotional torture inflicted on Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha and on the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself by it and for exonerating her, Allah Ta'ala did not rest just at hinting at the episode in a revelation, but revealed almost two ruku's for her exoneration. Not only that, but all those who had fabricated this slander, and those who had participated in narrating it, were warned to face the torment in this world and in the Hereafter. Perhaps never such warnings were revealed on any occasion.

In fact this incident of *Ifk* has brought into the open and highlighted the excellence of Sayyidah A'ishah's superior wisdom and intelligence along with her chastity and sanctity. That is why in the very first of the above quoted verses Allah Ta'ala has asked not to consider this incident as bad for her, rather it was a blessing. What could be a greater blessing than this, that Allah Ta'ala has confirmed her purity in no less than ten verses, which will be recited until the Dooms Day. Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha had herself said that she was quite confident that Allah Ta'ala would exonerate her and clarify her position through a Wahy (message to the Holy Prophet ﷺ) but did not consider herself to be so fortunate that Qur'anic verses would be revealed referring to her person, which will be recited for ever. At this point it will help the readers to know some details about the incident for understanding the verses. So, they are briefly narrated here:

On return from that journey Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha got involved in her household affairs, and was not the least aware of the rumor that was circulated by the hypocrites about her. Sahih of Bukhari has narrated on the authority of Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha herself that after the return from the journey she fell slightly sick, the main cause of which was that she did not notice the favour and grace from



the Holy Prophet ﷺ towards her, which was his norm. Instead, she noticed during that period that when he would come home, he would only inquire about her health after the salutation and go back. Since she did not know at all anything about the rumor that was being circulated about her, hence she could not understand the cause of his attitude towards her, but took the grief to heart, which started telling on her health. One day she went out in the open to ease herself, as there used to be no latrines in the houses in those days. Because she was not keeping well she took along Miṣṭah's mother with her. When they were returning home after she had eased herself, the foot of Miṣṭah's mother got entangled in her sheet and she fell down. As she fell down she uttered the phrase *تَعَسَّ مَسْطَحٌ*. This phrase is normally used by Arabs while cursing someone. Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha was taken aback on hearing this phrase from Miṣṭah's mother for her own son, and said to her that it was very bad that she was cursing her own son, who was such a gentleman and who had participated in the battle of Badr. On that Miṣṭah's mother asked her 'My dear girl, don't you know, this son of mine, what has he been saying around?' Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha inquired as to what had he been saying around. Then Miṣṭah's mother told her the whole story of Ifk fabricated by the people, and how her son was involved in it's spreading. Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha goes on to say that on hearing this her sickness was doubled. When she returned home and the Holy Prophet ﷺ came and inquired about her health after salutation as usual, she asked his permission whether she could go to her parent's house. He consented to her going to their house. The idea was to take them in confidence and have consultation. So she consulted her mother, who consoled her and said that there were people who were jealous of women like her, and spread rumors like that. So, she need not worry about it. Things would get alright on their own. On that she retorted 'Allah is Pure Subhan Allah! People have been talking about that. How can I be patient?' Then the whole night she cried, and did not sleep a wink. On the other hand the Holy Prophet ﷺ was extremely grieved on the spread of this false story, more so, because he did not receive any revelation on the incident during that period. Therefore, he called Sayyidna 'Ali and Usamah Ibn Zaid radi'allahu 'anhumaa, who were both members of his household, and consulted them as to what should he do under the circumstances. Sayyidna Usamah Ibn Zaid radi'allahu 'anhu said very emphatically that on the basis of his information he had no misgivings about Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha whatsoever. There is absolutely nothing, which could point toward any mistrust. Hence he need not pay any heed to such rumors. Sayyidna 'Ali radi'allahu 'anhu advised him (in order to bring him out of his grief and anxiety) that Allah Ta'ala had not put any restriction on him, hence if he had any unpleasant feelings about Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha, because of the rumors, then there are many other women. Moreover he suggested another alternative to remove his unpleasant feelings, and advised him to make inquiries about her from Barirah radi'allahu 'anha, who was the slave girl working for Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha. Hence, the Holy Prophet ﷺ made inquiries from Barirah radi'allahu 'anha, who submitted that she did not see anything unbecoming in Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha except that sometimes, because of her young age, she would leave the dough in the open and go to sleep, and the goat would eat up the dough. (After this the Hadith narrates the address of the Holy Prophet ﷺ from the rostrum in great detail in which he had complained about those who had fabricated the accusation and those who had spread the slander. A brief account of what happened next is as follows).

Sayyidah A'ishah radi'allahu 'anha goes on to say "I cried the whole day and the second night also continuously. My parents had also come to me, as they feared that I would break down with grief. While my parents were sitting with me the Holy Prophet ﷺ came in and sat down alongside me. He had not sit with me before ever since this incident had started. Then he recited the *khutbah of shahadah* and said 'O, A'ishah, I have received this information about you. If you are free from blame, then Allah will definitely exonerate you (that is express exoneration through revelation), but if you have slipped, then beg for Allah's pardon with repentance, because when the servant invokes His mercy after admitting his sin then Allah Ta'ala accepts his repentance'. After the Holy Prophet ﷺ had completed his discourse, my tears dried up completely. There was not a drop in my eyes. I requested my father, Abu Bakr radi'allahu 'anhu to give an answer to the Holy



Prophet ﷺ, but he excused himself saying what could he say. Then I asked my mother to give an answer, and she too excused herself saying as to what could she say. Then per force I had to speak. I was only a young girl, and by then had not learnt much even the Qur'an". In such a perplexing condition of grief and distress that she was in, even extremely learned and intelligent persons would have found it very difficult to express themselves in a balanced manner, but what Sayyidah 'Aishah radi'allahu 'anha said at that time is a piece of highly intellectual and scholarly discourse. Her wordings are reproduced verbatim below:

*"By God, I fully realize that you listened to this talk and kept on listening until it made inroads into your heart, and you have confirmed this (by your actions). Now if I say that I am free from this blame, as Allah knows well that I am in reality, then you will not verify my statement. And if I make admission of the accusation, of which Allah knows I am free, then you will agree with my admission. Wallah, now I do not see any example on the issue between you and me, except the one which the father of Yusuf 'alayhis salaam (Ya'qub 'alayhis salaam), said after hearing the wrong statement of his sons that 'So patience is best. And it is Allah whose help is sought against what you describe."*

Sayyidah 'Aishah radi'allahu 'anha related further that "After having said so I went away and lied down on my bed. I was confident that since I was free from the blame in reality, Allah Ta'ala would surely exonerate me by sending down a revelation. But I did not have the slightest idea or expectation that in my case Qur'anic verses will be revealed, which will be recited forever. It was because I considered my position to be much lower than that. All I had expected was that probably my exoneration will be revealed to him in his dream". Sayyidah Sayyidah 'Aishah radi'allahu 'anha goes on to narrate that "the Holy Prophet ﷺ had not got up from that company yet, nor anyone from the household had got up, when he was overtaken by the condition which he used to experience at the time of revelation of the Qur'an. In this condition he used to perspire profusely on the forehead. When this condition was over, then the Holy Prophet ﷺ got up smiling, and the very first thing that he said was that is "O 'Aishah, listen the good tiding . As for Allah Ta'ala, He has exonerated you". Then my mother said to me "Get up and go to the Holy Prophet ﷺ." I replied, "I do not feel obliged to any one in this case, except Allah, nor would I get up. I am thankful to my Lord, and it is He who has exonerated me."

### **Few distinctions of Sayyidah Siddiqua radi'allahu 'anha**

While explaining these verses Imam Baghawi rahimahullahu ta'ala has said that there were some distinctions of Sayyidah 'Aishah radi'allahu 'anha which no woman other than her could get, and Sayyidah 'Aishah radi'allahu 'anha also used to relate them with a sense of pride (as honorable gift).

First, that before the marriage with the Holy Prophet ﷺ Jibra'il 'alayhis salaam had brought to him her image wrapped in a silk cloth, and said to him 'she is your wife', (As reported by At-Tirmidhi from 'Aishah radi'allahu 'anha) while some other versions say that Jibra'il had brought this image in his palm.

Second, that the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not marry any maiden girl other than her.

Third, that the Holy Prophet ﷺ died in her lap.

Fourth, that he ﷺ was buried in her house.

Fifth, that he had received revelation even at that time also when he used to be with Sayyidah 'Aishah radi'allahu 'anha under the same quilt. None other wives was granted this distinction ever.

Sixth, that her radi'allahu 'anha, exoneration was sent down from the Heaven.

## DAY 22

Seventh, that she was the daughter of the caliph of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and was herself a Siddiqua radi'allahu 'anha, and was among those whom Allah Ta'ala had promised forgiveness and bountiful sustenance even during their lifetime. (Mazhari)

After seeing Sayyidah 'Aishah's radi'allahu 'anha scholarly research, understanding of jurisprudence and eloquent expression, Sayyidna Musa Ibn Talhah radi'allahu 'anhu commented that he had never come across a person more eloquent than her. (Tirmidhi)

Tafsir al-Qurtubi has related that when Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam was falsely accused, Allah Ta'ala exonerated him through the evidence of a baby by granting him speech, and when Sayyidah Maryam 'alayhas salaam was falsely accused, Allah Ta'ala exonerated her through the evidence of her son, Isa 'alayhis salaam, but when false accusation was leveled against Sayyidah Aishah radi'allahu 'anha, then Allah Ta'ala sent down ten verses of the Holy Qur'an to declare her exoneration, which has further enhanced her respect and stature.

This concludes the commentary for Day 22.

**ANSWER:** The sister of the boy killed by Al-Khadir/Al-Khidr ‘alayhis salaam

**Note:** this relates to the story of Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam meeting Al-Khadir ‘alayhis salaam. The full event is not related below; only that which is specific to the riddle.

## **SURAH AL-KAHF, VERSES 74-76 and 80-81**

**So, they moved ahead until when they met a boy, he killed him (the boy). He (Musa) said, ‘Did you kill an innocent person in retaliation of nobody? You have done something abominable indeed.’ [74] He said, ‘Did I not tell you that you can never be able to keep patient while with me?’ [75] He (Musa) said, “If I ask you about something after this, do not allow me your company. You have now reached a point where you have a valid excuse from my own side (to do so).”[76]**

**And as for the boy, his parents were believers. We apprehended that he would impose rebellion and infidelity upon them. [80] We, therefore, wished that their Lord would replace him with someone better than him in piety and more akin to affection. [81]**

## **COMMENTARY**

**The story of Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam and Al-Khadir ‘alayhis salaam**

[...]

Then, having disembarked from the boat, they started walking on the shore. All of a sudden, al-Khadir ‘alayhis salaam saw a boy playing with other boys. Al-Khadir ‘alayhis salaam killed the boy with his own hands. The boy died. Musa ‘alayhis salaam said, ‘you took an innocent life unjustly. Indeed, this was a grave sin you committed.’ Al-Khadir ‘alayhis salaam said, ‘Did I not tell you before that you will be unable to remain patient with me?’ Musa ‘alayhis salaam noticed that this matter was far more serious than the first one. Therefore, he said, ‘if I question you after this, you will be free to remove me from your company. As far as I am concerned, you have reached the limit of excuses from me.’

[...]

We now move to the sentence: **(until when they met a boy -74)**. The word: **(ghulam)** in the text is used for a minor boy in the Arabic usage. This boy killed by al-Khadir ‘alayhis salaam was a minor - as corroborated by Sayyidna Ibn ‘Abbas radi‘allahu ‘anhu and most commentators. Further on, when the words: (innocent person) were used for him, that too supports the view that he was a minor. The reason is that (zakiyyah) means ‘free of sin’ and it can be either the attribute of a prophet or a minor child who faces no accounting for what is done by him and no sin is written in his Book of Deeds.

The opening sentence of verse **80: (As for the boy)** means the boy who was killed by al-Khadir ‘alayhis salaam. The reality behind it, as stated by him, was that the boy was cut out for infidelity and rebellion against parents. But, his parents were pious people. Al-Khadir ‘alayhis salaam said that they apprehended that, once this boy grew up, he would harass his parents and cause them pain. And when he took to infidelity as a young man, he would not only become a live trial for the parents but would also endanger the very faith of his parents because of their love for him.

In verse **81** it was said: **“We, therefore, wished that their Lord would replace him with someone better than him in piety [having good deeds and morals] and more akin to affection [fulfilling due rights of the parents].”**

It will be noticed that the form used in this situation is plural: **(we apprehended)** and: **(we wished)**. One reason for it could be that al-Khadir ‘alayhis salaam attributed this apprehension and wish to himself and to Allah Ta’ala both. And it is also possible that he may have attributed it to himself alone - if so, the expression: **(we wished)** would mean: ‘we prayed to Allah’ because this matter of replacing a boy with a better one is an act which falls in the exclusive domain of Allah Ta’ala. Al-Khadir ‘alayhis salaam or some other human being cannot be associated with it.

If, at this point, someone were to say: If it was in the knowledge of Allah Ta’ala that this boy will grow into an infidel and mislead his parents as well, then, this event - true to the knowledge of Allah Ta’ala - should have necessarily transpired as it did. Then this doubt would be incorrect for the reason that nothing can come into being contrary to Divine knowledge. It can be answered by saying that it was there in Divine knowledge with the appendage and condition: If he reached maturity, he will not only become a disbeliever himself but would pose a danger for other Muslims also. Then, as he was killed before reaching the age of maturity, the ensuing event is not contrary to Divine Knowledge. (Mazhari)

Ibn Abi Shaibah, Ibn al-Mundhir and Ibn Abi Hatim have reported from Ibn ‘Atiyyah that Allah Ta’ala had blessed the parents of the slain boy with a girl in his place who became the mother of a prophet. And, as in a report from Sayyidna Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu, she gave birth to two prophets. Some other reports say that through the prophet she gave birth to, Allah Ta’ala gave guidance to a large community.

## COMMENTARY – TAFSIR IBN KATHIR

### The Story of killing the Boy

**(Then they both proceeded,)** means, after the first incident,

**(till they met a boy, and he (Khidr) killed him.)** It has been stated previously that this boy was playing with other boys in one of the towns, and that Al-Khidr deliberately singled him out. He was the finest and most handsome of them all, and Al-Khidr killed him. When Musa, peace be upon him, saw that he denounced him even more fervently than in the first case, and said hastily:

**(Have you killed an innocent person)** meaning, a young person who had not yet committed any sin or done anything wrong, yet you killed him

**(without Nafs)** with no reason for killing him.

**(Verily, you have committed a thing Nukr!)** meaning, something that is clearly evil.

**(He said: “Did I not tell you that you can have no patience with me”)** Once again, Al-Khidr reiterates the condition set in the first place, so Musa says to him:

**(If I ask you anything after this,)** meaning, ‘if I object to anything else you do after this,’

**(keep me not in your company, you have received an excuse from me.)** ‘you have accepted my apology twice.’

Ibn Jarir narrated from Ibn `Abbas that Ubayy bin Ka`b said: *“Whenever the Prophet ﷺ mentioned anyone, he would pray for himself first. One day he said: (May the mercy of Allah be upon us and upon Musa. If he had stayed with his companion he would have seen wonders, but he said, (If I ask you anything after this, keep me not in your company, you have received an excuse from me.))”*

### **Interpretation of why the Boy was killed**

Ibn `Abbas narrated from Ubayy bin Ka`b that the Prophet ﷺ said: (The boy Al-Khidr killed was destined to be a disbeliever from the day he was created.) It was recorded by Ibn Jarir from Ibn `Abbas. He said: (his parents were believers, and we feared he would oppress them by rebellion and disbelief) Their love for him might make them follow him in disbelief. Qatadah said, *“His parents rejoiced when he was born and grieved for him when he was killed. If he had stayed alive, he would have been the cause of their doom. So let a man be content with the decree of Allah, for the decree of Allah for the believer, if he dislikes it, is better for him than if He were to decree something that he likes for him.”*

An authentic Hadith says; *(Allah does not decree anything for the believer except it is good for him.)* And Allah says: **(and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you.) (2:216).**

**(So we intended that their Lord should exchange him for them for one better in righteousness and nearer to mercy. )** A child who was better than this one, a child for whom they would feel more compassion. This was the view of Ibn Jurayj.

This concludes the commentary for Day 23.



**ANSWER:** Hurs/Houris of Jannah

## **SURAH AS-SAFFAT, VERSES 48-49**

**and by their side there will be females restricting their gazes (to their husbands), having pretty big eyes, [48] as if they were eggs hidden (under feathers protected from pollution). [49]**

### **COMMENTARY**

7. In verse 48, it was said: **(restricting their gazes)**. This is an attribute of the hurs or houris of Jannah - wide eyes with lowered gaze. It means that except for the mates to whom Allah Ta'ala gives them in marital bond, they will not raise their eyes to cast a look at any other male. 'Allamah Ibn-ul-Jauzi reports: These women will tell their spouses, 'By the honor of our Lord, I see no one better than you in this Jannah. Praised be Allah who made me your spouse and made you, mine.'

'Allamah Ibn-ul-Jauzi has given yet another sense of 'those with lowered gaze' when he says that they will cause the gaze of their spouses remain lowered. In other words, they will be so beautiful and so faithful that their spouses would simply not have a wish to look at anyone else. (Tafsir Zad-ul-Masir, pages 57, 58, volume 8)

8. In verse 48: **(as if they were hidden eggs)**. As obvious, the hurs of Jannah have been likened to hidden eggs in this verse. The simile was popularly recognized among the people of Arabia. The egg hidden under feathers remains safe from the pollution, therefore it is always neat and clean. Moreover, its color is yellowish white, which was deemed by the Arabs as the most attractive color for women. Then there are other commentators who say that this simile does not relate to eggs as such, instead, the simile relates to the membrane hidden in the egg, and the sense is that the skin of those women will be as soft as the membrane of the eggs. (Ruh-ul-Ma'ani) Allah knows best.

### **COMMENTARY – TAFSIR IBN KATHIR**

**(And beside them will be Qasirat At-Tarf)** means, chaste females, who will not look at anyone other than their husbands, as Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Zayd bin Aslam, Qatadah, As-Suddi and others said.

**(with (wide and beautiful) eyes)** means, with beautiful eyes. It was also said that it means with wide eyes, which is connected to the first meaning. They are wide-eyed and beautiful, and their eyes are described as being beautiful and chaste. Allah says:

**(And beside them will be Qasirat At-Tarf, with (wide and beautiful) eyes.)**

**(as if they were Bayd Maknun.)** Their bodies are described as having the most perfect color.

`Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn `Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him: **(as if they were Bayd Maknun.)** means, as if they were hidden pearls.

Al-Hasan said: **(as if they were Bayd Maknun. )** means, protected, never touched by any hands.

As-Suddi said, *"The well preserved egg in its nest."*

Sa'id bin Jubayr said: (as if they were Bayd Maknun.) means, *"The inside of the egg."*

## DAY 24

Ata' Al-Khurasani said, *“It is the membrane which is between its outer shell and its inner contents.”*

As-Suddi said: **(as if they were Bayd Maknun.)** means, *“The white of the egg when its shell is removed.”*

Ibn Jarir's view concerning the meaning of Maknun (well preserved) is that the outer shell is touched by the wing of the bird and the nest, and by people's hands, unlike the interior of the egg. And Allah knows best.

This concludes the commentary for Day 24.

**ANSWER:** Zulaykha

**Note:** This is a long story, so only the commentary specific to the riddle, lines 1 and 2, has been provided below. The commentary pertaining to lines 3 and 4 can be found under Day 20 insha'Allah.

## **SURAH YUSUF, VERSES 21-23**

**And the one who bought him from Egypt said to his wife, “Make his stay graceful. He may be useful for us. Or, we may adopt him as a son.” And thus We established Yusuf in the land, so that We should teach him the interpretation of events. And Allah is powerful in (enforcing) His command, but most of the people do not know. [21] And when he reached the prime of his age, We gave him wisdom and knowledge, and this is how We reward those good in deeds. [22] And she, in whose house he was, seduced him away from his (resisting) self and bolted the doors, and said, “come on!” He said, “May Allah save me. Surely, he is my master. He has given me a good lodging. Surely, the wrongdoers do not prosper.” [23]**

### **COMMENTARY**

Described in the previous verses was an early account of Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam as to how the people from the caravan took him out of the well, and how his brothers made him out to be their escaped slave and traded him for a few dirhams. First of all, they did not know the value and station of their great brother. Secondly, their real purpose was not to make money by selling him - they wanted to remove him away from his father. Therefore, they did not stop at simply selling him because they felt the danger that the caravan may somehow leave him behind as a result of which he may somehow reach their father and tell him all about their conspiracy. So, according to a report from Tafsir authority, Mujahid, these people waited for the caravan to leave with him for Egypt. When the caravan actually departed, they went with the caravan upto a certain distance warning them on the way that he is in the habit of running away, therefore, they should not leave him free to move around, better still, they should tie him up. Thus, the caravan, unaware of the precious ‘merchandise’ they were carrying with them, took him in that condition as far as Egypt. (Tafsir Ibn Kathir)

The part of the story as taken up onwards in the present verses shows the eloquent brevity of the Qur’an when sections of the story which can be understood independently have not been necessarily described. For instance, the trip of the caravan through various stages en-route Egypt and the actual selling of Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam there. All this has been skipped.

Stated from here is: **“And the one who bought him from Egypt said to his wife, ‘Make his stay graceful...”**

According to Tafsir al-Qurtubi, when the caravan reached Egypt and offered him for sale, people vied with each other with increasing bids which rose to gold, to musk and to silk equal to his weight.

But, Allah Ta’ala had destined this human treasure to go to the most powerful authority of the time in Egypt, the ‘Aziz of Misr. He beat all the bids and bought Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam.

As we already know from the statement of the Holy Qur’an, all these things happening were nothing accidental. Instead, they were parts of the formidable plan put into action by the most exalted Lord Himself. That Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam will be bought in Egypt by the highest of the high in that country was certainly a call of destiny. According to Ibn Kathir, this man who bought Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam in Egypt was what we may call the Finance Minister of Egypt. His name has been cited as Qitfir, or ‘Itfir. The

King of Egypt at that time was Ruiyyan ibn Usayd, an Amalkite (who, later on, embraced Islam at the hands of Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam) and died as a Muslim during the lifetime of Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam (Mazhari). The name of the wife of the ‘Aziz of Egypt who had bought him has been given as Ra’eel, or Zulaikha. So, the ‘Aziz of Misr, called Qitfir (Potiphar), instructed his wife to provide good lodging for Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam, not to treat him like common slaves and see that good arrangements are made for him.

Sayyidna ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ud radi’allahu ‘anhu said: ‘Three men turned out to be the best physiognomists of the world: (1) The ‘Aziz of Misr who discovered the inner excellence of Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam from his outer appearance and gave those instructions to his wife; (2) the daughter of Sayyidna Shu’ayb ‘alayhis salaam who told her father about Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam: **(O my father, retain him on wages. surely, the best one for you to employ is the one who is strong and trustworthy - 28:26)**; (3) The third person is Sayyidna Abu Bakr radi’allahu ‘anhu who chose Sayyidna ‘Umar radi’allahu ‘anhu to be the Khalifah after the Holy Prophet ﷺ. (Ibn Kathir)

The next sentence of the verse is: **(And thus We established Yusuf in the land ...).** Given here is the good news of what would happen in the future, that is, Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam who has entered the House of the Aziz of Misr at this time as a slave shall soon be the highest ranking man in the country of Egypt when the power of governance comes into his hands.

In the statement which follows immediately after, that is: **(So that We should teach him the interpretation of events)**, if the letter (waw) appearing at the beginning of the sentence is taken as: (‘atf: conjunctive), a sentence will be considered as understood which will mean that ‘We established Yusuf in the land so that he brings forth peace in the world through equity and justice, works towards the economic and social betterment of the people of the country, and so that We teach him to put things right where they belong. The general sense of the later is something which is inclusive of the comprehension of Divine revelation, its implementation in practice, and the acquisition of all supportive areas of knowledge, and the correct interpretation of dreams as well.

Verse 21 ends with the statement: **(And Allah is powerful in (enforcing) His command ...).** I other words, it means that Allah Ta’ala is powerful and fully in control over what He wills and when He does so will, all outward chains of causes in this world start falling in line with His will - as said the Holy Prophet ﷺ in a Hadith: *‘When Allah Ta’ala intends to do something, He makes all worldly causes ready to act accordingly.’* But, says the last part of the sentence: that is, most of the people do not understand this reality. They have their eyes on obvious causes. These they take to be everything and keep going after them all the time. That there is the Causer of all Causes and the Holder of Absolute Power over everything is a thought they would seldom pay heed to.

In the first sentence of the second verse (22), it is said: **(And when he reached a t the prime of his age, We gave him wisdom and knowledge ...).**

At what age did he reach the prime of his age? In this, commentators differ. Sayyidna Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu, Mujahid and Qatadah رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى say that his age was thirty three years. Dahhak rahimahullahu ta’ala puts it at twenty, and Hasan al-Basri rahimahullahu ta’ala at forty. However, all of them agree that the bestowing of wisdom and knowledge upon him referred to at this place means the bestowal of Nubuwwah, the station of prophethood. This also tells us that Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam was invested with Nubuwwah much later than his arrival in Egypt - and the Wahy (revelation) sent to him while he was in the depth of the well was not the Wahy (revelation) technically identified with Nubuwwah. Instead of that, it

was a revelation in the literal sense which can also be sent to non-prophets - as it has appeared in the case of the mother of Sayyidna Musa 'alayhis salaam, and Sayyidah Maryam.

In the second sentence of the second verse (22), it was said: **(and this is how We reward those good in deeds)**. The sense is that delivering Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam from elimination and making him reach the office of power and honour was an outcome of his righteousness, fear of Allah and good deeds. This was something not restricted to his person alone. In fact, whoever acts the way he did, shall receive the blessings of Allah in the same fashion.

Moving to verse 23, the words of the text are: **And she, in whose house he was, seduced him away from his (resisting) self and bolted the doors, and said, 'come on!'**.

From the first verse, we know that this woman was the wife of the 'Aziz of Misr. But, at this place, the Holy Qur'an has elected to bypass the possibility of mentioning her by a brief expression as the wife of 'Aziz. Instead, it has chosen to use the expression: (in whose house he was). The hint given here is that the efforts of Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam to save himself from falling into sin were further complicated by the fact that he lived in the house of this very woman, under her protection, and as such, disapproving and discarding her verbal advance was no easy task.

### **The Strongest Defence Against Sin is the Seeking of Protection from Allah Himself**

How was he able to do that? There was an outward cause to this. When Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam found himself surrounded from all sides, he took the ultimate recourse. So, like a prophet he was, first of all, he sought the protection of Allah. He said: **(May Allah save me!)**. We see that he did not place his sole trust in his determination and resolve to hold out against the invitation to sin - he sought the refuge of Allah first. And it is obvious that anyone who enjoys the protection of Allah can never be moved away from the right path by anyone. It was only after having that coverage, that he started acting as a prophet would, with wisdom and earnest good counsel. Addressing Zulaikha directly and personally, he advised her that she too should fear Allah and give up her intention. He said:

**Surely, he is my master. He has given me a good lodging. Surely, the wrongdoers do not prosper.**

As obvious, it means: Your husband, the 'Aziz of Misr is my master who has raised and supported me and has given me a good home to live in. He is my benefactor. How can I even think of violating his honour? This is great injustice and those who commit injustice never prosper. Implied therein was a lesson for Zulaikha too who was told: When I know his rights on me for having been my master and caretaker for a lesser time than you, then, being his wedded wife of years, you should certainly know his rights on you much more than I do. At this place, Sayyidna Yusuf 'alayhis salaam has called the 'Aziz of Misr his Rabb - though, it is not permissible to use this word for anyone other than Allah Ta'ala. The reason is that words like this create either a suspicion of Shirk, or a resemblance with those who commit Shirk. Therefore, the use of such words has been prohibited in the Shari'ah of Islam. It appears in a Hadith of Sahih Muslim: *'Let no slave call his master his Rabb and let no master call his slave his 'abd or servant.'* But, this is a unique characteristic of the Islamic Shari'ah where, alongwith the prohibition of Shirk, everything else in which there is the least doubt that they may become the conduits of Shirk has also been prohibited. In the religious codes of past prophets, though Shirk has been strictly blocked but there was no restriction placed on the sources and inlets of Shirk. This was the reason why depiction of images was not prohibited in past religious codes. But in the Shari'ah of Islam, being valid upto the Last Day, full attention was given to protect it from being affected by Shirk. So, the sources and mediums of Shirk, such as, image and words - which arouse suspicion of Shirk were



## DAY 25

also prohibited. However, the saying of Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam: **(Surely, he is my master)**, was correct in its place.

And it is also possible that the pronoun in: **(innahu)** reverts to Allah Ta’ala which would mean that Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam had called Allah his Rabb and it was He who, in the real sense, gave him good lodging, and that disobedience to Him was the greatest injustice, and that the unjust never prosper.

Some commentators, Suddiy, Ibn Ishaq and others have reported that during the course of this privacy, Zulaikha started praising his looks with the purpose of softening his resistance. She said: How beautiful are your hair! Sayyidna Yusuf ‘alayhis salaam said: After death, these hair will be the first to part away from my body. Then, she said: How beautiful are your eyes! He said: After death, they will become water and flow down my face. Once again, she said: How beautiful is your face! Thereupon, he said: All this will be eaten up by the earth below. He was looking ahead. This was his concern for the ‘Aakhirah. Allah Ta’ala had set it upon him in the prime of his youth and that made all charms of mortal life turn into dust before him. It is true that the concern for ‘Aakhirah is something which can keep every human being protected from every evil wherever he or she may be. May Allah bless us all with this concern.

This concludes the commentary for Day 25.

**ANSWER:** Sayyidatina Umm Salamah radi'allahu 'anha

## **SURAH AL-AHZAAB, VERSE 35**

**Surely, Muslim men and Muslim women, believing men and believing women, devout men and devout women, truthful men and truthful women, patient men and patient women, humble men and humble women, and the men who give sadaqah (charity) and the women who give sadaqah, and the men who fast and the women who fast, and the men who guard their private parts (against evil acts) and the women who guard (theirs), and the men who remember Allah much and the women who remember (Him) ---- for them, Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward. [35]**

### **COMMENTARY**

**The Qur'anic addresses in masculine gender normally include women: The Wisdom behind it**

In the usual injunctions of the noble Qur'an, though, both men and women have been included as addressees, but generally the address is made to men. Women are included there as a corollary. Everywhere, by using the words: **(O those who have believed)** women have been addressed as being included and contained therein. This releases a hint suggesting that all matters relating to women are shielded, concealed and curtained. In this, there is honor and esteem for them. Particularly, if we were to ponder over the entire Qur'an, we shall discover that no woman except Sayyidah Maryam bint 'Imran has been referred to by her personal name. Instead, when comes the occasion to mention them, they have been mentioned under the cover of their attribution to men, such as, **(the woman or wife of the Pharaoh), (the wife of Nuh)** and **(the wife of Lut)**. The exception of Sayyidah Maryam may perhaps be for the reason that Sayyidna Isa 'alayhis salaam could have not been attributed to any father; therefore, the attribution had to be to the mother. So, it was for this attribution that her name was disclosed. And it is Allah who knows best.

Though, this style of the Qur'an was rooted in great wisdom and expediency, yet it was natural that women should have a feeling of some sort of discomfort about it. Therefore, there are several narrations in Hadith in which women have been reported to have said to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, "We see that Allah Ta'ala mentions only men everywhere in the Qur'an and it is them alone that He addresses. This tells us that women have almost no good in them. We are scared about our acts of 'Ibadah. May be, even that is not accepted from us (reported by al-Baghwhah from the blessed wives). Similar submissions of this nature from Sayyidah Umm 'Umarah al-Ansariyyah happen in Tirmidhi with the authority rating of hasan (good) and from Sayyidah Asma' bint 'Umays radi'allahu 'anha in some other narrations. And in all these narrations, this very submission has been identified as the cause of the revelation of the verse cited above.

In these verses special mention has been made of the acceptability of their deeds to mollify the hearts of women. Here, it has been made very clear that the touchstone of acceptance and appreciation with Allah Ta'ala is the righteousness of deeds and the spirit of obedience to Him. In this, there is no discrimination between man and woman.

### **The Injunction of Making the Dhikr of Allah Abundantly and Its Wisdom**

Islam stands on five acts of 'Ibadah or worship - Salah, Zakah, Siyam (fasting), Hajj and Jihad. But, there is just no injunction in the entire Qur'an that commands any act of 'Ibadah from out of these to be done abundantly. However, the doing of the Dhikr (remembrance) of Allah (by heart or tongue) abundantly has been ordered in several verses of the Holy Qur'an as in **Surah Al-Anfal (8:45)** and **Surah Al-Jumu'ah (62:10)** while in the present verse of Surah Al-Ahzab it was said: **(and the men remembering Allah**

## **much and the remembering women - 35).**

What is the wisdom behind it? To begin with, it can be said that the Dhikr of Allah is the essential spirit of all acts of worship as it appears in a narration of Sayyidna Mu'adh Ibn Anas radi'allahu 'anhu. Someone asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ, *"Who from among the Mujahidin deserves the best of returns?"* He said, *"One who makes the Dhikr of Allah most abundantly."* It was asked again, *"Who from among the fasting is most reward- worthy?"* He said, *"One who makes the Dhikr of Allah most abundantly."* Then, similar questions were asked about Salah, Zakah, Hajj and Sadaqah. Every time he said: 'One who makes the Dhikr of Allah most abundantly,' that is, he or she is more deserving of the reward (reported by Ahmad, from Ibn Kathir)

Secondly, it is the easiest of all acts of 'Ibadah. The Shari'ah too has placed no condition for it. Be it with wudu' or without, be it lying, sitting, or walking, the Dhikr of Allah can be done at all times. It demands no hard labor from anyone nor does it require any formal free time. Yet, so great is the effect and benefit of the Dhikr of Allah that, through it, even worldly chores transform into worship and religious acts. The prayers that are made before and after eating, on going out and on coming back, before travel, in travel and on returning home, and before and after starting a business have all been taught to us by the Holy Nabi ﷺ. The outcome of this enormous treasure of prophetic prayers is that no Muslim should do anything at any time while he or she may be heedless toward or negligent of Allah. And should one make it a point to recite these prayers as part of what he or she has to do in life and its work, then, dunya becomes din, i.e. worldly duties start releasing the fragrance of faith, a wonderful experience indeed.

## **COMMENTARY – TAFSEER IBN KATHIR**

### **The Reason for Revelation**

Imam Ahmad recorded that Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) the wife of the Prophet ﷺ said, *"I said to the Prophet, 'Why is it that we are not mentioned in the Qur'an as men are' Then one day without my realizing it, he was calling from the Minbar and I was combing my hair; so I tied my hair back then I went out to my chamber in my house, and I started listening out, and he was saying from the Minbar:*

***(O people! Verily Allah says: (Verily, the Muslims: men and women, the believers: men and women...)) to the end of the Ayah."*** This was also recorded by An-Nasa'i and Ibn Jarir.

**(Verily, the Muslims: men and women, the believers: men and women...)** indicates that Iman is something other than Islam, and that it is more specific, because Allah says:

**(The bedouins say: "We believe." Say: "You believe not but you only say, 'We have surrendered (in Islam),' for faith has not yet entered your hearts.") (49:14).** In the Two Sahihs, it says:

*(The adulterer does not commit adultery at the time when he is a believer.)* For it snatches away his Iman, although that does not mean he is a disbeliever, according to the consensus of the Muslims. This indicates that Iman is more specific than Islam, as we have stated at the beginning of our commentary on Al-Bukhari.

**(the Qanit: men and the women,)** Al-Qunut means obedience during quite time.

**(Is one who is (Qanit,) prostrating himself or standing in the middle of the night, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord...) (39:9)**

**(To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. All are Uqnuti (Qanitun) to Him.)**

# DAY 26

(30:26)

**(O Maryam! “Uqnuti to your Lord and prostrate, and bow with Ar-Raki`in (those who bow).”) (3:43)**

**(And stand before Allah Qanitin) (2: 238).** So, beyond Islam there is a higher level to be reached, which is Iman, and Qunut stems from them both.

**(the men and women who are truthful,)** This refers to their speech, for truthfulness is a praiseworthy attribute. Some of the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) were never known to have lied even once, neither during Jahiliyyah nor in Islam. Truthfulness is a sign of faith, just as lying is a sign of hypocrisy. Whoever is truthful will be saved:

*(You have to be truthful, for truthfulness leads to righteousness and righteousness leads to Paradise. And beware of lying, for lying leads to immorality and immorality leads to Hell. A man will keep telling the truth and striving to do so until he will be recorded with Allah as a truthful. And a man will keep telling lies and will persist in doing so until he will be recorded with Allah as a liar.)* And there are many Hadiths on this topic.

**(the men and the women who are patient,)** This is the attribute of those who are steadfast, which is patience in the face of adversity and knowing that what is decreed will inevitably come to pass. So, they face it with patience and steadfastness. Patience is the most difficult when disaster first strikes, then after that it becomes easier, and this is true steadfastness.

**(the Khashi` men and the women,)** Khushu` means serenity and tranquility, deliberation and dignity and humility. What motivates a person to be like this is the fear of Allah and the awareness that He is constantly watching, as mentioned in the Hadith:

*(Worship Allah as if you can see Him, for if you cannot see Him, He can see you.)*

**(the men and the women who give Sadaqat,)** As-Sadaqah (charity) means doing good to people who are in need or who are weak and have no means of earning a living and none to financially support them. They give them from the excess of their wealth in obedience to Allah and as a good deed to His creation. It was recorded in the Two Sahihs:

*(There are seven whom Allah will shade with His Shade on the Day when there will be no shade except His Shade -- and among them he mentioned -- ...a man who gave in charity and concealed it to the extent that his left hand did not know what his right hand was giving.)* According to another Hadith:

*(Sadaqah extinguishes bad deeds just as water extinguishes fire.)* There are many Hadiths which encourage charitable giving; this topic is discussed in detail elsewhere.

**(the men and the women who fast,)** According to a Hadith narrated by Ibn Majah:

*(Fasting is the Zakah of the body.)* In other words, it purifies it and cleanses it of things that are bad in both physical and Shar`i terms. Sa`id bin Jubayr said: “Whoever fasts Ramadan and three days of each month, is included in the Ayah, **(the men and the women who fast,)**”

Fasting is also one of the greatest means of overcoming one's desires, as the Messenger of Allah said:

*(O young men! Whoever among you can afford to get married, let him do so, for it is most effective in lowering the gaze and protecting the chastity. And whoever cannot get married, then let him fast, for it will be a protection for him.)* It is quite apt that next should be mentioned:

**(the men and the women who guard their chastity)** i.e., they protect their private parts from forbidden and sinful things, except for that which is permitted. Allah says:

**(And those who guard their chastity. Except from their wives or the whom their right hands possess -- for they are not blameworthy. But whosoever seeks beyond that, then it is those who are trespassers.) (70:29-31)**

**(and the men and the women who remember Allah much)** Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

*(If a man wakes his wife at night and they pray two Rak'ahs, they will recorded that night as being among the men and the women who remember Allah much.)* This was recorded by Abu Dawud, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah from the Hadith of Abu Sa'id and Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with them both, from the Prophet ﷺ. Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "The Messenger of Allah was walking along a road in Makkah, and he came to (the mountain of) Jumdan, and said,

(This is Jumdan, go ahead, for the Mufarridun have gone ahead. (The men and the women who remember Allah much) Then he said,

(O Allah, forgive those who shaved their hair.) They said, 'And those who shortened.' He said,

(O Allah, forgive those who shaved their hair.) They said, 'And those who shortened.'

(And those who shortened.) This was recorded by Imam Ahmad with this chain of narration. It was also recorded by Muslim, except for the last part of it.

**(Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward.)** Here Allah tells us that for all of those mentioned in this Ayah, He has prepared for them forgiveness of their sins and a great reward, meaning, Paradise.

This concludes the commentary for Day 26.



**ANSWER:** The wife of Sayyidna Julaybib radi'allahu 'anhu

## **SURAH AL-AHZAAB, VERSE 36**

**36. It is not for a believer, man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he has indeed strayed into a plain error.**

### **COMMENTARY – TAFSIR IBN KATHIR**

#### **The Reason for Revelation**

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Barzah Al-Aslami said: *“Julaybib was a man who used to enter upon women and joke with them. I said to my wife, ‘Do not let Julaybib enter upon you, for if he enters upon you I shall do such and such.’ If any of the Ansar had a single female relative, they would not arrange a marriage for her until they found out whether the Prophet wanted to marry her or not. The Prophet ﷺ said to one of the Ansar:*

*(Give me your daughter for marriage.) He said, ‘Yes, O Messenger of Allah, it would be an honor and a blessing’ He said,*

*(I do not want her for myself.) He said, ‘Then for whom, O Messenger of Allah’ He said,*

*(For Julaybib.) He said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, let me consult her mother.’ So he went to the girl’s mother and said, ‘The Messenger of Allah is proposing marriage for your daughter.’ She said, ‘Yes, it would be a pleasure.’ He said, ‘He is not proposing to marry her himself, he is proposing on behalf of Julaybib.’ She said, ‘What! Julaybib No, by Allah, we will not marry her to him.’ When he wanted to get up and go to the Messenger of Allah to tell him what the girl’s mother had said, the girl asked, ‘Who is asking for my hand’ So her mother told her, and she said, ‘Are you refusing to follow the command of the Messenger of Allah Follow his command, for I will not come to any harm.’ So her father went to the Messenger of Allah and said, ‘Deal with her as you wish.’ So he married her to Julaybib. Then the Messenger of Allah went out on one of his military campaigns, and after Allah had granted him victory, he said to his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them,*

*(See whether there is anybody missing.) They said, ‘We have lost so-and-so, and so-and-so.’ He said,*

*(See if there is anybody missing.) They said, ‘No one.’ He said:*

*(But I see that Julaybib is missing.) He said:*

*(Go and look for him among the dead.) So they looked for him, and found him beside seven of the enemy whom he had killed before he was himself killed. They said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, here he is, beside seven of the enemy whom he had killed before he was himself killed.’ The Messenger of Allah came and stood beside him and said,*

*(He killed seven before he was himself killed. He belongs to me and I belong to him.) He said this two or three times, then the Messenger of Allah carried him in his arms and held him while his grave was dug, then he placed him in his grave. It was not mentioned that he washed him, may Allah be pleased with him.” Thabit, may Allah be pleased with him, said: “There was no widow among the Ansar who was more sought after for marriage than that girl.”*

Ishaq bin `Abdullah bin Abi Talhah asked Thabit, *“Do you know how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed for that girl” He told him: “He said, (O Allah, pour blessings upon her and do not make her life hard.) And this is how it was; there was no widow among the Ansar who was more sought after for marriage than her.” This is how it was recorded by Imam Ahmad, in full.*

Muslim and An-Nasa'i recorded the story of his death in Al-Fada'il. Al-Hafiz Abu 'Umar bin 'Abd Al-Barr mentioned in Al-Isti'ab that when the girl said in her seclusion, 'Are you refusing to follow the command of the Messenger of Allah ' -- This Ayah was revealed: **(It is not for a believer, man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision.)**

It was narrated that Tawus asked Ibn 'Abbas radi'allahu 'anhu about praying two Rak'ahs after 'Asr and he told him not to do that. Ibn 'Abbas recited:

**(It is not for a believer, man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision.)** This Ayah is general in meaning and applies to all matters, i.e., if Allah and His Messenger decreed a matter, no one has the right to go against that, and no one has any choice or room for personal opinion in this case. Allah says: o

**(But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith, until they make you judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.) (4:65)** Hence the issue of going against it is addressed in such strong terms, as Allah says:

**(And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he has indeed strayed into a plain error.)**  
This is like the Ayah:

**(And let those who oppose the Messenger's commandment, beware, lest some Fitnah should befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them) (24:63).**

This concludes the commentary for Day 27.

ANSWER: Sayyidatina Maryam ‘alayhas salaam

## SURAH AL-IMRAN, VERSES 42-43

**And when the angels said: “O Maryam, Allah has chosen you and purified you and chosen you over the women of all the worlds. [42] O Maryam, stand in devotion to your Lord, and prostrate and bow down with those who bow.” [43]**

### COMMENTARY

1. In verse 42, the sentence: **(and has chosen you over women of all the worlds)** refers to all women in that period of time. Therefore, the statement (*Fatimah is the foremost among women of the Paradise*) appearing in hadith does not contradict it.

2. It will be noticed that, in the last sentence of verse 43: **(and bow down with those who bow)** while giving an order to bow down, the imperative has been qualified with the words **“with those who bow”**—but no such qualification appears while giving an order of prostration. This apparently seems to hint that people generally do not observe due concern while making ruku (bowing). They tend to bend a little, then resume the standing position (as if in a hurry). This kind of ruku (bowing) is closer to standing (qiyam). As said earlier, it apparently seems to suggest that Allah Almighty, by mentioning the qualification ‘those who bow’, has given a model to be followed so that one’s bowing in prayer could become similar to those who bow fully and perfectly as due.

### COMMENTARY – TAFSIR IBN KATHIR

#### The Virtue of Maryam Over the Women of Her Time

Allah states that the angels spoke to Maryam ‘alayhas salaam by His command and told her that He chose her because of her service to Him, because of her modesty, honor, innocence, and conviction. Allah also chose her because of her virtue over the women of the world.

At-Tirmidhi recorded that ‘Ali bin Abi Talib said, “*I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, (The best woman (in her time) was Maryam, daughter of ‘Imran, and the best woman (of the Prophet’s time) is Khadijah (his wife), daughter of Khuwaylid.)*” The Two Sahihs recorded this Hadith.

Ibn Jarir recorded that Abu Musa Al-Ash‘ari said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, *(Many men achieved perfection, but among women, only Maryam the daughter of ‘Imran and Asiah, the wife of Fir‘awn, achieved perfection.)* The Six (with the exception of Abu Dawud) recorded it. Al-Bukhari’s wording for it reads, *(Many men reached the level of perfection, but no woman reached such a level except Asiah, the wife of Fir‘awn, and Maryam, the daughter of ‘Imran. The superiority of ‘Aishah (his wife) to other women, is like the superiority of Tharid (meat and bread dish) to other meals.)*

We mentioned the various chains of narration and wordings for this Hadith in the story of ‘Isa, son of Maryam, in our book, Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah, all the thanks are due to Allah.

Allah states that the angels commanded Maryam ‘alayhas salaam to increase acts of worship, humbleness, submission, prostration, bowing, and so forth, so that she would acquire what Allah had decreed for her, as a test for her. Yet, this test also earned her a higher grade in this life and the Hereafter, for Allah demonstrated His might by creating a son inside her without male intervention. Allah said,

**(“O Maryam! Submit yourself with obedience (Aqnuti) and prostrate yourself, and bow**

**down along with Ar-Raki`in.”)**

As for Qunut (Aqnuti in the Ayah), it means to submit with humbleness. In another Ayah, Allah said,

**(Nay, to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth, and all surrender with obedience (Qanitun) to Him.) (2:116)**

## **SURAH MARYAM, VERSES 27-28**

**Then she came to her people carrying him (the baby). They said, “O Maryam you have come out with something grave indeed. [27] O sister of Harun, neither your father was a man of evil nor was your mother unchaste.” [28]**

### **COMMENTARY**

**“Then she came to her people carrying him.” - 19:27**

These words suggest that when Sayyidah Maryam ‘alayhas salaam was comforted by the supernatural indications that Allah Ta’ala will protect her from disgrace, she took the newborn baby with her to her house. As to the time when she returned home after giving birth to the child, Ibn ‘Asa’akir has narrated through Ibn ‘Abbas radi’allahu ‘anhu that she returned home to her people forty days after the birth of the child i.e. after the completion of the period of Nifas (the bleeding period after the birth of a child). (Ruh ul-Ma’ani)

**(Something grave indeed - 19:27).** The word فَرِي in Arabic language means to cut or to split, and is used to describe a task where a great deal of cutting and chopping is involved. However, Abu Hayyan has said that the word فَرِي means anything having preposterous and extraordinary significance, and may be used both in good and in bad sense. In the present context it is used to describe something monstrous, hence translated in the text as ‘something grave’. Generally this word is used for things which are known to be bad and corrupt in the extreme.

**(O sister of Harun - 19:28).** Sayyidna Harun ‘alayhis salaam, who was the brother and companion of Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam had died centuries before Sayyidah Maryam ‘alayhas salaam’s time. It is obvious, therefore, that in verse 28 where Sayyidah Maryam ‘alayhis salaam is addressed as the sister of Sayyidna Harun ‘alayhis salaam cannot be in its literal sense. This is also corroborated by the incident that when The Holy Prophet ﷺ sent Sayyidna Mughirah Ibn Shu’bah radi’allahu ‘amhu as his ambassador to the people of Najran they questioned him that in the Qur’an Sayyidah Maryam ‘alayhas salaam has been referred to as the sister of Sayyidna Harun ‘alayhis salaam whereas he had died long before her. Sayyidna Mughirah radi’allahu ‘anhu did not know the answer to this question. So, when he returned from the mission, he narrated the whole incident to The Holy Prophet ﷺ. On this The Holy Prophet ﷺ said why did you not tell them that it has been a common practice with the believers to adopt the names of the prophets in expectation of receiving their Barakah (blessings), and to claim relationship with them. (Ahmad, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Nasa’i)

This saying of the Prophet ﷺ may be interpreted in two ways. One, that Sayyidah Maryam’s ‘alayhas salaam relationship with Sayyidna Harun ‘alayhis salaam was mentioned because she was of his lineage, and it was customary with the Arabs to associate a person with their ancestors, for instance a man belonging to the tribe of Tamim would be called as Akha Tamim or Tamim’s brother, or an Arab would be addressed as Akha Arab. The other meaning is that the name Harun does not refer to Sayyidna Harun ‘alayhis salaam the companion/brother of Sayyidna Musa ‘alayhis salaam but to the brother of Sayyidah Maryam ‘alayhas

salaam herself who was also named after Sayyidna Harun ‘alayhis salaam out of reverence for the Prophet. In the second case the term Harun (Sister of Harun) fits in very well with the literal meaning of the word (sister).

**“Neither your father was a man of evil.” - 19:28.** These words suggest that when someone who is descended from righteous and pious ancestors commits a sin, then the sin is of greater magnitude compared to a sin committed by an ordinary person, because the sin brings bad name to the pious elders. It is for this reason that descendants of pious persons should make extra effort in the performance of righteous deeds, and fear Allah at all times.

## COMMENTARY – TAFSIR IBN KATHIR

### **Maryam with Al-Masih before the People, Their Rejection of Her and His Reply to Them**

Allah, the Exalted, informs of Maryam’s situation when she was commanded to fast that day and not to speak to any human being. For verily, her affair would be taken care of and her proof would be established. Thus, she accepted the command of Allah and she readily received His decree. She took her child and brought him to her people, carrying him. When they saw her like this they made a big deal about her situation and they sternly protested against of it, and

**(They said: “O Mary! Indeed you have brought a thing Fariy.”)** Fariy means a mighty thing. This was said by Mujahid, Qatadah, As-Suddi and others. Ibn Abi Hatim reported from Nawf Al-Bikali that he said, *“Her people went out searching for her, she was from a family that was blessed with prophethood and nobility. However, they could not find any trace of her. They came across a cow herder and they asked him, ‘Have you seen a girl whose description is such and such’ He replied, ‘No, but tonight I saw my cows doing something that I’ve never seen them do before.’ They asked, ‘What did you see’ He said, ‘Tonight I saw them prostrating in the direction of that valley.’”* `Abdullah bin Ziyad said (adding to the narration), *“I memorized from Sayyar that he (the cattle herder) said, ‘I saw a radiant light.’”* So they went towards the direction that he told him, and Maryam was coming towards them from that direction. When she saw them she sat down and she was holding her child in her lap. They came towards her until they were standing over her.

**(They said: “O Mary! Indeed you have brought a mighty thing (Fariy).”)** This means it was a mighty thing that she had brought.

**(O sister of Harun!)** This means, “O one resembling Harun (Aaron) in worship.”

**(Your father was not a man who used to commit adultery, nor your mother was an unchaste woman.)** They meant, “You are from a good, pure family, well-known for its righteousness, worship and abstinence from worldly indulgence. How could you do such a thing”

`Ali bin Abi Talhah and As-Suddi both said, “It was said to her, **(O sister of Harun!)** referring to the brother of Musa, because she was of his descendants. This is similar to the saying, ‘O brother of Tamim,’ to one who is from the Tamimi tribe, and ‘O brother of Mudar,’ to one who is from the Mudari tribe. It has also been said that she was related to a righteous man among them whose name was Harun and she was comparable to him in her abstinence and worship.

This concludes the commentary for Day 28.



**ANSWER:** Sayyidatina Khadijah radi'allahu 'anha

## **SURAH AL-MUZZAMMIL, VERSE 1**

**O you wrapped up in clothes,\* [1]**

### **COMMENTARY**

**‘O you wrapped up in clothes [1]’.** The word muzzammil literally means ‘one wrapped up in clothes’ and its near-synonym ‘muddaththir’ comes in the next Surah. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is addressed in this verse with reference to a particular style of wrapping himself in his clothes. The first event of this kind occurred when the Holy Prophet ﷺ received first revelation in the cave of Hira. Being his first experience, he felt it very hard, and was caught by a shivery cold, and once he reached home, he asked his blessed wife Khadijah radi'allahu 'anha to wrap him in a blanket which she did. A detailed account of this event is reported by Bukhari in the very first chapter of his book. Then the revelation stopped for some time. Speaking of this temporary break in the revelation [termed as fatrat-ul-wahy], Sayyidna Jabir radi'allahu 'anhu reports that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said in his narrative:

*“Whilst I was walking along, I heard a voice from heaven and I raised up my eyes. Lo! The Angel that had appeared to me in Hira was sitting on a chair between heaven and earth, and I was struck with awe on account of him and returned home and said, Wrap me up, wrap me up [zammiluni zammiluni]. Then Allah revealed the first five verses of Surah Al-Muddaththir (chapter 74).”* [Bukhari and Muslim]

According to this narrative, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is affectionately addressed as ‘O you, enveloped in a mantle,’ whereas in this Surah he is addressed as ‘O you wrapped up in clothes’. Both forms of address are used affectionately and endearingly to console him. The latter title of address ‘muzzammil’ as it appears in this Surah could probably be connected to another incident (referred to in the footnote) but it, nonetheless, shows deep love and affection for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. [Ruh-ul-Ma'ani]. Having addressed him with this special title, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is told in the following verses that praying to Allah in the stillness of night [salat-ut-tahajjud] will prepare him for the heavy task entrusted to him. Some details of the night-prayer have also been set out.

### **COMMENTARY – TAFSIR IBN KATHIR**

#### **The Command to stand at Night (in Prayer)**

Allah commands His Messenger ﷺ to cease being wrapped up, and this means to be covered during the night. He commands him to get up and stand in prayer to His Lord. This is as Allah says,

**(Their sides forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend out of what We have bestowed on them.) (32:16)** Thus, the Prophet ﷺ did as Allah ordered him, by standing for prayer at night. This was obligatory upon him alone, as Allah said,

**(And in some parts of the night offer the Salah with it (the Qur'an), as an additional prayer for you. It may be that your Lord will raise you to Maqam Mahmud.) (17:79)** Here Allah explains how much prayer he should perform. Allah says,

**(O you wrapped up! Stand all night, except a little.)** Ibn `Abbas, Ad-Dahhak and As-Suddi all said, **(O you wrapped up!)** *“This means, O you who are asleep.”* Qatadah said, *“The one who is wrapped up in his garments.”*

## SURAH AL-MUDDATHTHIR, VERSE 1

**O you, enveloped in a mantle, [1]**

### COMMENTARY

Surah Al-Muddaththir is one of the Surahs that was sent down in very early days of the revelation. Therefore, some of the scholars considered this Surah to be the first one in order of revelation. However, according to the well-known authentic ahadith, the first instalment of revelation comprised the initial verses of Surah Iqra'. Traditions show that after a few verses of this Surah had been revealed, further revelation stopped for a period of time. The period of time during which there was a temporary cessation of revelation is termed as fatrat-ul-wahy. Towards the end of this period, an incident took place that is recounted by the Holy Prophet ﷺ thus:

While I was walking, I heard a voice from the sky. So I lifted my gaze towards the sky and saw the same angel who had come to me in the cave of Hira'. He was sitting on a chair between the sky and the earth. So I was struck with awe until I fell down to the ground. Then, I went to my family and I said, "Wrap me up, wrap me up" So, they wrapped me up! Allah revealed the initial verses of Surah Al-Muddaththir. (Sahihain).

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is addressed in this Surah as: - **(O you, enveloped in a mantle...74:1)** The word al-Muddaththir is derived from dithar which refers to a 'thick, warm over-garment [such as a cloak or mantle] which a person wears in winter over his other clothes in order to protect himself from cold.' The form of address is affectionate and endearing as was explained under Al-Muzzammil in the preceding Surah. The two forms of address, al-Muzzammil and al-Muddaththir, are near-synonyms. Ruh-ul-Ma'ani cites a report from Jabir Ibn Zaid who says that Al-Muddaththir was revealed after Al-Muzzammil. Some scholars attribute this narration to Sayyidna Ibn 'Abbas radi'allahu 'anhu as well. However, according to the narration previously reported from Sahihain, it is clear that the first Surah to be revealed [after the temporary cessation] was Al-Muddaththir. If Al-Muzzammil was revealed before this, Sayyidna Jabir Ibn 'Abdullah radi'allahu 'anhu [the narrator of the Hadith] would have narrated it. Clearly, Al-Muzzammil and Al-Muddaththir, are near-synonyms. Therefore, it is very likely that the two Surahs might have been revealed in connection with the same incident - when the Holy Prophet ﷺ, whilst walking, heard a voice from the sky and saw Jibra'il Amin 'alayhis salaam sitting on a chair between the sky and the earth, and then went to the house and wrapped himself in a mantle. This at least confirms the point that the initial verses of the two Surahs were among the first verses to be revealed after the temporary break in the revelation. It is however not clear as to which set of the verses was revealed first, and which was revealed subsequently. Authentic narratives confirm that the initial verses of Surah Iqra' were first to be revealed. Al-Muzzammil and Al-Muddaththir were though revealed approximately the same time in connection with the same incident, there is a difference between the two: The injunctions given at the beginning of Al-Muzzammil are related to the Holy Prophet's ﷺ personal purification and perfection, and in Al-Muddaththir the injunctions are related to preaching, propagation and human reform.

### COMMENTARY – TAFSIR IBN KATHIR

**The First Ayat to be revealed after `Read!**

It has been confirmed in the Sahih Al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim on the authority of Abu Salamah that Jabir bin 'Abdullah informed him that he heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ speaking about the time period (of the pause in) revelation. The Prophet ﷺ said,

*(While I was walking I heard a voice from the sky. So I lifted my gaze towards the sky and saw the same angel who had come*

to me at the cave of Hira'. He was sitting on a chair between the sky and the earth. So I fled from him (in fear) until I fell down to the ground. Then, I went to my family and I said, 'Wrap me up, wrap me up. So, they wrapped me up! So Allah revealed, (O you wrapped up! Arise and warn!) Until (And keep away) ) Here, Abu Salamah added, 'Ar-Rujz means idols.' ((After this, the revelation started coming strongly and frequently in succession.) This is the wording of Al-Bukhari. The way this Hadith is narrated necessitates that revelation had descended before this. This is due to the Prophet's ﷺ statement,

*(The same angel who had come to me at the cave of Hira'.)*" That angel was Jibril, who had come to him with Allah's statement,

**(Read! In the Name of your Lord Who has created. He has created man from a clot. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous. Who has taught by the pen. He has taught man that which he knew not.) (96:1-5)**

After this first occurrence (in the cave) there was a period of time that passed, then the angel descended again. Imam Ahmad recorded from Abu Salamah bin 'Abdur-Rahman that Jabir bin 'Abdullah informed him that he heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying,

*(Then the revelation ceased coming to me for a period of time. Then, while I was walking, I heard a voice from the sky. So I lifted my gaze towards the sky to see the same angel who had come to me, sitting on a chair between the sky and the earth. So I fled from him a short distance before I fell down to the ground. Then I came to my family and said to them, 'Wrap me up, wrap me up! So, they wrapped me up! Then Allah revealed, (O you wrapped up! Arise and warn! And magnify your Lord. And purify your garments. And keep away from Ar-Rujz!)( After this, the revelation started coming strongly and frequently in succession.)* They both (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) recorded this Hadith by way of Az-Zuhri.

At-Tabarani recorded from Ibn 'Abbas that he said, "Verily, Al-Walid bin Al-Mughirah prepared some food for the Quraysh. So when they had eaten from it he said, 'What do you have to say about this man? Some of them said, 'He is a magician.' Others said, 'He is not a magician.' Then some of them said, 'He is a soothsayer.' But others said, 'He is not a soothsayer.' Some of them said, 'He is a poet.' But others said, 'He is not a poet.' Some of them said, 'This is magic from that of old.' Thus, they eventually all agreed that it was magic from ancient times. Then, when this news reached the Prophet, he became grieved, covered his head and wrapped himself up. This is when Allah revealed,

**(O you enveloped in garments! Arise and warn! And magnify your Lord (Allah)! And purify your garments! And keep away from Ar-Rujz (the idols)! And give not a thing in order to have more (or consider not your deeds of obedience to Allah as a favour to Him). And be patient for the sake of your Lord (i.e., perform your duty to Allah)!**

\* The Holy Prophet ﷺ is addressed in this verse with reference to a particular style of wrapping himself in his clothes. The first event of this kind occurred when the Holy Prophet ﷺ received first revelation in the cave of Hira'. Being his first experience, he felt it very hard, and was caught by a shivery cold, and once he reached home, he asked his blessed wife Khadijah radi'allahu 'anha to wrap him in a blanket which she did. Some narrations have reported another event: When the Holy Prophet ﷺ was accused, by the pagans of Makkah, of being a magician who separated between friends, he felt aggrieved, and wrapped himself in his clothes out of grief. Addressing him with reference to these events is a loving style adopted by Allah Ta'ala to console him. (Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

This concludes the commentary for Day 29.