

# **Women In The Qur'an And The Bible Volume 1**

# **Women In The Qur'an And The Bible - A Comparative Study - Volume 1**



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SHARES

**Sub Title:**

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This text presents a comparative study of six women who are honoured in both the Qur'an and the Bible: Maryam, Asiyah, Bilqis, Yukabed, Kulthum, and Sarah.

It follows their stories through Qur'anic verses and then compares each stage of their lives with the Biblical account, highlighting both shared narratives and important differences.

Drawing primarily on Twelver Shi'a Qur'anic exegesis, the discussion explains the historical setting, spiritual lessons, and moral guidance found in each account.

Rather than treating these women as supporting figures, the text shows their faith, patience, wisdom, and trust in Allah as examples for all believers. It also encourages respectful dialogue between Islam and the People of the Book while affirming the Qur'an's role as a source of guidance for humanity.

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**Topic Tags:**

[Comparative Religion](#) [6]

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**Miscellaneous information:**

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**Person Tags:**

[Lady Maryam](#) [8]

[Lady Asiyah](#) [9]

[Lady Yukabed](#) [10]

[Lady Kulthum/Miriam](#) [11]

[Lady Sarah](#) [12]

# Dedication

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the Name of Allah; The All-Beneficent, the All-Merciful*

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا امْرَأَتَ فِرْعَوْنَ إِذْ قَالَتْ رَبِّ ابْنِ لِي عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنْ فِرْعَوْنَ وَاعْمَلِهِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

***“Allah draws an example for those who have faith: the wife of Pharaoh, when she said, ‘My Lord! Build me near You, a home in paradise, and deliver me from Pharaoh and his conduct, and deliver me from the wrongdoing lot’.” (66: 11) [1](#)***

If Allah accepts this minor attempt, then I dedicate this research to the outstanding women of the Qur’an:

**Maryam (‘a), Asiyah (‘a), Bilqis (‘a), Yukabed (‘a), Kulthum (‘a), Sarah (‘a)**

and to my husband, who was my best friend, mentor, and teacher:

**Marhum Ali Azhar Arastu.**

I also pay special thanks to the personality of Lady Fatima Ma’suma of Qum (‘a), for providing me with the opportunity to study in her city and granting me the blessings of her proximity, through which I was able to complete this book.

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[1.](#) The Qur’an with an English Paraphrase.

Note: I changed the meaning exactly according to the words in Arabic. Instead of Build me a home near You in paradise I wrote Build me near You, a home in paradise.🔍🔍

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# Preface

### ***In the Name of Allah; The All-Beneficent, the All-Merciful***

All praise is due to Allah (SwT), Creator of the universe, and blessings and salutations upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S)<sup>1</sup> and his Holy Progeny ('a).

This book is about Maryam ('a), Asiyah ('a), Bilquis ('a), Yukabed ('a), Kulthum ('a) and Sarah ('a) as they are mentioned the different chapters of the Holy Qur'an, the Bible and in the traditions of the Holy Prophet (S) and his Holy Progeny (as). The stories of these outstanding women have many lessons for us. I have divided their stories into a number of segments and further divided these segments into different parts, and then discussed the verses of Qur'an that talk about those segments. After every part of the story, I have compared briefly what the Holy Bible says regarding that part of the story.

The Qur'an tells us to ponder over its verses, which contain a density of spiritual meanings. My goal in writing this book was to share the result of long thought on the verses of this glorious book, the Qur'an. The reason why I chose these women as a subject is because their story is captivating, and contains many messages. The goal of this book is to do a comparative study of the outstanding women that are mentioned in both the Qur'an and the Bible, in a story format, mostly based on Twelver-Shi'i Qur'anic exegesis/ commentaries. Through the comparison of women in both the Qur'an and in the Bible, we can provide an arena for dialogue to bring together the shared aspects of truth between Muslims and the people of the book (*Ahl al-Kitab*).

We can also open the door to discussing the Qur'an at a deeper level, showcasing and proving that it is the absolute word of God. By deriving the lessons from the verses, we can also prove that the Qur'an is a book of guidance for mankind, and that these are lessons for all, male and female. It is commonly perceived that only male characters are mentioned favourably in the Qur'an, however, this is simply untrue. Through this research, we will showcase the women who have been presented in the Qur'an favourably, some of whom have been marked with exceptional praise by God Himself.

This book is a continuation of a research paper that I wrote in my bachelors on Maryam ('a). It inspired me to research about the other women in the Qur'an.

I did not follow the chronological order of the women occurring in the Qur'an rather I chose them based on my personal interest.

Some of the important sources used were: *Tafsir Nemuneh*, *Tafsir Al-Mizan*, *Tafsir Nur*, *Manshoore-Javeed*, *Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal*, *The Study Qur'an*, *Tafsir e Mouzueey Qur'an e Kareem*, *Sireye Payambaran Dar Qur'an* and *Qissehaye Qur'an*. The text and the points taken from the books mentioned above are not word for word; rather the gist of what they contain was summarized in order to make the book simple and brief and thereby to cater to a larger audience.

The Qur'anic translation is based mostly on Sayyid Ali Quli Qarai's translation; however, in some places the translations of M H Shakir and Abdullah Yusufali have been used. At times, I have modified the translation of some verses.

The Biblical discussion is mostly based on the New International Version's translation and Matthew Henry's Complete Commentary.

I thank Allah for giving me the ability and opportunity to complete this research. I could not have handled this project alone and the contributions made by others have been priceless.

I would like to thank my advisor Agha Hadi Valipour for encouraging me, guiding me, and for his valuable time and insight. I would also like to thank my teacher Agha Tajabadi for supporting me in completing this project. Sister Rita Coto and Sister Veronica Ramirez provided me with motivation and help in guiding me to Biblical resources.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Sister Jasmine Sommer and my daughter Zainab Fatema Arastu who both read through the manuscript and gave valuable feedback, to Sister Fatemah Meghji for helping me edit this manuscript. Above all, I thank my daughters Zainab Fatema and Rabab Sakina and my son in laws Muhammad and Ali for their help, support and suggestions.

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<sup>1</sup> S indicates Sallallahu Alaihi wa A'alihi meaning peace be upon him and his progeny. ﷺ

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## Introduction

There are thirteen women who are mentioned in the Qur'an favourably who are also mentioned in the Bible (The Old Testament and/or The New Testament). They are as follows:

1. Hawwa (Eve)
2. Walah
3. Wala'a
4. Sarah
5. Hajar (Hagar)

6. Zulaykha
7. Yukabed (Jochabed)
8. Kulthum (Miriam)
9. Safurah
10. Asiyah
11. Bilqis
12. Maryam (Mary)
13. Hananah (Aashya)

The Bible mentions most of these women by name. While they are discussed in the Qur'an to some level, the Qur'an does not name them<sup>1</sup> except for Maryam ('a).<sup>2</sup> Most of these women are referred to as the mothers, wives, or daughters of prophets and/or other dignitaries in Qur'an. These women play an important role in Qur'an and in the Bible.

In this study, six of these women have been examined in detail in the light of the Qur'an and the Bible. They are:

- (1) Maryam ('a),
- (2) Asiyah ('a),
- (3) Yukabed ('a),
- (4) Bilqis ('a),
- (5) Kulthum ('a) and
- (6) Sarah ('a).

The examples and stories of these outstanding women are applicable to all: men and women, young and old. In the Qur'an, their stories are scattered across different chapters, depending on the situation or the subject being discussed. Allah has referred to Maryam ('a) and Asiyah ('a) as exemplary characters for all believers. Allah has also demonstrated intelligence through Kulthum ('a) and reliance through Yukabed ('a), patience through Sarah ('a) and wisdom through Bilqis ('a). We know that Allah is All-Wise, and as such, whatever He does is a manifestation of this deep wisdom. He never does anything futile, and if He has mentioned these women in His books of guidance, then there is certainly a deep message behind it.

In this paper, we examine various events that took place in the lives of these women, and the lessons that we learn from them. The moral context of these events includes the ideal and desired relationship between the Creator and the creation (in this case, these women), and the tests they must face. Their admirable strength and lofty spirituality are shown through their respect and obedience to their Creator. They stand strong and steadfast through various tests, demonstrating their submission, piety, faith, courage, truthfulness, patience, and their reliance on God.

As with other narratives in the Qur'an, the lessons in their stories are clear for those who possess intellect and think, while for the people who do not pay attention to the signs of Allah, they are just interesting stories. The Qur'an is a book of guidance for all of mankind, and its message is applicable until the end of time. Its narratives apply to us even today and as such, we should learn from these stories.

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[1.](#) It is possible they have not been mentioned by name as a mark of respect. In some eastern cultures, it is regarded as disrespectful to be called by one's first name.❏❏

[2.](#) ('a) indicates alayha (or hi) al-salam meaning peace be on her (or him).❏❏

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## Chapter 1: Maryam ('a)

### Lineage

#### According to the Qur'an

Maryam ('a), the mother of Isa ('a), has been mentioned 34 times in the Qur'an. An entire chapter (*Surah*) of the Qur'an has also been named after her (*Surah Maryam*, Chapter 19). She was the daughter of Imran, who was the son of Mathan. [1](#)

Mathan was from the elites of Bani Isra'il [2](#) and was from the progeny of Nabi Sulayman [3](#) who was the son of Nabi Dawood [4](#) who was from the progeny of Nabi Ibrahim. [5](#)

According to some traditions, Imran, the father of Maryam ('a), was also a prophet [6](#) and he received revelations. However, some traditions say that he was a priest. [7](#) One tradition about Imran narrated from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir ('a) reads:

It is reported that Abu Basir [8](#) said, "I asked Abu Ja'far [9](#) ('a) about Imran, whether he was a prophet. He

said, ‘Yes. He was a prophet and an apostle to his people, and Hannah (the wife of Imran) and Hananah (Aashya) [10](#) (the wife of Zachariah) [11](#) were sisters. Mary was born to Imran from Hannah, and John [12](#) was born to Zachariah from Hananah. Mary gave birth to Jesus (‘a), and Jesus (‘a) was the son of the daughter of John’s aunt. John was the son of the aunt of Mary (i.e. her cousin). And the aunt of one’s mother is like one’s aunt.” [13](#)

Maryam’s father Imran should not be confused with Nabi Musa’s [14](#) father whose name was also Imran. It has been narrated that there was a difference of 1,800 years between these two personalities. [15](#)

### Related Verses from the Qur’an

With regards to the lineage of Maryam, the following are the related verses from the Qur’an:

- Surah Aal-‘Imran, ayah #33: ***“Indeed Allah chose Adam and Noah, and the progeny of Abraham and the progeny of Imran above all the nations” (3:33).***
- Surah at-Tahrim, ayah #12: ***“And Mary, daughter of Imran...” (66: 12).***
- Surah Aal-‘Imran, ayah #35: ***“When the wife of Imran said...” (3:35).***
- Surah Aal-‘Imran, ayah #37: ***“He charged Zechariah with her care...” (3:37).***

### Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived

#### Imran: The Father of Maryam (‘a)

#### **Surah Aal-‘Imran, ayah # 33**

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ

***“Indeed Allah chose Adam and Noah, and the progeny of Abraham and the progeny of Imran above all the nations” (3:33).***

- Imran was the father of Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) His name has been mentioned three times in the Qur’an: in Surah Aal-‘Imran and in Surah at-Tahrim. [16](#)

- A *Surah* [17](#) has been named after him and his progeny: this shows his status.
- In the above verse, Allah emphasizes the high status of Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) and Hadhrat Isa (‘a) by mentioning *the progeny of Imran*. Both Maryam (‘a) and Isa (‘a) were from the progeny of Nabi Ibrahim as well. However, Allah wanted to highlight their status by mentioning the name of Imran which indicates his special status. The verses that follow then speak of the birth of Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) [18](#)
- In the verse, it is mentioned that Allah ‘chose’ them. This does not mean that they were forced to choose the truth. In fact, these people chose the right path with their free-will, God-consciousness and piety. [19](#)
- The verse says that Allah chose **progeny of Imran above all the nations**. The verse does not say that He chose the progeny of Imran **from** all nations. This shows that Allah wanted them to guide humanity with their free will, hard work and struggle. [20](#)

#### Surah at-Tahrim, ayah # 12

وَمَرْيَمَ ابْنَتَ عِمْرَانَ

**“And Mary, daughter of Imran” (66: 12).**

- In Surah at-Tahrim, Allah mentions the name of Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) along with her father’s name. This shows respect to her lineage.

#### [Hannah: The Mother of Maryam \(‘a\)](#)

#### Surah Aal-‘Imran, ayah # 35

اِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ عِمْرَانَ

**“When the wife of Imran said...” (3:35).**

- A woman can reach such a status that Allah Himself considers her worthy to narrate her story.[21](#)

### Nabi Zachariah (‘a): The Uncle of Maryam (‘a)

**Surah Aal-‘Imran, ayah # 37**

كَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا

***“He charged Zechariah with her care...” (3:37)***

- Maryam (‘a)’s father Imran had passed away when her mother was pregnant with her. This is why Allah made Nabi Zechariah (‘a) her guardian. He was also her uncle.[22](#)
- Allah takes care of orphans.

### According to the Bible

In the Bible, the lineage of Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) is not discussed. But Jesus’ ancestry is discussed in detail from David purportedly through Joseph (who was betrothed to Mary in the Biblical rendition). [23](#)

### Comparison of the Qur’an and the Bible

- The Qur’an has mentioned the parents of Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) whereas her parents and family are not discussed in the Bible.
- In the Qur’an whenever Imran is mentioned as a name, it is referring to Imran, the father of Hadhrat Maryam[24](#) (‘a). In the Bible, the only Imran mentioned is not the father of Mary, but the father of Nabi Musa (‘a), as Amram.[25](#)

### Birth

## According to the Qur'an

As narrated in the Qur'an, the sisters Hannah (the wife of Imran), and Ashyaa (the wife of Nabi Zachariah), were barren and did not have children for an extensive amount of time.

One day, Hannah was sitting under a tree and saw a bird's nest, observing the mother bird feeding the chicks. Pangs of motherhood aroused in her as she saw this scene. As such, she prayed to Allah with utmost sincerity for a baby. Her prayer was answered, and she soon became pregnant.[26](#)

According to some traditions, Allah sent a revelation to Hannah's husband, Imran, and revealed to him that he would have a son who would cure incurable diseases, raise the dead with the permission of Allah, and that he would be a prophet sent by Allah to the Bani Isra'il.[27](#)

Imran narrated this revelation to his wife. As such, Hannah thought that the baby in her womb was the same prophet of whom her husband had spoken. So, she vowed to give this child in the service of the temple built by Prophet Dawud ('a) in Palestine known as "*Bait ul-Muqaddas*."[28](#) She said:

***"My Lord! Surely, I vow to Thee what is in my womb, to be devoted (to Thy service); accept therefore from me. Surely Thou art the Hearing, the Knowing" (3:35).***[29](#)

She made a "*nadhr*," which means vow, and means to make something not normally obligatory, obligatory on oneself if one's prayers are fulfilled.[30](#)

In those days, only male children were chosen for this undertaking. Such children were called "*muharar*". The word "*muharar*" is derived from the word "*tahrir*" which means to set free from chains and imprisonment. Thus, "*tahrir*" is used also for freeing a slave. Writing a book is also called "*tahrir*", because it frees the thoughts and ideas that are stored in the mind of a person.[31](#) These children were called "*muharar*" because they were set free from the responsibility of serving their parents. Instead, their duty was to serve the temple by keeping it clean. In their spare time, they worshipped the Almighty. Some have speculated that under the supervision of their parents, these '*muharar*' children served the temple until they reached puberty. Once they reached puberty, they were free to decide whether they wanted to continue serving the temple or not.[32](#)

Hannah had made this *nadhr*, dedicating her child to the temple, and the day finally came when Hannah went into labor. Hannah was astonished to see that she had given birth to a female instead of a male. All this time, due to the revelation given to Imran, she had incorrectly assumed that she was carrying a male child. This was the reason as to why she had made her promise. Now, what would she do? Until now, only boys had been dedicated to the temple. Never before had a female been chosen for this service. How would Hannah keep her promise given these conditions?

She had mixed emotions, which the Qur'an describes:

***“When she brought forth, she said: ‘My Lord! Surely I have brought forth a female’– and Allah knew best what she brought forth and the male is not like the female...” (3:36).***[33](#)

When the verse states that *the male is not like the female*, what is most likely meant is that the female cannot carry out the same duties that a male could. Moreover, only males were chosen by the temple to be raised therein. Hannah had made this promise because she was under the impression that she had conceived a male.

Young boys were chosen instead of girls, because after puberty, girls began to menstruate. This would force them to leave the temple for a few days as they would be in a state of ritual impurity, and they would not be able to serve the temple on those days. Moreover, they would have to observe *hijab*,[34](#) and would possibly become pregnant. These were practical hurdles for girls to be raised in the temple. As such, it was more common for boys to be chosen for this service because they were free from all these obstacles.[35](#)

Even though she unexpectedly gave birth to a female, Hannah’s passion for God did not subside, and she remained determined to devote her child to the temple. She named the child “Maryam”, which means a female worshipper and also a maid servant.[36](#) The name “Maryam” itself depicts how much Hannah wanted to devote this child for this purpose – to serve and worship God alone.

When she sees the female child, Hannah tells Allah:

***“... And I have named it Maryam And I commend her and her offspring into Thy protection from the accursed Shaitan” (3:36).***[37](#)

Hannah keeps her promise, and dedicates Maryam in the service of the temple, *Bayt al-Muqaddas*.

Some commentators have said that the fact that Hannah vowed to dedicate Maryam to the temple in her pregnancy and then naming her child shows that her husband Imran had passed away before Maryam was born.[38](#) Another indication that her father had died when she was born, was that there was a lottery to choose her guardian.[39](#)

After Hannah prays for Maryam and Maryam’s children, to be protected from Satan, the Qur’an narrates that Allah accepted her gift:

***“Thereupon her Lord accepted her with a gracious acceptance, and made her grow up in a worthy fashion” (3:37).***[40](#)

Some commentators say that the sign of God’s acceptance was that Maryam never experienced menstruation, in which case she would have to leave the Temple Mount for a few days, and some say that perhaps Allah informed Hannah of this acceptance through divine inspiration.[41](#)

## Related verses from the Qur'an

- Surah Aal-'Imran, ayah # 35-37:

*“When the wife of Imran said, ‘My Lord, I dedicate to You what is in my belly, in consecration. Accept it from me; Indeed You are the All-hearing, the All-knowing.’” (3:35).*

*“And when she bore her, she said, ‘My Lord, I have borne a female [child]’ and Allah knew better what she had borne and the male is not like the female. ‘I have named her Mary, and I commend her and her offspring to Your care against [the evil of] the outcast Satan.’” (3:36).*

*“Thereupon her Lord accepted her with a gracious acceptance, and made her grow up in a worthy fashion, and He charged Zachariah with her care. Whenever Zachariah visited her in the sanctuary, he would find provisions with her. He said, ‘O Mary, from where does this come for you?’ She said, ‘It comes from Allah. Allah provides whomever He wishes without any reckoning.’” (3:37).*

## Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived

### Hannah's Vow

Surah Aal-'Imran, ayah # 35:

إِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

*“When the wife of Imran said, “My Lord, I dedicate to You what is in my belly, in consecration<sup>42</sup>. Accept it from me; Indeed You are the All-hearing, the All-knowing” (3:35).*

- Hannah was ready to dedicate the child in her womb to God. This was the only child that she would ever have, and for whom she had waited so long. This tells us that Hannah was very devout, strong, and high in her spiritual status.<sup>43</sup> After many years of waiting for a child, most mothers would never do this. She might devote one child to serve the temple, if she had many children, but for someone to have one child and still dedicate it is very rare.
- People plan for their future, and should also plan for their unborn child.<sup>44</sup> For example, before a child is born, the parents might move to a city where there are good schools, or

to the country where they think the environment is safer for the child. Also, they might start saving so that they have enough funds to educate their child in the best of ways.

- The ayah teaches us how to forget oneself and to sacrifice and give in the way of Allah,[45](#) unfortunately, we often think in the opposite way. We may put our own conveniences and desires first, thinking, “Me first, then Allah.” The ayah teaches us how to be selfless.
- Serving places of worship, like the mosque, has so much value that the beloved ones of Allah would vow to put their children there, even before the child was born.[46](#)
- The act of making a *nadhr*, which is a vow or a promise to God, has been part of the history of religions for thousands of years.[47](#)
- The mother has a right on the child. This can be understood from when Hadhrat Hannah says, ***“My Lord, I dedicate to You what is in my belly” (3:35).***[48](#)
- People who dedicate their entire lives to the service of Allah are successful. It is not enough to only dedicate a part of one’s life.[49](#)
- It is the right of the mother that the child should serve her, but if she dedicates him to the service of the Lord, then she disregards her right. The word ‘*muharara*’ depicts this point.[50](#)
- When we give something in the way of Allah it should be from what we love and value. For example, when Habil[51](#) and Qabil[52](#) offered sacrifices in the way of Allah, Habil offers the best sheep that he had from his flock, whereas Qabil offers the worst grains[53](#) or vegetation from his farm.[54](#) Allah accepted Habil’s offering.
- When we give from what we value and love, we should not become arrogant or boastful that we have given it. Rather, we should pray that Allah accepts it.[55](#)

- If women so desire, they are capable of reaching a high spiritual level. Here, Nabi Zachariah was motivated by seeing the piety of Hadhrat Maryam and Hadhrat Hannah.[56](#)

#### [Hannah Bore a Girl!](#)

#### Surah Aal-'Imran, ayah # 36:

فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَىٰ وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

***“And when she bore her, she said, ‘My Lord, I have borne a female [child]’ and Allah knew better what she had borne and the male is not like the female. ‘I have named her Mary, and I commend her and her offspring to Your care against [the evil of] the outcast Satan’” (3:36).***

- There is a debate regarding the part of the ayah that states *“Allah knew better what she had borne and the male is not like the female...”* The debate is whether both clauses were stated by God or Maryam’s mother. Some say that both parts of were said by Maryam’s mother, whereas others say that the first part of the sentence (*Allah knew better what she had borne*) was said by Allah and that the second part of the sentence (*and the male is not like the female*) was said by Maryam’s mother. Both of these views are seemingly incorrect. It seems to be that both of these parts were said by Allah. If they had been said by Maryam’s mother, then the ayah would have said, “Allah knows better what I have given birth to.” If we look at the previous part of the ayah, it states, *‘My Lord I have borne a female...’* and the next sentence expresses that Allah knew that her child was a girl, and Allah wanted to fulfill her wish, in a better way by giving her a girl instead of a boy. Suppose, she were given a son, instead of the daughter; what could that son achieve? He, like 'Isa ('a), could be made a prophet; he could cure the blind, heal the lepers, and raise the dead. And this was the most he could have done. But this female child, which Allah gave her, would be a means to complete the word of Allah; she would bear a son without a father and Allah would make her and her son together a manifest sign for the people. This son would talk as a babe in his cradle, he would be the spirit and word of Allah. His likeness before Allah would be like Nabi Adam; both of them created without a father. The next part of the sentence states, *‘... and the male is not like the female...’* These also do not make sense as the words of Hadhrat Maryam’s mother. If they were her words, then she should have uttered the opposite. She would have said, “and the female is not like the male”. The reason for this is that when something someone wanted

is not given to them, they will say in disappointment, “this is not like what I wanted” or “the thing that was given to me (female), is not like what I wanted (male)”. This person will not say, “The thing that I wanted (male) is not like what has been given to me (female)”.[57](#)

- Ayatullah Jawadi Amoli says that the scholars who have given their view about this verse can be divided into two groups. One group has regarded the simile in this verse as a reversed simile, ‘*and the male is not like the female*’, i.e. the simile means the opposite of what has been mentioned and that what is actually meant is that “the female is not like the male”. This is because their thinking is flawed, like the people of the age of ignorance, and that they regard the male as superior to the female. The other groups of scholars regard this verse to be a true simile. They believe that the verse is saying that no male can perform the role that this female was going to fulfill. No man during that time was fit to be the father of Nabi Isa (‘a), nor was anyone fit to be the husband of Hadhrat Maryam (‘a). This is why the simile in this ayah is a direct simile and not a reversed one.[58](#)
- What we want is not important. Allah’s wisdom and what He wants is what is important:[59](#) “...*and Allah knew better what she had borne.*” We should be thankful to Allah in all situations and take what He gives, appreciating what He has blessed us with.
- It is possible that a female may reach a high status that a male might not reach. Hadhrat Maryam reached that status.[60](#)
- Select good names for your children.[61](#) We see in history that prophets sometimes changed the names of people after they accepted Islam. In the days of ignorance before Islam, people used to have the names of animals!
- A mother also has the right to name her child.[62](#) In some cultures, contrary to the teachings of Islam, mothers are not given the right to name their children– only grandparents are. Imam Ali (‘a) tells his opponent Marhab in the Battle of Khaybar, “My mother has named me Hyder!”[63](#)
- Small unexpected changes in life shouldn’t make you forget your main goal in life. Hannah

was expecting a boy, and unexpectedly, the child born was a girl. However, it did not make Hannah forget her vow. She still dedicated the child to the temple, and named her 'Maryam', which means servant and female worshipper.[64](#)

- The ayah teaches us that our child's spiritual salvation is the most important thing of all; we should worry about saving our children from the whisperings and temptations of Satan.[65](#)
- Don't just consider the future of your immediate children; rather, think about their progeny too.[66](#) In other words we should be concerned about the progeny of our children as well. In this way, their impact on the world will go beyond just one generation– we should bring up our children with good moral values and God-wariness that will extend to their children as well.
- Nobody knows the future of their children, and neither did Hannah. Nobody has complete knowledge of the unseen. From looking at Hannah's words, the question that arises here is, "How did Hannah know that Hadhrat Maryam would have children?" To answer this, we can say that Hannah was informed by her husband that she would have a son who would be extraordinary. Thus, when she became pregnant, and when her husband passed away, she had no doubt that the baby she was carrying was the same son about whom she had been informed. However, when she delivered a girl, she realized that she was mistaken; and became sure that the extraordinary son would actually come from Hadhrat Maryam, and that she would have children. This was why she kept her promise, named her child "Maryam," and prayed for her offspring.[67](#)
- The ayah teaches us that we should also pray for our children and for our progeny. There are so many people whom we see who are pious and God-wary, but their progeny is not always guided.
- We should not only depend on the type of upbringing that we give our children. We should also entrust the child in Allah's (SwT) security first and foremost. Our efforts are limited, and Allah (SwT) is not. Further, there is a lot of glitter and temptation around us and our

children.[68](#)

- The ayah depicts Hannah as a very spiritually high and God-conscious woman, because of her vow, that she named her child ‘Maryam,’ and turns to Allah for her child and the child’s offspring.[69](#)
- Satan has always been the enemy of mankind.[70](#)

#### Maryam (‘a) under the care of Nabi Zachariah

Surah Aal-‘Imran, ayah # 37:

... فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا

***“Thereupon her Lord accepted her with a gracious acceptance, and made her grow up a good growing, and He charged Zachariah with her care...” (3:37).***

- God’s acceptance has different levels. Allah accepted Maryam with a ‘*gracious acceptance*.’[71](#) This means that it was a high level of acceptance.
- If one gives in the way of Allah with full sincerity then Allah accepts it graciously.[72](#)
- The gift should attempt to match the status of the receiver. Hannah offered the best thing that she had to Allah.

#### According to the Bible

The Bible does not mention anything about the birth of Holy Mary.

#### Comparison of the Qur’an and the Bible

- The Bible does not mention any name or characteristics of Hadhrat Maryam’s mother, whereas the Qur’an mentions her with honor, calling her the wife of Imran, and recalling

her piety and dedication to Allah.

- The Bible does not mention anything about the birth of Mary whereas the Qur'an discusses it in detail, affording her a spiritual status independent of Isa ('a).

## Guardianship

### According to the Qur'an

Maryam was brought to the Temple Mount and the rabbis started arguing as to who should be her guardian. Each of them tried to prove their eligibility for this task. Maryam's exceptional status as the first female in the temple, as well as her pious family, was why they all wanted to be her guardian.

To solve the conflict, it was decided that there would be a draw. All of the interested candidates were asked to write their names on a wooden pen and to then throw the pens into the water. The pen that floated would win, and would be Maryam's guardian. All of the rabbis, including Nabi Zachariah ('a), did this, and none of the pens floated except Nabi Zachariah's. As such, this is how Allah chose Nabi Zachariah to be Hadhrat Maryam's guardian. Moreover, Nabi Zachariah was the most appropriate guardian for her: he was a prophet of Allah, and also an uncle of Hadhrat Maryam (he was her mother's sister's husband).<sup>[73](#)</sup> With Allah's help and mercy, despite the conflict, Hadhrat Maryam's guardianship was finally given to Nabi Zachariah.<sup>[74](#)</sup>

The Qur'an tells us of this scene and says:

***"...and you were not with them when they were casting lots [to see] which of them would take charge of Mary's care, nor were you with them when they were contending" (3:44).***<sup>[75](#)</sup>

***"...and He charged Zachariah with her care" (3:37).***<sup>[76](#)</sup>

As such, Hadhrat Maryam was taken under the wing of Nabi Zachariah ('a). She prayed to and worshipped Allah an extraordinary amount. According to the narration of Ibn Abbas, after the age of nine, she used to fast every day and pray the whole night.<sup>[77](#)</sup> Her piety, worship and knowledge went beyond the piety, worship and knowledge of the rabbis of her time.

Having Nabi Zachariah ('a) as her guardian was not just a blessing for her, but it was also a blessing for Nabi Zachariah ('a). In fact, whenever he visited her in her quarters where nobody except him was allowed to enter, he would see food near her despite not having brought it for her.<sup>[78](#)</sup> The Qur'an says

***"Whenever Zachariah visited her in the sanctuary, he would find provisions with her" (3:37).***<sup>[79](#)</sup>

Every effect has a cause, and seeing the food there surprised Nabi Zachariah (‘a) because nobody except him was allowed to visit her. He knew the food had to have come from somewhere, but he wasn’t sure from where. As such, he asked her in a confused tone: “O Mary, from where does this come for you?” In response, she says:

***“It comes from Allah. Allah provides whomever He wishes without any reckoning” (3:37).***

### **What kind of food?**

Some of the questions that may arise, is what kind of provision or food was it that it shocked Nabi Zachariah (‘a)? How did it get there? There is nothing mentioned in the Qur’an about this – Maryam simply says that it is from Allah. Traditions give us some detail on this and say that it was a type of heavenly fruit and that it was out of season.[80](#)

Some commentators, like the author of Al-Manar believe that it was regular worldly food. Ibn Jarir narrates that in those days, the Bani Isra’il were experiencing a famine. Moreover, Nabi Zachariah (‘a) was a carpenter and it was difficult for him to provide for and to support his family. However, when his name came out to be the guardian of Maryam, he took pride in supporting her through whatever meager earnings he had. He would bring Maryam (‘a) food with his earnings, however, when he came to Hadhrat Maryam and saw food near her in the famine, it surprised him. [81](#)

As he saw these blessings from Allah (SwT), it encouraged Nabi Zachariah to pray for a child despite his wife’s infertility. If Allah (SwT) could provide Hadhrat Maryam with fruits that were not available in that season, then why could Allah (SwT) not give him a child in his old age? When he saw this miracle of food, it prompted him, and he turned to pray to Allah (SwT) wholeheartedly:[82](#)

***“Thereat Zachariah supplicated his Lord. He said, ‘My Lord! Grant me a good offspring from You! Indeed You hear all supplications” (3:38).***[83](#)

### **Tradition of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir [84](#) (‘a):**

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (‘a) narrates that the chores between Imam Ali (‘a) and Hadhrat Fatimah (‘a) were divided by the Holy Prophet (S). The outside chores were given to Imam Ali (‘a) and the household chores were given to Hadhrat Fatimah(‘a). One day, Imam Ali (‘a) asked for food and Hadhrat Fatimah (‘a) informed him that there was no food in the house, nor had there been for three days. Imam Ali (‘a) inquired as to why she did not inform him earlier. She responded by saying that it was the request of the Holy Prophet (S) not to embarrass or trouble her husband.

As such, Imam Ali (‘a) went out and took a loan from someone to buy some food. On his way, he met his companion Miqdad who informed Imam Ali (‘a) that hunger had forced him out of the house. Imam Ali (‘a) gave the loaned money to Miqdad and returned home empty-handed. When he arrived home, he saw that the Holy Prophet (S) was there and that Hadhrat Fatimah (‘a) was praying. Moreover, he saw

that there was food in front of the Holy Prophet (S)! When he asked Fatimah (‘a) as to where she had received the food, she responded by reciting the verse with the same reply that Hadhrat Maryam gave to Nabi Zachariah (‘a). At this point, the Holy Prophet (S) said that this scenario was the same as when Nabi Zachariah (‘a) visited Maryam and saw food near her and asked her as to where she got it, and she replied that it was from Allah.[85](#)

### Related Verses from the Qur’an

- Surah Aal-‘Imran, ayah # 44:

*“These accounts are from the Unseen, which We reveal to you, and you were not with them when they were casting lots [to see] which of them would take charge of Mary’s care, nor were you with them when they were contending” (3:44).*

- Surah Aal-‘Imran, ayah # 37–38:

*“Thereupon her Lord accepted her with a gracious acceptance, and made her grow up a good growing, and He charged Zachariah with her care. Whenever Zachariah visited her in the sanctuary, he would find provisions with her. He said, ‘O Mary, from where does this come for you?’ She said, ‘It comes from Allah. Allah provides whomever He wishes without any reckoning” (3:37).*

*“Thereat Zachariah supplicated his Lord. He said, ‘My Lord! Grant me a good offspring from You! Indeed You hear all supplications” (3:38).*

### Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived

#### The Holy Prophet (S) Receives a Revelation

Surah Aal-‘Imran, ayah #44:

ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ وَ مَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يُلْقُونَ أَقْلَامَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ وَ مَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ

*“These accounts are from the Unseen, which We reveal to you, and you were not with them when they were casting lots [to see] which of them would take charge of Mary’s care, nor were you with them when they were contending” (3:44).*

- Prophets are informed about the unseen and things that they would not know otherwise through revelation from Allah.[86](#)
- The ayah tells us that before this revelation, this incident was not well-known, and that the Prophet (S) would have no other way of knowing it.[87](#)
- One of the ways that we can learn history is from Allah's revelation. He knows the full details of the past in a way that no human does. One of the miracles of the Qur'an is to inform us of the past and the unseen.[88](#)
- The words in the ayah '*you were not with them*' and '*nor were you with them*', is a repetition of the same expression. This shows us that the case of Maryam's guardianship was a serious matter in the eyes of Allah.[89](#)
- One of the ways of solving a conflict is by casting a lottery/draw.[90](#)
- There is often rivalry in the undertaking of an important holy task.[91](#) This may be because of the power and status that will be attained with its undertaking, or because the people sincerely want to get closer to Allah.
- Everybody knew that this child was not an ordinary one, and that Maryam had a special status. They wanted to be a part of her life, so that they get some credit too.
- Allah resolved the conflict with a draw, and He knew best as to who should be her guardian.

#### [Allah Sends Off-Season Fruit for Maryam \('a\)](#)

#### **Surah Aal-'Imran, ayah # 37:**

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَا

مَرِيَمُ أُنِّي لَكَ هَذَا قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

***“Thereupon her Lord accepted her with a gracious acceptance, and made her grow up a good growing, and He charged Zachariah with her care. Whenever Zachariah visited her in the sanctuary, he would find provisions with her. He said, ‘O Mary, from where does this come for you?’ She said, ‘It comes from Allah. Allah provides whomever He wishes without any reckoning’” (3:37).***[92](#)

- When you take one step towards Allah, Allah will take ten steps towards you.
- Hannah promises to devote the child to serve Allah. He then gives Maryam the best teacher, and sends heavenly food for her, thus taking care of her physical and spiritual growth.[93](#)
- When Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) says that ‘Allah provides whomever He wishes without any reckoning’ she does not just mean that you cannot count the provision of God, rather, it means that it is beyond any estimation.[94](#)
- The phrase ‘....and made her grow up in a worthy fashion’ shows that Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) grew up perfectly.[95](#) Also, it shows that Allah bestowed on her and her offspring guidance and sanctity. In the Qur’anic language, "cleanliness", means free from sin, and purified from the filth and dirt that comes with distance from God. Her growth was like a tree with branches. Allah (SwT) strengthened her with piety on every branch of this tree. She worked hard, and God strengthened her, and this is why the whisperings of Satan had no effect on it, and she did not sin. These two characteristics, that is, gracious acceptance and good growing led to her being chosen and purified which is referred to in another verse:

***“And when the angels said, ‘O Mary, Allah has chosen you and purified you, and He has chosen you above the women of the world’” (3:42).***

Her exceptional piety and status with God was the answer to her mother’s prayer. In the previous ayah, Hannah prays to Allah (SwT) by saying “... ***and I commend her and her offspring to Your care against [the evil of] the outcast Satan***” (3:36)’[96](#)

- With a mother like Hadhrat Maryam (‘a)– whose guardian was Nabi Zachariah (‘a), her home was the temple, and her food was from heaven– the result and outcome was a prophet like Nabi Isa (‘a). There are many factors that affect a good upbringing, some of which are:
- A mother who is a pure soul, and pious woman.
- A mother who is physically fit and capable
- A mother who is under the guardianship and constant care of Allah.
- A mother who eats halal<sup>97</sup> and pure food<sup>98</sup>
- Whoever comes under the guardianship of a prophet learns the tools to stay away from the devil.<sup>99</sup>
- Worship does not mean that you have to cut all of your ties with the world, and live a complete ascetic lifestyle. It does not mean that you live in solitude. The ayah says **“*whenever Zachariah visited her in the sanctuary...*” (3:37)**<sup>100</sup> This means that even though Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) lived in the temple and would worship extensively, she still had visitors and kept a strong relationship with her family.
- The ayah teaches us that the guardians should be observant, vigilant and inquisitive. The ayah states that whenever Nabi Zachariah (‘a) visited Hadhrat Maryam, he saw food near her, and then he asked her **“*from where does this come for you?*” (3:37)**<sup>101</sup> Here, Nabi Zachariah was observant and probing: he did not fail to notice what was happening, and when he noticed, he did not ignore it or jump to conclusions. Rather, he probed. Similarly, nowadays, parents and guardians should observe what is going on with children, and ask them about whatever they are confused about.

- The word ‘*rizq*’ (food/provision) is used as a common noun in a very general way. This indicates that it was some type of unusual food as it is not given a name. It is said that Nabi Zachariah (‘a) used to find winter fruits in summer and vice versa with Hadhrat Maryam (‘a). Some interpret that the food found with Maryam (‘a) was common and nothing was unusual about it, but this interpretation does not match with the context of the verse and situation. Nabi Zachariah (‘a) was satisfied with the answer of Maryam (‘a), when she said; *‘this is from Allah...’* If the food was normal, then Nabi Zachariah (‘a) would not have been satisfied with this answer and would have found it odd. He was satisfied with her answer because the food was unusual and miraculous and as such, it being from God made sense. Also, in the next ayah, Allah (SwT) says, ***“There did Zachariah pray to his Lord He said: My Lord! grant me from Thee good offspring Surely Thou art the Hearer of prayer” (3:38)***. This tells us that Nabi Zachariah (‘a) was so inspired by the presence of miraculous food, that in awe, he turned in hope and prayer to Allah (SwT) to grant him a child. This means that the food he saw near Maryam (‘a) was astounding, so he felt it was time for him to pray to Allah (SwT) to grant him an astounding prayer and give him a good child despite his old age and his wife’s infertility. [102](#)
- A woman can reach such a lofty and high position that it would even amaze a prophet. [103](#)
- Blessings are always from Allah, and are not due to our hard work or because of our efforts. [104](#) It is true that hard work plays a role, but ultimately, all credit goes back to Allah (SwT). After all, He is the one who grants us any ability in working in His way. There are a lot of factors that are involved in making something possible. For example, to succeed, one needs good health and may not be able to work hard with physical impairments, illnesses, etc...
- Allah can provide us without any medium if He wishes. If He wills it, anything is possible. [105](#)
- Some commentators think that the presence of provisions from Allah was a sign that Allah accepted Hannah’s dedication (Maryam). [106](#)

- Just as seedlings and saplings are likely to grow well under the supervision of a farmer, similarly, human beings are likely to grow well spiritually if they submit themselves to the spiritual guides, who guide and direct them [107](#).
- The *mihrab* is a special place within a building of worship like a mosque. It is usually used by the *Imam* or leader of congregational prayers. Allamah Tabatabai says that, in the Islamic world, the recess in a mosque which is reserved for the Imam/leader, is known as the ‘mihrab’. [108](#) The word *mihrab* is derived from the Arabic root word ‘*harb*’ which means to struggle. It is in this place of prayer, a *mihrab*, that the believers fight with the devil and struggle with their carnal souls. As such, this is why this place is called a *mihrab*. There are three opinions as to why this word has been used in the ayah:
  1. According to *Al-Mizan*, *mihrab* means a place in the mosque or home that is especially reserved for worship. It is said that it was given this name because it is the place where one fights against Satan and his/her desires. [109](#) Once a person enters the *mihrab*, it is his/her duty to struggle and fight against his/her carnal desires.
  2. Others have said that originally the leading and the foremost portion of the sitting place of someone’s home was called *mihrab* of the house, and later on, when mosques were built, the part in the front was given the same name: *mihrab*.
  3. It has been narrated that the *mihrab* the Bani Isra’i’l built was different from what we refer to as a *mihrab* today. It was elevated like an altar and was surrounded by walls in a way that if there was someone inside the *mihrab*, he/she would be hidden and not visible from outside. It can also be a closet with a door in front of the synagogue, and one has to ascend a few steps to reach it. Anyone inside remains hidden from others in the synagogue.

#### [Nabi Zachariah \(‘a\) Prays for a Child](#)

#### Surah Aal-‘Imran, ayah #38:

هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ

***“Thereat Zachariah supplicated his Lord. He said, ‘My Lord! Grant me a good offspring from You! Indeed You hear all supplications’” (3:38). [110](#)***

Another translation:

There did Zachariah pray to his Lord He said: My Lord! Grant me from Thee good offspring surely Thou art the Hearer of prayer. [111](#)

- When Hannah saw the bird feeding the chicks, her desire to be a mother was heightened, and she prayed to Allah whole-heartedly for a child. Similarly, when Nabi Zachariah (‘a) saw the off-season fruit near Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) sent by Allah, his heart was also filled with the desire to have a pious child, like Maryam. As such, he prayed to Allah with all his heart. [112](#)
- The inner state of a human being and the time of prayer and supplication (Du’a) have an effect on the acceptance of the prayer. [113](#) According to traditions, there are certain timings that are highly recommended for supplicating to Allah:
  - For example: Some of the recommended times are: Thursday night, the whole day of Friday, and the last hour of Friday. Friday especially is given a lot of importance as there are many traditions regarding its importance. One tradition of the Holy Prophet (S) states that: “Surely Friday is the master of days and the most glorious day for Allah (SwT). Rather it is superior to *Eid al-Fitr* and *Eid al-Adha*. Friday has five advantages:
    1. Adam was created on that day.
    2. On that day Nabi Adam was sent to earth.
    3. Allah (SwT) took the life of Nabi Adam on that day.
    4. Archangels, the heavens, the earth, winds, mountains, and trees fear that the Last Day occurs on such a day.

5. On that day there is an hour, that whatever lawful asked will be granted. [114](#)

- Other times of particular significance to make prayers include: the night of destiny (*Laylat al-Qadr*), in *salat al-witr* (the last unit of the night prayers i.e. *salat al-layl*), [115](#) immediately after the dawn, dhuhr and maghrib prayers, [116](#) between *adhan* and *iqamah*, [117](#) while reciting the Qur'an, when you are heartbroken, when tears roll down your cheeks, when it is raining, when it is windy, and while prostrating (*sajda*). [118](#)
- There is a tradition of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq ('a) where he has said that:

عَنْهُ عَنْ أَبِيهِ وَغَيْرِهِ عَنِ الْقَاسِمِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ عَنْ أَبِي الْعَبَّاسِ فَضْلِ الْبَقْبَاقِيِّ قَالَ قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ع يُسْتَجَابُ الدُّعَاءُ فِي أَرْبَعَةِ مَوَاطِنَ فِي الْوُتْرِ وَبَعْدَ الْفَجْرِ وَبَعْدَ الظُّهْرِ وَبَعْدَ الْمَغْرِبِ

“Prayers are answered in four places: in *salat al-witr*, after dawn, after dhuhr, and after maghrib.”

- It is okay to be envious out of admiration, but jealousy is wrong. Being envious from admiration leads you to perfection, but jealousy leads you to deficiency. Prophet Zachariah ('a) saw the high spiritual station of Hadhrat Maryam ('a) and envied her because of his admiration. In turn, this paved the way for him to pray for a child too. [119](#) There is a difference between envy from admiration and jealousy. An envious person is someone who admires someone else when he/she sees something good in others, and wishes to be like them. In this type of envy, he/she does not have negative thoughts for the other person. For example, if someone was envious from admiration and saw that his/her friend has a nice car, he/she would be happy for that person and would want them to continue to have the car, but would also wish that they too could have the same model car. On the other hand, if a person gets jealous of his/her friend, he/she would wish that his/her friend should not have the car, and that he/she should and is more deserving, etc.
- A woman has the capability to influence and impress a prophet of Allah. [120](#) Unfortunately, some believe that only men can get closer to Allah, because they don't have to face the hurdles that a woman has to face. At times, women may feel like there are many spiritual obstacles in her path, like menstruation, pregnancy, and childbirth. However, often, her

femininity plays a positive role in her proximity to God. For example, there are many rewards for childbirth and for all of the sacrifice and hardship that a woman goes through when tending to her child. This can all lead to her getting closer to God. Moreover, when a woman does not pray during her menstruation, it is not because she is an outcast and that Allah (SwT) does not love her. Rather, Allah made this rule for her comfort because He loves her. If she is not praying in those days, she is obeying Allah and getting closer to Him through that obedience, not disobeying Him and getting further to him!

- When we look at perfection in others, we desire the same. Thus, we turn back to Allah asking for the same perfection and actively seek it. [121](#) This is why we should surround ourselves with pious friends and those who will inspire us to become better. They will influence us into actively seeking piety. If we have friends that are negative influences, they will affect us in the opposite way and lead us further away from remembering God. There is a tradition from Nabi Isa ('a) [122](#) where he says that friends should have these three qualities:

1. When we look at them, we should be reminded of Allah.
2. When we talk to them, our knowledge should increase.
3. Their actions should make you desire the Hereafter. [123](#)

- We should always pray to have righteous, God-fearing children. This is of utmost importance, and has been the custom and traditional practice of the prophets. [124](#)
- The value of our descendants is in their piety, chastity and purity – i.e. in their proximity to Allah. [125](#) If someone has many children and grand-children, but none of them are on the right path and have gone astray, then what is their value?
- In prayers, we should call to Allah (SwT) by praising Him. ***“Surely Thou art the hearer of***

**prayers” (3:38)** [126](#). One should extol and specify the qualities of Allah (SwT) and should express how inferior he/she is in front of Him, the Almighty. The supplications of the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams (‘a) teach us the art of invoking and supplicating to Allah. For example, the supplications of Imam Ali Zayn al-’Abidin (‘a) [127](#) in *Sahifat as-Sajjadiyah* teach us the art of prayer in beautiful detail. [128](#)

- The ayah states **“Surely Thou art the hearer of prayers” (3:38)**. The word ‘*hearer*’ does not mean that Allah (SwT) only hears all the sounds and words of prayers, which He undeniably does. Rather, it also means that Allah listens and grants to all the wishes of the one who is supplicating. [129](#)

## According to the Bible

The Bible has mentioned Prophet Zachariah (‘a) [130](#) with honor and dignity. Both him and his wife Elizabeth were known for their piety.

Matthew Henry writes:

...That they were a very religious couple...It is a happy thing when those who are joined to each other in marriage are both joined to the Lord; ...that they may be examples to the flock... [131](#)

He writes about Elizabeth as follows:

Elisabeth was barren, and they began to despair of ever having children, for they were both now well stricken in years, ...Many eminent persons were born of mothers that had been long childless, as Isaac, Jacob,... and so here John the Baptist, to make their birth the more remarkable and the blessing of it the more valuable to their parents, and to show that when God keeps his people long waiting for mercy he sometimes is pleased to recompense them for their patience by doubling the worth of it when it comes.

## Related Verses from The Bible

- Luke: Chapter 1, Verse 6: “Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord’s commandments and regulations blamelessly” [132](#)
- Luke: Chapter 1, Verse 36: ‘And behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren’. [133](#)

## Comparison of the Qur'an and the Bible

- The Bible has mentioned Prophet Zachariah (‘a) with honor. Both he and his wife Elizabeth were known for their piety. The Bible states, “*Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord’s commandments and regulations blamelessly*” [134](#)
- The Bible does not mention anything about the guardianship of Mary where they drew lots, whereas the Qur’an talks about how they drew lots.
- The Bible does not shed any light upon the food or the blessings sent to Mary from heaven, whereas the Qur’an does talk about it.
- The Bible does not mention that the Prophet Zachariah (‘a) was chosen as the guardian of Mary, whereas the Qur’an has mentioned it.
- According to the Muslim traditions, Elizabeth was the aunt (mother’s sister) of Mary, whereas the Bible says that she was her cousin.

## Chosen by Allah

### According to the Qur’an

Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) worshipped Allah (SwT) day and night. She became a symbol of piety, modesty, and faith among the Bani Isra’iil. She was popularly known as *Maryam Muqaddas*, which means the Holy Mary.

Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) had reached such spiritual heights that angels visited her and spoke with her. One day, the angels gave her good news, and said,

***“O Maryam! Surely, Allah has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above the women of the world” (3:42).*** [135](#)

Indeed, it was because of her piety, modesty, purity, and faith that Allah (SwT) chose her above the women of the world of her time. The first sentence in the ayah states that “*Allah has chosen you*”. This was because of the superior qualities that she possessed. In the second sentence, He states that He

has “*chosen you above the women of the world*”. This shows that she had superior qualities that surpassed all of the women of the world of her time. After giving her glad-tidings, the angels said,

***“O Maryam, be obedient to your Lord, and prostrate and bow down with those who bow in worship” (3:43).*** [136](#)

This was to thank Allah (SwT) in return for the great blessing of her spiritual status. [137](#)

### Related verses from the Qur'an

- Surah Aal-‘Imran, Ayah #42-43:

***“And when the angels said: O Maryam! Surely Allah has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above the women of the world” (3:42).***

***“O Maryam! Worship thy Lord devoutly: Prostrate thyself, and bow down in prayer with those who bow down” (3:43).*** [138](#)

### Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived

#### Maryam (‘a) chosen by Allah

Surah Aal-‘Imran, ayah # 42:

وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ

***“And when the angels said, ‘O Maryam, Allah has chosen you and purified you, and He has chosen you above the women of the world” (3:42).***

- Various commentaries of the Qur'an, like *al-Manar*, *Ruh al-Bayan*, *Qurtubi*, *Muragi* and *Kabir*, state that there are four women who are superior to all the women of the world. They are Hadhrat Maryam (‘a), Hadhrat Asiyah (‘a) (Pharoah’s wife), Hadhrat Khadijah (‘a) [the Holy Prophet’s (S) wife], and Hadhrat Fatimah (‘a) (the Prophet’s (S) daughter). [139](#) Traditions of the Holy Prophet (S) and Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (‘a) narrate that Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) was the most outstanding and chosen woman of her time, and Hadhrat Fatimah (‘a) is the most superior among all women of all times, from the beginning of this world until the end. [140](#) Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) was the most outstanding woman of her time, similarly to how the Bani Isra’il are mentioned in the Qur'an:

***“O Children of Israel remember My blessing which I bestowed upon you, and that I gave you an advantage over all the nations” (2:47; 2: 122).***

It is obvious here, that Allah is talking about the nations at those times. [141](#)

- Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) was chosen because of her dedication and purity, and it is obvious that only a woman like her could give birth to an extraordinary child who was none other than Nabi Isa (‘a). [142](#)
- Angels not only communicated with men of a high spiritual rank (i.e. Prophets), rather, they communicated with women of a high spiritual rank too. A woman can reach such a rank that Allah (SwT) sends messages to her through the angels. [143](#) Another woman that Allah (SwT) sent message to was the mother of Nabi Musa (‘a), when He asks her to leave her child in a casket and to put the casket into the river.
- We can understand that Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) was infallible, because the ayah states that Allah ‘*purified*’ her, which means from sins and spiritual impurity. [144](#)
- She is a role model for men and women of all times. If Allah has made her a role-model, then that means that it is possible for believers today to be like her as well.

#### **Allah (SwT) asks Maryam (‘a) to Pray with the Congregation**

**Surah Aal-‘Imran, ayah # 43:**

يَا مَرْيَمُ اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ

***“O Mary! Worship thy Lord devoutly: Prostrate thyself, and bow down in prayer with those who bow down” (3:43).***

- In the previous ayah, Allah (SwT) granted Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) three things: He says that He has “*chosen you, purified you, chosen you above the women of the world*”. In return, Allah asks three things from her: 1. worship, 2. prostration, and 3. bowing. [145](#)

- To those who are closer to Allah (SwT), their worship, humility and modesty should be more than others. For example, *salat al-layl*<sup>146</sup> was obligatory on the Prophet (S)<sup>147</sup> as they are our role-models and mentors.
- In the previous ayah, Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) was chosen by Allah (SwT). The best way for her to show her gratitude was by bowing, prostrating and praying.<sup>148</sup> We have numerous traditions that speak of thanking Allah for the blessings that He has bestowed upon us. It is not always necessary to bow and prostrate continuously, one may also thank Allah (SwT) by saying “*Alhamdulillah Rabbil Aalameen*” (All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds). In a tradition from Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (‘a), the most complete way of thanking Allah is to say “*Alhamdulillah Rabbil Aalimeen!*”<sup>149</sup>

Moreover, in addition to thanking Allah (SwT), we should thank our fellow humans as well. There is a tradition that says: ‘If the creations are not thanked, then the Creator too has not been thanked’. We need to express our gratitude, not just feel it in our hearts. Traditions say that there are three steps to expressing gratitude:

1. Thanking by our tongues: Here, we will say ‘thank you’ verbally.
  2. Thanking by our hearts: We should be grateful in our heart. We should realize what has been done for us, and feel the need for gratitude and thanking them for the blessing.
  3. Thanking by our actions: The blessings that were bestowed upon us should be spent in *halal* (permissible) things, and we should make the best use of the blessing in order to please the giver. For instance, the organs of our body are blessings from Allah (SwT). We should not use our eyes to look at *haram* (forbidden) things. We should not use our ears for listening to *haram* things like backbiting, music, etc. If Allah (SwT) has given us wealth, we should spend it in the way of Allah (SwT) and on what is permissible.
- Worship should be only for Allah (SwT). The ayah states, ‘*worship thy Lord*’.<sup>150</sup> Unfortunately, we tend to forget this. We start worshipping the world, wealth, family, children, status etc. and these things become our first priority. This is called *shirk al-*

*khafiy*, i.e. the hidden polytheism. This means that we worship them along with Allah (SwT), and make these priorities partners of Allah (SwT). This is why we indulge in sin. For example, we may do something forbidden to please our employer but ignore the fact that it is forbidden to do such an act.

- Worship is the basis for moulding and shaping a human being. [151](#) Those who do not have God in their lives are lost. Allah is the nurturer, and He is our creator. Who could know our needs better than Him? If we forget Him, then He will forget us too. For example, if we do not call someone for a long time, even though they constantly call us, then this person will also stop calling us. However, it is up to us to determine if we leave the avenues to Allah open or closed.
- The ayah depicts that prayers in congregation were practiced before the advent of Islam. The ayah states, '*bow down in prayer with those who bow down*'. [152](#) Islam encourages congregational prayers (*salat al-jama'ah*). Traditions narrate that if more than ten people stand together in prayers, their reward is going to be innumerable.
- The ayah shows that women can pray in congregation and go to the mosque. When men are present, like Hadhrat Maryam ('a), [153](#) they should maintain their modesty and chastity.
- The chosen ones and the friends of Allah (SwT) should be with people, and worship Allah together, i.e. they should not live in seclusion. The ayah states, '*bow down in prayer with those who bow down*'. [154](#) Allah (SwT) has chosen these individuals, and they are our role-models. As such, they need to be with people, so that we can learn from them. They were also human beings like us, and as such, if they could reach this level in their piety, worship, modesty and faith, then so can we.
- In this ayah, all three words 'اَقْنُتْ اِسْجُدْ وَ ارْكَعْ' (worship, prostrate, and bow) indicate humbleness and obedience. If the ayah mentions prostration before bowing, this does not necessarily mean that in those days, in formal prayers, bowing was performed after prostration. It is like saying 'pray, perform the ablution, and keep yourself ritually clean'. This means one must take care of all these duties, not necessarily in the order

mentioned. [155](#)

## **According to the Bible**

The Bible mentions that the angel descended on Mary and gives her the glad tidings that she was blessed and chosen among women, by God.

Matthew Henry writes:

The angel Gabriel carries his message as cheerfully to Mary ...as to Zacharias in the temple at Jerusalem...he surprised her with this salutation, 'Hail, thou art highly favoured.' This was intended to raise in her, a value for herself; .... She is dignified: "Thou art highly favoured." God, in his choice of thee to be the mother of the Messiah, has put an honour upon thee ...the singular favour done her in preferring her to conceive and bear our blessed Lord..." [156](#)

## **Related Verses from the Bible**

- Luke: Chapter 1, verses 28–30: And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. [157](#)

## **Comparison of the Qur'an and the Bible**

- The Bible, like the Qur'an, mentions that an angel descends on Mary and gives her the glad tidings that she was blessed and chosen among women, by God

## **Modesty and Chastity Reflected**

### **According to the Qur'an**

Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) decides to move to the eastern side of *Bayt al-Muqaddas* (the Temple Mount). This was probably a nice, quiet, and secluded place – ideal for worship in peace, without distractions. Here, she puts some type of a barrier between her and others, so that her place of worship is totally secluded.

At this time, Allah (SwT) sends an angel in the form of a handsome man. When this handsome man invades her privacy, she is shocked and frightened. This young woman was a symbol of piety, modesty, and chastity, and now she saw a stranger in her private chambers. She must have been frightened, and possibly shaking. She immediately cries out saying,

***“I seek refuge in Allah, the all Beneficent from you. Do not touch me if you are God wary and if you fear Allah” (19: 18).***

Even though the stranger was handsome, and they were in a secluded area, she did fall to temptation. Instead, she encourages him to be God-wary, just in case his intentions were not pure. Then she takes the name of Allah (SwT) to remind him of God. This shows how chaste and modest she was: she invites him to God-wariness, advising him to control his desires. She seeks refuge in Allah (SwT), the Almighty, the all Powerful, and knows that there is no power other than Him. Relying on Him was the best move she took in this great difficulty. [158](#)

After saying these powerful lines, Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) waits for the stranger’s reaction, while trembling with fear and panic. Finally, the stranger breaks the silence by saying, ***“I am only a messenger of your Lord” (19: 19).*** Hearing this, and realizing that he is an angel, she is totally relieved.

### What is meant by ‘Our Spirit’?

In ayah 17 of Surah Maryam, Allah mentions ‘Our spirit’. The ayah states:

***“Thus did she seclude herself from them, whereupon We sent to her Our Spirit and he became incarnate for her as a well-proportioned human” (19: 17).***

Almost all the commentators believe that the spirit referred to in this ayah is Angel Jibra’il, i.e. the Archangel Gabriel. He is called ‘spirit’ because he is a spirit and also a being. He is also the messenger of Allah (SwT) to the prophets, and brought messages which gave life to humanity. When Allah refers to him as His spirit, it shows his greatness, distinction and honor. [159](#)

### A Question

The story of Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) is found in two Surahs, [160](#) Surah Maryam and Surah Aal-‘Imran. The question raised is if these two events belong to the same incident or if they are two different incidents. The answer to this question is that both chapters are narrating the same incident. Surah Aal-‘Imran summarizes and makes reference to the incident, whereas Surah Maryam gives the details of the incident. [161](#)

### Related Verses from the Qur’an

- Surah Maryam, ayah #16–19:

***“And mention Maryam in the Book when she drew aside from her family to an eastern place” (19: 16).***

***“So she took a veil to screen herself (from them); then We sent to her Our spirit, and there appeared to her a well-made man” (19: 17).***

***“She said: ‘I seek the protection of the All-beneficent from you, should you be God wary!’” (19: 18).***

***“He said: ‘I am only a messenger of your Lord’” (19: 19).***

### **Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived**

#### **Maryam (‘a) Honored**

**Surah Maryam, ayah #16:**

وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَرْيَمَ إِذِ انْتَبَذَتْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا مَكَانًا شَرْقِيًّا

***“And mention Maryam in the Book when she drew aside from her family to an eastern place” (19: 16).***

- One of the duties of religious leaders is to respect and honor important personalities in history by remembering them. The ayah states, ‘*And mention Maryam in the Book.*’ [162](#) We should remember her and others and remind ourselves about them so that they are not forgotten– they are our role models and can play an important role in our growth.
- Great women should be remembered, as should great men. The ayah states, ‘*And mention Maryam in the Book*’. This ayah is similar to the ayah that says, ‘*And mention Ibrahim in the Book.*’ *Surah Maryam, Ayah 41* [163](#) This shows that Islam does not discriminate between pious men and women. Whoever is more pious is closer to Allah. Both men and women are His creations and are equal in His eyes.
- It is preferable to pray in a quiet and secluded place. [164](#) If the place is secluded, then we are not distracted, and can concentrate better. In seclusion, we can open our hearts to Allah. On the other hand, Islam encourages us to pray obligatory prayers in the largest possible congregation. Allah (SwT) guarantees large rewards when we pray our obligatory

prayers in congregation, and this shows that Islam wants human beings to live in society in harmony. In the teachings of Islam, one cannot perform the recommended prayers in congregation– only the obligatory ones. Islam does not want us to stay in the mosque at all times, and does not promote extremes.

#### An Angel in the Shape of a Man Visits Maryam ('a)

#### **Surah Maryam, ayah # 17:**

فَاتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا فَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا

***“So she took a veil to screen herself (from them); then We sent to her Our spirit, and there appeared to her a well-made man” (19: 17).***

- To segregate and to have a curtain where the women are praying has an importance of its own. Hadhrat Maryam ('a) also chose a secluded corner in the mosque and then hung a curtain to partition herself from others, giving herself privacy. [165](#)
- Angel Jibra'il has a high rank given by Allah (SwT). The ayah says, ***“then We sent to her Our spirit” (19: 17).*** [166](#)
- Angels can take different forms, and human beings can see them too. For some messages, they would descend in the form of humans. [167](#) For example, at the time of Nabi Ibrahim and Nabi Lut, [168](#) they also came in the form of men.
- Training (*tarbiyah*) is done gradually, step-by-step, and not in an instantaneous process. In the previous ayahs, Allah talks about the birth of Nabi Yahya [169](#) who was born to old parents. Then he talks about the birth of Nabi Isa ('a) without a father. [170](#)
- Jibra'il not only visited and took messages to male prophets, but he visited females as well. [171](#)

- A woman can reach a status in which angels talk to her. [172](#) It is not just men. Whoever is more pious, is closer to Allah (SwT), regardless of gender.

### Maryam ('a) Reminds the Angel

#### **Surah Maryam, ayah # 18:**

قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقِيًّا

***“She said: ‘I seek the protection of the All-beneficent from you, should you be God wary!’”***  
(19: 18).

- To people who are chaste, the mere thought of sin makes them shiver and seek refuge in Allah. [173](#)
- The best place of refuge is in the mercy and blessing of Allah. The ayah states, *the Beneficent God*. [174](#)
- To take refuge in Allah (SwT) is a custom among the prophets and the friends of Allah. [175](#)
- Be considerate of the privacy of others. [176](#) Some may not realize this or take it into consideration, and will arrive at your doorstep without prior permission or notice.
- To be in an isolated place with a stranger who is a *non-mahram* [177](#) is potentially dangerous, and should be avoided. [178](#)
- While doing *nahy anil munkar*, (forbidding evil), it is always good to remind the other person of God-wariness and piety, as piety is the most effective way of refraining from sins. [179](#)
- Out of all the attributes and qualities of Allah (SwT), Hadhrat Maryam ('a) uses

*rahman*. [180](#) In this critical situation, she is able to invoke Allah's (SwT) mercy towards her, and is able to stay away from sins, just like Nabi Yusuf ('a) [181](#), when he was in a similar predicament. In that predicament, he says,

***“Yet I do not absolve my [own carnal] soul, for the carnal soul indeed prompts [men] to evil, except inasmuch as my Lord has mercy. Indeed my Lord is all-forgiving, all-merciful” (12:53).***

- Instead of the attribute “Raheem,” Hadhrat Maryam uses “Rahman”, because “Rahman” includes mercy in a wider aspect, it includes mercy of this world and hereafter, whereas “Raheem”, is for the mercy only in the hereafter. [182](#)

### The Angel Gives Maryam ('a) the News of a Pure Son

Surah Maryam, ayah # 19:

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكَ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا

***“He said: ‘I am only a messenger of your Lord’” (19: 19).***

that I may give you a pure son.

Introducing ourselves is a good habit to have and it can get rid of people's anxiety. The ayah quotes Angel Jibra'il comforting and telling Maryam, ***“I am only a messenger of your Lord” (19: 19).***

- Having a pure child close to Allah is more valuable than just having a child. [183](#)

### According to the Bible

The Bible narrates that the Archangel Gabriel was sent to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin who was engaged to a man named Joseph, who was a descendent of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

Matthew Henry writes:

She was a virgin, a pure unspotted one, but espoused to one of the same royal stock, like her, however, of low estate; so that upon both accounts there was an equality between them; his name was Joseph; he also was of the house of David... [184](#)

## Related Verses from the Bible

- Luke: Chapter 1, verses 26–27: **And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.** [185](#)

## Comparison of the Qur'an and the Bible

- The Bible mentions specifically that the Archangel Gabriel was sent, whereas the Qur'an is a little more general and says that "Our Spirit" was sent.
- The Bible talks about her being engaged to Joseph, whereas the Qur'an does not mention this at all.
- The Bible does not talk about her reaction when she sees the angel, whereas the Qur'an describes it.
- Both the Bible and Qur'an state that she was a chaste virgin, and that she became miraculously pregnant.

## Conception

### According to the Qur'an

Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) was relieved when the Angel informed her that he was the messenger sent by Allah (SwT), but when the Angel informed her that he was there to give her a son, she was astonished. She was wondering how this could be possible, and said,

***"How shall I have a child seeing that no human being has ever touched me, nor have I been unchaste?" (19:20).***

She must have been thinking that there were only two natural biological ways of getting pregnant: either by marriage, or adultery, and she had not experienced either of those. Her heart probably beat faster, and she was confused. Just then, Jibra'il said,

***“Allah says: ‘It is easy for Me’” (19:9).***

Thus, Allah (SwT) was reminding her of His power. If Allah (SwT) wishes anything, it is possible. He just has to say ‘Be’ and it is. Perhaps He was trying to tell her, “Have you not seen the off-season fruit we sent you? Haven’t you seen the miracles of other Prophets? Didn’t you hear the angels testifying your chastity? Don’t you know that your great-grandfather [186](#) was created from nothing? [187](#) If I could create him without a father and a mother, then why can’t I create your child without a father?” The angel continued.

***“He said, ‘So shall it be’. Your Lord says, ‘It is simple for Me’. And so that We may make him a sign for mankind and a mercy from Us, and it is a matter which has been decreed” (19:21). [188](#)***

Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) conceived a child then, and she moved to a distant place to give birth. Some ask: How did she get pregnant? There are different views. Some say that Jibra’il blew in her shirt. [189](#) Others say that Jibra’il blew in her mouth, but the Qur’an has not mentioned how, as this detail is unnecessary. The important thing was that she conceived miraculously. [190](#)

### [Related Verses from the Qur’an](#)

- Surah Maryam, ayah #19–21 (19:19–21):

***“He said: ‘I am only a messenger of your Lord’” (19:19).***

***“She said, ‘How shall I have a child seeing that no human being has ever touched me, nor have I been unchaste?’” (19:20).***

***“He said, ‘So shall it be’. Your Lord says, ‘It is simple for Me’. And so that We may make him a sign for mankind and a mercy from Us, and it is a matter which has been decreed” (19:21). [191](#)***

### [Explanatory comments and lessons derived](#)

#### [The Angel says that he is a Messenger from Allah \(SwT\)](#)

**Surah Maryam, ayah #19:**

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكَ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا

***“He said: ‘I am only a messenger of your Lord’” (19:19).***

- Angels are not just messengers of God, sometimes they are sent on specific missions to

carry out certain tasks. The ayah states, ‘*That I will give you a pure son*’. [192](#)

- To have a son is valuable, but to have a *pure son* is more valuable. [193](#)

#### Virgin and a Child!

Surah Maryam, ayah # 20:

قَالَتْ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا

***“She said, ‘How shall I have a child seeing that no human being has ever touched me, nor have I been unchaste?’” (19:20).***

- Adultery and fornication are detested actions in all religions. The ayah states ‘*nor have I been unchaste*’. [194](#)
- This ayah depicts that Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) was unmarried, whereas some religions say that she was engaged and later married to Joseph.

#### It is simple for Allah

Surah Maryam, ayah # 21:

قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّنٌ وَلِنَجْعَلَهُ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِنَّا وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَّقْضِيًّا

***“He said, ‘So shall it be’. Your Lord says, ‘It is simple for Me’. And so that We may make him a sign for mankind and a mercy from Us, and it is a matter which has been decreed” (19:21).***

- Allah is all-Powerful; He has power over everything and can create anything, no matter how unlikely it may seem. [195](#)
- The conception of Nabi Isa (‘a) itself was Nabi Isa’s first miracle. [196](#)

- Extraordinary acts and miracles show that Allah is our Lord and Master and in control of everything in the world. The goal behind these miracles is to guide human beings. [197](#)
- The existence of Nabi Isa (‘a) is a mercy. Someone who guides human beings, someone who kindles faith in the heart of human beings, is a means from Allah. [198](#)
- Nobody can change what Allah decides. The ayah says, *‘It is a matter which has been decreed.’* [199](#)

### According to the Bible

When Gabriel saw Mary he saluted her saying “*Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women*”. Mary was surprised to hear this. When she was wondering on the strange salutation, the angel instead of clarifying his intention made her more perplexed by informing that God favors her and she will be pregnant soon with a son who shall be called Jesus. He will be the son of God and will be given the throne of David. He will rule forever over the house of Jacob.

She was surprised to hear this. She says that she was never with a man before and asks how this is possible. This was not the language of her distrust, or any doubt of what the angel said, but of a desire to be further instructed. [200](#) The angel replies that everything is possible with the will of the Lord. To give her evidence he says that even Elizabeth who was known to be barren has conceived in her old age. Dr. Lightfoot believes that all the instances in the Old Testament of those having children that had been long barren, which was above nature, were designed to prepare the world for the belief of a virgin’s bearing a son, which was against nature. [201](#) Then he described the process about how will she get pregnant by saying, “*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.*” She objects not the danger of spoiling her marriage, and blemishing her reputation, but leaves the issue with God, and submits entirely to his will. [202](#) Then the angel left her.

### Related verses from the Bible

- Luke, Chapter 1, verses 28–38: And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the

Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore, also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.[203](#)

### Comparison of the Qur'an and the Bible

- The Bible says that Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) had a fiancé named Joseph whereas the Qur’an omits this entirely.
- The Bible says that Joseph was from the line of Prophet David (‘a) whereas the Qur’an has not mentioned him at all.
- The Bible calls Prophet Jesus as the Son of God whereas the Qur’an has nullified this belief in several ayahs.[204](#)
- The Bible believes that Prophet Jesus shall rule forever whereas the Qur’an has no such indication.[205](#)
- Both the Qur’an and the Bible believe that the angel gave her the news that she will be given a son.
- Both the Bible and the Qur’an describe Hadhrat Maryam’s (‘a) response as confusion as to how was it possible when no man had touched her.
- Both the Qur’an and the Bible mention that Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) was convinced when she

was reminded that it was simple for Allah to create a child. Nothing was impossible for Him.

## **Birth of Nabi Isa (‘a)**

### **According to the Qur’an**

Nabi Isa’s (‘a) birth was a miraculous one. After getting pregnant, Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) moves to a far-off place. Many commentators believe that place to be Naserah (Nazareth). In that city, she seldom stepped out and mostly stayed indoors.

There is also a controversy regarding the length of her pregnancy. The controversy goes back to different views in different traditions. Some say her pregnancy was for one hour, others say nine hours. Some traditions say that it was six months, others seven months, others eight months, and some say it was a regular pregnancy of nine. Regardless, the length of her pregnancy has no bearing on its miraculous nature.[206](#)

When she started getting labor pains, she went alone to the wilderness. There were no humans, greenery, or even water. She was all alone. Usually in such a situation, women seek the help of their husbands, families, and friends, but her delivery was an exception. She wanted to be away from everybody to avoid being questioned.

Alone and sad, she reached near the trunk of a dried palm tree. She was anxious as to how she would face people with this child. She would be accused of adultery. How would she answer their questions? What would she say when they asked who the child’s father was? Who would believe her when she said that he was born without a father? Would they believe that it was a miracle? She was a young woman, a symbol of chastity and modesty, who grew up under the supervision and guardianship of a prophet, brought up in the temple, and who spent all her life in worship. All these thoughts crowded her mind. She burst out into tears, saying:

***“I wish I was dead and long forgotten” (19:23).***

Apart from these troubling thoughts, her solitude, hunger and thirst, there was no midwife to help her with the delivery, and no suitable place to rest. Some people find this predicament surprising, and ask, “How could Maryam, who had reached such spiritual heights, and had seen the bounties and blessings of Allah (SwT), how could she utter such words like *“I wish I was dead and long forgotten.”* If they had been in this situation, they would know how Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) felt, and the difficulty that she was going through.[207](#) Women who have given birth can easily perceive and understand what Hadhrat Maryam was going through. Maryam had hope in Allah’s mercy. Allah (SwT), who had given her this child miraculously without a father, would protect her from the accusations of the people. Moreover, this

child was going to be a great prophet. This was surely a great gift from Allah (SwT) to her.

While she was having these troubling thoughts, suddenly she heard a voice calling out to her from beneath her, saying,

***“Do not grieve! Your Lord has made a spring to flow at your feet” (19:24).***

Look above, the dried palm tree has changed into a fruit bearing palm tree! Now,

***“Shake the trunk of the palm tree, freshly picked dates will drop upon you” (19:25).***

Enjoy the fresh dates and drink from the refreshing spring that Allah (SwT) has created for you!

***“Eat, drink, and be comforted” (19:26).***

Look at your beautiful new-born son! Take pleasure in him and thank Allah for this handsome gift. But if you are worried about the future, where people will question you about the baby, then don't worry.

***“Then if you see any human, say, ‘Indeed I have vowed a fast to the All-beneficent, so I will not speak to any human today’” (19:26).***

Communicate somehow with them that you will not speak. You do not need to worry about defending yourself, Allah (SwT) has given this son to you and He has given him the responsibility of defending you. Relax and rely on Allah. These words of revelation were like light in the darkness – hearing them, she was at total peace.

### [Related Verses from Qur'an](#)

- Surah Maryam, ayah #22–26:

***“Thus she conceived him, then withdrew with him to a distant place” (19:22)***

***“The birth pangs brought her to the trunk of a date palm. She said, ‘I wish I had died before this and become a forgotten thing, beyond recall’” (19:23).***

***“Thereupon he called her from below her [saying,]” Do not grieve! Your Lord has made a spring to flow at your feet” (19:24).***

***“Shake the trunk of the palm tree freshly picked dates will drop upon you” (19:25).***

***“Eat, drink, and be comforted. Then if you see any human, say, ‘Indeed I have vowed a fast to the All-beneficent, so I will not speak to any human today’” (19:26).***

## Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived

### Maryam ('a) Conceives!

#### Surah Maryam, ayah #22

فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَانْتَبَذَتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا

***“Thus she conceived him, then withdrew with him to a distant place” (19:22).***

- Sometimes chaste people need to withdraw from people to avoid accusations.[208](#)

### Solitude and Hardship

#### Surah Maryam, ayah #23:

فَأَجَاءَهَا الْمَخَاضُ إِلَى جِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ قَالَتْ يَا لَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسِيًّا مَّنْسِيًّا

***“The birth pangs brought her to the trunk of a date palm. She said, ‘I wish I had died before this and become a forgotten thing, beyond recall’” (19:23).***

- Sometimes, troubles and calamities pave the way towards blessings. The pangs of labor, fear, anxiety, loneliness and sadness led Hadhrat Maryam ('a) towards the trunk of dry palm tree which Allah (SwT) used to provide her with fresh dates.[209](#)
- Sometimes, it might be difficult to confide in another person, and some burdens are so heavy, that a person might wish for death instead – even though they do not have the right to take their own life.[210](#)
- Death may seem better than a defamed life.[211](#)

### Allah (SwT) Causes A Spring to Flow at Her Feet!

#### Surah Maryam, ayah # 24:

فَنَادَاهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَّا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا

***“Thereupon he called her from below her [saying,]” Do not grieve! Your Lord has made a spring to flow at your feet” (19:24).***

- Some commentators believe that the voice that called out to her from below was the voice of Jibra'il. However, the structure of the ayahs seems to suggest that the voice belonged to Nabi Isa ('a). Some commentators have said that it was Nabi Isa ('a) comforting her so that she is at peace and perhaps indicating that when the time came to defend her honour, she would just have to point to her son, who would talk for her.[212](#)
- For a chaste woman, it is grievous and horrendous to be accused of being unchaste. The ayah states, *‘Do not grieve!’*[213](#)

#### Dry Palm Tree Gives Fresh Dates

**Surah Maryam, ayah #25:**

هَزَي إِلَيْكَ بِجِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ تُسَاقِطُ عَلَيْكَ رَطْبًا جَنِيًّا

***“Shake the trunk of the palm tree freshly picked dates will drop upon you” (19:25).***

- Even in difficulties, we may have to work hard to get sustenance. The ayah says, *‘Shake the trunk’*.[214](#)
- Being comforted and at ease is more important than food. If a person is sad, even the most delicious food will not seem appetizing. The previous ayah says, *‘Do not grieve!’*, and after He comforts her, Allah then says, ***“freshly picked dates will drop upon you” (19:25).***[215](#)
- The first thing that is recommended for mothers to eat after child-birth is fresh dates. In another tradition, the Prophet (S) has said, ‘Dates should be the first thing that women should eat after giving birth.’[216](#) Also, Imam Ali ('a) has said, “The best food for a

pregnant woman is fresh dates, and there is no medicine better than dates for her”[217](#)

- It is ironic that when Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) was healthy, Allah (SwT) sent heavenly food for her to eat effortlessly. However, in the moment when she is tired, worn out from her delivery, and stressed Allah asks her to shake the tree trunk to get some food. Allah’s methods of testing us may sometimes be surprising![218](#)
- Until now, Allah was showering his blessings on Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) in what seems to be a rather simple fashion. The question may arise as to why Allah (SwT) asked her to shake the palm tree, and exert effort in this scenario? The answer to this question may indicate a larger point which is that one shouldn’t rely on the help of the unseen without making an effort. It is true that everything is from Allah (SwT) and that if Allah (SwT) decides something, it will happen. However, one of the conditions to let it happen is in the hands of the human beings and that condition is that humans need to make an effort, to show that they are ready.[219](#)

Some people do not make any effort, and say that they are relying only on Allah (SwT). However, this is flawed. Rather, one truly relies on Allah while also making a real effort. For example, if a man needs a job but instead of searching for a job and sending applications, he sits on a prayer mat and prays to Allah (SwT) to send him sustenance. This is an incorrect way of thinking: we have to take initiative, while knowing that the results are in the hands of Allah (SwT). For example, when the Prophet was out on a journey with his companions, and they stopped near a pond to have some water and rest, the companions rushed to the pond. The Holy Prophet (S) tied his camel to a tree first before he went towards water. In response, the companions said, “O Prophet of Allah we could have done that for you! Why did you tie your camel? You should rely on Allah (SwT).” To this, the Holy Prophet (S) said: “I like to do my own chores. Further, before we rely on Allah (SwT), we should take the necessary steps– tie the camel and depend and rely on Allah (SwT).

#### [Fast of Silence](#)

#### **Surah Maryam, ayah # 26:**

فَكُلِّي وَاشْرَبِي وَعَيْنَا فِيمَا تَرَيْنَ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا

***“Eat, drink, and be comforted. Then if you see any human, say, ‘Indeed I have vowed a fast to the All-beneficent, so I will not speak to any human today’” (19:26).***

- Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq ('a) said, "A fast is not just refraining from eating and drinking." After saying this, he recited the ayah above.[220](#) In the times of previous prophets, there was a fast called the 'fast of silence'. In this fast, they refrained from talking for a period of time.
- Hadhrat Maryam ('a) was ordered to observe a fast of silence, perhaps because the people she was going to face were not mentally fit to grasp what she had to say and were not going to listen to anything. Perhaps, if she had spoken, they would not have believed her and would have tortured her with more questions and accusations.[221](#)
- A baby is the cause of happiness and comfort to parents. The ayah states, '**Be comforted**'.[222](#) Perhaps, by looking at her newborn she would be happy and comforted.
- A great blessing in sustenance is when you are happy and comforted. The ayah states, '**Eat, drink, and be comforted**'.[223](#)
- Making *nadhr* or a vow was a common practice for a long time among religious individuals. Whenever we are stuck, or feel like we are facing a dead end, we should seek the help of Allah (SwT) by vowing or making a promise to God. The ayah states, '**I have vowed a fast**'.[224](#)
- Vowing should be to seek closeness to Allah (SwT) and for Him. As such, Allah's name should be mentioned in it. The ayah states, '**I have vowed a fast to the All-beneficent**'.[225](#)
- To fulfill a promise is obligatory. The ayah states, '**Indeed I have vowed a fast...so I will not speak**'.[226](#)
- Sometimes, it is more helpful to remain silent in front of others, especially those who are out to get you. The ayah says, '**I will not speak to any human today**'.[227](#)

## According to the Bible

According to the Gospel of Matthew, Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they got married, Joseph found out that she was pregnant. He did not want to cause more controversy, so he decided to break his relationship with her quietly.[228](#) When having these thoughts, he had a dream in which an angel informed him that she was pregnant from the Holy Spirit. The angel then asked him to take her as his wife. Then he told him that a son will be born to her and that he should name him Jesus. When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel had instructed him. He took her as his wife, but did not touch her until she gave birth to Jesus.[229](#)

Matthew Henry writes about Joseph not *‘willing to make her a public example’* that:

He might have done so; for, by the law, a betrothed virgin, if she played the harlot, was to be stoned to death. But he was not willing to take the advantage of the law against her; if she be guilty... Being a just man, that is, a strict observer of the law, he would not proceed to marry her, but resolved to put her away; and yet, in tenderness for her, determined to do it as privately as possible.[230](#)

According to the Gospel of Luke, it was time to register their names in their towns for the census. Joseph travelled with Mary, his fiancée, from Nazareth to Bethlehem, which was his own town. Bethlehem was the city of David, where he was born, and therefore there he must be born who was the Son of David.[231](#) She was full term pregnant then. She went into labor and gave birth to her first son. She swaddled him and put him in the manger as there was no room available for them[232](#) in the inn.[233](#)

## Related Verses from the Bible

- Matthew, Chapter 1, verses 18–25: <sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. <sup>19</sup> Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately. <sup>20</sup> But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. <sup>21</sup> And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins. <sup>22</sup> Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, <sup>23</sup> Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. <sup>24</sup> Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: <sup>25</sup> And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus.[234](#)

- Luke, Chapter 2, verses 1–7: In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. <sup>2</sup> (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) <sup>3</sup> And everyone went to their own town to register. <sup>4</sup> So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. <sup>5</sup> He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, <sup>7</sup> and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.[235](#)

### Comparison of the Qur'an and the Bible

- The Bible does not talk about the feelings, anxiety, and fear of Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) during her pregnancy and labor, whereas the Qur’an discusses her physical and emotional state throughout.
- The Bible does not talk about her fear of facing the accusations of the Bani Israel after her delivery whereas the Qur’an discusses it.
- The Bible does not talk about the miracles that took place after her labor, as the Qur’an does– where Allah (SwT) made the dry palm tree give fresh dates and made a spring flow under her feet, in the barren desert land.
- At the time of giving birth, when she was under mental pressure and in pain, Allah (SwT) comforts her by giving her blessings and hope: no mention of this revelation and comfort from God has been made in the Bible.
- The Bible talks about Joseph, her husband, who was ashamed of what Maryam (‘a) had done, and did not want to make her a “*public example*”, and that is why he wanted to “*put her away privately*”.[236](#) However, according to the Qur’an, there is no mention of a husband or a fiancé.

- The Bible discusses the angel informing Joseph about the birth of Jesus, but the Qur'an has not narrated this or mentioned Joseph in any manner.
- The Gospel of Luke mentions that he was born in Bethlehem. However, the Qur'an has not mentioned the precise place of birth.
- Bible mentions that Jesus was her firstborn. Meaning that she had other children too. But according to Qur'an she had only one child and that was Jesus.

## Hadhrat Maryam Returns with Nabi Isa ('a)

### According to the Qur'an

Hadhrat Maryam ('a) returned to her people with her baby in her arms. When they saw the scene, they were all astonished. These people knew her modesty, chastity, abstinence, virtue and piety. Some of them started to doubt her purity, while others were surprised and worried. Some jumped to conclusions and started to insult and accuse her of being unchaste, by saying ***"O' Mary, you have certainly come up with an odd thing!" (19:27)***. You have performed an ugly act. Shame on you! ***'O sister of Aaron! Your father was not an evil man, nor was your mother unchaste' (19:28)***. How come you performed this evil act? You disgraced the honor of your family. You shattered their respect and honor and your own.

Hadhrat Maryam ('a) did not speak a word, obeying Allah's command. The only thing that she did was to point towards her son, Nabi Isa ('a), the young babe in her arms. Some of the crowd became angry with her, thinking that she was making fun of them. Some of them said, ***"How can we speak to one who is yet a baby in the cradle?" (19:29)***. According to some traditions, some of them were very upset and said, "Her mocking at us is worse than the dirty act that she performed". [237](#)

This scene did not last long, as the Nabi Isa ('a) broke the silence by declaring, ***"Indeed I am a servant of Allah! He has given me the Book and made me a prophet. He has made me blessed, wherever I may be, and He has enjoined me to [maintain] the prayer and to [pay] the zakat<sup>238</sup> as long as I live" (19:31)***.

Then he defended his mother by stating, ***"And to be good to my mother."*** Then, to show how fortunate he was, he said, ***"He has not made me self-willed and wretched" (19:32)***.

Thus, he finished by concluding, ***"Peace is to me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I am raised alive" (19:33)***. The three days that he mentioned are the most critical days in one's life.

These three days are the days that, without the mercy of Allah (SwT), are very difficult. A person's destiny revolves around these three days. This miracle proved to the people that the birth of Nabi Isa ('a) was no ordinary event.

### Related Verses from the Qur'an

- Surah Maryam, ayah #27–33:

***“Then carrying him she brought him to her people. They said, ‘O Mary, you have certainly come up with an odd thing!’” (19:27).***

***“O sister of Aaron! Your father was not an evil man, nor was your mother unchaste” (19:28).***

***“Thereat she pointed to him. They said, ‘How can we speak to one who is yet a baby in the cradle?’” (19:29).***

***“He said, ‘Indeed I am a servant of Allah! He has given me the Book and made me a prophet’” (19:30).***

***“He has made me blessed, wherever I may be, and He has enjoined me to [maintain] the prayer and to [pay] the zakat as long as I live” (19:31).***

***“And to be good to my mother, and He has not made me self-willed and wretched” (19:32).***

***“And peace is on me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I am raised alive” (19:33).***

### Explanatory Comments and Lessons derived

#### Maryam ('a) Faces the Crowd

#### **Surah Maryam, ayah #27:**

فَأَتَتْ بِهِ قَوْمَهَا تَحْمِلُهُ قَالُوا يَا مَرْيَمُ لَقَدْ جِئْتِ شَيْئًا فَرِيًّا

***“Then carrying him she brought him to her people. They said, ‘O Mary, you have certainly come up with an odd thing!’” (19:27).***

- One should tell the truth, even if others may get upset. The ayah states, ‘*she brought him to her people.*’ [240](#)

- People make hasty assumptions according to what they see and without investigating the facts behind the scenes that may tell a different story. When they saw the baby in Hadhrat Maryam's ('a) arms, they immediately assumed the worst and said, "*O Mary you have certainly come up with an odd thing!*"[241](#)

#### People Taunt Maryam ('a)

#### **Surah Maryam, ayah #28:**

يَا أُخْتَ هَارُونَ مَا كَانَ أَبُوكِ امْرَأً سَوْءً وَمَا كَانَتْ أُمُّكِ بَغِيًّا

***"O sister of Aaron! Your father was not an evil man, nor was your mother unchaste" (19:28).***

- Some commentators say that Harun [Aaron] was the half-brother of Hadhrat Maryam ('a), which means he was born to another mother and not from Hadhrat Hannah. However, the Prophet (S) has said that "Maryam was from the family of Harun, the brother of Nabi Musa ('a)." [242](#) Some commentators say that Harun was known for his piety and chastity. If they wanted to say that someone was chaste and pious, people would call that person the brother and/or sister of Harun. It was an idiom used by the Bani Isra'il. [243](#) In this way, they were being sarcastic with Hadhrat Maryam ('a), and taunting her.
- One of the ways of nurturing and training is to remind them of the good deeds of their ancestors. The ayah states, *O sister of Aaron.* [244](#)
- From pious parents and families, we expect pious children. The piety of parents has an effect on the character of children, (though this is not the only factor at hand). [245](#) The ayah states, '*Your father was not an evil man nor was your mother unchaste.*' Some people want their children to be religious and pious, whereas they themselves do not practice. Parents need to be role-models of piety if they want their children to follow suit. If the roots of a tree are not healthy, slowly but surely, the tree will wither away.

#### Maryam ('a) Points at the Baby

#### **Surah Maryam, ayah #29:**

فَأَشَارَتْ إِلَيْهِ قَالُوا كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا

***“Thereat she pointed to him. They said, ‘How can we speak to one who is yet a baby in the cradle?’” (19:29).***

- Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) obeyed Allah’s command and observed the fast of silence. She trusted Allah that the baby will defend her innocence. With utmost belief in Allah she pointed to her son, but she did not speak. As such, we should also always do what Allah tells us, and trust and rely on Him in all our affairs.
- The people were confident that the baby would not speak. They had forgotten the power of Allah, and wrongly assumed that she was looking for excuses.

#### **The New Born Speaks**

#### **Surah Maryam, ayah # 30**

قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ آتَانِيَ الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا

***“He said, ‘Indeed I am a servant of Allah! He has given me the Book and made me a prophet’” (19:30).***

- Once someone asked Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (‘a) if Nabi Isa (‘a) was a messenger of Allah (SwT) while he was in the cradle (due to his words). The Imam replied that he was a *nabi* (a prophet) but not a *rasul* (messenger) until he was seven-years old.[246](#) A *nabi* is a prophet with all the requisite knowledge, but he does not have a duty to preach. However, if someone approaches him with a question, then he has to answer. A *rasul*, on the other hand, is a prophet with this knowledge who also has a duty to preach and invite others to the truth. Thus, a *rasul* is always a *nabi*, but a *nabi* is not always a *rasul*.
- The very first sentence that was uttered by Nabi Isa (‘a) was *“I am a servant of Allah”*. He said clearly that he was a servant of Allah, and not God himself. Unfortunately, people still deified him and called him the son of God.[247](#)

- If Allah wants, He can make a baby talk in the cradle too.[248](#)
- The first thing that we should say to introduce ourselves is that we are servants of Allah. This is the best feature of our creation that we can be proud of.[249](#)
- There is no age restriction on prophethood or imamate.[250](#)

### [The Blessed Infant](#)

#### Surah Maryam, ayah # 31:

وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا

***“He has made me blessed, wherever I may be, and He has enjoined me to [maintain] the prayer and to [pay] the zakat as long as I live” (19:31).***

- Something that is blessed is characterized by lots of benefits for others. Nabi Isa (‘a) has a blessed long life, and he will reappear after the advent of Imam Mahdi (aj).[251](#) His followers are many and he succeeded in spreading the truth, but his enemies did not succeed in killing him. This portrays that he is blessed.[252](#)
- All of our credits and distinctions are from Allah. The ayah states, ***“He has made me blessed.”***[253](#) All of the blessings that we have are from Allah (SwT): whatever we own, give, and receive– it all belongs to Allah (SwT). If we achieve something, we should know that we could not have done it without divine help.
- There is no problem inherent in confidence if there is no pride involved.[254](#) We should not forget that whatever we have, including any good qualities like health, beauty or wealth– they are all blessings from Allah (SwT). So, if we want to show gratefulness for this and give credit to Allah where it is due, we should say, ‘Allah has blessed me’.
- Prophets are the fountainhead and the source of blessings.[255](#) Allah said in a *hadith al-*

*qudsi*[256](#) “O Muhammad, if it was not for you, I would not have created the skies and the earth”

- Spiritual excellence is not bound by time or place. The ayah states ***‘wherever I may be.....as long as I live’***[257](#)
- Prayers and charity are common things in the heavenly religions.[258](#)
- Connection with Allah [by performing prayers] is a part of faith, as is giving to the poor [in charity].[259](#) When one helps the poor, one is actually helping the creation of Allah (SwT) in service to Him. Allah loves those who help others, and when one helps the poor, one gets connected with Allah (SwT).
- Prayers and charity will give us blessings throughout our lives.[260](#) As long as we live, we must remember Allah (SwT) and the poor and destitute.

#### The Infant Honors His Mother

#### **Surah Maryam, ayah # 32:**

وَبِرًّا بِوَالِدَتِي وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْنِي جَبَّارًا شَقِيًّا

***“And to be good to my mother, and He has not made me self-willed and wretched” (19:32).***

- Nabi Isa (‘a) by using the words *‘my mother’* proved the chastity of his mother, and pointed out that he has no father. He said *my mother* but did not say *my parents*. [261](#)
- Being good to your mother is one of the moral traits and values taught and valued by the prophets.[262](#) There are numerous traditions that talk about honoring a mother. There is a tradition of the Holy Prophet (S) in which he says: “Heaven lies under the feet of the mothers.”[263](#) Another tradition narrates that a man had taken his old mother on his back to the pilgrimage and he was circumambulating the Holy Ka’bah with her on his back.

When he saw the Holy Prophet (S), he asked him, “Have I paid her back for the troubles she went through for my sake?” The Prophet (S) replied, “No, you have not paid back even one of her cries in labor when she delivered you’.” [264](#) Yet another tradition narrates that a man came to the Prophet (S) and asked him “Who should I do good towards?” The Holy Prophet (S) said, “(Serve) your mother.” The man asked the same question three times, and the Holy Prophet (S) answered exactly the same. When the man asked the same question for the fourth time, the Holy Prophet (S) replied, “Your father.” [265](#) This shows us the importance of a mother.

- Another tradition narrates that once Nabi Musa (‘a) supplicated to Allah (SwT) and wanted to meet his companion in heaven. Allah (SwT) sent the Angel Jibra’il towards Nabi Musa (‘a), and Jibra’il gave the address and details of a butcher. Nabi Musa (‘a) was curious and wanted to see what the butcher had done to be granted such a special place in heaven next to a prophet of God. Nabi Musa (‘a) paid him a visit, and saw that this butcher worked all day, and, towards the evening, he began to head home. Prophet Musa (‘a) followed him and asked him, ‘Do you want a guest?’ The butcher happily obliged and said, ‘You are welcome.’ Musa (‘a) saw that this man cooked dinner, and had a big basket hanging a few feet away from the roof. He lowered the basket and there was a very old woman in it. The man washed her and fed her with his own hands. After he had finished feeding her, the old lady mumbled something that Musa (‘a) could not understand. Then, the butcher laid out food for Prophet Musa (‘a) and sat down with him (‘a) to eat. Nabi Musa (‘a) asked him, ‘How are you related to the old lady?’ The butcher said, ‘She is my mother and she is old and handicapped, but since I cannot afford to have a maid to serve her, I do my best to take care of her.’ Nabi Musa (‘a) asked, “She said something after you finished feeding her. What was it?” The butcher said, “She prays for me every time I feed her that Allah forgives my sins and makes me a companion of Nabi Musa (‘a) in heaven.” Nabi Musa (‘a) told the butcher, “I have good news for you; Allah (SwT) has heard her supplication.” [266](#)
- Whoever does not treat his mother properly will never be able to treat others properly. [267](#)  
The ayah states, *‘to be good to my mother’*
- Prophets are not after power. They do not want to be rulers, nor dictators. The ayah states, *He has not made me self-willed and wretched* [268](#)

## Peace Is on Me Forever

### Surah Maryam, ayah #33:

وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا

***“And peace is on me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I am raised alive” (19:33).***

- The path of the prophets is safe from the time they are born to the day of resurrection and they are free from all deviations.[269](#) They can never go astray, as their will-power is very strong and they can see and feel the results of sinning. This can be understood by thinking of the example of how we know not to drink dirty water, and would never do so—knowing that the water is contaminated and will make us ill. In the same way, the prophets know the true effects of sins and thus, stay away from them.
- Sometimes, it is good to talk about oneself with dignity. The ayah states, ‘*Peace is to me.*’[270](#)
- The most important days for a human are the day they are born, the day they die, and the day they are resurrected.[271](#)
- Everyone will die; even Nabi Isa (‘a) knew that though he is alive, a day will come when he will die too.[272](#)
- Someone who is born, will die and will be resurrected cannot be the son of God.[273](#)

## According to the Bible

Nothing is found in the Bible regarding the return of Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) with her baby Nabi Isa (‘a) to her townspeople.

## Comparison of the Qur’an and the Bible

- The Bible does not talk about the reaction of the people when they saw Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) with a child, whereas the Qur’an discusses it.
- The Bible does not talk about Hadhrat Maryam’s (‘a) fast of silence, whereas the Qur’an discusses how Hadhrat Maryam maintained silence, obeying the command of Allah (SwT). She left the task of defending her chastity to her infant, Nabi Isa (‘a).
- The Qur’an describes how as a baby, Nabi Isa (‘a), defends his mother’s modesty and chastity by calling himself a servant of Allah (SwT). He introduces himself as the prophet of Allah (SwT) and the miraculous nature of him talking as a baby proves his exceptional birth and the chastity of his mother, Hadhrat Maryam (‘a). This event is not narrated in the Bible.
- The Bible identifies Nabi Isa (‘a) as the son of God, but the Qur’an rejects this idea, saying that in actuality, he introduced himself by saying the opposite, ***“Indeed I am a servant of Allah! He has given me the Book and made me a prophet” (19:30).***

## An Example for the Believers

### According to the Qur’an

In Surah at-Tahrim, ayah 10, it says: ‘Allah draws an example for the faithless: the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot. They were under two of our righteous servants, yet they betrayed them.’ Here, the wife of Nabi Lut (‘a) and the wife of Nabi Nuh (‘a)<sup>274</sup> are named as examples of the faithless: these two women lived in the house of prophets and were married to them, and yet they betrayed the truth. They were among the disbelievers, and hence, Allah (SwT) cites them as examples of the faithless.

Later in Surah at-Tahrim, ayah 11 and 12, Allah (SwT) says:

***“Allah draws an [other] example for those who have faith: the wife of Pharaoh...” (66: 11).***

***“And Mary, daughter of Imran, who guarded the chastity of her womb, so We breathed into it of Our spirit” (66: 12).***

She confirmed the words of her Lord and His Books, and she was one of the obedient.’ Here, both the faithful men and women are told to take Hadhrat Asiyah (‘a) (the wife of Pharaoh) and Hadhrat Maryam

(‘a) as examples. Hadhrat Asiyah (‘a) was the wife of Pharaoh and she lived in luxury. However, she accepted the truth; Pharaoh obviously did not like this, and tortured her to death. When given the choice between denouncing her faith or returning to Pharaoh and facing torture, she opted for torture.

Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) was chaste, truthful and obedient to Allah (SwT) and was chosen as an example for all believers. She attained purity and piety by sincerely serving Allah (SwT). Some of her outstanding qualities and holy experiences include:

1. Chastity
2. Obedience
3. Truthfulness
4. Being purified by Allah (SwT)
5. Being chosen by Allah (SwT) above all women of her era
6. Being addressed by angels
7. Receiving food from Allah (SwT)
8. Being the mother of Nabi Isa

Among the above merits, two are the most important and encompass the rest, i.e. to be the most truthful and to be purified. Indeed, these are two signs of perfect people. The most truthful come in rank immediately after the prophets.<sup>[275](#)</sup> In fact, to be the most truthful is so important that prophets are sometimes praised as being the most truthful. Truthfulness here is much more than truthfulness in one’s speech. The truthfulness here requires truthfulness in speech, intentions, beliefs, and actions. In other words, truthfulness involves correspondence and compliance between one’s heart, mind, tongue, and deeds. Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) is the only woman mentioned in the Qur’an as being the most truthful (*siddiqah*). Of course, this does not mean that this status is limited to her alone. Islamic narrations

mention other women, especially Hadhrat Fatimah (‘a), the daughter of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S), to be one of the most truthful.[276](#)

The second merit of utmost importance is purity. This is another praiseworthy characteristic attributed to Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) in the Qur’an. The Qur’an teaches us that Allah (SwT) is the purest of the pure, holiest of the holy, the source of all sanctity and cleanliness; no impurity, evil, or wickedness can ever approach Him. It is impossible for evil hearts to understand anything about Him, to have faith in Him, to come to any kind of knowledge related to His exalted attributes, let alone to be taught by Him, or for His teachings to be whispered in their hearts and inspired in their souls. Whoever aspires to approach Him must take the necessary steps towards purifying their souls and cleansing their hearts. However, voluntary purification by a person is only possible to a limited extent, after which it is Allah (SwT) Himself who will guide the person in their endeavors towards purification. This process begins after a trial of the person’s all-truthfulness, and after severe tests to prove their resolution in the path they have chosen towards Him. Without such purification, it was not possible for Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) to receive the Spirit and this blessing.[277](#)

### Related Verses from Qur’an

- Surah at-Tahrim, ayah #12:

***“And Mary, daughter of Imran, who guarded the chastity of her womb, so We breathed into it of Our spirit. She confirmed the words of her Lord and His Books, and she was one of the obedient” (66: 12).***

### Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived

#### Maryam (‘a): An Example for the Faithful

Surah at-Tahrim, ayah # 12:

وَمَرْيَمَ ابْنَتَ عِمْرَانَ الَّتِي أَحْصَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِنَا وَصَدَّقَتْ بِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّهَا وَكُتِبَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الْقَانِنِينَ

***“And Mary, daughter of Imran, who guarded the chastity of her womb, so We breathed into it of Our spirit. She confirmed the words of her Lord and His Books, and she was one of the obedient” (66: 12).***

- With regards to her faith, she had reached the peak of it. She accepted and believed in all of the heavenly books of Allah (SwT) and was obedient to Him entirely.[278](#)

- She was so faithful to all of the heavenly books and revelations that Allah (SwT) calls her ‘most truthful,’ ***‘The Messiah, son of Mary, is but an apostle. Certainly other apostles have passed before him, and his mother was a truthful one...’ (5:75).***
- Allah, by revealing such ayahs, ensured that Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) would be free of all the accusations against her; He affirms her purity and chastity.[279](#)
- *Our Spirit* mentioned in the ayah portrays the high rank of the angel who carried out this task. It is like saying ‘*House of Allah*’. Obviously Allah neither has a home nor a soul or spirit, but when He attributes something to Himself, it shows its importance.[280](#)
- As mentioned earlier, many Muslim exegetes have interpreted this *spirit* to be the angel Jibra’il. Imam Ali (‘a) was asked as to whether the Spirit was Gabriel, and he responded by saying that, “Gabriel is from the angels and the Spirit is other than him.” According to another report from Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (‘a),[281](#) the spirit is “a creature greater than Gabriel and Michael”. According to Allamah Tabatabai, the spirit is instrumental in the process of revelation received by prophets. As alluded to by the Qur’an, the recipients of the Spirit are not ordinary people. They are distinguished as benefiting from the special grace of the Lord, and as having capabilities enabling them to be addressed by His Spirit. It is in this category of people that the Maryam (‘a) is placed in the Qur’an, even though she was not a messenger of God.[282](#)

### [According to the Bible](#)

The Bible has verses where Hadhrat Maryam (‘a) is called “*blessed*”. Either she calls herself this or others address her as such. When Mary visited Elizabeth while Elizabeth was pregnant with John the Baptist, the baby in her womb leaped. It was as though it was giving a signal to his mother to expect something very extraordinary from Mary and that Mary was to be the mother of the awaited Messiah.[283](#) This is when Elizabeth says, “*Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear*”[284](#) After hearing this, Mary calls herself ‘*blessed*’.[285](#)

### [Related Verses from the Bible](#)

- Luke Chapter 1, verse 42: Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you

will bear”[286](#)

- Luke, Chapter 1, verse 46 – 48: My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my savior, For he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on, all generations will call me blessed.[287](#)

## Comparison of the Qur'an and the Bible

- Qur'an exalts Hadhrat Maryam ('a) as *an example for the faithful*. The Bible does not mention God Himself naming her as an example for the faithful. However, there are verses in the Bible in which others called her “blessed,” or she calls herself “blessed.” For example, when Mary visits Elizabeth, Elizabeth exclaims in a loud voice, “*Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear*”[288](#) Mary then says: “*My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my savior, For he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on, all generations will call me blessed*”[289](#)

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[1.](#) Amuli, Jawadi, Tafsir e Mozueey Qur'an e Karim, Sirey Payambaran Dar Qur'an vol. 7, p. 320; Al-Tabarsi, Tafsir e Jawame Al Jame, Persian Translation, vol. 1, p. 405.[\[1\]](#)

[2.](#) Biblical name Children of Israel, Motemad Lari, Tuba, Maryam Dukhtari Dar Mahrab, p. 11.[\[2\]](#)

[3.](#) Biblical name Solomon.[\[3\]](#)

[4.](#) Biblical name David.[\[4\]](#)

[5.](#) Biblical name Abraham.[\[5\]](#)

[6.](#) Shirazi, Makarim, Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 2, p. 409.[\[6\]](#)

[7.](#) Ishtehardi, Muhammed Muhammedi, Qissyhaye Qur'an, p. 395; Mason, Denise, Qur'an wa Kitab e Muqaddas: Darune Maye haye Mushtarak, Persian Translation by Fatemeh Sadaat Ta-Hami, p. 474.[\[7\]](#)

[8.](#) A companion of Imam al-Baqir ('a).[\[8\]](#)

[9.](#) Imam Muhammad al-Baqir ('a).[\[9\]](#)

[10.](#) According to some traditions her name was Aashya. She was the mother of Nabi Yahya (John the Baptist). Her Biblical name was Elizabeth. Qadyani, Batool, Seemaye Hadhrat Maryam('a) uz didgahe Qur'an wa Injeel, p. 29.[\[10\]](#)

[11.](#) Nabi Zakariya was from the progeny of Nabi Dawud.[\[11\]](#)

[12.](#) Nabi Yahya.[\[12\]](#)

[13.](#) Mahdi, Muntazir Qaim, Jesus Through Shiite Narrations, p. 32, quoted from Bihar, vol. 14, p. 202, h. 14.[\[13\]](#)

[14.](#) Biblical name Moses.[\[14\]](#)

[15.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 2, p. 409, Qanadi, Saleh, Ashnaee ba Ma'arif e Qur'an, Tafsir e-Mozuee, vol. 1, p. 243.[\[15\]](#)

[16.](#) Seemaye Hadhrat Maryam ('a) uz didgahe Qur'an wa Injeel, p. 21.[\[16\]](#)

[17.](#) Chapter of Qur'an.[\[17\]](#)

[18.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 2, p. 518.[\[18\]](#)

[19.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 2, p. 517.[\[19\]](#)

- [20.](#) Seemaye Hadhrat Maryam(‘a) uz didgahe Qur’an wa Injeel, p. 19.🔗🔗
- [21.](#) The discussion regarding her mother will be in the next segment ‘Birth’.🔗🔗
- [22.](#) The discussion regarding guardianship will be in the next segment ‘Guardianship’.🔗🔗
- [23.](#) The genealogy of Jesus is found in Luke 3/23–38, Mathew 1/1– 17.🔗🔗
- [24.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 2, p. 520.🔗🔗
- [25.](#) Seemaye Hadhrat Maryam(‘a) uz didgahe Qur’an wa Injeel, p. 21.🔗🔗
- [26.](#) Al–Tabarsi, Majma al–Bayan, Persian Translation, vol. 4, p. 46.🔗🔗
- [27.](#) Al–Tabarsi, Majma al–Bayan, Persian Translation, vol. 4, p. 46.🔗🔗
- [28.](#) Bayt al–Muqaddas refers to the Temple Mount built by Nabi Dawud (‘a). It is the region in modern–day Palestine where Masjid al–Aqsa, the Dome of the Rock, and the Western Wall now lie. The Western Wall is the only piece of the Temple that now remains.🔗🔗
- [29.](#) Shakir, M.H., Qur’an English Translation, p. 54.🔗🔗
- [30.](#) Tabatabai, Syed Mohammad Hussain, Al–Mizan, vol. 3, p. 266.🔗🔗
- [31.](#) Tabatabai, Syed Mohammad Hussain, Al–Mizan, vol. 3, p. 266.🔗🔗
- [32.](#) Shirazi, Makarim, Qisseyhaye Qur’an, p. 423, 424; Al–Mizan, vol. 3, p. 267.🔗🔗
- [33.](#) Qur’an English Translation, p. 54.🔗🔗
- [34.](#) Covering the head and dressing modestly and conservatively in front of men.🔗🔗
- [35.](#) Tafsire Namune, vol. 2, p. 611.🔗🔗
- [36.](#) Al–Mizan, vol. 3, p. 270.🔗🔗
- [37.](#) Qur’an English Translation, p. 54.🔗🔗
- [38.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 2, p. 611.🔗🔗
- [39.](#) Al–Mizan, vol. 3, p. 267. The discussion regarding guardianship will be next segment ‘Guardianship’.🔗🔗
- [40.](#) Qarai, Syed Ali Quli, The Qur’an with an English Paraphrase, p. 76.🔗🔗
- [41.](#) Qisseyhaye Qur’an, p. 424.🔗🔗
- [42.](#) Or dedication.🔗🔗
- [43.](#) Qarati, Mohsin, Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 50.🔗🔗
- [44.](#) Qarati, Mohsin, Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 50.🔗🔗
- [45.](#) Qarati, Mohsin, Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 50.🔗🔗
- [46.](#) Qarati, Mohsin, Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 50.🔗🔗
- [47.](#) Qarati, Mohsin, Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 50.🔗🔗
- [48.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 50.🔗🔗
- [49.](#) Qarati, Mohsin, Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 50.🔗🔗
- [50.](#) Qarati, Mohsin, Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 50.🔗🔗
- [51.](#) Biblical name: Abel the son of Prophet Adam.🔗🔗
- [52.](#) Biblical name: Cain the son of Prophet Adam.🔗🔗
- [53.](#) Arastu, Rizwan, God’s Emissaries Adam to Jesus, p. 59.🔗🔗
- [54.](#) Qissey haye Qur’an, p. 33.🔗🔗
- [55.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn vol. 12, p. 50.🔗🔗
- [56.](#) Tafsir e Mozueey Qur’an e Karim, Sirey Payambaran Dar Qur’an vol. 7, p. 321.🔗🔗
- [57.](#) Al–Mizan, vol. 3, p. 269, 270.🔗🔗
- [58.](#) Amuli, Jawadi, Zan dar Aine Jalal o Jamal, p. 133.🔗🔗
- [59.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 51.🔗🔗
- [60.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 51.🔗🔗
- [61.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 51.🔗🔗
- [62.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 51.🔗🔗
- [63.](#) Imam Ali (‘a) is also known as Hyder.🔗🔗
- [64.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 51.🔗🔗
- [65.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 52.🔗🔗

- [66.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 52.🔗🔗
- [67.](#) Al–Mizan, vol. 3, p. 271.🔗🔗
- [68.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 52.🔗🔗
- [69.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 52.🔗🔗
- [70.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 52.🔗🔗
- [71.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 52.🔗🔗
- [72.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 52.🔗🔗
- [73.](#) Majma al–Bayan, Persian Translation, vol. 4, p. 52.🔗🔗
- [74.](#) Tafsir e Mouzueey Qur’an e Karim, Sirey payambaran dar Qur’an, vol. 7, p. 315.🔗🔗
- [75.](#) The Qur’an with an English Paraphrase, p. 77.🔗🔗
- [76.](#) The Qur’an with an English Paraphrase, p. 76.🔗🔗
- [77.](#) Qisseyhaye Qur’an, p. 426.🔗🔗
- [78.](#) Tafsir e Mouzueey Qur’an e Karim, Sirey payambaran dar Qur’an, vol. 7, p. 316.🔗🔗
- [79.](#) The Qur’an with an English Paraphrase, p. 76.🔗🔗
- [80.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 2, p. 617.🔗🔗
- [81.](#) Note: Makarim Shirazi rejects this commentary. Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 2, p. 618.🔗🔗
- [82.](#) Tafsir e Mouzueey Qur’an e Karim, Sirey payambaran dar Qur’an, vol. 7, p. 316.🔗🔗
- [83.](#) The Qur’an with an English Paraphrase.🔗🔗
- [84.](#) The 5th Holy Imam.🔗🔗
- [85.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 2, p. 618,619; Urusi Havezi Abd Ali ibn Juma, Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 1, p. 333.🔗🔗
- [86.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 60.🔗🔗
- [87.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 60.🔗🔗
- [88.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 60.🔗🔗
- [89.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 60.🔗🔗
- [90.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 60.🔗🔗
- [91.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 61.🔗🔗
- [92.](#) Sayyid Ali Quli Qarai’s translation but replaced ‘and made her grow up in a worthy fashion’ with ‘and made her grow up a good growing’.🔗🔗
- [93.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 52.🔗🔗
- [94.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 52.🔗🔗
- [95.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 53.🔗🔗
- [96.](#) Al–Mizan, vol. 3, pp. 271, 272.🔗🔗
- [97.](#) Allowed as per the Islamic law.🔗🔗
- [98.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 53.🔗🔗
- [99.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 53.🔗🔗
- [100.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 54.🔗🔗
- [101.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 54.🔗🔗
- [102.](#) Al–Mizan vol. 3, p. 273.🔗🔗
- [103.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 54.🔗🔗
- [104.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 54.🔗🔗
- [105.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 54.🔗🔗
- [106.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 2, p. 614.🔗🔗
- [107.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 2, p. 614.🔗🔗
- [108.](#) Al–Mizan, vol. 3, pp. 272 & 273.🔗🔗
- [109.](#) Al–Mizan, vol. 3, pp. 615 & 616.🔗🔗
- [110.](#) Sayyid Ali Quli Qarai’s translation.🔗🔗
- [111.](#) Shakir’s translation.🔗🔗
- [112.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 54.🔗🔗

- [113.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 55.🔗🔗
- [114.](#) Hilli, Ahmad Ibn Fahd, English Translation by Ali Akbar Aghili Ashtiani, ‘Uddat al–Da’i, p 51.🔗🔗
- [115.](#) The night prayers which are highly recommended.🔗🔗
- [116.](#) Dhuhr and Maghrib: Afternoon and Sunset.🔗🔗
- [117.](#) Adhan when Muslims call for prayers at the time of prayers and Iqamah is recited just before starting the salat.🔗🔗
- [118.](#) Garmarudi Asadullah Asadi, Raz o Ramz e Niyayesh, p. 112 to 117.🔗🔗
- [119.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 55.🔗🔗
- [120.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 55.🔗🔗
- [121.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 55.🔗🔗
- [122.](#) Biblical Name Jesus.🔗🔗
- [123.](#) Jesus Through Shiite Narrations, p. 260, tradition #5.1.🔗🔗
- [124.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 55.🔗🔗
- [125.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 55.🔗🔗
- [126.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 55.🔗🔗
- [127.](#) The fourth Holy Imam.🔗🔗
- [128.](#) A book which consists the supplications of Imam Zayn al–’Abidin (‘a) the fourth Holy Imam.🔗🔗
- [129.](#) Tafsir e–Mouzuee e Qur’an e Karim, Seerey Payambaran dar Qur’an, vol. 7, p. 317.🔗🔗
- [130.](#) “The father of John Baptist was a priest, a son of Aaron; his name Zacharias” see:  
[https://www.the](https://www.thebiblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/luke/1.html) [13] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew–henry–complete/luke/1.html🔗🔗
- [131.](#) [https://www.the](https://www.thebiblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/luke/1.html) [13] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew–henry–complete/luke/1.html🔗🔗
- [132.](#) The Bible, The New Testament, Luke, chapter 1, verse 6, New International Version.🔗🔗
- [133.](#) The Bible, The New Testament, Luke, Chapter 1, verse 36, King James Version.🔗🔗
- [134.](#) The Bible, The New Testament, Luke, chapter 1, verse 6, New International Version.🔗🔗
- [135.](#) Translation Shakir.🔗🔗
- [136.](#) Translation Qarai.🔗🔗
- [137.](#) Qisseyhayeh Qur’an, p. 427.🔗🔗
- [138.](#) Translation Yusufali.🔗🔗
- [139.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 58.🔗🔗
- [140.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 1, p. 337.🔗🔗
- [141.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh vol. 2, p. 632.🔗🔗
- [142.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh vol. 2, p. 632.🔗🔗
- [143.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 58.🔗🔗
- [144.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 58.🔗🔗
- [145.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn vol. 2, p. 59.🔗🔗
- [146.](#) Recommended midnight prayers🔗🔗
- [147.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn vol. 12, p. 59.🔗🔗
- [148.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn vol. 12, p. 59.🔗🔗
- [149.](#) Kulayni, Al–Kafi, Kitab ash–Shukr, vol. 2, p. 95, tradition 10.🔗🔗
- [150.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 59.🔗🔗
- [151.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 59.🔗🔗
- [152.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 59.🔗🔗
- [153.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 59.🔗🔗
- [154.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 59.🔗🔗
- [155.](#) Tasir e Namune, vol. 2, p. 633.🔗🔗
- [156.](#) [https://www.the](https://www.thebiblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/luke/1.html) [13] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew–henry–complete/luke/1.html🔗🔗
- [157.](#) The Bible, King James Version, The New Testament, Luke, Chapter 1, verses 28–30🔗🔗
- [158.](#) Qisseyhayeh Qur’an, p. 428🔗🔗
- [159.](#) Qisseyhayeh Qur’an, pp. 429, 430.🔗🔗

- [160.](#) Chapters. [1]
- [161.](#) Subhani, Jafar, Manshoor Jawed, vol. 12, p. 358. [1]
- [162.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 253. [1]
- [163.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 253. [1]
- [164.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 253. [1]
- [165.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 253. [1]
- [166.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 254. [1]
- [167.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 254. Angels are not material. When they are seen in the forms of human beings it is an apparition (tamathul). It is like a dream where people see human beings and talk to them. But in reality, those people are not physically present. An apparition is someone you think you see but who is not really there as a physical being. So it was Maryam (‘a) who saw the angel in the form of a man but in reality, the angel had not transformed into a man: Refer: Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 14, pp. 47–52. [1]
- [168.](#) Biblical name Prophet Lot. [1]
- [169.](#) Biblical name John The Baptist. [1]
- [170.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 254. [1]
- [171.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 254. [1]
- [172.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 254. [1]
- [173.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 255. [1]
- [174.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 255. [1]
- [175.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 255. [1]
- [176.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 255. [1]
- [177.](#) One to whom marriage is permissible. [1]
- [178.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 255. [1]
- [179.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 255. [1]
- [180.](#) Merciful. [1]
- [181.](#) Biblical name: Joseph. [1]
- [182.](#) Manshoor e–Jawid, pp. 359, 360. [1]
- [183.](#) Manshoor e–Jawid, pp. 359, 360. [1]
- [184.](#) [https://www.the](https://www.thebiblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/luke/1.html) [13] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew–henry–complete/luke/1.html [1]
- [185.](#) The Bible, King James Version, The New Testament, Luke, Chapter 1, verses 26–27. [1]
- [186.](#) Nabi Adam. [1]
- [187.](#) Qissyhaye Qur’an, p. 429. [1]
- [188.](#) Sayyid Ali Quli Qarai’s translation, but replaced ‘(already) decided’ with ‘which has been decreed’. [1]
- [189.](#) Qissyhaye Qur’an be Qalam e Ravan, p. 426. [1]
- [190.](#) Qisseyhaye Qur’an, p. 430. [1]
- [191.](#) Sayyid Ali Quli Qarai’s translation, but replaced ‘(already) decided’ with ‘which has been decreed’. [1]
- [192.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 255. [1]
- [193.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 255. [1]
- [194.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 255. [1]
- [195.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 257. [1]
- [196.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 257. [1]
- [197.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 257. [1]
- [198.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 257. [1]
- [199.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 257. [1]
- [200.](#) [https://www.the](https://www.thebiblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/luke/1.html) [13] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew–henry–complete/luke/1.html [1]
- [201.](#) [https://www.the](https://www.thebiblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/luke/1.html) [13] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew–henry–complete/luke/1.html [1]
- [202.](#) [https://www.the](https://www.thebiblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/luke/1.html) [13] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew–henry–complete/luke/1.html [1]
- [203.](#) The Bible, King James Version, The New Testament, Luke, Chapter 1, verses 26–38 [1]

- [204.](#) See Surah al-Tawbah, 9:30 & 9:31. Surah al-Mai'dah, 5:17, 5:72, 5:73, 5:75, 5:116. Surah al-Nahl, 16:51. Surah al-Nisa, 4:59, 4:171. Surah Maryam, 19:37. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [205.](#) Seemaye Hadhrat Maryam Uz Deedgahe Qur'an wa Injeel, p. 62–64. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [206.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 13, p. 53. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [207.](#) Qissehayeh Qur'an, p. 432. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [208.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 257. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [209.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 257. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [210.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 257. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [211.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 257. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [212.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 258. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [213.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 258. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [214.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 258. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [215.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 258. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [216.](#) Al Kafi, vol. 6, p. 22, tradition 4. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [217.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 330, tradition 50. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [218.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 258. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [219.](#) Manshoor e-Jawid, p. 362. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [220.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 332, tradition 58. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [221.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 259. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [222.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 259. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [223.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 259. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [224.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 259. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [225.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 259. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [226.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 260. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [227.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 260. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [228.](#) The Bible, NIV, Mathew, Chapter 1, verses 18 to 25. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [229.](#) The Bible, NIV, Mathew, Chapter 1, verses 18 to 25. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [230.](#) <https://www.thebiblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/matthew/1.html> [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [231.](#) <https://www.thebiblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/luke/2.html> [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [232.](#) The Bible, NIV, Luke, Chapter 2, verse 1 to 7. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [233.](#) <https://www.thebiblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/luke/2.html> [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [234.](#) The Bible, KJV, Mathew, Chapter 1, verse 18 to 25;  
<https://www.thebiblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mathew+1&version=KJV> [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [235.](#) The Bible, NIV, Luke, Chapter 2, verse 1 to 7; <https://www.thebiblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2&version=NIV> [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [236.](#) The Bible, New Testament, Mathew, verse 19, King James Version; <https://www.thebiblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mathew+1&version=KJV> [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [237.](#) Qissehayeh Qur'an, p. 434. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [238.](#) Charity. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [239.](#) Sayyid Ali Quli Qarai's translation, deleted the word [Lineage], original translation was 'O sister of Aaron's {lineage}'. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [240.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 260. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [241.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 260. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [242.](#) Ibid, Qarati narrated from Tafsir e-Burhan. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [243.](#) Qissehayeh Qur'an, p. 433, in footnotes; Majma al-Bayan vol. 15, p. 163. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [244.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 260. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [245.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 260. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [246.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 261. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)
- [247.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 261. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)

- [248.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 262.🔒🔒
- [249.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 262.🔒🔒
- [250.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 262.🔒🔒
- [251.](#) The 12th Holy Imam who is in occultation. (atfs) May Allah hasten his return.🔒🔒
- [252.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 262.🔒🔒
- [253.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 263.🔒🔒
- [254.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 263.🔒🔒
- [255.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 263.🔒🔒
- [256.](#) The holy tradition, the words of Allah (SwT) but it is not from Qur'an.🔒🔒
- [257.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 263.🔒🔒
- [258.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 263.🔒🔒
- [259.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 263.🔒🔒
- [260.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 263.🔒🔒
- [261.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 263.🔒🔒
- [262.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 263.🔒🔒
- [263.](#) Nahjul Fasaha, p. 125.🔒🔒
- [264.](#) Sadaqat, Syed Ali Akbar, Ek Sad Mouzoo Pansad Dastaan, vol. 3, p. 289.🔒🔒
- [265.](#) Sadaqat, Syed Ali Akbar, Ek Sad Mouzoo Pansad Dastaan, vol. 3, p. 288.🔒🔒
- [266.](#) Gulestani, Shaikh Ali, Dastanhai Tableeghi, p. 243.🔒🔒
- [267.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 263.🔒🔒
- [268.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 263.🔒🔒
- [269.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 264.🔒🔒
- [270.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 264.🔒🔒
- [271.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 264.🔒🔒
- [272.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 264.🔒🔒
- [273.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 7, p. 264.🔒🔒
- [274.](#) The wife of Prophet Lot and Prophet Noah.🔒🔒
- [275.](#) See Surah al–Nisa, 4:69.🔒🔒
- [276.](#) Shomali, Mohammad Ali, Mary, Jesus and Christianity, An Islamic Perspective, p. 11, 12. Paraphrase.🔒🔒
- [277.](#) Bahmanpour, Mohammad Saeed, Mary in Islam, p. 10to 12 Paraphrase.🔒🔒
- [278.](#) Bahmanpour, Mohammad Saeed, Mary in Islam, p. 317.🔒🔒
- [279.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 24, p. 318.🔒🔒
- [280.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 24, p. 318.🔒🔒
- [281.](#) The sixth Holy Imam.🔒🔒
- [282.](#) Mary in Islam, p. 13 to 15.🔒🔒
- [283.](#) <https://www.thebiblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/luke/1.html>🔒🔒
- [284.](#) The Bible, New Testament, Luke, Chapter 1, verse 42, New International Version.🔒🔒
- [285.](#) The Bible, New Testament, Luke, Chapter 1, verse 46–48.🔒🔒
- [286.](#) The Bible, New Testament, Luke, Chapter 1, verse 42, New International Version.🔒🔒
- [287.](#) The Bible, New Testament, Luke, Chapter 1, verse 46–48.🔒🔒
- [288.](#) The Bible, New Testament, Luke, Chapter 1, verse 42.🔒🔒
- [289.](#) The Bible, New Testament, Luke, Chapter 1, verse 46–48.🔒🔒

# Chapter 2: Asiyah (‘a)

## Asiyah (‘a) in the Palace of the Pharaoh

### According to the Qur’an

In the Islamic commentaries and traditions, Asiyah (‘a) the daughter of Muzahim, was the wife of Pharaoh. <sup>1</sup> According to some commentaries, she was from the Bani Isra’il<sup>2</sup> and barren. Others say that she had a daughter who was sick,<sup>3</sup> and that this was their only child. *Tafsire Namuneh* narrates from Ibn Abbas that this daughter had an incurable disease. The doctors tried their best to cure her, but in vain. The Pharaoh consulted the priests, who foretold that from the Nile, there would emerge a human being whose saliva, when rubbed on the sick daughter, would cure her. From then on, Pharaoh and his wife, Asiyah (‘a) were waiting for this person to appear from the Nile.<sup>4</sup>

It is narrated that one day, while Asiyah (‘a) was sitting with the Pharaoh on the shores of Nile, they saw a wooden casket floating in the river.<sup>5</sup> They fished out the box.

***“Then Pharaoh’s family picked him up...” (28:8).***

When the Pharaoh opened the box<sup>6</sup>, they were shocked to find a baby there. When Asiyah’s (‘a) eyes fell on the baby, her heart melted with mercy and love. Allah asserts this by saying,

***“...there shall take him up one who is an enemy to Me and enemy to him. And I cast down upon you love from Me, and that you might be brought up before My eyes.” (20:39).***

Moreover, it was possible that the saliva of this child was a cure for their daughter too as foretold by the priests.<sup>7</sup>

When the Pharaoh realized and saw the signs that this baby was of the Bani Isra’il –his features and as it was left in a casket in the river Nile– the nightmare of a man standing against him and being the source of his downfall shadowed his thoughts. The Pharaoh did not want to take a chance and to let this boy live as an exception to his cruelty and his mass male infanticide of the male infants of the Bani Isra’il. His courtiers who wanted to butter him up encouraged him to kill the child. <sup>8</sup> However, Asiyah (‘a) stood against them, and tried to convince him, saying,

***“[This infant will be] a [source of] comfort to me and to you. Do not kill him.” (28:9).***

She continues to convince him, saying ***“Maybe he will benefit us” (28:9)*** and went on further by suggesting ***“we will adopt him as a son” (28:9).***

Finally, Pharaoh agrees and acquiesces to her request and suggestion. Perhaps this was because he

had no son from Asiyah, or it could be that the child was the possible source of a cure for his only daughter who was sick.[9](#)

As such, they kept the child, and Asiyah named him *Musa*. In Egyptian, *mu* meant “water” and *sa* meant “tree” or “reed”[10](#) as she had found him in the reeds of the Nile.

### Related Verses from the Qur'an

- Surah al-Qasas, ayah # 9:

*Pharaoh's wife said [to Pharaoh], "[This infant will be] a [source of] comfort to me and to you. Do not kill him. Maybe he will benefit us, or we will adopt him as a son." And they were not aware. (28:9).*

### Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived

#### According to the Bible

Pharaoh's only daughter[11](#) who was barren[12](#) went to bathe in the Nile along with her maids. While swimming, she noticed a suspicious basket that was stuck in the reeds. She ordered one of her maids to pull it out for her. [13](#)

When the basket was brought to her, she opened it. To her surprise, she saw a beautiful baby in it. When the baby started to cry, her heart reached out to him. Somehow, she gathered that the baby was Hebrew, and said, *"This is one of the Hebrew babies"*. [14](#)

Moses' sister was witnessing this scene from a distance. She tactfully introduced her mother as a wet nurse to the palace: *Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you."*[15](#)

When Moses finished weaning, his mother returned him to the palace. Pharaoh's daughter adopted him and named him Moses meaning “I drew him out of the water”. [16](#)

Matthew Henry comments on this beautifully:

God often raises up friends for his people even among their enemies. Pharaoh cruelly seeks Israel's destruction, but his own daughter charitably compassionates a Hebrew child, and not only so, but, beyond her intention, preserves Israel's deliverer. O Lord, how wonderful are thy counsels! [17](#)

### Related Verses from the Bible

- Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 5: Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. [18](#)
- Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 6: She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said. [19](#)
- Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 9: Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you." So the woman took the baby and nursed him. [20](#)
- Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 10: When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, "I drew him out of the water." [21](#)

#### [Pharaoh's wife \('a\) saves Nabi Musa \('a\)](#)

#### Surah al-Qasas, ayah# 9

وَقَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرَّتُ عَيْنٍ لِي وَلَكَ لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَنْفَعَنَا أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُ وَلَدًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

**Pharaoh's wife said [to Pharaoh], "[This infant will be] a [source of] comfort to me and to you. Do not kill him. Maybe he will benefit us, or we will adopt him as a son." And they were not aware (28:9).**

- Women play an influential role in society, and should, especially when it comes to enjoining the good. The ayah reflects this by stating how Asiyah ('a) tried to convince him not to kill the child: '*Pharaoh's wife said...*' [22](#)
- The status, wealth, and power of Pharaoh were not a barrier to her suggestion, and she was successful in changing his opinion through her words. [23](#)
- Suggestions and advice to do good should not always be in harsh words, but can perhaps

be more effective through other means. She opens her suggestion by using a softer tone:

**"[This infant will be] a [source of] comfort to me and to you" (28:9).** [24](#)

- After communicating an emotional appeal, one's suggestion can be put forth. The ayah states Asiyah's methodology by her saying, **"[This infant will be] a [source of] comfort to me and to you. Do not kill him" (28:9)**[25](#)
- According to the commentaries, in response to his wife's statement that the child would be a blessing and a comfort, the Pharaoh said, "He would be a comfort for you, but not for me" and some commentators mention a hadith from the Prophet (S) saying that had Pharaoh agreed with his wife's positive and hopeful appraisal of Musa's arrival, God would have guided Pharaoh to faith just as He guided his wife.[26](#)
- It is important to be strategic when enjoining good and forbidding evil. Sometimes, it is helpful not to phrase it as a command, but rather a gentle suggestion. Asiyah's ('a) request was followed with a suggestion **"Do not kill him. Maybe he will benefit us, or we will adopt him as a son" (28:9)**. This shows her strategic methodology in dealing with Pharaoh.
- Spouses play a very important role in each other's lives and influence each other. Using the right words and a strategic methodology, can help in guiding and aiding each other in making the right decision or stopping evil from taking place.
- Never be scared of supporting the truth even if one is alone. Even if it is against a tyrant like Pharaoh, or against the majority of people, it is important to stand for the Truth. Asiyah ('a) stood bravely against the idea of killing the baby, despite the danger it posed to her, by stating, **"Do not kill him."**
- The power of God is always above the power of the tyrants of this world. The ayah states, **'And they were not aware'** of what Allah (SwT) had in store for them. Little did Pharaoh know that this would be the child that God had chosen to rise against him.

- When trying to convince someone, it is important to use convincing arguments and to communicate the positives of such a decision. Asiyah (‘a) tries to stop Pharaoh from killing Musa (‘a) by mentioning the benefits stating, “*Maybe he will benefit us, or we will adopt him as a son.*” [27](#)
- Pharaoh had no son and Asiyah knew that he wanted children. As such, she tells him, “*we will adopt him as a son*” (28:9).
- The Pharaoh had great plans for this baby that was drawn from the waters. They thought that he might be of some benefit to them. Perhaps, the Pharaoh thought that he might play the role of their son by supporting their corrupt ideologies. But Allah (SwT) had better plans than Pharaoh’s. The same child would be the source of destruction of the Pharaoh’s ideologies. He would be the savior of Bani Isra’il, and all of mankind – including Pharaoh’s kingdom. Allah had different plans than Pharaoh did, and orchestrated them perfectly right under Pharaoh’s nose. The ayah hints on this idea by stating, ‘*And they were not aware.*’
- A woman’s worth depends on her piety, not on her social status. In the story of Nabi Yusuf (‘a), there was Zulaykha, a woman in the palace who played a very negative role in his life due to her forbidden pursuit and lack of piety. On the other hand, Asiyah (‘a), who was a pious woman, played a positive role in Nabi Musa’s life.[28](#) The worth of each of these women was determined not on their status, but on their piety.

### Comparison of the Qur’an and the Bible

- According to the Qur’an, it was the wife of Pharaoh who saved Nabi Musa (‘a), whereas according to the Bible, it was the daughter of Pharaoh.
- Both the Qur’an and the Bible note that there was a woman from the Pharaoh’s household who saved Nabi Musa (‘a)
- The Qur’an narrates that “*the family of Pharaoh’s picked him up...*” (28:8) without indicating the exact individual who did. However, the Bible narrates that the daughter of

Pharaoh “saw the basket among the reeds and sent her **female slave** to get it.” (Exodus 2/5–6)[29](#)

- The Qur’an narrates how the wife of Pharaoh protects Nabi Musa (‘a) from being killed by Pharaoh whereas the Bible does not narrate this incident.
- According to the Qur’an, the Pharaoh was present at the scene when they picked the casket from the Nile. According to the Biblical rendition, he was not there.
- Some Islamic commentaries[30](#) narrate the story of the Pharaoh having a sick daughter who was cured by Nabi Musa (‘a)’ saliva. This story is not found in the Qur’an, the Bible, or in Matthew Henry’s commentary.

## An Example for the Believers

### According to the Qur’an

In Surah at-Tahrim, the Qur’an honors and commends Hadhrat Asiyah (‘a) by presenting her as an example for the faithful (along with Hadhrat Maryam (‘a)) in contrast to the wives of Prophet Nuh (‘a) and Lut (‘a) who are mentioned as the examples of the disbelievers. The Qur’an glorifies Hadhrat Asiyah (‘a) by saying:

***“Allah draws an example for those who have faith: the wife of Pharaoh, when she said, “My Lord! Build me a home near You in paradise, and deliver me from Pharaoh and his conduct, and deliver me from the wrongdoing lot” (66: 11).***

Both faithful men and women are being told to take Asiyah (‘a), the wife of Pharaoh, as an example or as their spiritual mentor. According to *Majma al-Bayan*, she was a beautiful woman from the progeny of the Prophets and from Bani Isra’il. She was considered as merciful and charitable.[31](#) Thus, she possessed saintly qualities and is mentioned alongside Hadhrat Maryam (‘a). The Prophet (S), with regard to her status, has said, “*The great women of paradise are Khadijah Bint Khawlid (‘a), Fatimah Bint Muhammad (‘a), Maryam Bint Imran (‘a), and Asiyah Bint Muzahim (‘a).*”[32](#) Abi Musa has also narrated from the Prophet (S) that he said, “*There are many perfect men [mentioned, like the Prophets] however, the perfect women are four: Maryam (‘a) Asiyah (‘a), Khadijah (‘a) and Fatimah (‘a)*”[33](#) Another narration from Jabir ibn Abdullah from the Prophet (S) states that “*The three people who did not reject the revelation are: Momin Ale Yaseen, Ali Ibn Abi Talib and Asiyah the wife of Pharaoh.*”[34](#)

## Her Faith

Regarding her faith, it can be definitively said that she was sincere and Truth-seeking, and that her heart was ready to accept the truth. As mentioned earlier, she had saintly qualities, like being merciful to the believers and giving them charity.<sup>[35](#)</sup>

When she saw the miracle of Nabi Musa (‘a) with the magicians, namely that his staff changed into a python and devoured all of the fictional snakes that the magicians had made an illusion of, her heart was content and brought her faith in the divine message and prophethood of Nabi Musa (‘a)<sup>[36](#)</sup>

In the beginning, she held her faith a secret. However, soon the Pharaoh found out.<sup>[37](#)</sup> He warned her again and again to give up her faith in Musa (‘a) and his Lord, but she refused. At this, the Pharaoh ordered that she be laid down on the scorching sand and that her hands and feet should be nailed to the ground. Then, he ordered that a big boulder should be placed on her chest. In this manner, he murdered her, and as she was taking her last breaths, she prayed to Allah,

***“My Lord! Build me a home near You in paradise, and deliver me from Pharaoh and his conduct, and deliver me from the wrongdoing lot” (66: 11).***<sup>[38](#)</sup>

While dying, Allah (SwT) showed her place to her in paradise and she smiled happily. When Pharaoh saw her smiling, he told his companions that she had gone crazy as she was smiling as she was being tortured.<sup>[39](#)</sup>

Fatemah Meghji in her article *The Woman of Paradise: The Rebellious Queen of Pharaoh* beautifully translates the words of the great scholar and commentator of the Qur’an, Allamah Tabatabai, with regards to the prayer of Asiyah (‘a):

...when the faith (*iman*) of a person reaches perfection, their exterior (*dhahir*) and interior (*batin*) will be fully in line with each other, i.e. one’s heart and tongue will be in unison with each other. Such a person will not say anything except that which they will do, and they won’t do anything except that which they say. And they don’t entertain hopes, and their tongues do not say anything, except for that which they seek to do with their actions. Because God brought this lady forth as an example, and alluded to her special status in her worship, he narrates the prayer that she called with, and (it is this prayer) that shows the type of her holistic obedience to Him.

Throughout her life, it was exactly this wish that she was after, that God would build a home for her in paradise, and that He would save her from the Pharaoh and his evil actions. So, the wife of Pharaoh implored to her Lord for mercy, and this request was to become close to God. This closeness to God had preference over closeness to the Pharaoh. This closeness to Pharaoh was also accompanied by every type of pleasure. In his court, she could find everything that her heart desired, and even those wishes that didn’t usually reach a person, could be found there. As such, it is obvious that the wife of Pharaoh had closed her eyes from all of the pleasures of the life of this world. And this was not because

it was not in her reach, but rather, all of these were available in abundance to her. Even with that, she had closed her eyes from it, and she was attached to the glory that lied with God, and to His proximity. She had attained faith in the unseen, and stood strong and upright with her faith until she left this world.

And this step that the wife of Pharoah took in her path to serving God, is a step that can be an example for anyone who wants to follow in this path. It is because of this aspect that God summarized her hopes and her state throughout her entire life in one short prayer; a prayer that does not give any meaning except that she had cut herself off from all comforts of this world, from anything that caused inattention to God, that she has sought refuge with her Lord, and that except for attaining proximity to God, she has no other wishes or desires, and that she is choosing a home in His house of mercy.

When she says ***“My Lord! Build me a home near You in paradise” (66: 11)***, in this prayer, she is requesting a home that should both be in proximity to God and also in paradise, and this is to the fact that in paradise, homes are in proximity to God, (in the same way that) God has said:

أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ

***“...they are living and provided for near their Lord” (3: 169).***

In addition to this, one's presence in proximity to God and closeness to Him is a special type of intangible spiritual blessing, whereas a permanent home in paradise is a tangible spiritual blessing, and as such, it makes sense that a servant of God would request both from Him.[40](#)..

Then Fatemah Meghji writes:

The reason that Allamah Tabatabai's points with regards to this verse are so significant and extraordinary is because he touches on the idea that this is perhaps not a prayer that literally came out of Asiyah's mouth, but that this is something where “God summarized her hopes and her state throughout her entire life in one short prayer.” Here, the narrator is being attributed to God. It is true that He is narrating her reality and truth, and that does not affect the truth of her saying this, however it could be said that this quote is speaking from the *zabane hal*, the language of the state/reality. Taking this into consideration, her words taken on a deeper significance, they are not simply the words of a martyr dying in pain and under torture, but rather a reflection of her spiritual reality. [41](#)

### **How was she martyred?**

Traditions narrate that Asiyah (‘a) was killed by Pharoah. However, there is a difference of opinion as to the exact method by which she was murdered.

Some traditions say that when the Pharoah was informed that Asiyah (‘a) had faith in Allah (SwT), he tried to force her to renounce her faith. However, when she refused, he ordered that a big boulder be

thrown at her and she was killed by it.

Other traditions say that when she was being tortured, she prayed to Allah (SwT) for a house in heaven near Him. Allah (SwT) answered her prayers and her house was shown to her. At that moment, she passed away. Then, a big boulder was thrown onto her dead body.

Some traditions say that she was she was nailed down with four nails and was tortured. Then, a big boulder was placed on her, and she was left to die under the scorching sun.

Allah (SwT) knows better.[42](#)

### Related Verses from the Qur'an

- Surah at-Tahrim, ayah # 11:

***Allah draws an[other]example for those who have faith: the wife of Pharaoh, when she said, "My Lord! Build me a home near You in paradise, and deliver me from Pharaoh and his conduct, and deliver me from the wrongdoing lot (66: 11).***

### Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived

#### Asiyah ('a) as an Example for the Faithful

Surah at-Tahrim, ayah # 11:

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا امْرَأَتَ فِرْعَوْنَ إِذْ قَالَتْ رَبِّ ابْنِ لِي عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنْ فِرْعَوْنَ وَاعْمَلِهِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

***“Allah draws an example for those who have faith: the wife of Pharaoh, when she said, ‘My Lord! Build me near You, a home in paradise, and deliver me from Pharaoh and his conduct, and deliver me from the wrongdoing lot’” (66: 11).***[43](#)

- Ayatullah Jawadi Amuli writes that Asiyah ('a) was not just chosen as an example for the women but she was chosen an example for all of humanity. As such, both men and women should take her as a mentor. Allah (SwT) did not say that He *draws an example for women who have faith*. Rather, He says, ***“Allah draws an example for those who have faith” (66: 11)***. This means that she is an example for all of humanity.[44](#)

- She was the wife of a man who said اَنَا رَبُّكُمْ الْأَعْلَى **"I am your exalted lord"** (79:24) and مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِي **"I do not know of any god that you may have other than me"** (28:38).
- According to Arabic grammar the word اَعْلَى 'exalted' has a restriction and a limitation in it. That is why we will not find two people who are exalted. It is always one person. As such, the Pharaoh was claiming that from all, he was the most exalted and the high. Instead of saying *La ilaha illa Allah* (There is no god but God), he was claiming *La ilaha illa Ana* (There is no god but I). Surprisingly, a woman who lived in such a household is the one who *Allah draws an example for those who have faith.* [45](#)
- She prayed, **'My Lord! Build me, near You, a home in paradise'** (66:11). This means that she wanted to be close to Allah (SwT) – in a home, in paradise. Her focus was on closeness to him, unlike others who just pray for paradise and the wonderful things within it, like, جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ **'gardens with streams running in them'** (2:25) [46](#) She mentions proximity to God first, and then paradise later. [47](#)
- Her prayer had six dimensions. The first two were *tawalla* (love). One was *Jannat ul Liqah Allah* (paradise where she will be close to Allah) and the second was *Jannat ul tajri min tahtiha al-anhar* (the paradise where there are gardens with streams running in them). The other four were about *tabarra* (to disassociate with those who oppose Allah (SwT)). First was *'deliver me from Pharaoh'*, the second was *'and his conduct,'* the third was *'deliver me from the wrongdoing lot'* and the fourth was *'and their conduct,'* [48](#)
- By asking for a home near Allah (SwT), she rejected and degraded the palace of Pharaoh. [49](#)
- She declared her detachment and disgust from Pharaoh and his evil deeds and his tyranny. [50](#)
- She didn't want to be included in the punishment of Pharaoh. When she says *deliver me from Pharaoh and his conduct* it does not mean that she was just praying to be saved

from his torture, actually she wanted to be saved from his conduct of doing *shirk* (ascribing partners to God). She had the fear of being acquainted with his polytheism and later being associated with it too.[51](#)

- She was not attracted by the glitter of her husband's palace, nor was she afraid of the torture and persecution. She stood firm in the way of Allah (SwT) and did not budge.[52](#)
- She prayed, '***My Lord! Build me, near You, a home in paradise***' (66: 11). This prayer shows that she wanted to be physically present in paradise. Spiritually, she wanted to be closer to Allah (SwT).[53](#)
- She preferred being martyred in the way of Allah (SwT) than living as a non-believer and the Queen of Egypt.
- Sometimes we could be struck by a calamity. The most important is that how we respond to it. What could be more difficult than this that she was the queen of a country and her hands and feet were tied and nailed? But instead of giving up her faith she does this *Du'a*.
- The inner state of a human being and the time of prayer and supplication (*Du'a*) do have an effect on the acceptance of the supplication.[54](#) According to traditions certain timings are highly recommended for supplicating. Some of these recommended times include: Thursday night, the whole day of Friday, and the last hour of Friday, *laylat al-qadr*, when it is raining, when you are heartbroken, etc.
- Rawand Osman, in her "*Female Personalities in the Qur'an and Sunna: Examining the Major Sources of Imami Shi'i Islam*", writes:

She sets an example for religio-political jihad. Asiyah refused to submit to the highest political and religious power, and she withstood tyranny by being steadfast in her faith and prayer. Her jihad is not necessarily an outward one, yet it is the foundation for active jihad. Imam 'Ali said, "The first kind of jihad that will overpower you is the jihad of your hands, then of your tongues, then of your hearts. He whose heart neither knows right conduct nor disapproves of indecency has a heart that has been turned upside

down”. While jihad with words or actions may be deemed either inevitable or contingent, jihad with the heart is indispensable, vital and without it the human becomes indistinct.”[55](#)

- A woman decides for herself. She writes her own destiny. [56](#) She is not dependent on anybody in choosing what she wants.[57](#) Asiyah (‘a) chose the right and Allah supported her and guided her.
- She was living in the worst environment, but the corrupt society did not have an effect on her faith. [58](#)
- Asiyah (‘a) proved that women have the freedom to choose their faith, even if against the will of a tyrannical husband.[59](#)
- She supported her infallible leader, Prophet Musa (‘a)[60](#)
- She was patient. She was tortured to death but did not give up her faith in Allah (SwT).[61](#)
- Allah is the Just Judge who will not punish anyone except for their own sins.[62](#)
- She had high goals and dreams. She did not give into anything lesser than being in *paradise and close to Allah (SwT)*.[63](#)
- Spiritual wealth has more satisfaction than material wealth. She had everything, yet she opted for the best.
- To reject all the material comforts of this world needs courage.
- Du’a should be for the best. She did Du’a for a home. Didn’t she have a home? *Bayt* or a home is a place of staying somewhere during the night and same applies to animals, somewhere that we spend the night. [64](#) A home is a place of rest and comfort. She was in

her husband's house where she had no peace. She was looking for a place of refuge where she would have peace of mind and she can practice her beliefs freely.[65](#) That is why her Du'a "build a home *for me*."

- To sacrifice ourselves for truth.
- To seek the pleasure of the creator is better than to seek the pleasure of creation.[66](#)
- When given the choice between denouncing her faith and returning to Pharaoh, or facing torture, she opted for torture.
- Giving preference to wisdom, logic and revelation is preferred in family issues.[67](#)
- Someone has to bring that change![68](#)
- It is said that one hand cannot clap. We need two hands to clap. But she proved that one person can bring revolutions.[69](#)

### According to the Bible

Nothing is found in the Bible about God praising or honoring the woman (the daughter of Pharaoh) who saved baby Moses from the Nile. She is mentioned vaguely in 1 Chronicles 4: 18 where historical records are mentioned from Adam to Abraham. The Bible, in 1 Chronicles 4: 18[70](#) mentions her children and husband whereas Matthew Henry in his commentary contends that she had no children[71](#). Hence, it is possible that the two figures mentioned in Exodus (The Old Testament) and 1 Chronicles (The New Testament) might not be in reference to the same woman.

In Jewish tradition, she was called Bithiah. The *Midrash*[72](#) also portrays her as a pious and devoted woman, who would bathe in the Nile to cleanse herself of the impurity of idolatrous Egypt[73](#) and that she was not affected by the ten plagues.[74](#) She was exiled by Pharaoh for bringing Moses to the house of Pharaoh and claiming him as her own child. Bithiah left Egypt with Moses when he ran away after killing an Egyptian slave driver, and she married Mered the Judahite.[75](#)

## Related Verses from the Bible

- 1 Chronicles, Chapter 4, verse 17: The sons of Ezra: Jether, Mered, Ephraim and Jalon. One of Mered's wives gave birth to Miriam, Shammai and Ishbah the father of Eshtemoa.[76](#)
- 1 Chronicles, Chapter 4, verse 18: (His Judean wife gave birth to Jered the father of Gedor, Heber the father of Soco, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah.) These were the children of Pharaoh's daughter Bithiah, whom Mered had married.[77](#)

## Comparison of the Qur'an and the Bible

- The Qur'an commends Asiyah ('a) by presenting her as an example for the believers whereas her exemplary nature is not mentioned in the Bible. In the Qur'an Allah (SwT) also honors her by quoting the prayer she made to Him.
- In Qur'an she has been given status by being mentioned alongside the likes of Maryam ('a), while this comparison is not found in the Bible.
- The Bible mentions her husband's name as Mered but Qur'an mentions her as the wife of Pharaoh.
- Bible mentions her children but Qur'an has made no mention about it.

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[1.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 24, p. 302; Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 25, p. 55; Mafatih al-Ghaib, vol. 30, p. 575. [\[1\]](#)

[2.](#) Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 18, p. 164. [\[2\]](#)

[3.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 27. [\[3\]](#)

[4.](#) Ibid; Qissehaye Quran, p. 225. [\[4\]](#)

[5.](#) Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 4, p. 116. [\[5\]](#)

[6.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 27. [\[6\]](#)

[7.](#) Ibid [\[7\]](#)

[8.](#) Ibid [\[8\]](#)

[9.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 27. [\[9\]](#)

10. God's Emissaries Adam to Jesus, p. 342 cited in the footnotes. [10]
11. In the Biblical account, the daughter of Pharaoh who rescued Moses is not named. A daughter of Pharaoh named Bithiah is mentioned in I Chronicles 4/18. The Midrash identifies the two as the same person, and says she received her name, literally "daughter of Yah" (Yah being a form of YHWH, which is often rendered in English as "LORD"), because of her compassion and pity in saving the infant Moses. Cited from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bithiah> [14] [11]
12. "The tradition of the Jews is that Pharaoh's daughter had no child of her own, and that she was the only child of her father", cited from <https://www.the> [13] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/exodus/2.html [12]
13. The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 5. [13]
14. The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 6. [14]
15. The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 9. [15]
16. The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 10; <https://www.the> [13] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/exodus/2.html [16]
17. <https://www.the> [13] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/exodus/2.html [17]
18. The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 5. [18]
19. The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 6. [19]
20. The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 9. [20]
21. The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 10. [21]
22. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 9, p. 22. [22]
23. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 9, p. 22. [23]
24. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 9, p. 22. [24]
25. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 9, p. 22. [25]
26. Fakhr al-Razi, Mafatih al-Ghaib, vol. 24, p. 581; Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 18, p. 163; Seyyed Hossein Nasr, The Study Qur'an, p. 948. [26]
27. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 9, p. 22. [27]
28. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 40 of Surah Ta-Ha. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [28]
29. The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 5. [29]
30. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 16, p27; Shirazi in his footnotes says that this story is a narration from Ibne Abbas narrated in Majma' al-Bayan and Mafatih al-Ghaib. [30]
31. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation vol. 18, p. 163. [31]
32. Suyuti, Jalaluddin, Dur ul Manthur, vol. 6, p. 246. [32]
33. Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 377, under Surah ut-Tahrim, 66:10. [33]
34. Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 377, under Surah ut-Tahrim, 66:10. [34]
35. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation vol. 18, p. 163. [35]
36. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 24, p. 302; Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 25, p. 155. [36]
37. Shirazi, Ali, Zanan e Namuneh, p. 257, originally cited from Kamil e Ibn Athir, vol. 1, p. 71. When Siyanah- the wife of Hizqeel (Ezekeil) and the hairdresser of Pharaoh's daughter -and her children were burnt brutally for not giving up their faith in Allah. Asiyah ('a) openly revolted against Pharaoh and his brutality. She openly declared her faith in the Lord of Musa ('a); Also refer <https://www.al-islam.org/an-overview-of-mahdi-s-government-najimuddin-ta...> [15] [37]
38. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 24, p. 315. [38]
39. Zanan e Namuneh, p. 19, originally cited from Kamil e Ibn Athir, vol. 1, p. 71. [39]
40. Meghji, Fatemah, A Woman of Paradise: The Rebellious Queen of Pharaoh, Part 2, an article in the journal Message of Thaqalayn, vol. 17, Number 3, 2016 cited from Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai trans. Sayyid Muhammad Baqir Musawi Hamadani, Tarjume Tafsir al-Mizan Volume 19, p 577. Accessed with Jami al-Tafasir, NUR Software. Translated from the Farsi with reference to the original Arabic by Fatemah Meghji.  
Link to part 1 of the article:  
<https://al-islam.org/message-thaqalayn/vol-17-no-2-summer-2016/woman-par...> [16]

Link to part 2 of the article:

<https://al-islam.org/message-thaqalayn/vol-17-no-3-autumn-2016/woman-par...> [17]

41. A Woman of Paradise: The Rebellious Queen of Pharaoh, Part 2.
42. Al-Mizan, Persian Translation, vol. 19, p. 581.
43. The Qur'an with an English Paraphrase. Note: I changed the meaning exactly according to the words in Arabic. Instead of Build me a home near You in paradise I wrote Build me near You, a home in paradise.
44. Zan dar Aine Jalal o Jamal, p. 120.
45. Zan dar Aine Jalal o Jamal, p. 121.
46. Zan dar Aine Jalal o Jamal, p. 121.
47. Zan dar Aine Jalal o Jamal, p. 121.
48. Ibid, Note: The fourth is not mentioned but it is understood: mehzuf.
49. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 24, p. 316.
50. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 24, p. 316.
51. Zan dar Aine Jalal o Jamal, p. 122.
52. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 24, p. 316.
53. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 24, p. 316.
54. Al-Mizan vol. 19, p. 55.
55. Osman, Rawand, Female Personalities in the Qur'an and Sunna: Examining the Major Sources of Imami Shi'i Islam, pp. 63-64.
56. Meghji, Fatemah, A Woman of Paradise: The Rebellious Queen of Pharaoh, Part 2, p. 60.
57. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 11 of Surah at-Tahrim, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn.
58. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 11 of Surah at-Tahrim, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn.
59. Stowasser, Barbara Freyer, Women in the Qur'an, Traditions, and Interpretation, p60.
60. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 11 of Surah at-Tahrim, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn.
61. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 11 of Surah at-Tahrim, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn.
62. Ibn Kathir, Accessed the website Qur'an Tafsir Ibn Katheer, under verse 11 of Surah at-Tahrim;  
[http://www.qtafsir.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=1298&Itemid=1](http://www.qtafsir.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1298&Itemid=1) [18]
63. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 11 of Surah at-Tahrim, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn.
64. Hasan Mustafawi, Al-Tahqiq fi Kalimat al-Qur'an Volume 1, 358. Accessed with Jami al-Tafasir, NUR Software, cited in A Woman of Paradise: The Rebellious Queen of Pharaoh, Part 2, p. 64.
65. A Woman of Paradise: The Rebellious Queen of Pharaoh, Part 2, p. 65.
66. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 11 of Surah at-Tahrim, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn.
67. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 11 of Surah at-Tahrim, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn.
68. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 11 of Surah at-Tahrim, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn.
69. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 11 of Surah at-Tahrim, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn.
70. Please refer to the section 'Related verses from the Bible' that follows.
71. "The tradition of the Jews is that Pharaoh's daughter had no child of her own, and that she was the only child of her father", cited from  
<https://www.thebiblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/exodus/2.html> [13]

<sup>72</sup> In Judaism, the Midrash is the rabbinic literature which contains early interpretations and commentaries on the Written Torah and Oral Torah.<sup>[1]</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Bithiah, Wikipedia; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bithiah> [14]<sup>[1]</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Bithiah, Wikipedia; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bithiah> [14]<sup>[1]</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Bithiah, Wikipedia; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bithiah> [14]<sup>[1]</sup>

<sup>76</sup> The Bible,NIV, p222, 1Chronicles, Chapter 4, verse 17; <https://www.thebiblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+4><sup>[1]</sup> [13]

<sup>77</sup> The Bible, NIV, p. 222, 1Chronicle, Chapter 4, verse 18; <https://www.thebiblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+4><sup>[1]</sup> [13]

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SHARES

## Chapter 3: Bilqis (‘a) – The Queen of Saba

### Her Faith and her People’s Faith

#### According to the Qur’an

The story of the Queen of Saba has been narrated in *Surah al-Naml* from verse 20 to verse 44. The Queen of Saba <sup>1</sup>is known in the Islamic tradition as Bilqis<sup>2</sup> (or Bilqays), daughter of Sharahil.<sup>3</sup> She lived at the time of Nabi Sulayman (‘a).

Nabi Sulayman (‘a) ruled over a vast and magnificent kingdom, centered in Jerusalem. It is narrated from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (‘a) that Nabi Sulayman’s kingdom spanned from the East to the West.<sup>4</sup> Due to Allah’s blessings, he was not only the ruler of people, but of birds, animals, jinn<sup>5</sup>, clouds, and even the wind.<sup>6</sup> There was never a more prosperous and greater kingdom seen on earth. He was given knowledge<sup>7</sup> and science<sup>8</sup> by Allah including the ability to understand the languages of the animal kingdom.<sup>9</sup>

One day, in his assembly of birds, he realized that the hoopoe was missing and said: **“Why do I not see the hoopoe?...” (27:20)**. The hoopoe (*hudhud*) is a medium-sized bird with a long thin bill, notable for its distinctive crest on its head. <sup>10</sup> Some may wonder how Sulayman (‘a) realized that a hoopoe was missing. There are a few suggestions: Some say that the birds stretched their wings and hovered over the army of Nabi Sulayman (‘a), providing them with shade from the sun while they were travelling. The absence of the hoopoe created a gap in the shield of the birds flying above them, and as such, sunlight reached the army.<sup>11</sup>

Others say that the hoopoe was in charge of figuring out where the nearest water was available. Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (‘a) has said that the hoopoe could see water underground, just as we can see oil in a

glass bottle. [12](#) When Sulayman (‘a) asked about the water, he discovered that hoopoe was absent. [13](#)

When Nabi Sulayman (‘a) noticed that the hoopoe was missing, he first said: ***“Why do I not see the hoopoe?...” (27:20)*** and then added ***“...Or is he absent?”*** This shows that he meant either the hoopoe had no valid excuse, or that he had a valid excuse. [14](#) To discipline and give an indirect message to all the creatures under his rule, Sulayman (‘a) added,

***“I will surely punish him with a severe punishment, or I will surely behead him, unless he brings a clear-cut excuse.” (27:21).***

It was not long before the hoopoe arrived, and said to Sulayman (‘a)

***“I have alighted on something which you have not alighted on, and I have brought you from Saba [15](#) a definite report” (27:22).***

Then he started to describe what he had found in the kingdom of Saba. He said:

***“I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given everything, and she has a great throne” (27:23).***

Sulayman (‘a) was reflecting on this news when the hoopoe broke the silence by giving him a strange and sad account, saying,

***“I found her and her people prostrating to the sun instead of Allah, and Satan has made their deeds seem decorous to them thus he has barred them from the way [of Allah], so they are not guided” (27:24).***

***“So that they do not prostrate themselves to Allah” (27:25).***

Then hoopoe started mentioning his own faith in Allah (SwT) by describing Allah (SwT) as the one and only one

***“...who brings out the hidden in the heavens and the earth, and He knows whatever you hide and whatever you disclose” (27:25).***

***“Besides Allah there is no god except Him is the Lord of the Great Throne” (27:26).***

After hearing the surprising report from the hoopoe that the people of Saba were worshipping the sun instead of Allah (SwT), Nabi Sulayman (‘a) decided to investigate some more. He did not want to jump to conclusions or depend on a single report. He wanted to be sure before taking further steps. Hence, he said to the hoopoe,

***“We shall see whether you are truthful, or if you are one of the liars” (27:27).***

By saying this, he didn't accuse the hoopoe, nor did he accept his report without evidence. To investigate the matter further, Sulayman ('a) wrote a short and meaningful letter to the Queen, and said to the hoopoe,

***"Take this letter of mine and deliver it to them. Then draw away from them and observe what [response] they return" (27:28).***

#### **Related Verses from the Qur'an**

- Surah al-Naml, ayah # 20-28:

***"[One day] he reviewed the birds, and said, " Why do I not see the hoopoe? Or is he absent?" (27:20)***

***"I will surely punish him with a severe punishment, or I will surely behead him, unless he brings a clear-cut excuse" (27:21)***

***"He did not stay for long [before he turned up] and said, " I have alighted on something which you have not alighted on, and I have brought you from Sheba a definite report" (27:22).***

***"I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given everything, and she has a great throne" (27:23).***

***"I found her and her people prostrating to the sun instead of Allah, and Satan has made their deeds seem decorous to them thus he has barred them from the way [of Allah], so they are not guided" (27:24).***

***"So that they do not prostrate themselves to Allah, who brings out the hidden in the heavens and the earth, and He knows whatever you hide and whatever you disclose" (27:25).***

***"Allah there is no god except Him is the Lord of the Great Throne" (27:26).***

***"He said, 'We shall see whether you are truthful, or if you are one of the liars'" (27:27).***

***"Take this letter of mine and deliver it to them. Then draw away from them and observe what [response] they return" (27:28).***

#### **Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived**

## Hoopoe Missing!

### Surah al-Naml, ayah # 20

وَتَفَقَّدَ الطَّيْرَ فَقَالَ مَا لِيَ لَا أَرَى الْهُدُودَ أَمْ كَانَتْ مِنَ الْغَائِبِينَ

***“[One day] he reviewed the birds, and said, “Why do I not see the hoopoe? Or is he absent?” (27:20).***

- Nabi Sulayman (‘a) says “*the hoopoe*”, which means that he was referring to a specific hoopoe. [16](#)
- A sign of good management is to review employees, and to observe and keep an eye on their behaviour. The manager should be vigilant such that he should even feel the absence of an ordinary worker and should follow up on him. Work ethic and discipline are important as the violation of a single person might have an effect on the entire community. [17](#)
- One should not blame anyone by making hasty judgements. There could be several excuses and possibilities that someone was not aware of. The verse states *Why do I not see the hoopoe?* [18](#)
- Far-sightedness, sharpness, and precision are some of the conditions of leadership. [19](#)
- Seyyed Hossein Nasr quotes Qurtubi saying that Solomon’s reaction to the absence of the hoopoe shows one of the qualities of a great leader; he was aware of the condition of those he led, down to that of a single bird. [20](#)

## Punishment

### Surah al-Naml, ayah # 21

لَأَعَذِّبَنَّهُ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا أَوْ لَأَذْبَحَنَّهُ أَوْ لَيَأْتِيَنِي بِسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ

***“I will surely punish him with a severe punishment, or I will surely behead him, unless he brings a clear-cut excuse” (27:21).***

- The phrase “*I will surely punish him with a severe punishment or I will behead him*” show the seriousness of Nabi Sulayman’s (‘a) tone. He is swearing to them that he will *surely* punish or behead the hoopoe unless he brings a clear-cut excuse.[21](#)
- Nabi Sulayman (‘a) did not pass a judgement in the hoopoe’s absence, but made the consequences of treachery clear. [22](#)
- Nabi Sulayman (‘a) said *unless he brings a clear-cut excuse*: This shows that even though he had power over weak animals, he was also just and ready to accept a valid excuse from the hoopoe.[23](#)
- Never close the doors of defense for a victim, and hear what they have to say.[24](#)
- **What kind of punishment?** Some commentaries have discussed the possible punishments that the hoopoe could have faced had he not been found innocent.[25](#)

#### [News from Saba](#)

#### **Surah al-Naml, ayah # 22**

فَمَكَثَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحَطْتُ بِمَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ وَ جِئْتُكَ مِنْ سَبَإٍ بِنَبَأٍ يَقِينٍ

***“He did not stay for long [before he turned up] and said, “I have alighted on something which you have not alighted on, and I have brought you from Sheba a definite report” (27:22).***

- A small creature like the hoopoe had the courage to tell the powerful ruler, Nabi Sulayman (‘a), that he had come with some information that Nabi Sulayman (‘a) was unaware of. This shows the freedom of speech in the kingdom of Nabi Sulayman (‘a)[26](#)

- The hoopoe was addressing the most powerful ruler, but interestingly, we do not see him expressing flattery in his speech, even though he is very respectful.[27](#)
- It is possible for a tiny creature like the hoopoe to know something which the knowledgeable king and Prophet of God did not know. Humans should never be too proud or arrogant of their knowledge.[28](#)
- Birds have a sense of understanding, and belief; knowledge is not limited to human beings.
- Be a good listener.

#### The Queen

#### Surah al-Naml, ayah # 23

إِنِّي وَجَدْتُ امْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ

***“I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given everything, and she has a great throne” (27:23).***

- Women can rule.[29](#) However, it was probably uncommon for women to rule, and that could be why the hoopoe makes a note of it.[30](#)
- Bilqis (‘a) had a prosperous kingdom. In fact, the hoopoe says *she has been given everything, and she has a great throne*.
- The hoopoe had seen the kingdom of Nabi Sulayman (‘a), and that is why he could compare both the kingdoms. It seems that Bilqis (‘a) had a noteworthy and grand kingdom as the hoopoe said “*she has a great throne*”.[31](#)

Surah al-Naml, ayah # 24

وَجَدْتَهَا وَ قَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّمْسِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَ زَيْنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ

***“I found her and her people prostrating to the sun instead of Allah, and Satan has made their deeds seem decorous to them thus he has barred them from the way [of Allah], so they are not guided” (27:24).***

- If the leader goes astray, it is likely that their people will too.[32](#)
- Birds worship Allah (SwT) and know that Satan is often at work. The hoopoe was surprised that the people of Saba were worshipping the sun instead of Allah (SwT).
- To have the blessings of Allah (SwT) in this world is not a sign of being close to Allah (SwT). Allah (SwT) granted both Nabi Sulayman (‘a) and Bilqis (‘a) everything.[33](#) However, one chose to worship Him while the other worshipped the sun (though she eventually came to worship Allah as well).[34](#)
- When Allah (SwT) blesses the righteous, it is a grace of Allah[35](#). However, the same blessing in the hands of others is limited to the crown and throne and does not extend beyond the life of this world.[36](#)
- It is in the innate nature of humans to worship a lord; if he does not find the truth, he often worships falsehood in the desire to worship something.[37](#)
- The worship of the sun has taken place in history. People worshipped the sun at the time of Nabi Ibrahim (‘a)[38](#) and also at the time of Nabi Sulayman (‘a).[39](#)
- Shaytan invites people to falsehood by making it look beautiful. He makes bad traits and actions seem good in order to stop people from worshipping Allah.[40](#)

- Never make hasty conclusions. The hoopoe said *so they are not guided*. However, later on we see that they accept guidance once it comes to them.[41](#)

## Hidden

### Surah al-Naml, ayah # 25

أَلَّا يَسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ الَّذِي يُخْرِجُ الْخَبْءَ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُخْفُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ

***“So that they do not prostrate themselves to Allah, who brings out the hidden in the heavens and the earth, and He knows whatever you hide and whatever you disclose” (27:25).***

- The word الْخَبْءَ means a treasure that is hidden.[42](#) Imam Ali (‘a) said “The personality of a man is hidden under his tongue”. [43](#) Just like the ingredients for honey are hidden in the flower, Allah (SwT) brings out the honey through the honey bees. Similarly, all fruits and vegetables are hidden in the soil and water. Every year, Allah (SwT), with the help of His trees, plants and flowers manifests these fruits and vegetables.[44](#) This is possibly why hoopoe is saying that Allah *brings out the hidden in the heavens and the earth*. The blessings are from Allah, so why aren’t they worshipping Him?
- The sun is a creation of Allah and the people of Saba were worshipping the creation instead of the creator.[45](#) Many times, we are guilty of making the same mistake. We worship our boss, our families, our teachers, our prestige, and our money– instead of Allah (SwT).
- We think that we are *ashraf al-makhlūqat*; the best of all creations. It is true, that human beings have the potential to be better than other creatures, but that is not always the case. The hoopoe, a bird, recognized Allah better than the people of Saba!
- Some commentators believe that khaba’ الْخَبْءَ means the hidden of the heavens and the earth.[46](#) Others contend that the hidden of the heavens is the rain and the hidden of the earth is plants and trees. [47](#) Some believe that it could mean everything – as all creations were behind the curtain of non-existence, and Allah brings them out into the realm of

existence.<sup>48</sup> Allamah Tabatabai refutes the last opinion and says that this is the meaning for *فطر* and not for *الْخَبَاءُ*<sup>49</sup>

- Allamah Tabatabai says that the meaning of the phrase “*He knows whatever you hide and whatever you disclose*” does not only mean that Allah knows everything that you do in privacy and all that you do in public. Rather, it has a more general meaning that Allah is aware of all that you do and all that you have in your heart.<sup>50</sup> Allah has knowledge of everything. Nothing is hidden from Him.<sup>51</sup>

### Tawhid

#### Surah al-Naml, ayah # 26

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

**“Allah there is no god except Him is the Lord of the Great Throne” (27:26).**

- Al-Tabarsi says that it is probable that this verse is quoting the words of Allah describing Himself<sup>52</sup> as opposed to the hoopoe. However, other commentators contend that they are the words of hoopoe in continuation of the previous verse, and that the hoopoe was expressing his faith in Allah (SwT).<sup>53</sup>
- This verse reflects *tawhid ibadi* <sup>54</sup> (unity in worship) and *tawhid rububi*. (unity in Lordship)<sup>55</sup> Allah is the source of everything and is all-Powerful. He alone deserves to be worshipped.
- Seyyed Hossein Nasr writes that “Qurtubi notes that the Queen of Saba’s throne is called *mighty* in relation to the other thrones of the sovereigns of the earth, whereas God’s throne is mighty because it encompasses the heavens and the earth”.<sup>56</sup>

### Investigation

#### Surah al-Naml, ayah # 27

قَالَ سَنَنْظُرُ أَصَدَقْتَ أَمْ كُنتَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ

***“He said, ‘We shall see whether you are truthful, or if you are one of the liars’” (27:27).***

- It is always good to investigate before making judgements and taking action.
- It is not admirable to believe things blindly, nor to reject things without reason.[57](#) A person should neither be naïve, nor stubborn. Nabi Sulayman (‘a) did not completely believe the hoopoe unconditionally, nor did he reject him entirely. He suspended judgement, and investigated further. [58](#)
- In important matters, it is better to have substantial evidence from various sources.[59](#)
- It is often beneficial to begin on a positive note before mentioning the negative ones. The verse states, *“We shall see whether you are truthful, or if you are one of the liars”*[60](#)

#### The Letter

#### **Surah al-Naml, ayah # 28**

اَذْهَبْ بِكِتَابِي هَذَا فَأَلْفِهِ إِلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ فَانْظُرْ مَاذَا يَرْجِعُونَ

***“Take this letter of mine and deliver it to them. Then draw away from them and observe what [response] they return” (27:28).***

- Writing letters and inviting others to the truth is a part of the history and tradition of prophets. Prophet Muhammad (S) also wrote letters to the king of Persia and Rome.[61](#)
- Birds can serve as messengers between humans.[62](#)
- The pen can be an important source of guidance, and has many blessings.[63](#)

- To have a plan is one of the tactics of good management. The verse says “*Take this letter of mine ... Then draw away from them ...*”[64](#)
- Give people time to think before asking for their decision, and observe them. The verse states “*Observe what [response] they return.*”[65](#)
- **How did the hoopoe deliver the letter?** There are various opinions as to how this was done: Qitadah narrates that Bilqis (‘a) was sleeping, when the hoopoe came and threw the letter on her neck. She woke up and read the letter.[66](#) Some say that there was an opening or a small window, through which the sun would shine through. When this happened, Bilqis (‘a) would prostrate to it. So, the hoopoe sat in front of the window, blocking the sunlight with his wings. When the sun did not shine through it, Bilqis (‘a) became curious and came closer to the window to check. When she did that, the hoopoe threw the letter towards her. She read the letter and summoned her 312 noblemen to discuss the letter.[67](#) However, Ayatullah Nasir Makarim Shirazi refutes this and says that the verse says *فَأَلْقَاهُ إِلَيْهِمْ* “*and deliver it to them*”, which in an apparent literal reading, shows that Bilqis (‘a) was sitting in her court, with her noblemen when the letter was delivered.[68](#)

### According to the Bible

There is no mention of this part of the story in the Bible.[69](#) The only mention of the hoopoe in the Bible is where it talks of birds that are forbidden to eat. [70](#)

### Comparison of the Qur’an and the Bible

- The entire event of the hoopoe is mentioned in the Qur’an and is not mentioned at all in the Bible. As such, all of the events described above are unique to the Qur’an.
- The Qur’an states that Nabi Sulayman ruled over the birds[71](#) whereas the Bible states God gave him wisdom and insight and understanding[72](#) with which he could describe plant life and teach about the animals and birds.[73](#)

- The Qur'an states that Sulayman ('a) was a messenger<sup>[74](#)</sup> of God with a high spiritual status, whereas the Bible contends that he was a just king<sup>[75](#)</sup>.

## In Her Court

### According to the Qur'an

The hoopoe obeyed Nabi Sulayman ('a): he delivered the letter and observed their reaction to it from a distance.

The Queen of Saba opened and read the letter. She had heard of the wisdom, power and strength of Sulayman ('a). The tone of the letter sounded decisive and serious, and so, she began to ponder on the words. She then turned her attention to her courtiers and said,

***"O [members of the] elite! Indeed a noble letter has been delivered to me" (27:29).***

***"It is from Solomon, and it begins in the name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful" (27:30).***

***"[It states,] 'Do not defy me, and come to me in submission'" (27:31).***

After relaying the contents of the letter, she turned to her courtiers and said,

***"O [members of the] elite! Give me your opinion concerning my matter. I do not decide any matter until you are present" (27:32).***

They responded by saying:

***"We are powerful and possess a great might. But it is up to you to command. So see what you will command" (27:33).***

With this reply, they conveyed that they were submissive to her, and that they were ready to fight for their strong kingdom under her command.<sup>[76](#)</sup> When she heard this response, she realized that they were inclined towards war. She did not approve of this path, and said,

***"Indeed when kings enter a town, they devastate it, and reduce the mightiest of its people to the most abased. That is how they act" (27:34).***

They will kill some, imprison some, and some will be driven out of the kingdom. She was a ruler and she knew the chaos that would ensue if they were attacked and fought. Rulers often think of personal profit over the betterment of their people.<sup>[77](#)</sup>

Then continuing by saying that they should first test Sulayman (‘a) and his people to see what they wanted. She wanted to determine if Sulayman (‘a) was a prophet or a king, a devastator or a savior. She wanted to figure out if he humiliated and abased kingdoms or if he dignified and exalted them. To find this out, she decided to test him by sending him something. And so, she declares,

***“I will send them a gift, and I shall see what the envoys bring back” (27:34).***

She knew that kings loved gifts, and that riches were their weakness. She knew that many of them could be easily bought by gifts. Perhaps she thought to herself that if he accepts the gift, then she would know that he was only a king, but that if he rejected it, then she could be sure that he was a prophet.<sup>78</sup> The Qur’an has not mentioned what the gift was. Some commentaries have hypothesized details as to what the gifts were, but we are not certain. <sup>79</sup>

### Related verses from the Qur’an

- Surah al-Naml, ayah # 29–35

***“She said, ‘O [members of the] elite! Indeed, a noble letter has been delivered to me” (27:29).***

***“It is from Solomon, and it begins in the name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful” (27:30).***

***“[It states,] ‘Do not defy me, and come to me in submission”” (27:31).***

***“She said, ‘O [members of the] elite! Give me your opinion concerning my matter. I do not decide any matter until you are present”” (27:32).***

***“They said, ‘We are powerful and possess a great might. But it is up to you to command. So see what you will command”” (27:33)***

***“She said, ‘Indeed when kings enter a town, they devastate it, and reduce the mightiest of its people to the most abased. That is how they act” (27:34).***

***“I will send them a gift, and I shall see what the envoys bring back” (27:35).***

### Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived

#### A Noble Letter

Surah al-Naml, ayah # 29

قَالَتْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ إِنِّي أُلْقِيَ إِلَيَّ كِتَابٌ كَرِيمٌ

***“She said, ‘O [members of the] elite! Indeed, a noble letter has been delivered to me” (27:29).***

- Bilqis (‘a) had advisors in her court.
- **Why did Bilqis (‘a) call the letter “a noble letter”?** There are a few opinions:
  - Some say that she saw that the letter was stamped with a seal, so she knew that it was important and thus called it a *noble letter*. Some traditions mention that the nobility of a letter is in its seal.[80](#)
  - Some say that because it had ‘*In the name of Allah*’ at the beginning, she called it a noble letter.[81](#)
  - Others believe that she said it was a noble letter due to its contents,[82](#) and moreover, that the writing of the letter was beautiful.[83](#)
  - Some say that she called it such because she knew that the letter was from someone who ruled man, jinns and animals. She knew about him, and also knew his name.[84](#)
  - Some opine that the letter was delivered through an extraordinary means, the hoopoe bird, so she called it *noble*.[85](#)
  - Allamah Tabatabai believes that the letter was *noble* to her because of two reasons only: Firstly, it was from Nabi Sulayman (‘a) and she had heard of his vast empire, glory, and his extraordinary powers. The proof of this is that when she sees her throne in Nabi Sulayman’s (‘a) court, she mentions ***and we were informed before it, and we had submitted.***” (27:42).[86](#) Secondly, the letter began with the phrase “*In the name of Allah*” and that is probably why she called it noble. The sun-worshippers believed in Allah as well; He (SwT) was called God of Gods (*rabb al-arbab*). As such, Allah was exalted and respected by them, even though they gave partners to Him. [87](#) As such, Allamah Tabatabai refutes these other opinions and calls them *tafsir bi al-rayi* (commentaries

according to one's opinion). [88](#) Ayatullah Nasir Makarim Shirazi and Agha Qarati believe that all of these opinions could be true together at the same time. [89](#)

#### [Contents of the Letter](#)

#### Surah al-Naml, ayah # 30-31

إِنَّهُ مِنْ سُلَيْمَانَ وَإِنَّهُ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

***“It is from Solomon, and it begins in the name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful” (27:30).***

أَلَّا تَعْلُوا عَلَيَّ وَأُتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ

***“[It states,] ‘Do not defy me, and come to me in submission’” (27:31).***

- The letter had three sentences: First sentence was “In the name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful.” The second sentence was “Do not defy me” The third sentence was “and come to me in submission”. [90](#)
- Letters should be short and to the point. [91](#)
- Always start your work with the name of Allah (SwT). [92](#)
- The phrase “Do not defy me” means “do not dictate me” [93](#) and “do not exalt yourself against me”. [94](#) Allamah Tabatabai believes that the phrase “Come to me in submission” means to submit and surrender to him. He contends that the word ‘muslim’ here has the literal meaning of submission and surrender, and not the meaning of having faith in Allah (SwT). Allamah Tabatabai continues that Nabi Sulayman (‘a) was a prophet and also a king. When he asked the people of Saba to submit to him, he would eventually invite them towards Allah (SwT) as well, fulfilling his duty as a prophet. We see that at the end of the story, Bilqis (‘a) accepted Islam and said ***“I submit with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds” (27:44).*** [95](#)

- Ayatullah Jawadi Amuli believes that the letter was an invitation to Islam, and that the Queen sent Nabi Sulayman (‘a) a gift to test him. Bilqis (‘a) thought that if he accepted the gift and withdrew his invitation to Islam, then he was not a true prophet and it is not necessary to accept his religion.[96](#)
- Islam is submission and surrender (to Allah): “Al-Islam huwa al-tasleem”.
- This is the only Surah in the Qur’an that repeats Bismillah hir rahman nir raheem in the middle of the Surah.[97](#)

### Consultation

#### Surah al-Naml, ayah # 32

قَالَتْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ أَفْتُونِي فِي أَمْرِي مَا كُنْتُ قَاطِعَةً أَمْرًا حَتَّى تَشْهَدُونِ

***“She said, ‘O [members of the] elite! Give me your opinion concerning my matter. I do not decide any matter until you are present’” (27:32).***

- The above verse portrays the Queen’s diplomacy with her courtiers. This is a sign of a diplomatic and shrewd ruler. Maybe she knew what was to be done but she still wants her courtiers to feel special and involved in her decision.
- Hossein Nasr writes quoting Ibn Arabi: the queen’s handling of the letter from Solomon demonstrated her superiority and worthiness to rule. Such attributes along with her willingness to embrace true faith when challenged (unlike other figures such as Pharaoh) can also be interpreted as constituting a Qur’anic model for beneficent and wise female leadership and governance.[98](#)
- [أَفْتُونِي](#) Is derived from the word فتوى (*fatwa*) which means to give a precise ruling in a complicated matter. By using this word she wanted to bring her counsellors attention to the complicated situation and was indirectly asking them to be discreet when giving their opinion.[99](#)

- The word تَشْهَدُونَ is derived from the word شهود (shahud) which means to be present. In this verse it implies that she wanted them to be present physically and also to have presence of mind in giving their advice. [100](#) Also she wanted to say that she has never been a dictator and has always taken their advice. [101](#)

### Power of Saba

#### Surah al-Naml, ayah # 33

قَالُوا نَحْنُ أَوْلُوا قُوَّةٍ وَأُولُوا بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ وَالْأَمْرُ إِلَيْكِ فَانْظُرِي مَاذَا تَأْمُرِينَ

***“They said, ‘We are powerful and possess a great might. But it is up to you to command. So see what you will command’” (27:33)***

- The word قُوَّةٍ (quwwah) means the power and ability that allows a person to do something. In this verse, it is referring to the army that can help drive out the enemy troops from their kingdom. [102](#)
- The word بَأْسٍ (ba's) means to be rigorous and strong in action. In this verse, it could be alluding to their courage and valor. [103](#)
- The words of the courtiers display their support for engagement in war, their military strength, and also their obedience to her command.
- In many governments, people participate and contribute to the discussions of important decisions of the country, however, the final decision lies with one person, the entrusted leader. [104](#)

### Mannerisms of Kings

#### Surah al-Naml, ayah # 34

قَالَتْ إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوا أَعِزَّةَ أَهْلِهَا أَذِلَّةً وَكَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ

***“She said, ‘Indeed when kings enter a town, they devastate it, and reduce the mightiest of its people to the most abased. That is how they act’ (27:34).***

- When Bilqis (‘a) heard the answer of her courtiers, she realized that they wanted to fight. This is why, in response, she explained the reality of war and how kings plunder the kingdoms they invade, and that this was not a positive thing to engage in for no good reason.
- Bilqis (‘a) was aware of the weaknesses of rulers, and knowingly confessed to the character of the leaders and kings. This displays her courage and acceptance of the reality and truth of things. [105](#)
- Her aversion to war was not out of fear; rather, it was because she knew and understood the devastating nature of the war.
- With regards to the verse كَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ *“That is how they act”*, some commentators [106](#) believe the phrase to be the words of Allah. However, Allamah Tabatabai refutes this opinion and says that the phrase was stated by the queen of Saba. The phrase means that this is how kings have usually acted and generally speaking, this is their tendency. [107](#)

#### Test with a Gift

#### **Surah al-Naml, ayah # 35**

وَإِنِّي مُرْسِلَةٌ إِلَيْهِمْ بِهَدِيَّةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ بِمَ يَرْجِعُ الْمُرْسَلُونَ

***“I will send them a gift, and I shall see what the envoys bring back” (27:35).***

- One should not make hasty decisions. Bilqis (‘a) first studied the situation by investigating; she sent a gift to see Sulayman’s (‘a) reaction to assess the situation further. Only then did she make a decision.
- If Nabi Sulayman (‘a) agreed to take the gift and stopped propagating, then Bilqis (‘a) did

not want to accept his invitation to his religion as this would have indicated to her that he was not a true prophet. [108](#)

- If a movement is materialistic, then you can bribe or buy it for material possessions and wealth. [109](#)
- The gift was sent by a group of envoys that had a leader. This leader was the one who took the gift to Nabi Sulayman (‘a), as the verse says *So when **he** came to Solomon* [110](#)  
The verse does not say when **they** came to Solomon.
- **What was the gift?** There have been exaggerations, myths and folktales over what this gift was, and they have been rejected by scholars. [111](#) Some of them include things like slave girls, slave boys, and jeweled swords. Some say that Nabi Sulayman (‘a) in response, lined up all the jinns, animals and the birds to display his power to the people of Saba and to show that their gift was nothing in comparison to what he already had in his kingdom. [112](#)

### According to the Bible

The Bible does not relay anything that happened in the court of Sheba before she visited King Solomon.

### Comparison of the Qur’an and the Bible

- The Bible does not relate that part of the story where the Queen of Saba receives a letter and her conversation with her courtiers whereas the Qur’an mentions it.
- The Qur’an mentions that Bilqis (‘a) sent a gift to Nabi Sulayman (‘a) before she visited him whereas the Bible does not mention a gift being sent **before** her visit.

### In Nabi Sulayman’s (‘a) Court

## According to the Qur'an

The envoys of Saba reached the kingdom of Nabi Sulayman (‘a) with the gift. When they presented the gift to Nabi Sulayman (‘a), to their surprise, instead of welcoming them, he was offended and rebuked them by saying,

***“Are you aiding me with wealth? What Allah has given me is better than what He has given you. Rather you are exultant over your gift” (27:36).***

He was upset at their attempt to buy him with wealth, and asked them to return to their people by saying,

***“Go back to them (to Saba), for we will come at them with hosts which they cannot face, and we will expel them from it, abased, and they shall be degraded” (27:37).***

His words were serious and showed strong determination. The envoys could sense the seriousness in the threat after seeing the magnificence of his kingdom and his strong army. [113](#)

If the Queen and the people of Saba had asked for evidence for Nabi Sulayman’s (‘a) prophethood or for a miracle, it would have been better. They had the right to investigate the truth of the matter. However, sending a gift seemed to indicate that they were in fact, rejecting the message of truth. [114](#) Some may think that Nabi Sulayman’s threat contradicts the verse ***‘There is no compulsion in religion’ (2:256)***. But idol worship and sun worship is not a religion, it is actually a deviation from religion. [115](#) Moreover, this verse is talking about the state of one’s heart, not the responsibility of a people to surrender to God’s divine governments as their rulers.

The envoys of Saba returned to Bilqis (‘a). They reported the might, magnificence and glory of the kingdom of Nabi Sulayman (‘a). The different powers that he possessed were a sign that Nabi Sulayman (‘a) was not an ordinary man and was indeed the prophet of Allah (SwT). Moreover, they reported that he had rejected the gifts and not only could he not be bought with gifts, but he was not in need of them. They realized that they were not fit to confront this king. [116](#)

And so, the Queen of Saba decided to visit Nabi Sulayman (‘a) personally to investigate this religion further. She set off with a few noblemen. When the news reached Nabi Sulayman (‘a) that the Queen of Saba was on her way to visit him, he wanted to offer a proof of his prophethood by displaying his power to them. As such, he asked his courtiers,

***“O [members of the] elite! Which of you will bring me her throne before they come to me in submission?” (27:38).***

Two of them volunteered:

***“An afreet [117](#) from among the jinn said, “I will bring it to you before you rise from your place. Indeed, I have the power for it and am trustworthy” (27:39).***

Another,

***“The one who had some knowledge of the Book said, ‘I will bring it to you in the twinkling of an eye’. So when he [Sulayman (‘a)] saw it set near him, he said, ‘This is by the grace of my Lord, to test me if I will give thanks or be ungrateful. And whoever gives thanks, gives thanks only for his own sake. And whoever is ungrateful [should know that] my Lord is indeed all-sufficient, all-generous” (27:40). [118](#)***

To see how observant and acute she was, to judge her wisdom, and to lay the foundation for her to bring faith in Allah [119](#), Nabi Sulayman (‘a) ordered his workers to disguise her throne by saying,

***“Disguise her throne for her, so that we may see whether she is discerning or if she is one of the undiscerning ones” (27:41).***

***“So when she came, it was said [to her], “Is your throne like this one?” (27:42).***

The Queen of Saba answered wisely with caution, hesitating to jump to any conclusions immediately: ***“It seems to be the same” (27:42)***. She answered intelligently and chose the best words. If she had said “It is like my throne”, she would have been wrong because that would indicate it was not her throne and that there were two. If she had said “this is my throne”, that was seemingly impossible as well given that the distance between the kingdoms was vast. The only way this could have been possible was through a miracle or supernatural events and help. [120](#)

She was convinced that this was the case once she realized that it was indeed her throne. In fact, she had realized the truth of Sulayman’s (‘a) words when he rejected her gift and had invited her towards the true religion of Allah. She then expressed herself by saying

***“... and we were informed before it, and we had submitted” (27:42).***

***“She had been barred [from the way of Allah] by what she used to worship besides Allah, for she belonged to a faithless people” (27:43).***

Meanwhile Nabi Sulayman (‘a) had ordered his people to pave the floor of one of the courtyards in his palace with thin glass or crystal. [121](#) Beneath it, water flowed. When the Queen of Saba was asked, ***“Enter the palace... she supposed it to be a pool of water” (27:44)*** and lifted her dress to avoid getting wet. When she did this, Nabi Sulayman (‘a) informed her that, ***“It is a palace paved with crystal” (27:44).***

She was amazed by this. After discussing the matter further with Nabi Sulayman (‘a) and asking him a series of questions, [122](#) she said,

***“My Lord! Indeed I have wronged myself, and I submit with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds” (27:44).***

Ayatullah Jawadi Amuli writes:

Many Prophets invited the oppressive, tyrannical dictators of their times by giving them good tidings and inviting them towards the truth but it had no effect. Nabi Musa (‘a) and Harun (‘a) tried explaining Pharaoh and his courtiers but it had no effect. Even their miracles were rejected. Instead, they either killed or imprisoned the Bani Isra’iil and paid no heed to the prophet’s message. They took pride in slaughtering their sons and sparing their daughters. [123](#) Finally, they were all drowned. [124](#)

The same scenarios were repeated at the time of Nabi Ibrahim (‘a), Nabi Isa (‘a) and other prophets, until it was the turn of the Queen of Saba. She received a letter from Nabi Sulayman (‘a) which was blended with glad-tidings and warnings, threats and promises and she was ready to accept the truth. Even though this woman’s power was not less than the other rulers, she was wiser than many men! [125](#)

If many men have been successful and righteous, [then it is also true] that there were also men who were corrupt and killed innocent generations and races because of their greed. However, this courageous woman saved many lives because of her wisdom and pursuit of the truth. [126](#)

### Related verses from the Qur’an

- Surah al-Naml, ayah #36–44

***“So when he came to Solomon, he said, ‘Are you aiding me with wealth? What Allah has given me is better than what He has given you. Rather you are exultant over your gift!’” (27:36).***

***“Go back to them, for we will come at them with hosts which they cannot face, and we will expel them from it, abased, and they shall be degraded” (27:37).***

***“He said, ‘O [members of the] elite! Which of you will bring me her throne before they come to me in submission?’” (27:38).***

***“An afreet from among the jinn said, ‘I will bring it to you before you rise from your place. Indeed I have the power for it and am trustworthy” (27:39).***

***“Someone who had some knowledge about the Book said, ‘I will bring it to you in the twinkling of an eye’. So, when he saw it set near him, he said, ‘This is by the grace of my Lord, to test me if I will give thanks or be ungrateful. And whoever gives thanks, gives thanks only for his own sake. And whoever is ungrateful [should know that] my Lord is indeed all-sufficient, all-generous” (27:40).***

***“He said, ‘Disguise her throne for her, so that we may see whether she is discerning or if she is one of the undiscerning ones” (27:41).***

***“So when she came, it was said [to her], ‘Is your throne like this one?’ She said, ‘It seems to be the same, and we were informed before it, and we had submitted’” (27:42).***

***“She had been barred [from the way of Allah] by what she used to worship besides Allah, for she belonged to a faithless people” (27:43).***

***“It was said to her, ‘Enter the palace’. So when she saw it, she supposed it to be a pool of water, and she bared her shanks. He said, ‘It is a palace paved with crystal’. She said, ‘My Lord! Indeed, I have wronged myself, and I submit with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds’” (27:44).***

### **Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived**

#### **Nabi Sulayman’s reaction**

#### **Surah al-Naml, ayah #36**

فَلَمَّا جَاءَ سُلَيْمَانَ قَالَ أَتُمِدُّونَ بِمَالٍ فَمَا آتَانِيَ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا آتَاكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ بِهَدْيِكُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ

***“So when he came to Solomon, he said, ‘Are you aiding me with wealth? What Allah has given me is better than what He has given you. Rather you are exultant over your gift!’” (27:36).***

- Ayatullah Jawadi Amuli writes that when Nabi Sulayman (‘a) rejected the gift that was sent, Bilqis (‘a) realized that it was impossible to make him give up his invitation by bribing him with a gift. On the other hand, she knew that when kings invaded a country, they plunder it and debase people. [127](#)
- The ‘you’ in the verse ***Are you aiding me with wealth?*** is not addressing the envoy rather it is addressing their queen. [128](#)
- The word بِمَالٍ (*wealth*) has been used as an indefinite noun, perhaps to show how worthless and invaluable material gifts truly are. [129](#)
- People of Allah do not trade the truth for material possessions. They are not after this materialistic world. [130](#) Never be a slave of this materialistic world.
- People of Allah are farsighted, emotionally intelligent, and decisive. They are not naïve,

and Sulayman (‘a) could see the intentions behind the gift. [131](#)

- Islam encourages accepting gifts but not bribery. [132](#)
- All blessings are only from Allah (SwT) and what He gives is the best.
- Nabi Sulayman (‘a) was gifted with prophethood, knowledge, God-wariness and guidance from Allah (SwT). [133](#)
- The verse *Rather you are exultant over your gift* means that when you see a dazzling expensive material gift, your eyes shine and your mouth waters– but such a gift has no value for me. [134](#)

#### [Threat](#)

#### Surah al-Naml, ayah # 37

ارْجِعْ إِلَيْهِمْ فَلَنَأْتِيَنَّهُمْ بِجُنُودٍ لَا قِبَلَ لَهُمْ بِهَا وَلَنُخْرِجَنَّهُمْ مِنْهَا أَذِلَّةً وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ

***“Go back to them, for we will come at them with hosts which they cannot face, and we will expel them from it, abased, and they shall be degraded” (27:37).***

- In the verse ‘**Go back to them**’ Nabi Sulayman is addressing the head of envoys. The phrase ‘*to them*’ is referring to the queen and the people of Saba. [135](#)
- Nabi Sulayman (‘a) does not threaten to kill them; rather he threatens them by saying that he will drive them out of their castles, and that they will be belittled. [136](#)
- Nabi Sulayman (‘a) does not launch a surprise attack– rather he makes his intentions well-known. [137](#)

- The forces of truth are stronger than falsehood. The verse says *we will come at them with hosts which they cannot face*. [138](#)

### Challenge

Surah al-Naml, ayah # 38

قَالَ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُوْا أَيُّكُمْ يَأْتِينِي بِعَرْشِهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ

***“He said, ‘O [members of the] elite! Which of you will bring me her throne before they come to me in submission?’” (27:38).***

- Nabi Sulayman (‘a) wanted to perform a miracle to prove the power that Allah (SwT) had bestowed on him. By seeing her throne miles away from home, Bilqis (‘a) would be able to readily accept Allah (SwT) and his prophet. [139](#)
- By doing something extraordinary, he wanted to win their hearts and trust in Allah (SwT). In this way, they would not have to face each other in the battlefield. [140](#)
- The courtiers of Nabi Sulayman had extraordinary powers. [141](#)
- By challenging, he opened the room for healthy competition among his workers. [142](#) This also shows that it is good to make use of others capabilities. [143](#)

### Ifreet

Surah al-Naml, ayah # 39

قَالَ عِفْرِيتٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقُومَ مِنْ مَّقَامِكَ وَإِنِّي عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِيٌّ أَمِينٌ

***“An afreet from among the jinn said, ‘I will bring it to you before you rise from your place. Indeed I have the power for it and am trustworthy’” (27:39).***

- *Ifreet* means mischievous and evil, [144](#) and according to traditional dictionaries means that it is someone who is disliked because of his impurity. [145](#)
- He was either a demon [146](#) from the jinn, or mischievous jinn. [147](#)
- The verse *Indeed I have the power for it and am trustworthy*, means that ‘I have the power to carry it, and I will not get tired. Further, I am trustworthy because I will not cheat you [148](#) and I will not steal it or the gems from it.’ [149](#)

#### One who had Some Knowledge of the Book

#### Surah al-Naml, ayah # 40

قَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَن يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ فَلَمَّا رَآهُ مُسْتَقِرًّا عِنْدَهُ قَالَ هَذَا مِن فَضْلِ رَبِّي لِيَبْلُوَنِي أَأَشْكُرُ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ وَمَن شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّي غَنِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ

***“Someone who had some knowledge about the Book said, ‘I will bring it to you in the twinkling of an eye’. So, when he saw it set near him, he said, ‘This is by the grace of my Lord, to test me if I will give thanks or be ungrateful. And whoever gives thanks, gives thanks only for his own sake. And whoever is ungrateful [should know that] my Lord is indeed all-sufficient, all-generous”***  
(27:40). [150](#)

- Who was the person who had the knowledge of the book? There are a few opinions over who this person was:
1. This verse is in contrast to the previous verse, showing that this person was not from the jinn, but that rather he was human. Imam Ali al-Hadi (‘a) [151](#) has said that his name was Asif ibn Barkhiya. He was the nephew, [152](#) vizir, and successor of Nabi Sulayman (‘a). [153](#)
  2. Some say that he was a man who knew the secret greatest name of Allah (*ism al-a’dham*) [154](#) that when invoked, guarantees one’s supplication to be answered. [155](#) Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (‘a) said that there are seventy three *asma al-a’dham* and that Asif ibn Barkhiya only had one of them, and with it, he was able to get the throne. [156](#) Asif ibn

Barkhiya had *some* knowledge about the Book. Other traditions note that Imam Ali (‘a) had *all* the knowledge of the book. [157](#) Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (‘a) has said that “the knowledge of the person who had *some knowledge about the Book* compared to the knowledge of Imam Ali (‘a) was like a drop of water on the wing of a fly compared to the ocean.” [158](#)

3. Some believe that this person was Nabi Khidr (‘a), [159](#) while others say that it was Jibra’il. [160](#)
4. Some say that it was Nabi Sulayman (‘a) himself who wanted to exhibit the power that Allah had blessed him with. [161](#)
5. Fakhr Al-Razi prefers the last interpretation [162](#) whereas Allamah Al-Tabarsi, Allamah Tabatabai and Ayatullah Nasir Makarim Shirazi reject it. [163](#) Allamah Tabatabai and Ayatullah Nasir Makarim Shirazi support the first view that it was Asif ibn Barkhiya. [164](#)

- **What kind of knowledge did he possess?** In the verse, the word ‘*knowledge*’ has been used as an indefinite noun. This means that he had a sort of knowledge that cannot be described by words. [165](#) Allamah Tabatabai writes beautifully saying that when the person who got the throne said *I will bring it to you...* in reality, it was Allah (SwT) who got the throne there. This shows that the person who got the throne had a special connection with Allah (SwT). He was so close to Allah, that whenever he wanted something, Allah also wanted that same thing. [166](#)
- **What kind of a book?** It was one of the holy books sent by Allah (SwT) to the prophets or the preserved tablet (*loh e mahfuz*). [167](#) As such, it is referring to a type of divine knowledge.
- **What does... *in the twinkling of an eye*... mean?** Regarding the phrase *in the twinkling of an eye*...there are many opinions. Allamah Tabatabai writes that this is the amount of time in which a person looks at something and it registers in the mind. In that same

amount of time, this person brought the throne. [168](#) However, Ayatullah Nasir Makarim Shirazi refutes his teacher's, Allamah Tabatabai's opinion, and writes that this cannot be accepted as there is no proof. He believes that it means *in the blink of an eye*. His proof is in Surah Ibrahim, verse 43, where the same verb has been used: لَا يَرْتَدُّ إِلَيْهِمْ طَرْفُهُمْ (there will be a fixed gaze in their eyes). On the day of resurrection, people will be terrified and their eyes will stay open in awe, such that they will not even blink. Thus, the person who brought the throne meant that he will bring the throne immediately, before Nabi Sulayman ('a) blinked. [169](#)

- **How was the throne transferred?** There are many opinions. Some of these include: [170](#)

1. Angels carried it.
2. The wind carried it.
3. By Allah's order, it moved.
4. The earth swallowed it, and then it appeared in front of Nabi Sulayman ('a).
5. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq ('a) said that the earth wrapped under it.
6. Allah made it non-existent in Saba and then gave it existence in Nabi Sulayman's ('a) court.
7. Jabir narrates from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir ('a) that the earth between Nabi Sulayman ('a) and Bilqis ('a) folded or rolled and Asif ibn Barkhiya transferred the throne with his own hands. Then, the earth went back to its previous state. [171](#)

- When he saw the throne appear, Nabi Sulayman ('a) said sincerely *This is by the grace of*

*my Lord!* Nabi Sulayman (‘a) did not take any credit for the power that his student and successor Asif ibn Barkhiya showed. Unlike Qaroon who said *إِنَّمَا أُوتِيْتُهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عِنْدِي* (“*I have indeed been given [all] this because of the knowledge that I have.*”) [172](#)

- The phrase *My Lord is indeed all-sufficient, all-generous* means that He has no need of gratitude from human beings and is neither helped by its presence nor harmed by its absence. [173](#)

- **What do we learn from this verse?**

- Humans can have more power than the jinns. [174](#)
- True spiritual knowledge is the source of true power. Humans have learnt how to make video phone calls, and technological advances continue to grow. However, spiritual power gave someone the ability to move items from the east to west within seconds. [175](#)
- Humans have potentials and powers that he has not explored yet. [176](#)
- There should be speed in performing duties. [177](#)
- All blessings are from Allah (SwT). [178](#)
- Never be proud of our knowledge and power. [179](#)
- Blessings from Allah are sometimes tests. Even the prophets were tested. [180](#)
- Man has free will. The verse says *And whoever gives thanks,.... And whoever is ungrateful.*

- Man is responsible for his deeds. [181](#)
- Allah is not in need of our gratitude. [182](#)

### Disguise the Throne!

#### Surah al-Naml, ayah # 41

قَالَ نَكِّرُوا لَهَا عَرْشَهَا نَنْظُرُ أَ تَهْتَدِي أَمْ تَكُونُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ

***“He said, ‘Disguise her throne for her, so that we may see whether she is discerning or if she is one of the undiscerning ones’” (27:41).***

- *Disguise* means to change the outer appearance of the throne by adding or removing something [183](#) or to perhaps change the color or rearrange the studded gems. [184](#)
- **What was the intention in disguising the throne?** There are a few opinions:

1. Nabi Sulayman (‘a) wanted to test her wisdom. [185](#)
2. He wanted to perform a miracle to prove his prophethood. [186](#)
3. He wanted to test her sense of precision and attention. [187](#)

- **Why did he want to test her wisdom?** By testing her wisdom, he wanted to see whether logic should be used to invite her towards Allah (SwT). [188](#) Perhaps, he wanted to give her a duty after she accepted Islam, and wanted to see if she had the potential to accept such a duty or not. [189](#) Perhaps, he wanted to propose to her for marriage and wanted to see if she was a suitable match for him. [190](#)

Surah al-Naml, ayah # 42

فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ قِيلَ أَ هَٰذَا عَرْشُكَ قَالَتْ كَأَنَّهُ هُوَ وَأُوتِينَا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ

***“So when she came, it was said [to her], ‘Is your throne like this one?’ She said, ‘It seems to be the same, and we were informed before it, and we had submitted’” (27:42).***

- It is recorded in history that the Queen of Saba had her expensive throne in an enclosed room which had strong and sturdy doors protected by guards, in a special castle. [191](#)
- The question was أَ هَٰذَا عَرْشُكَ ***“Is your throne like this one?”*** and it was not أَ هَٰذَا عَرْشُكَ “Is this your throne?” The question was to make the throne more unrecognizable and oblivious. [192](#) However, it was also hinting to the fact that it had some association with her throne – a throne that Sulayman (‘a) could not have seen before, given that he had never been to the land of Saba.
- She answered كَأَنَّهُ هُوَ ***“It seems to be the same,”*** and did not say أَنَّهُ هُوَ ‘Certainly it is my throne’. [193](#) She was smart enough to be careful and accurate with her words.
- The question was to test her intelligence: if she said yes or no, she would have been incorrect, because the throne was neither entirely the same nor entirely different. However, she correctly evaluated it by saying that it “seemed” like her throne. [194](#)
- In the phrase *before it*: the article ***it*** refers to the miracle where she saw her throne in Nabi Sulayman’s (‘a) court. This means that when the courtier from Nabi Sulayman’s (‘a) court asked her ***“Is your throne like this one?”*** she gathered it to be a reminder or a hint for her saying “Did you notice the supernatural extraordinary powers Sulayman (‘a) has?” That is why she answered ***“We were informed before it...”*** as if to say: “We knew about his powers and his mighty kingdom before we saw this miracle. We don’t need to be reminded or hinted indirectly. That is the reason that we have submitted. Hence we have bowed down to him in obedience and submission”. [195](#)

- A person should be observant, and precise in their answers.
- The Qur'an has mentioned both wise men like Luqman ('a), as well as wise women like Bilqis ('a)

### Barrier

#### Surah al-Naml, ayah # 43

وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَتْ تَعْبُدُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ

***“She had been barred [from the way of Allah] by what she used to worship besides Allah, for she belonged to a faithless people” (27:43).***

- In the previous verse Bilqis ('a) says ***“we were informed before it...”*** which means that she already recognized the power of Allah (SwT) and the truth of Nabi Sulayman's prophethood before she saw the miracle. However, she was blocked by the faithless environment, where they worshipped the sun, from recognizing the whole truth and submitting to Allah (SwT). [196](#)
- If a person is being barred from accepting the truth or being hindered from practicing the truth or is in danger of losing faith while the doors of migration are open for him, it is better to migrate. [197](#)

### Submission

#### Surah al-Naml, ayah # 44

قِيلَ لَهَا ادْخُلِي الصَّرْحَ فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً وَكَشَفَتْ عَنْ سَاقَيْهَا قَالَ إِنَّهُ صَرْحٌ مُمَرَّدٌ مِنْ قَوَارِيرَ قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

***“It was said to her, ‘Enter the palace’. So when she saw it, she supposed it to be a pool of water, and she bared her shanks. He said, ‘It is a palace paved with crystal’. She said, ‘My Lord! Indeed, I have wronged myself, and I submit with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds’” (27:44).***

- الصَّرْحَ means a palace and any building that is higher and overlooking other buildings and also it means a place that has been made flat and it has no roof. [198](#) لُجَّة means dense gushing [199](#) waters [200](#). مُمَرَّد means clear and قَوَارِير means glass. [201](#)

- Rawand Osman writes,

One of Solomon's way of proving his prophethood to people was through his exquisite *mulk*. A tradition from Imam al-Sadiq tells that a prophet always speaks to people in the language that could convince them. That is why, for example, Moses brought magic and Muhammad brought a literary masterpiece...the Qur'an tells that Bilqis had been given everything...In spite of all that she had, however Solomon demonstrated his sway over elements in nature and treasures that were beyond her grasp. Perhaps this is how the queen was able to associate with those signs and comprehend them as convincing proofs. [202](#)

- The phrase "*Enter the palace*" was probably said by one of the attendants of Nabi Sulayman ('a). [203](#)
- When Bilqis ('a) lifted her skirt [204](#) thinking she had to walk through water, she was informed that it would not get her wet, and that it was just clear glass and a crystal pavilion, she was amazed. After seeing the magnificence of his kingdom, the incident of the hoopoe (*hudhud*), the rejection of the gift, and also the bringing of her throne from Saba, her doubts were cleared. She knew with certainty that these were the miracles and signs of Allah (SwT) and that Sulayman ('a) was His messenger. [205](#)
- Once she was convinced of the truth, she immediately confessed: "*My Lord! Indeed I have wronged myself...*" Perhaps she was guilty of not worshipping and bringing faith in Allah (SwT) right when she had seen the first sign, [206](#) or was admitting that worshipping the sun was wrong and had only hurt her. By confessing this and repenting, she purified her heart and laid the foundation for the next step which was accepting the beliefs and tenants of the religion.
- Even though the culture she was in and what she worshipped served as a barrier to her accepting true faith, the door of her innate nature (*fitrat*), thought and reflection, was all

around her and so her decision was open. Once she was convinced, she embraced Islam, by saying, *I submit with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.*" [207](#)

- When she said *أَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ* "...and I submit with Solomon..." she meant "I am not a Sulaymani Muslim, rather I am a Muslim *alongside* Sulayman i.e. I am **your** (Allah's) Muslim." [208](#)
- The Islam in *كُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ* ... **and we had submitted (27:42)** was different from the Islam in *أَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ* "...and I submit with Solomon..." The first one consisted of submission to Nabi Sulayman's ('a) rulership, while the other was submission to Allah (SwT). [209](#)  
Clarifying the difference, she immediately adds the phrase *the Lord of all the worlds*. Here, she emphasizes that there is no Lord but Allah (SwT) who is the lord of all the worlds and he alone deserves to be worshipped and nothing else. [210](#)
- Her conversion was not sudden, rather it was gradual. It was the culmination of a process of change in the queen's heart. [211](#)
- Rawand Osman writes:

Throughout the story there is tension between her heart and her head...Her intelligence seems to be exemplary from the religious point of view, precisely because it was neither proud nor stubborn, but led to submission to God. If understanding and softness are feminine qualities, these seem to be favored in this case. [212](#)

- Bilqis ('a)'s submission was better to that of Pharaoh. Bilqis ('a) accepted immediately whereas the Pharaoh accepted when he saw death awaiting him and it was too late for him. Bilqis ('a) submitted to *the Lord of all the worlds*, whereas the Pharaoh submitted to the Lord of *the Children of Israel* [213](#). Bilqis ('a) understood the very essence of God as *the Lord of all the worlds*. " [214](#), whereas Pharaoh's understanding was limited to the power of God as manifested through the miracles that Allah sent on the Children of Israel and his complete and utter defeat at His hands.

- Bilqis (‘a) uses the word مَعَ (*with*), thus saying that we are all brothers<sup>[215](#)</sup> and sisters in Islam. We are all lined up in one row in front of Allah, serving Him together (SwT). There is no gender, class, or caste hierarchy. In Islam, we are all one and it is only our faith that gives us any value in the eyes of Allah.
- The climax of the story of the Queen of Saba was *tawhid*<sup>[216](#)</sup>, and this should be the goal of every Muslim.
- One should use every means at one’s disposal (perhaps even the aid of material wealth) to guide someone to the right path.<sup>[217](#)</sup>
- Bilqis (‘a) was a disbeliever but Nabi Sulayman (‘a) welcomed her with respect and kept her honour. This teaches us that we need to honor and treat our non-Muslim guests with good manners.<sup>[218](#)</sup>
- Sometimes, we might see things, but we may not recognize their true reality or understand the whole picture. Our knowledge is limited. The verse states, *So when she saw it, she supposed it to be a pool of water...*
- Submitting to the truth is not a sign of weakness; rather it is a sign of true liberty and freedom.<sup>[219](#)</sup>
- True repentance is when one compensates the past by asking forgiveness and illuminates the future with the light of guidance and change. Bilqis (‘a) said, *“Indeed I have wronged myself, and I submit with Solomon to Allah...”*<sup>[220](#)</sup>
- The Qur’an through the image of the Queen of Saba portrays that a woman is free and responsible in choosing her own faith and in expressing her beliefs.<sup>[221](#)</sup> Some writers have unfortunately seen this independent figure in Qur’an as “*resisting paradigmization*” and a product of “*fanciful storytelling*.”<sup>[222](#)</sup>

- Having faith is not always sufficient. One needs to accompany faith with action. It is important to be with a guide and prophet to help figure out these actions.[223](#)
- The goal of prophets was to invite people to Allah, not to expand their kingdoms or gain material wealth. The Queen of Saba also understood this. That is why she said in the end, *“I submit with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.”*[224](#)
- Seyyed Hossein Nasr, quoting the Sufi commentator, Ibn Ajibah says:

The encounter between Sulayman and Bilqis on a spiritual level ...is a highly complex allegory of the relationship between a spiritual master and a disciple...in the spiritual life one relinquishes one's throne, which symbolizes the soul, and it is transfigured by the spiritual master into something new, but not completely different. Commentaries on Ibn Arabi's *Fusus* mention that Bilqis was taught here a lesson about appearance, about seeing what she believed should not have been there (her throne) and about not seeing what was in reality there (glass, not water), which is a kind of allegory for the challenge of overcoming appearances[225](#) to reach the nature of things[226](#), a goal of the spiritual life.[227](#)

### According to the Bible

The story of the Queen of Sheba is narrated in two chapters of the Bible, i.e. 1 Kings, Chapter 10, verse 1 to 13 and 2 Chronicles, Chapter 9, verses 1 to 12.[228](#) The story begins with the Queen of Sheba[229](#) having heard of the wisdom of King Solomon, traveling all the way from Sheba (Yemen[230](#)) to Jerusalem, to personally test his wisdom. She comes with a big caravan loaded with gifts for Solomon comprising of large quantities of gold, precious stones, incense and spices.[231](#)

King Solomon welcomes her warmly to his palace. She was impressed to see his palace, his servants, his officials, his cup-bearers, his pomp and glory. She tests his wisdom by asking a few tough questions but Solomon answers them easily. She is impressed by his knowledge, wisdom and palace. She appreciates this by saying, *“The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true. But I did not believe these things until I came and saw with my own eyes.”*

She commends him further by saying, *“in wisdom and wealth you have far exceeded the report I heard.”* Then she envies the people around him by saying, *“How happy your people must be! How happy your officials, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom!”* Then she glorifies God saying, *“Praise be to the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on the throne of Israel.”* They exchange gifts, and then the Queen returns to Sheba.

Mathew Henry writes in his commentary:

On what errand the queen of Sheba came – not to treat of trade,...or his assistance against some common enemy, ...but she came, to satisfy her curiosity; for she had heard of his fame, especially for his wisdom,...She came to hear his wisdom, and thereby to improve her own<sup>232</sup> that she might be the better able to govern her own kingdom by his maxims of policy...She was religiously inclined, and had heard not only of the fame of Solomon, but...the great name of that God whom Solomon worshipped and from whom he received his wisdom, and with this God she desired to be better acquainted...

He writes regarding the gifts that she got: “She came with nothing mean or common, but gold, and precious stones, and spices, because she came to trade for wisdom, which she would purchase at any rate.” Further, Henry comments about Solomon’s convincing answers to her: “...he allowed her to commune with him of all that was in her heart<sup>233</sup> and gave her a satisfactory answer to all her questions<sup>234</sup> whether natural, moral, political, or divine. ...” Moreover, he writes that “...she admired the buildings and furniture of his palace...but above all these...his wisdom...and the last thing mentioned, which crowned all, is his piety...” Further, “she made a noble present to Solomon of gold and spices, ...Thus she paid for the wisdom she had learned...Solomon was not behind-hand with her: He gave her whatsoever, she asked,<sup>235</sup>...of those things that were curious ...besides that which he gave her of his royal bounty,<sup>236</sup> his divine bounty, which infinitely exceeds royal bounty...”<sup>237</sup>

### [Related Verses from the Bible](#)

- 1 Kings, Chapter 10, verse 1 to 13:

When the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon and his relationship to the Lord, she came to test Solomon with hard questions. <sup>2</sup> Arriving at Jerusalem with a very great caravan – with camels carrying spices, large quantities of gold, and precious stones – she came to Solomon and talked with him about all that she had on her mind. <sup>3</sup> Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for the king to explain to her. <sup>4</sup> When the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon and the palace he had built, <sup>5</sup> the food on his table, the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, his cupbearers, and the burnt offerings he made at the temple of the Lord, she was overwhelmed.<sup>6</sup> She said to the king, “The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true. <sup>7</sup> But I did not believe these things until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half was told me; in wisdom and wealth you have far exceeded the report I heard.<sup>8</sup> How happy your people must be! How happy your officials, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom! <sup>9</sup> Praise be to the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on the throne of Israel. Because of the Lord’s eternal love for Israel, he has made you king to maintain justice and righteousness.”<sup>10</sup> And she gave the king 120 talent of gold, large quantities of spices, and precious stones. Never again were so many spices brought in as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.<sup>11</sup> (Hiram’s ships brought gold from Ophir; and from there they brought great cargoes of algumwood and precious stones. <sup>12</sup> The king used the algumwood to make supports for the temple of the Lord and for the royal palace, and to make harps

and lyres for the musicians. So much algumwood has never been imported or seen since that day.)<sup>13</sup> King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired and asked for, besides what he had given her out of his royal bounty. Then she left and returned with her retinue to her own country. [238](#)

- 2 Chronicles, Chapter 9, verses 1 to 12:

When the queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's fame, she came to Jerusalem to test him with hard questions. Arriving with a very great caravan – with camels carrying spices, large quantities of gold, and precious stones – she came to Solomon and talked with him about all she had on her mind.<sup>2</sup> Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for him to explain to her.<sup>3</sup> When the queen of Sheba saw the wisdom of Solomon, as well as the palace he had built,<sup>4</sup> the food on his table, the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, the cupbearers in their robes and the burnt offerings he made at the temple of the Lord, she was overwhelmed.<sup>5</sup> She said to the king, "The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true."<sup>6</sup> But I did not believe what they said until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half the greatness of your wisdom was told me; you have far exceeded the report I heard.<sup>7</sup> How happy your people must be! How happy your officials, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom!<sup>8</sup> Praise be to the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on his throne as king to rule for the Lord your God. Because of the love of your God for Israel and his desire to uphold them forever, he has made you king over them, to maintain justice and righteousness."<sup>9</sup> Then she gave the king 120 talents<sup>1</sup> of gold, large quantities of spices, and precious stones. There had never been such spices as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.<sup>10</sup> (The servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon brought gold from Ophir; they also brought algumwood and precious stones.<sup>11</sup> The king used the algumwood to make steps for the temple of the Lord and for the royal palace, and to make harps and lyres for the musicians. Nothing like them had ever been seen in Judah.)<sup>12</sup> King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired and asked for; he gave her more than she had brought to him. Then she left and returned with her retinue to her own country.[239](#)

- Mathew, Chapter 12, verse 42:

The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom, and now something greater than Solomon is here.[240](#)

## **Comparison of the Qur'an and the Bible**

- The Qur'an talks about 'a gift' being sent by the Queen of Sheba to Sulayman ('a) before she visits him, but the Bible says that she gave the gifts when she herself visited him. The chronology of these events is different.
- The Bible gives a list of the gifts that she brought with her including incense, gold, spices, precious stones. The Qur'an mentions 'a gift' but does not give any details.
- The Qur'an mentions the miracle where Sulayman ('a) got her throne delivered to his court in the blink of an eye. However, the Bible does not narrate this incident.
- The Qur'an mentions that Sulayman ('a) wanted to test her observation and wisdom so he asked his people to alter the throne. Again, this part of the story is not mentioned in the Bible.
- The Qur'an talks about the courtyard being paved with clear crystal and water flowing underneath. When Bilqis ('a) saw this sight, she thought that it was a pool and was concerned that her clothes would get wet. The Bible does not mention this.
- The Bible mentions that when she came to Solomon, she asked him questions which he answered. However, the Qur'an does not mention this.
- The Bible says that she praised God by saying, "*Praise be to the Lord your God,*"<sup>241</sup> but it does not mention that she fully accepted and submitted to Solomon's God whereas the Qur'an mentions that she fully accepted the religion and said, "***I submit with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds***" (27:44).
- The Bible mentions an exchange of gifts between them, but the Qur'an does not mention this.

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1. the present Yemen. [1]
  2. Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 245 [2]
  3. The Study Qur'an, p. 932 [3]
  4. <https://www.al-islam.org/hayat-al-qulub-vol-1-allamah-muhammad-baqir-al-...> [19] I guess he wanted to say that it was a vast empire. [4]
  5. See Surah al-Naml, 27:17. [5]
  6. See Surah Saba, 34:12. [6]
  7. See Surah al-Naml, 27:15 [7]
  8. See Surah Saba, 34:12; He was given molten copper. [8]
  9. Surah al-Naml, 27:19. [9]
  10. The Study Qur'an, p. 932. [10]
  11. Mafatih al-Ghaib, vol. 24, p. 550. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [11]
  12. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 96. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software [12]
  13. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 96; Tafsir Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 441. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [13]
  14. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 96; Tafsir Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 441. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [14]
  15. I changed the word from Sheba to Saba. [15]
  16. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 20 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [16]
  17. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 446. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [17]
  18. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 446. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [18]
  19. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 446. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [19]
  20. The Study Qur'an, p. 932. [20]
  21. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 505. [21]
  22. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 470. [22]
  23. Ibid; Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 21 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [23]
  24. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 21 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [24]
  25. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 21 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn [25]
  26. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 22 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn; Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 470. [26]
  27. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 471. [27]
  28. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 471. [28]
  29. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 23 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn [29]
  30. Ibid; Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 475 [30]
  31. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 471 [31]
  32. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 24 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [32]
  33. Surah al-Naml verse 16: Nabi Sulayman (a) said **أَوْتَيْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ** [33]
  34. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 24 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn [34]
  35. See Surah al-Naml, 27:16. Nabi Sulayman (a) said "we have been given out of everything. Indeed this is a manifest advantage." [35]
  36. See Surah al-Naml, 27:23. [36]

- [37.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 24 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗
- [38.](#) See Surah al– Ana’am, 6:78: Then, when he saw the sun rising, he said, " This is my Lord! This is bigger!"🔗🔗
- [39.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 24 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗
- [40.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 24 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗
- [41.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 24 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗
- [42.](#) Qamus e Qur’an, vol. 1–2, p. 217.🔗🔗
- [43.](#) قَالَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ع الْمَرْءُ مَخْبُوءٌ تَحْتَ لِسَانِهِ ‘Uyun al–Akhbar al–Ridha’ (‘a), vol. 2, p. 24. Accessed by Jame Ahadith 3.5, Nur Software 3; Nahju al–Balagha, hikmat 148 cited in Shirazi, Makarim, Payam e Imam Amir al–Momineen, vol. 13, p. 219.🔗🔗
- [44.](#) Qamus e Qur’an, vol. 1–2, p. 217.🔗🔗
- [45.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian Translation, vol. 15, p. 508.🔗🔗
- [46.](#) Majma al–Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 100. Accessed by Jame Tafaseer, Nur software.🔗🔗
- [47.](#) Majma al–Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 100. Accessed by Jame Tafaseer, Nur software. Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 25 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗
- [48.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 507.🔗🔗
- [49.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 507.🔗🔗
- [50.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 508.🔗🔗
- [51.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 25 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗
- [52.](#) Majma al–Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 100. Accessed by Jame Tafaseer, Nur software.🔗🔗
- [53.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 508; Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 474.🔗🔗
- [54.](#) Unity in worship, tawhid in worship, monotheism in worship🔗🔗
- [55.](#) Divine unity, Unity in divine lordship.🔗🔗
- [56.](#) The Study Qur’an, p. 932.🔗🔗
- [57.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 27 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗
- [58.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 27 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗
- [59.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 27 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗
- [60.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 27 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗
- [61.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 28 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗
- [62.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 28 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗
- [63.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 28 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗
- [64.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 28 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗
- [65.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 28 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗
- [66.](#) Majma al–Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 103. Accessed by Jame Tafaseer, Nur software.🔗🔗
- [67.](#) Majma al–Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 103. Accessed by Jame Tafaseer, Nur software.🔗🔗
- [68.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 479.🔗🔗

69. A similar account like Qur'an is found in the Jewish literature probably written in the 8th century called 'Targum Sheni' to Esther (see: Colloquy of the Queen of Sheba); cited in the article 'Queen of Sheba': [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen\\_of\\_Sheba](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen_of_Sheba); [20] The Targum Sheni is an Aramaic translation elaboration of the Book of Esther, that embellishes the Biblical account with considerable new apocryphal material. [21]
70. The Bible, NIV, Leviticus, Chapter 11, verse 19; The Bible, NIV, Deuteronomy, Chapter 14, verse 18 [22]
71. See Surah al-Naml, 27: 17. [23]
72. The Bible, NIV, 1Kings, Chapter 4, verse 29. [24]
73. The Bible, NIV, 1Kings, Chapter 4, verse 33. [25]
74. See Surah al-Nisa, 4: 163. [26]
75. 1Kings, Chapter 2, verse 17. [27]
76. Qissehayeh Qur'an, p. 381. [28]
77. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, pp. 482-483. [29]
78. Qissehayeh Qur'an, p. 381. [30]
79. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 456. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software [31]
80. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 102. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software; Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 511; Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 480. [32]
81. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 102. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software; Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 511; Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 480. [33]
82. Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 244. [34]
83. Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 244. [35]
84. Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 244. [36]
85. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 511. [37]
86. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 510. [38]
87. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 510. [39]
88. Meaning: Commentators give their own opinion: Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 511. [40]
89. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 480; Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 29 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn [41]
90. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 481 [42]
91. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 30 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [43]
92. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 30 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [44]
93. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 512. [45]
94. The Study Qur'an, p. 933. [46]
95. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 512. [47]
96. Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 244. [48]
97. The Study Qur'an, p. 933. [49]
98. The Study Qur'an, p. 933. [50]
99. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 482. [51]
100. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 482. [52]
101. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 512. [53]
102. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 512. [54]
103. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 513. [55]
104. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 33 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [56]
105. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 34 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [57]
106. Mafatih al-Ghaib, vol. 24, p. 555. Accessed by Jami tafaseer, Nur software; Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15 p.

514. [1][2]

[107.](#) Mafatih al-Ghaib, vol. 24, p. 555. Accessed by Jami tafaseer, Nur software; Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15 p.

514. [1][2]

[108.](#) Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 244. [1][2]

[109.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 34 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [1][2]

[110.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 514. [1][2]

[111.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 484; Mafatih al-Ghaib, vol. 24, p. 555. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software; Tabatabai and Jawadi Amuli don't mention the stories. [1][2]

[112.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 484; Mafatih al-Ghaib, vol. 24, p. 555. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software; Tabatabai and Jawadi Amuli don't mention the stories. [1][2]

[113.](#) Qisseyhayeh Qur'an, p. 383. [1][2]

[114.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 492. [1][2]

[115.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 463. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [1][2]

[116.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 467. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [1][2]

[117.](#) A kind of mischievous jinn: cited in The Study Qur'an, p. 934. [1][2]

[118.](#) Irving, T.B, The Qur'an, p. 380. [1][2]

[119.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 478. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [1][2]

[120.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 479. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [1][2]

[121.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 509. [1][2]

[122.](#) Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 245. [1][2]

[123.](#) See Surah al-Baqarah, 2:49. [1][2]

[124.](#) See Surah at Ta-Ha, 20:78. [1][2]

[125.](#) Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 242 to 243. Note: It is not a word-to-word translation. It is just the gist of the meaning. [1][2]

[126.](#) Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 246. Note: It is not a word-to-word translation. It is just the gist of the meaning. [1][2]

[127.](#) Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 244. [1][2]

[128.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 515. [1][2]

[129.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 515. [1][2]

[130.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 36 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [1][2]

[131.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 36 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [1][2]

[132.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 36 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [1][2]

[133.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 491. [1][2]

[134.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 491. [1][2]

[135.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 515: سَابَا refers to Saba. [1][2]

[136.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 494. [1][2]

[137.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 494. [1][2]

[138.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 494. [1][2]

[139.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 516. [1][2]

[140.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 497. [1][2]

[141.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 38 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [1][2]

[142.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 38 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [1][2]

[143.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 38 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-

Thaqalayn. [143]

[144.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p516; Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p.497. [144]

[145.](#) Qamus e Qur'an, vol. 2, p. 219. [145]

[146.](#) Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p113. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software [146]

[147.](#) The Study Qur'an, p. 934. [147]

[148.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 516. [148]

[149.](#) Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 113. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [149]

[150.](#) The Qur'an with an English Paraphrase: Irving, T.B, The Qur'an, p. 380. [150]

[151.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 40 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [151]

[152.](#) Ibid, Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 114. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software; Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, 499. [152]

[153.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 517. [153]

[154.](#) To use Ism e adham is not just chanting of a name rather it is that a person should reach perfection in his faith, taqwa and akhlaq to an extent that he starts manifesting that name. Ref: Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 499. [154]

[155.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 517; Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p114. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software; The Study Qur'an, p. 934; Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 499. [155]

[156.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 4, p. 90. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [156]

[157.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 4, p. 88. [157]

[158.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, vol. 4, p. 88. [158]

[159.](#) Ibid, Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p114. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software; The Study Qur'an, p. 934. [159]

[160.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 517; Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p114. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [160]

[161.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 517; Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p114. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software; The Study Qur'an, p. 934. [161]

[162.](#) The Study Qur'an, p. 934. [162]

[163.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 517; Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p114. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software; Tafsir e Namunah, vol. 15, p. 499. [163]

[164.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 517; Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 498. [164]

[165.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 517. [165]

[166.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 518. [166]

[167.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 517; Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p114. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [167]

[168.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 518. [168]

[169.](#) Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 500. [169]

[170.](#) Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p114. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software (All the opinions are recorded here). [170]

[171.](#) Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 527: Tabatabai says that this view is the same as the view in item number five of Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation: Ibid, p. 528. [171]

[172.](#) Surah al-Qasas, 28:78 cited in Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 503. [172]

[173.](#) The Study Qur'an, p. 935. [173]

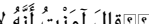
[174.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 40 of Surah al-Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [174]

[175.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 40 of Surah al-Naml. [175]

[176.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 40 of Surah al-Naml. [176]

[177.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 40 of Surah al-Naml. [177]

[178.](#) Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 40 of Surah al-Naml. [178]

- [179.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 40 of Surah al–Naml. 
- [180.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 40 of Surah al–Naml. 
- [181.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 40 of Surah al–Naml. 
- [182.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 40 of Surah al–Naml. 
- [183.](#) The Study Qur'an, p. 935; Majma al–Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p114. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. 
- [184.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 507; Majma al–Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p114. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. 
- [185.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 520. 
- [186.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 520. 
- [187.](#) Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 245. 
- [188.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 507. 
- [189.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 507. 
- [190.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 507. 
- [191.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 508. 
- [192.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 521. 
- [193.](#) Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 245. 
- [194.](#) The Study Qur'an, p. 935. 
- [195.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 521. It is not a word–to–word translation. 
- [196.](#) Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 245; Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 43 of Surah al–Naml. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn; Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 522: it is the gist and not a word–to–word translation. 
- [197.](#) Surah al–Nisa, 4:97: When the people will bring an excuse saying that they were weak in their lands and could not practice. The angels will ask them why they not migrated. 
- [198.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 522. 
- [199.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 510: refer to the footnotes. 
- [200.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 522. 
- [201.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 522. 
- [202.](#) Female Personalities in the Qur'an and Sunna: Examining the Major Sources of Imami Shi'i Islam, pp. 111– 112. 
- [203.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 522. 
- [204.](#) There are some absurd stories (ref: Majma al–Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 118; Mafatih al–Ghaib, vol. 24, p. 559. Accessed by Jame tafaseer, Nur software). It is narrated that the jinns lied to Nabi Sulayman saying that Bilqis ('a) had donkey hooves. To examine her feet, he made the pool of water. Other stories say that when she lifted her skirt he saw hair on her legs and he didn't like it. So he took the jinn's advice and since then the traditional hair remover nure was made. Both Sunni and Shi'a tafaseers have rejected these stories saying that these stories are Israiliyat. (ref: The Study Qur'an, p. 935, Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 526). 
- [205.](#) Ibid. 
- [206.](#) Ibid. 
- [207.](#) Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 245. 
- [208.](#) Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 246. 
- [209.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 522. 
- [210.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 15, p. 522. 
- [211.](#) Female Personalities in the Qur'an and Sunna: Examining the Major Sources of Imami Shi'i Islam, p. 109. 
- [212.](#) Ibid, p. 118. 
- [213.](#) See Surah Yunus, 10:90:  قَالَ آمَنْتُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّذِي آمَنْتُ بِهِ بَنُوا إِسْرَائِيلَ وَ أَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ
- [214.](#) See Surah al–Naml, 27:44. 
- [215.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 512. 
- [216.](#) Unity in God. 

- [217.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 44 of Surah al–Naml. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn. [1]
- [218.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 44 of Surah al–Naml. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn. [1]
- [219.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 44 of Surah al–Naml. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn. [1]
- [220.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 44 of Surah al–Naml. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn. [1]
- [221.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 44 of Surah al–Naml. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn. [1]
- [222.](#) Stowasser, Barbara Freyer, Women in the Qur'an, Traditions, and Interpretations, p. 62 [1]
- [223.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 44 of Surah al–Naml, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn [1]
- [224.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 44 of Surah al–Naml. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn. [1]
- [225.](#) Dhahir. [1]
- [226.](#) Haqeeqat. [1]
- [227.](#) The Study Qur'an, p. 936. [1]
- [228.](#) The two testament accounts of the coming of the queen of Sheba to Solomon differ slightly from one another but the story is the same. [1]
- [229.](#) She is also called as the 'Queen of the South' by Jesus as Sheba was situated south of Jerusalem; ref: Mathew, chapter 12, verse 42. [1]
- [230.](#) Ethiopians claim Sheba to be from Ethiopia: see:  
<https://www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk/api/datastream?publicationPid=uk-a-...> [21] [1]
- [231.](#) The Bible, NIV, 1Kings, Chapter 10, verse 2. [1]
- [232.](#) The Bible, Matthew, Chapter 12, verse 42. [1]
- [233.](#) The Bible, 1 Kings, Chapter 10, verse 2. [1]
- [234.](#) The Bible, 1 Kings, Chapter 10, verse 3. [1]
- [235.](#) The Bible, 1 Kings, Chapter 10, verse 13. [1]
- [236.](#) The Bible, 1 Kings, Chapter 10, verse 13. [1]
- [237.](#) <https://www.the> [13] Biblegateway.com/resources/matthew–henry/1Kgs. 10. 1–1Kgs. 10. 13 [1]
- [238.](#) <https://www.the> [13] Biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Kings+10; The Bible, NIV, 1Kings, Chapter 10, verse 1 to 13 [1]
- [239.](#) The Bible, NIV, 2 Chronicles, Chapter 9, verses 1 to 12; <https://www.the> [13] Biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Chronicles+9&version=NIV; [1]
- [240.](#) The Bible, NIV, Mathew, Chapter 12, verse 42; Luke, Chapter 11, verse 31; <http://the> [22] Biblehub.com/luke/11–31.htm [1]
- [241.](#) The Bible, NIV, 1Kings, Chapter 10, verse 9; 2 Chronicles, Chapter 9, verse 8 [1]

[1] [1]

SHARES

# Chapter 4: Yukabed (‘a) and Kulthum

## Revelation

### According to the Qur’an

Yukabed (or Jochebed) [1](#)(‘a), the mother of Nabi Musa (‘a) is not named in the Qur’an. She is referred to as *Umm Musa*, ‘the mother of Musa.’ When she was pregnant with Nabi Musa (‘a), the Pharaoh passed orders that every male child born to the Bani Isra’il should be killed. He spared female infants of this murder.[2](#) The midwives of Egypt were ordered to watch over the pregnant women of Bani Isra’il and to report to the Pharaoh if it was a boy.[3](#) The Qur’an narrates this by saying

***“Indeed Pharaoh tyrannized over the land, reducing its people to factions, abasing one group of them, slaughtering their sons and sparing their women. Indeed He was one of the agents of corruption” (28:4).***

Hadhrat Yukabed’s pregnancy with Musa (‘a) was not apparent,[4](#) and so, she kept it a secret, knowing the danger that her child was in.[5](#) She also had a friend who was a midwife. When she went into labor, she called her friend and confided in her hoping that she would be loyal to her and that she would not disclose her secret.[6](#)

When Nabi Musa (‘a) was born and the midwife’s eyes fell on him, she was filled with affection and love for him. Allah evoked this love in her heart as he had made Musa (‘a) endearing to onlookers. In the Qur’an, it says

***“And I cast down upon you love from Me...” (20:39).***

The midwife confessed to Yukabed (‘a) that initially, she had the intention of reporting the birth of this child, but once her eyes fell on him, she changed her mind. She asked Yukabed (‘a) to take good care of him and left her house.[7](#)

When she left the house, Pharaoh’s spies noticed her, and decided to investigate. When Nabi Musa’s (‘a) sister saw the spies coming along with soldiers, she rushed inside the house and informed her mother. Yukabed (‘a) was frightened, and didn’t know how to save her child. There was no time to think as the soldiers were speedily approaching. Perhaps she heard the hooves of their horses getting closer and closer. At the spur of the moment, she picked up her swaddled baby and hid him in the oven.[8](#)

When the soldiers entered the home, the baby was nowhere to be found. The oven was blazing with fire. They questioned her as to what was the midwife doing in her house. She answered that the midwife was her friend and was visiting her. Disappointed, the soldiers left.[9](#)

After they left, Yukabed (‘a) recollected her senses and looked for Musa (‘a). The cry of the baby from the oven made her rush there. To her surprise the baby was untouched by the fire of the oven just like Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) was untouched by the fire of Nimrud. [10](#)

The spies were now more alert, and her house was under constant watch. Her secret could be disclosed simply by the cries of her child; she was worried and nervous. [11](#) Soon, Allah (SwT) sent a revelation to her in the form of inspiration.

### Related Verses from the Qur'an

- Surah al-Qasas, ayah # 7:

*“We revealed to Moses’ mother ...” (28:7).*

- Surah Ta-Ha, ayah # 38:

*“When We revealed to your mother whatever was revealed” (20:38).*

### Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived

#### Revelation to Nabi Musa’s Mother

#### Surah al-Qasas, ayah# 7

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ

*“We revealed to Moses’ mother ...” (28:7).*

#### Surah Ta-Ha, ayah # 38

إِذْ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّكَ مَا يُوحَىٰ

*“When We revealed to your mother whatever was revealed” (20:38).*

- *Wahy* (وحي) literally means inspiration, revelation, [12](#) suggestion, to point out a thing to someone, to put a thing into the mind of someone secretly, [13](#) letter, writing: something revealed or written or the idea inspired or revealed, saying, commandment, to dispatch a

messenger to someone, [14](#) to speak with someone secretly, to urge, voice. In Islamic terminology, *wahy* means the communication of an idea, command and/or information from Allah (SwT) to a chosen human being [15](#) that is conveyed either directly or indirectly. [16](#)

- The word *wahy* has been used in the Qur'an in different ways, most commonly in the following ways: [17](#)

1. **Secret communication (إشارة):** In the story of Nabi Zakariyah ('a), during the days in which he did not speak for three days as a sign from Allah (SwT), it is said that he comes out and communicates messages to his people with actions. The word *wahy* is used in that type of communication that he had with his people without speaking. [18](#)
2. **Instinct (غريزة):** In the case of the honey-bee, and the instinctual nature in which bees know where to go, how to build a honey-comb, make honey, etc., the Qur'an says that Allah (SwT) has done *wahy* to the bees. [19](#) This type of guidance is what we might call instinctual, and was put there by none other than God.
3. **Inspiration (إلهام):** In the story of Yukabed ('a), some have postulated that when she was in danger and feared for the life of her child, she was suddenly struck with inspiration and had this idea which was actually an inspiration from Allah. [20](#) *Ilham* (إلهام) literally means to inspire, or to put a thought or an idea into someone's mind. [21](#) In Islamic terminology, *ilham* means the inspiration of an idea or information from Allah given to any chosen person. [22](#) It is something that can happen to anybody.
4. **Prophetic Revelation (وحي الرسول):** When Allah (SwT) sent revelations to his prophets [23](#) through different methods (i.e. through a medium, to the heart or through an angel), the word *wahy* has been used. With regards to revelations to Prophets, the word *wahy* has been in this context more than 70 times in the Qur'an. [24](#)

- The revelation mentioned in this verse is argued to be different from the revelation sent to

Prophets. It has been speculated that it was an inspiration, an idea, or thought put into her mind,[25](#) in the form of *ilham*, as opposed to the form of Prophetic revelation directly from Allah or through an angel.

- When Allah (SwT) says, “*We revealed to Moses’ mother*”, this shows that Yukabed (‘a) was chosen by Allah (SwT) to protect Musa (‘a). He inspired her with how to do this and revealed this message of comfort and solace to her.
- In the revolution of Prophets, many women played crucial and important roles.[26](#)
- Allah (SwT) is the best guide and support in anxiety, tight spots and dead ends.[27](#) When Yukabed (‘a) thought there was no way out Allah (SwT) revealed to her the way out.
- Allah’s (SwT) door is never closed even when all doors seem closed.
- A woman can also receive revelations and inspirations from Allah (SwT).[28](#)
- The Qur’an does not only narrate the revelations that were sent to men. Rather, it also discusses the different revelations that were sent to women.
- We need to pay attention to the voices of our heart, and know that inspiration comes from Allah (SwT).
- At times when we feel stranded, and alone, with no help, these are the times when our heart calls to Allah (SwT) sincerely. Allah (SwT) is always there when we call Him, and He is always there to help us. Often, we forget His presence until we are thrown into difficult situations.
- Allah (SwT) narrates “*We revealed to Moses’ mother* “. Allah (SwT) takes pride in narrating this story because Yukabed (‘a) trusted Him completely. He comforted her and

solved her problems in a beautiful, intricate manner, despite a very dire situation in which all odds seem to be stacked up against her. Despite the unlikely odds, she listened to Allah's revelation, and found that things unfolded in a beautiful manner. This was a serious test of her trust (*tawakkul*) in God.

### According to the Bible

Yukabed ('a) is called Jochebed<sup>[29](#)</sup> in Bible. She was the daughter of Levi<sup>[30](#)</sup> or a descendant of Levi<sup>[31](#)</sup> who was the son of Jacob. She was married to Amram the son of Kohath,<sup>[32](#)</sup> who was the son of Levi. <sup>[33](#)</sup>

The Bible says that *Amram married his father's sister Jochebed*<sup>[34](#)</sup> and their children were Aaron, Miriam and Moses.<sup>[35](#)</sup> As such, both Jochebed and Amram were from the progeny of Levi, son of Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham.

Matthew Henry writes regarding the birth of Moses:

It seems to have been just at the time of his birth that the cruel law was made for the murder of all the male children of the Hebrews; and many, no doubt, perished by the execution of it. The parents of Moses had Miriam and Aaron, both older than he, born to them before this edict came out, and had nursed them without that peril.

He describes the feelings of *Jochebed* by stating:

Probably the mother of Moses was full of anxiety in the expectation of his birth, now that this edict was in force, and was ready to say, "Blessed are the barren that never bore"<sup>[36](#)</sup>. "Better so than bring forth children to the murderer..."<sup>[37](#)</sup>

He then writes that both parents were involved instead of just Jochebed:

His parents observed him to be a goodly child, more than ordinarily beautiful...They fancied he had a luster in his countenance that was something more than human, and was a specimen of the shining of his face afterwards...Three months they hid him in some private apartment of their own house, though probably with the hazard of their own lives, had he been discovered...It is said that the parents of Moses hid him by faith; some think they had a special **revelation** to them that the deliverer should spring from their loins; however they had the general promise of Israel's preservation, which they acted faith upon, and in that faith hid their child, not being afraid of the penalty annexed to the king's commandment.<sup>[38](#)</sup>

### Related verses from the Bible

- Exodus, Chapter 6, verse 16: These are the names of the sons of Levi according to their

generations: Gershon and Kohath and Merari; and the length of Levi's life was one hundred and thirty–seven years.[39](#)

- Exodus, Chapter 6, verse 18: The sons of Kohath: Amram and Izhar and Hebron and Uzziel; and the length of Kohath's life was one hundred and thirty–three years.[40](#)
- Exodus, Chapter 6, verse 20: Amram married his father's sister Jochebed, who bore him Aaron and Moses. Amram lived 137 years. [41](#)
- Numbers, Chapter 26, verse 59: The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, a descendant of Levi, who was born to the Levites[42](#) in Egypt. To Amram she bore Aaron, Moses and their sister Miriam[43](#)
- Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 1: Now a man of the tribe of Levi married a Levite woman[44](#)
- Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 2: and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months.[45](#)
- Hebrews, Chapter 11, verse 23: By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after his birth, because they saw he was a beautiful child, and they were unafraid of the king's edict. [46](#)

### Comparison of the Qur'an and the Bible

- The Bible mentions her name explicitly as '*Jochebed*' but the Qur'an does not name her and rather calls her the mother of Musa ('a), i.e. *Umme Musa*.
- The Qur'an says that Allah (SwT) revealed to her how should she save her baby whereas the Bible does not mention this as a revelation from God. However, Mathew Henry mentions in his commentary that "some think they had a special revelation to them that

the deliverer should spring from their loins” but he does not mention anything about the revelation instructing her as to what she should do with the baby to save his life.

- The Bible mentions *Jochebed*’s lineage whereas the Qur’an does not.
- In Hebrews, chapter 11, verse 23, it is mentioned that his parents hid him whereas in Exodus, chapter 2, verse 2, it is mentioned that it was his mother who hid him for three months. The Qur’an does not mention the duration of how long she was able to hide him for. However, in the commentary, *Majma al-Bayan*, it is narrated that Yukabed (‘a) nursed Nabi Musa (‘a) for three months (i.e. had to hide him for that duration) before she put him in the Nile.[47](#)

## Cast into the River

### According to the Qur’an

Day after day, Yukabed became more anxious that the guards may figure out her secret. Allah cast His revelation into her heart,[48](#) calming her down, despite the dangerous mission ahead. The revelation instructed her by saying

***“Nurse him; then, when you fear for him, cast him into the river, and do not fear or grieve, for We will restore him to you and make him one of the apostles” (28:7).***

This was an order from Allah which she had to abide by and accomplish, trusting completely in Him. It was an order that asked her to cast her baby into the river – a difficult test indeed!

She gathered her courage and looked for a carpenter to build a box for her so that she could put Musa (‘a) in the Nile. The carpenter was an Egyptian whose name was Hizbeel[49](#). After she described what kind of a box she wanted, the carpenter became curious and asked her “What do you want this box for?” Yukabed (‘a) told him the truth: that she was from the Bani Isra’il and that she wanted to hide her son in the box.[50](#) Hizbeel decided to inform the guards, but when he approached them and tried to communicate the news, he became tongue-tied, and couldn’t speak. He tried to explain with actions, but the guards could not understand him, and instead made fun of him, beat him, and kicked him out. As soon as he left their presence, he could speak again. So, he decided to approach the guards again– but the same thing happened. He tried three times, but in vain.[51](#) Finally, the carpenter realized that this was a serious matter and that there was wisdom behind this.[52](#) So he built the box and gave it to Yukabed (‘a).

Perhaps it was early in the morning, when the Egyptians were still sleeping that Yukabed ('a) came to the banks of the Nile with the box and her baby.<sup>53</sup> She nursed the baby one last time and then put him in the box. With a heavy heart, she set the box free in the Nile, and it floated away on the waves, soon out of her sight.<sup>54</sup> Perhaps she stood there, watching it as long as her eyes could follow it.

### Related verses from the Qur'an

- Surah al-Qasas, ayah # 7

***“Nurse him; then, when you fear for him, cast him into the river, and do not fear or grieve, for We will restore him to you and make him one of the apostles” (28:7).***

- Surah Ta-Ha, ayah # 39

***“Saying: ‘Put him into a chest, then cast it down into the river, then the river shall throw him on the shore’...” (20:39).***

### Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived

#### The Mother casts the Baby in the River

##### **Surah al-Qasas, ayah# 7**

أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ فَإِذَا خِفْتِ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِي وَلَا تَحْزَنِي إِنَّا رَادُّوهُ إِلَيْكَ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

***“Nurse him; then, when you fear for him, cast him into the river, and do not fear or grieve, for We will restore him to you and make him one of the apostles” (28:7).***

##### **Surah Ta-Ha, ayah # 39**

أَنْ أَقْذِفِيهِ فِي الْتَابُوتِ فَأَقْذِفِهِ فِي الْيَمِّ فَلْيُلْقِهِ الْيَمُّ بِالسَّاحِلِ

***“Saying: ‘Put him into a chest, then cast it down into the river, then the river shall throw him on the shore’...” (20:39).***<sup>55</sup>

- Supernatural help is often based through materialistic methods. For example, Allah (SwT) asked Yukabed ('a) to ‘nurse the baby’ then ‘leave him in the box’. <sup>56</sup> He told her what to

do, but the miraculous results were in His hands and he used these materialistic means to carry out His commands.

- Rivers, like other creations of Allah, (SwT) follow His orders.[57](#) The ayah states, ***the river shall throw him on the shore...***
- When Allah (SwT) wills something, He makes all the preliminaries and arrangements for it. To save Nabi Musa ('a), He reveals to Yukabed ('a) to cast her baby into the river. He orders the Nile to carry the box holding Musa ('a) to the shores where Asiyah and the Pharoah were.[58](#)
- The secret to reach perfection is to break oneself from all ties, attachments and things that one cherishes and loves. For example:
- Breaking from the self: Nabi Ibrahim ('a) was ready to be thrown in the fire.
- Breaking from one's spouse: Nabi Ibrahim ('a) left Hajar ('a) and his son Isma'il in the barren land of Mecca.
- Breaking from one's baby: Yukabed ('a) casted her baby in the river.
- Breaking from one's youth: Nabi Ibrahim ('a) was ready to sacrifice his son Isma'il.
- Breaking from one's lustful desires: Nabi Yusuf ('a) rejected the offer made by Zulaykha.
- Breaking from and abandoning sleep: Only Allah (SwT) knows the rewards of the night prayers (*salat al-layl*).[59](#)

- In verse 7 of Surah al-Qasas, there are two orders *أَرْضِعِيهِ* Nurse *him* and *فَأَلْقِيهِ* cast *him* and two prohibitions *لَا تَخَافِي* and *لَا تَحْزَنِي* *do not fear or do not grieve*. [60](#)
- The difference between *خوف* *fear* and *حزن* *grief*: ‘Fear’ is in the possibility of danger whereas ‘grief’ is when the danger is definite and certain. [61](#)
- Seyyed Hossein Nasr writes that, “She is told to ‘fear not’ that Moses would die or be lost, ‘nor grieve’ over her separation from him. [62](#) Some note that fear is suffering over what may come (in future), and grief is suffering for what has gone by (in the past).” [63](#)
- The word *الْيَمِّ* means a large river or sea. [64](#) In this verse, it is said that it is referring to the Nile of Egypt which is known for being massive. It has been narrated that the Pharaoh’s palace was built on the shore of the Nile. [65](#)
- A child should not be deprived of his mother’s milk in normal circumstances. The ayah says, *Nurse him...* [66](#)
- There are secrets hidden that we do not always understand in Allah’s commands. Sometimes, they might not make complete sense to us as we are limited in our knowledge. For example, when Allah commands Yukabed (‘a) to cast the baby in to the Nile, it was essentially asking her to risk the child’s life. [67](#) Similarly, sometimes Islamic laws don’t make sense to us. This is because our intelligence and wisdom is limited whereas Allah’s wisdom and knowledge is unlimited. There are hidden secrets in His laws and orders which are far from our capacity to fully understand.
- Don’t be afraid to carry out Allah’s commands (SwT). Yukabed (‘a) was worried about two things. Firstly, she was worried that her child would be killed [*do not fear...*] and secondly, she was worried about being separated from her child [*do not grieve...*]. However, Allah (SwT) guaranteed that he would save Musa’s life, and even return him to her, and solve the problem to both of her anxieties in a wonderful manner. [68](#)

- Whatever is given in the way of Allah (SwT) is returned in the best form. Yukabed (‘a) followed the orders of Allah (SwT) and set her child free in the Nile. Allah (SwT) returned him to her and made him from the Prophets. The ayah states ... *for We will restore him to you and make him one of the apostles* [69](#)
- Allah (SwT) informs selected people of the future. The ayah states,... *make him one of the apostles.* [70](#)
- When a woman like Yukabed (‘a) trusts (*tawakkul*) Allah (SwT) and is obedient (*ita’at*) to Him, she can reach a high and lofty status. Because of this, Allah (SwT) has honored and elevated her by mentioning her in the Qur’an and telling her story.
- To appropriately nurture and train (*tarbiyah*) her child, a mother may need to make some difficult choices and let go of her child. A bird in the nest pecks on her chick and pushes him out of the nest to push him to fly and soar high. A mother will wean her baby and stop nursing him in order to make him eat other foods which are needed for his growth. Yukabed (‘a) had to let go of Musa (‘a) for his safety and to *make him one of the apostles*.
- Sometimes a mother might be firm about something to teach her child. For example, she might not let him have soft drinks. The child might think how cruel the mother is. The mother might not show and might look cruel to the child but actually she is sad from inside (لا تَحْزَنِي). She does it for the betterment of her child.

### According to the Bible

Jochebed hid baby Moses for three months. After three months it became more difficult for her to hide him. The guards were searching everywhere for male infants. *But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile.* [71](#)

Matthew Henry in his commentary describes the situation Moses’ parents were in:

At three months’ end, probably when the searchers came about to look for concealed children, so that they could not hide him any longer (their faith perhaps beginning now to fail), they put him in an ark of

bulrushes<sup>72</sup> by the river's brink ...God put it into their hearts to do this, to bring about his own purposes, that Moses might by this means be brought into the hands of Pharaoh's daughter ...

Moses seemed quite abandoned by his friends; his own mother durst not own him: but now the Lord took him up and protected him. In times of extreme difficulty, it is good to venture upon the providence<sup>73</sup> of God. Thus to have exposed their child while they might have preserved it, would have been to tempt Providence; but, when they could not, it was to trust to Providence...

Providence brings no less a person thither than Pharaoh's daughter, just at that juncture, guides her to the place where this poor forlorn infant lay, and inclines her heart to pity it, which she dares do when none else durst.<sup>74</sup>

### Related Verses from the Bible

- Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 3: But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile.<sup>75</sup>

### Comparison of the Qur'an and the Bible

- The Qur'an says that there was an order through revelation to cast the baby into the Nile. The Bible does not mention anything about a revelation that gives such a task to Musa's mother. Matthew Henry in his commentary talks about a revelation and mentions that it was put in their heart, saying "God put it into their hearts to do this..."
- According to the Qur'an and Qur'anic commentaries, Yukabed ('a) placed him in a chest (*tabut*)<sup>76</sup> whereas the Bible says she put him in a *papyrus basket and coated it with tar and pitch*.<sup>77</sup> Matthew Henry in his commentary writes that "they put him in an ark of bulrushes..."
- The Qur'an instructs Yukabed ('a) to ***"Saying: 'Put him into a chest, then cast it down into the river, then the river shall throw him on the shore'..." (20:39)***<sup>78</sup> Qur'anic commentaries also say that she put him in the box and cast the box in the Nile and the box was carried by the waves to the palace. However, the Bible says that *she placed the child in it( a papyrus basket) and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile*.<sup>79</sup>

Matthew Henry also writes in his commentary that *they put him in an ark of bulrushes by the river's brink ...* [80](#)

- The Qur'an discusses Allah (SwT) comforting Yukabed ('a) by saying, *do not fear or grieve*[81](#) however, the Bible does not mention anything as such.
- The Qur'an narrates Allah's promise to Yukabed ('a) that said, "... ***We will restore him to you and make him one of the apostles***" (28:7). However, the Bible has no mention of this.
- The Qur'an and Qur'anic commentaries have asserted Yukabed's strong faith and piety because Allah (SwT) communicates and reveals to her in the form of inspiration. The Bible does not testify to this explicitly in the same way. Matthew Henry in his commentary writes "It is said that the parents of Moses hid him by faith" but when they could no longer hide him, he writes, "their faith perhaps beginning now to fail..."

## Pangs of Motherhood

### According to the Qur'an

Yukabed ('a) saw the box floating away from her. She probably felt that her heart was floating away with the box, as Musa lay helplessly inside of it.[82](#) Her heart was in turmoil, and it was probably difficult for her to control her emotions. She could think of nothing but her son.[83](#) But if it was not for the mercy of Allah she would have disclosed the secret.[84](#) Qur'an narrates this by saying,

***"The heart of Moses' mother became desolate, and indeed she was about to divulge it had We not fortified her heart so that she might have faith [in Allah's promise]" (28: 10).***

It is natural for a mother to react in the way that she did. However, Allah (SwT) helps her and calms her with His revelation and promise.[85](#) This revelation brought peace to her heart and mind, and filled her with courage. She trusted Him and His promise that Musa would soon be returned to her and that he would be from the Prophets.[86](#)

### Related verses from the Qur'an

- Surah al-Qasas, ayah # 10

***“The heart of Moses’ mother became desolate, and indeed she was about to divulge it had We not fortified her heart so that she might have faith [in Allah’s promise]” (28: 10).***

Explanatory comments and lessons derived

A Worried Mother

**Surah al-Qasas, ayah# 10**

وَأَصْبَحَ فُؤَادُ أُمِّ مُوسَى فَارِغاً إِنْ كَادَتْ لَتُبْدِي بِهِ لَوْلَا أَنْ رَّبَطْنَا عَلَى قَلْبِهَا لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

***“The heart of Moses’ mother became desolate, and indeed she was about to divulge it had We not fortified her heart so that she might have faith [in Allah’s promise]” (28: 10).***

**Arberry’s Translation:** On the morrow the heart of Moses’ mother become **empty** and she well nigh disclosed him had We not strengthened her heart, that she might be among the believers.[87](#)

- Seyyed Hossein Nasr quotes the famous Sunni scholar Qurtubi and writes: “The verb translated (أَصْبَحَ) ‘became’ can also have the more particular sense of something that happens in the morning, so that it would be rendered, “*And morning found the heart of Moses’ mother empty.*”[88](#)
- The first instance of the term heart in the verse uses (فُؤَادُ) *fu’ad*, and the second uses *qalb*. Some lexicographers say that the term *qalb* pertains more to the essence, or the “kernel” of the heart, while *fu’ad* signifies the container or outward dimensions of the heart. Sometimes, the terms are treated synonymously. In Sufi literature, there is often a hierarchy of such terms: *fu’ad*, *qalb*, *sirr* (secret or mystery), and *ruh* (spirit) – to describe the depths and layers of human beings’ inner reality.[89](#)
- (فارِغاً) *farig* lexically means ‘empty’. Some commentators have said that Yukabed (‘a)’s heart *became empty*, [90](#) meaning that it was empty of everything except for the remembrance of her son.[91](#) Her grief over his absence was so much that perhaps she forgot or was made to forget the promise that God had made to her regarding Musa (‘a) [92](#) *Became empty* may also be a way of saying that she was completely driven to mental

distraction and could not think<sup>93</sup> or that she was overcome by anxiety and fear <sup>94</sup> and that she had lost her senses when she heard that her baby fell into the hands of Pharaoh.<sup>95</sup> Allamah Tabatabai refutes the above interpretations and says that by considering the context of the verses mentioned before and after this one, the meaning of the verse is that the heart of Musa's mother was comforted because of the revelation and was made empty of fear and anxiety. If there was no promise of Allah involved, in the revelation that He would save Musa ('a), Yukabed ('a) would have disclosed the secret because of her anguish and anxiety.<sup>96</sup>

- The word (تُبْدِي) *tubdi* is derived from the root (أَبْدَأَ) *ibd'a* which means to disclose, divulge.<sup>97</sup> The word (رَبَطْنَا) *rabatna* is from the root (رَبَطَ) *rabt* which means to connect, to tie something, to link, to fasten, to bind.<sup>98</sup> In the ayah, the word (رَبَطَ) *rabt* means that Yukabed's heart was linked, tied and connected with Allah (SwT) through the revelation where Allah (SwT) said ***“do not fear or grieve, for We will restore him to you and make him one of the apostles” (28:7).*** Her heart was comforted by it.<sup>99</sup> Hence, her heart was empty and devoid of fear and grief.
- Serenity, ease, and comfort of the hearts is granted by Allah (SwT). <sup>100</sup> One of the signs of faith is that the hearts are at rest. <sup>101</sup>
- The only thing that is important in the eyes of Allah is 'faith', regardless of gender. The ayah states, لَتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ *“so that she might be among the believers.”* The ayah mentioned the masculine gender: *mu'minin*, indicating that the word is gender neutral and includes females. <sup>102</sup>

### According to the Bible

The Bible does not narrate the feelings and emotions of Jochabed after she left her baby in the reeds of the Nile.

### Related verses from the Bible

None

## Comparison of the Qur'an and the Bible

- The Qur'an talks about the emotional state of Yukabed ('a) but there is no reference or mention of it in the Bible.
- When the Qur'an describes the agony, grief, and emotions of the mother, it indicates that Musa ('a) was away from her for a long period of time. But the way The Bible describes the scene it looks like the baby was away from her for a short period. Perhaps that is why Jochabed's emotions are not discussed.
- Qur'anic commentaries narrate a tradition from Imam Muhammad al-Baqir ('a) that Musa ('a) was away from his mother for three days. However, Matthew Henry writes "Providence brings no less a person thither than Pharaoh's daughter, just at that **junction** (moment), guides her to the place where this poor forlorn infant lay..." [103](#)

## Kulthum/Miriam –The Brave Sister

### According to the Qur'an

Yukabed ('a) was comforted that Allah (SwT) will never go against His word. But she was curious about her son too. So she dispatched her daughter Kulthum [104](#) to get any information she could get about him. She wanted to know where the waves carried the box. [105](#)

Kulthum followed her mother's instructions. She followed the box but she watched it from a distance to keep out suspicion. To her surprise the ones who rescued her brother from the ferocious waves of the Nile were the people from the House of Pharaoh! [106](#) Maybe her heart skipped a beat when she saw Asiyah ('a) the Queen of Pharaoh holding the baby in her arms.

She was watching intently trying not to miss out a single scene as well as keeping her calm and making sure that she is being unnoticed.

Soon the baby started crying with hunger. They started looking for a wet nurse but the baby refused to be suckled by anyone. Maybe he didn't like the taste of their milk or their look scared him. [107](#) The guards were dispatched everywhere in search of a wet nurse. Women thronged the palace hoping that he would accept their milk and somehow, they be connected to the palace but he disappointed them. This is what Allah means when he narrates in Qur'an:

***“We had forbidden him to be suckled by any nurse since before” (28: 12).***

The guards while searching for a wet nurse were approached by Kulthum who suggested

***“Shall I show you a household that will take care of him for you and will be his well-wishers” (28: 12).***

Maybe she said “I know a woman from Bani Israeel who lost her baby recently and is ready to take the privilege of nursing the baby from the palace.” [108](#)

The guards were tired of searching and were happy to take the offer. They followed Kulthum (‘a) to her house to fetch this lady she was talking about [109](#) who was none other but Yukabed (‘a) herself.

### Related verses from the Qur’an

- Surah al- Qasas, ayah # 11

***“She said to his sister, ‘Follow him’. So she watched him from a distance, while they were not aware” (28: 11).***

- Surah al-Qasas, ayah # 12

***“We had forbidden him to be suckled by any nurse since before. So she said, ‘Shall I show you a household that will take care of him for you and will be his well-wishers?’” (28: 12)***

- Surah Ta-Ha, ayah # 40

***“When your sister walked up saying, ‘Shall I show you someone who will take care of him?’” (20:40).***

### Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived

#### The Sister Spies

Surah al- Qasas, ayah# 11

وَقَالَتْ لِأُخْتِهِ قُصِّيهِ فَبَصُرَتْ بِهِ عَنْ جُنْبٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

***“She said to his sister, ‘Follow him’. So she watched him from a distance, while they were not aware” (28: 11).***

- Ayatullah Jawadi Amoli commending the courage of Kulthum (‘a) writes:

It is obvious that following the box (carrying baby Musa) till the castle of Pharaoh was not an easy job. But Musa’s mother had ordered her daughter to follow the box and to get information about the final destination of the box and if the final destination was the palace of Pharaoh to give the suggestion of a wet nurse was not an easy task.

At a time when all the wet nurses were pursued and questioned if the baby was a boy or a girl– because only a woman who gave birth can nurse not all women– to suggest and introduce a wet nurse was not an ordinary task; but to step into danger and to face death and execution. [110](#)

- Kulthum (‘a) was obedient to her mother and followed the box without arguing. The obedience of a daughter is reflected in the ayah. ***She said to his sister, “Follow him.”***
- The sister was clever and shrewd as she watched him from a distance. *So she watched him from a distance, while they were not aware.*
- One should be ready to face dangers or even sacrifice oneself to save a brother. Islam is a religion of brotherhood. We are all brothers and sisters in Islam.
- Women have to be a part of social affairs. *She said to his sister, “Follow him.”* [111](#)
- In sensitive matters it is better to delegate. The ayah states, “*She said to his sister...*” If Yukabed (‘a) would have stepped out herself the secret could have been disclosed. [112](#)
- Reliance (*tawakkul*) on Allah does not mean that one does not take any action. Yukabed (‘a) even though she had faith in Allah’s promise, she sent her daughter Kulthum (‘a) to follow the box. [113](#)

- In an oppressive government one has to be careful and act normal to avoid suspicion of the enemy. Kulthum (‘a) followed the box but watched it from a distance to keep the suspicion away. [114](#)

#### The Smart and Subtle Recommendation

#### **Surah al- Qasas, ayah# 12**

وَحَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَرَاضِعَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَقَالَتْ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ يَكْفُلُونَهُ لَكُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُ نَاصِحُونَ

***“We had forbidden him to be suckled by any nurse since before. So she said, ‘Shall I show you a household that will take care of him for you and will be his well-wishers?’” (28: 12).***

#### **Surah Ta-Ha, ayah # 40**

إِذْ تَمْشِي أُخْتُكَ فَتَقُولُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ مَن يَكْفُلُهُ

***“When your sister walked up saying, Shall I show you someone who will take care of him?” (20:40).***

- *We had forbidden him...* in the ayah is not *tehrim e shar’i* but it was a *tehrim e takwini*. That means that Allah (SwT) had made him to refuse suckling by any other woman but his mother. [115](#) He had made him detest them [116](#)
- If Allah (SwT) does not want even the most established rulers cannot provide even an infant. The ayah says, “*We had forbidden...*” [117](#)
- The very first action of an infant which is ‘suckling’ is also done with the will of Allah (SwT). [118](#)
- *Since before...* in the ayah means: even before Kulthum (‘a) got there and approached them with her suggestion. [119](#)

- When an arrogant person is overwhelmed, he is ready to accept the suggestion of others, even if it is an anonymous person. [120](#)
- One needs to be smart while facing the enemy. Kulthum (‘a) did not say “*Shall I show you his mother*” instead she said “*Shall I show you a household*” [121](#)
- An infant is not dependent on food only; nevertheless he needs a family and a loving environment. That is why Kulthum (‘a) suggested, “***Shall I show you a household that will take care of him...***”. She did not mention just nourishment or milk. [122](#)
- A suggestion should sound like a benefit to the addressee. Kulthum (‘a) said, “*...for you.*” [123](#)
- Nurturing and fostering is valuable if it is along with love and well wishing. The ayah states “*will take care of him for you and will be his well-wishers.*” [124](#)
- In an oppressive government one needs to play his revolutionary role with caution and perfection. Let it be a man or a woman. The ayah says, “*When your sister walked up...*” [125](#)
- To seek the favors of Allah (SwT) one needs to show action. The ayah states, “*When your sister walked up...*” [126](#)
- Logical suggestions should be made in a soft and sweet manner. Kulthum (‘a) said, “*Shall I show you someone...*” [127](#)
- Do not disclose secrets. Kulthum (‘a) said ‘*someone*’ instead of ‘*his mother*’. [128](#)

## **According to the Bible**

### **Miriam saves baby Moses**

The Bible narrates that after Jochebed placed the baby in the papyrus basket and left him in the reeds on the bank of the river Nile, his sister, Miriam was watching from a distance without making it obvious that she is his relative. She wanted to see what would happen to him, if he would be saved or not. Maybe she was praying in her heart that someone should save him.

Finally her prayers were answered. Bible narrates that Pharaoh's daughter came down for a swim with her maids. She saw the basket and got curious and asked her maid to fetch it. To her surprise there was a beautiful baby in it. The baby started crying with hunger. Then, Miriam came close and asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?" [129](#) "Yes, go," she answered. So she went and got Jochebed.

Matthew Henrys writes in his commentary:

Pharaoh's daughter thinks it convenient that he should have a Hebrew nurse, and the sister of Moses, with art and good management, introduces the mother into the place of a nurse, to the great advantage of the child; for mothers are the best nurses, and those who receive the blessings of the breasts with those of the womb are not just if they give them not to those for whose sake they received them. [130](#)

### **Miriam a Prophetess**

Bible has more information on Miriam. According to the Bible she was a prophetess. After Pharaoh, his people (the Egyptians), their chariots and their horsemen were drowned in the sea while they were chasing the Israelites, Miriam the prophetess took a tambourine and started singing hymns in the praise of the Almighty Lord. The women joined her in singing and rejoicing. In Micah under the heading 'The Lord's Case against Israel' the people are reminded that Miriam was sent along with Moses and Aaron to guide them.

### **Miriam and Aaron Oppose Moses**

In *Exodus* Miriam is elevated and given the status of a prophetess. But in *Numbers* she is degraded and punished for talking against Moses. She and her brother were offended because he took an Ethiopian wife. So they talk against him which brings down the wrath of God. She is punished with leprosy. Then with the prayers of Moses she is relieved.

### **Her punishment reminded**

In *Deuteronomy* while there is a discussion of how to care for skin diseases, the punishment of Miriam is reminded.

## Her death

She died in Kadesh and was buried there.

## Related verses from the Bible

### Miriam saves baby Moses

- Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 4: His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him. [131](#)
- Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 7–8: Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?" "Yes, go," she answered. So the girl went and got the baby's mother. [132](#)

### Miriam a prophetess

- Exodus, Chapter 15, verse 20–21: Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing. Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the *Lord*, for he is highly exalted. Both horse and driver he has hurled into the sea. [133](#)
- Micah, Chapter 6, verse 4: I brought you up out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery. I sent Moses to lead you, also Aaron and Miriam. [134](#)

### Miriam and Aaron Oppose Moses

- Numbers, Chapter 12, verses 1 to 16:

Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his Cushite [135](#) wife, for he had married a Cushite. Has the Lord spoken only through Moses?" they asked. "Hasn't he also spoken through us?" And the Lord heard this. (Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth). At once the Lord said to Moses, Aaron and Miriam, "Come out to the tent of meeting, all three of you." So the three of them went out. Then the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud; he stood

at the entrance to the tent and summoned Aaron and Miriam. When the two of them stepped forward, he said, "Listen to my words: "When there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, reveal myself to them in visions, I speak to them in dreams. But this is not true of my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my house. With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" The anger of the LORD burned against them, and he left them. When the cloud lifted from above the tent, Miriam's skin was leprous –it became as white as snow. Aaron turned toward her and saw that she had a defiling skin disease, and he said to Moses, "Please, my lord, I ask you not to hold against us the sin we have so foolishly committed. Do not let her be like a stillborn infant coming from its mother's womb with its flesh half eaten away. "So Moses cried out to the LORD, "Please, God, heal her!" The LORD replied to Moses, "If her father had spit in her face, would she not have been in disgrace for seven days? Confine her outside the camp for seven days; after that she can be brought back." So Miriam was confined outside the camp for seven days, and the people did not move on till she was brought back. After that, the people left Hazeroth and encamped in the Desert of Paran [136](#)

#### [Her punishment reminded](#)

- Deuteronomy, Chapter 24, verse 8–9: In cases of defiling skin diseases, be very careful to do exactly as the Levitical priests instruct you. You must follow carefully what I have commanded them. Remember what the LORD your God did to Miriam along the way after you came out of Egypt. [137](#)

#### [Her death](#)

- Numbers, Chapter 20, verse 1: In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh. There Miriam died and was buried. [138](#)

### [Comparison of the Qur'an and the Bible](#)

- Qur'an mentions that Yukabed ('a) asked Moses' sister to follow him but Bible does not mention that.
- Both the Qur'an and the Bible don't mention the name of the sister in the episode where she saves baby Moses.

- Later the Bible mentions the name of the sister as ‘Miriam’ but the Qur’an does not mention her name.
- Both the Qur’an and the Bible mention that she maintained the distance while watching him.
- Qur’an narrates that there were other women who tried to nurse the baby but were rejected by the infant. Bible does not throw any light on this incident.
- Both the Qur’an and the Bible mention that it was the sister who introduced the mother as a wet nurse.
- Bible says that Miriam was a prophetess whereas Quran does not mention it. (In Islam women are not prophets [139](#)).
- Bible narrates that Miriam and Aaron talked against Moses but the Qur’an does not mention it.
- According to the Bible she was punished with leprosy but Qur’an does not mention this.
- Bible records the place that Miriam passed away was Kadesh but Qur’an has not mentioned it.

## **A Promise Fulfilled**

### **According to the Qur’an**

When Asiyah (‘a) picked up Musa (‘a) from the Nile, there was no nurse–maid whose milk he would drink. The palace began to search for a woman to nurse him, when Musa’s sister came with her mother as a suggestion. As soon as Yukabed (‘a) took her baby in her arms, the baby smelled his mother and latched onto her, drinking profusely. [140](#) Yukabed (‘a) must have held back tears of delight as she was

reunited with her child, and cradled him in her arms, holding him close to her heart. What a relief!

Haman,<sup>141</sup> the vizier of Pharaoh, became suspicious of her, and said “I think you are his mother. Otherwise, why did he refuse all of the other women, but accept you so easily?”

Yukabed (‘a) answered calmly and with tact saying “Your Highness! I am a neat, clean, and perfumed person, and my milk is very sweet. Until this day, I have never been rejected by any infant.” <sup>142</sup> Those present accepted her words, gave her presents,<sup>143</sup> and hired her for the job.

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (‘a) says that “It was not more than three days that Allah (SwT) returned the baby to the mother.” <sup>144</sup> Finally, Allah’s promise was fulfilled! Allah narrates this in the Qur’an:

***“Thus We restored him to his mother so that she might be comforted and not grieve, and that she might know that Allah’s promise is true, but most of them do not know” (28: 13).***

Seyyed Hossein Nasr compares her being ‘comforted’ in this verse to Hadhrat Maryam (‘a), stating: “...the healing of his mother’s heart is described as an end in its own right, and the compassion and solicitude toward her suffering as a mother evokes the consolation received by Mary during her labor pains.” <sup>145</sup>

There is also a discussion with regards to whether Yukabed (‘a) took Musa (‘a) to her home and brought him every day, or occasionally to the palace, so that he could visit his foster mother, Asiyah (‘a). It is uncertain if this is the case or if she went to the palace periodically to nurse him. There is no solid evidence to prove any of these possibilities. However, the first possibility sounds better. <sup>146</sup>

After weaning him, Yukabed (‘a) probably brought him back to the palace and handed him over to his foster parents: Asiyah (‘a) and Pharaoh. The evidence for this is later in the story: when Nabi Musa (‘a) was chosen by Allah (SwT) and invited the Pharaoh towards Allah (SwT),

***“Pharaoh said, ‘Did we not rear you as a child among us, and did you not stay with us for years of your life?’” (26: 18).*** <sup>147</sup>

Ayatullah Jawadi Amuli writes regarding the three women in the life of Nabi Musa (‘a) as follows:

In revolutions and struggle against oppression, men are known to have played an important role. But in the struggle against Pharaoh, the presence of women is amazing! The Qur’an has mentioned three women who saved Hadhrat Musa (‘a) from being killed and those that have raised him. The responsibility of upbringing of Musa (‘a) was on the shoulders of the mother of Musa, the sister of Musa and the wife of Pharaoh. These three women stood against the political aggressions of that time and put their lives in danger in order to save Hadhrat Musa (‘a) <sup>148</sup>

When Musa’s mother, in obedience to the command of Allah put her child in the river, <sup>149</sup> she told Musa’s sister to follow the box. <sup>150</sup> Pharaoh’s wife told her husband,

***“[This infant will be] a [source of] comfort to me and to you. Do not kill him. Maybe he will benefit us, or we will adopt him as a son” (28:9).***

Thus, all three women laid the foundation of saving Musa (‘a) and for bringing the downfall of Pharaoh. [151](#)

Ayatullah Jawadi Amuli then praises their courage by writing:

Neither the order to follow the basket by the mother was a normal task nor the courageous suggestion from the sister. The suggestion of the wife of Pharaoh was also not an easy task because she lived in the age of the most bloodthirsty people. Her courage and bravery is reflected in her suggestion,

***“...Do not kill him. Maybe he will benefit us, or we will adopt him as a son” (28:9).*** [152](#)

### [Related Verses from the Qur'an](#)

- Surah al-Qasas, ayah # 13

***“Thus We restored him to his mother so that she might be comforted and not grieve, and that she might know that Allah's promise is true, but most of them do not know” (28: 13).***

- Surah Ta-Ha, ayah # 40

***“...Then We restored you to your mother that she might be comforted and not grieve” (20:40).***

### [Explanatory comments and lessons derived](#)

#### [Mother relieved with a true promise](#)

Surah al-Qasas, ayah# 13 & Surah Ta-Ha, ayah# 40

فَرَدَدْنَاهُ إِلَىٰ أُمِّهِ كَيْ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا وَلَا تَحْزَنَ ۚ وَلِتَعْلَمَ أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

***“Thus We restored him to his mother so that she might be comforted and not grieve, and that she might know that Allah's promise is true, but most of them do not know” (28: 13).***

فَرَجَعْنَاهُ إِلَىٰ أُمِّكَ كَيْ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا وَلَا تَحْزَنَ

***“...Then We restored you to your mother, that she might be comforted and not grieve” (20:40).***

- The phrase “*that she might know*” means that by seeing her baby, she attains certainty (*yaqeen*) that Allah’s (SwT) promise is true. She sees Allah’s (SwT) promise being fulfilled before her eyes. She knew and had faith that Allah’s promise was true, but as she saw it happening, she could build her certainty (*yaqeen*) that Allah’s promise is always true. [153](#) Similar to Nabi Uzayr (‘a) and Ibrahim (‘a), who built their certainty after seeing the miracles of Allah unfold before their eyes. [154](#)
- With regards to the phrase “*Allah’s promise,*” some commentators [155](#) have the opinion that this is not an unconditional (*mutlaq*) term referring to all promises made by Allah (SwT). The phrase in the ayah is only referring to the promise that Allah (SwT) made to return Musa (‘a) to his mother, and contend that it does not refer to all promises that Allah (SwT) makes. However, Allamah Tabatabai refutes this opinion and says that it applies to all promises that Allah (SwT) makes (*mutlaq*) and not just the promise of returning Musa (‘a) back to his mother. The evidence to this suggestion is the phrase “*but most of them do not know*”. This means that most people do not know or understand that Allah’s promises are always fulfilled, and they dwell in doubts of His word. [156](#)
- Allah’s (SwT) promises are always true. For example, He promised to protect the Qur’an from being tampered. [157](#) He promised that the Romans will defeat the Persians. [158](#) He promised the defeat of the Meccan pagans by the Muslims. [159](#)
- A child is a source of comfort to their mother. [160](#)
- For the rightful and God-wary, the goodness of the goal is more important than any recognition attained. The child was returned to Yukabed (‘a). However, she was given the title of wet-nurse, and not recognized as his mother. However, the safety and return of her child back was more important than any title or recognition she had. [161](#)
- The mother plays an important role in the life of a child and has a deep bond with him/her. Interestingly, the ayahs do not mention Musa’s father. The above verses state: ‘We

restored him to his mother'(28: 13) and 'We restored you to your mother' (20:40). [162](#)

- إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا **Indeed ease accompanies hardship. (94:6)**. After the parting and extensive pain, the mother and son were reunited. After the storm, there is calm. [163](#)
- If Allah (SwT) wants a person can become a beloved of two opposing parties (Pharaoh and Musa's family). The ayah says regarding Yukabed ('a) [164](#) تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا **she might be comforted (28: 13)** and Asiyah ('a) told Pharaoh [165](#) قُرَّتْ عَيْنِي لِي وَ لَكَ **comfort to me and to you (28:9)**. [166](#)
- Grief and joy is apparent in the eyes. When Yukabed ('a) was united with her son, it was a comfort to her eye تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا and when Nabi Yaqub ('a) was separated from his son, Yusuf ('a) he lost his eyesight in grief **His eyes had turned white with grief (12:84)** [167](#) (وَ (اَبْيَضَّتْ عَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْحُزْنِ).
- There are various stages of faith. Yukabed ('a) was a faithful woman: **had We not fortified her heart so that she might have faith. (28: 10)**. However, even one who is faithful can reach higher stages, like that of absolute certainty: **that she might know that Allah's promise is true (28: 13)**. [168](#)
- Sometimes, we do not understand the philosophy behind certain incidents, and cannot fathom the wisdom behind it. We judge things quickly from the surface without looking into it deeply. The ayah states, "but most of them do not know." [169](#)
- A mother's loving lap is the best place for a child to grow. The ayah states, "We restored you to your mother..." [170](#) The affection and the attention that a mother can give to a child is priceless, and nobody can fill her shoes.
- Seeking the pleasure of a mother carries a lot of weight in the eyes of Allah (SwT) and He is sensitive to their pains and troubles. The ayah states, "We restored you to your mother, that she might be comforted." [171](#)

## According to the Bible

Miriam rushed home and got her mother, Jochebed to take her to the palace. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you." So Jochebed took the baby and nursed him. Perhaps she took him to her home because the Bible narrates, *"When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son."*<sup>172</sup> Pharaoh's daughter then named the baby 'Moses', meaning, "I drew him out of the water."

Matthew Henry writes in his commentary:

It was also an unspeakable satisfaction to the mother, who received her son as life from the dead, and now could enjoy him without fear...The Jews tell us that his father, at his circumcision, called him Joachim, but Pharaoh's daughter called him Moses, 'Drawn out of the water', so it signifies in the Egyptian language...<sup>173</sup>

## Related verses from the Bible

- Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 8–10:

So the girl went and got the baby's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you." So the woman took the baby and nursed him. When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, "I drew him out of the water."

## Comparison of the Qur'an and the Bible

- Both the Qur'an and the Bible narrate that Musa (‘a) was restored to his mother.
- Both the Qur'an and the Bible narrate that Yukabed (‘a) was hired as wet-nurse.
- The Bible mentions that it was Pharaoh's daughter who personally hired Yukabed whereas the Qur'an does not give the specifics as to who hired her.
- The Qur'an says that the baby was restored to the mother to 'comfort' her and to relieve her from her 'grief' whereas the Bible does not mention this.

- The Qur'an emphasizes on a promise that was made to Yukabed ('a) saying, '*Allah's promise is true*' but the Bible does not mention any promises made to Jochebed.
- The Bible mentions that it was the foster-mother of Moses who named him but the Qur'an does not mention that.
- Yukabed ('a) probably brought him back to the palace after weaning him and handed him to his foster-parents: Asiyah ('a) and Pharaoh. The evidence to suggest this is that when Nabi Musa ('a) returned to Egypt to invite Pharaoh towards Allah (SwT), he said, "***Did we not rear you as a child among us, and did you not stay with us for years of your life?***" (26: 18). [174](#) However, the Bible has mentioned it explicitly during the narration of the story itself: *When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son.* [175](#)

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1. Qissehayeh Qur'an be qalam e ravan, p. 237. [\[1\]](#)

2. Pharaoh repeats the same threat when Musa was an adult.(7:127; 40:25) The Qur'an itself indicates that the murder of males was a form of collective punishment or control rather than the result of foretelling of future events as is sometimes mentioned in the commentaries (ref: Mafatih al-Ghaib), by astrologers or even through a dream of Pharaoh, warning that a child would be born of the Israelites who would rise and destroy Pharaoh's kingdom. Cited from The Study Qur'an, p. 946. [\[2\]](#)

3. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 14. Accessed by Jame Tafasir, Nur Software. [\[3\]](#)

4. Maybe she had a retroverted uterus which tilts backwards instead of forward. [\[4\]](#)

5. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 162. Accessed by Jame Tafasir, Nur Software. [\[5\]](#)

6. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 24. Accessed by Jame Tafasir, Nur Software. [\[6\]](#)

7. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 162. Accessed by Jame Tafasir, Nur Software. [\[7\]](#)

8. Ibid; Mafatih al-Ghaib, vol. 24, p. 579. Accessed by Jame Tafasir, Nur Software. [\[8\]](#)

9. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 24. Mafatih al-Ghaib, vol. 24, p. 579. Accessed by Jame Tafasir, Nur Software. [\[9\]](#)

10. Ibid; Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p.162. Accessed by Jame Tafasir, Nur Software. [\[10\]](#)

11. Ibid. [\[11\]](#)

12. Baalbaki, Munir and Baalbaki Rohi, Al-Mawrid, p. 1226. [\[12\]](#)

13. Ibrahim Anis, Abdul Halim Muntasir, Atiyah As Savalahi, Mohammad Khalaf Allah Ahmad, Mojam Al Waseet, p. 1018. [\[13\]](#)

14. Qureshi, Syed Ali Akbar, Qamus e Qur'an, vol. 7, p. 189. [\[14\]](#)

15. Rizvi, Sayyid Sa'eed Akhtar, The Qur'an and Hadith. Accessed by:

<https://www.al-islam.org/quran-and-hadith-allamah-sayyid-saeed-akhtar-ri...> [23] [\[15\]](#)

16. Araste, Hussain Jawan, Dars Name Uloom e Qurani, pp. 69 to 75. [\[16\]](#)

17. Marefat, Muhammad Hadi, Amoozish e Ulume Qurani, p. 14. [\[17\]](#)

18. See Surah Maryam, 19:11. [\[18\]](#)

19. See Surah al-Nahl, 16:68. [\[19\]](#)

20. See Surah Ta-Ha, 20:37–40. [1]
21. Ibrahim Anis, Abdul Halim Muntasir, Atiyah As Savalahi, Mohammad Khalaf Allah Ahmad, Mojam Al Waseet, p. 842. [2]
22. Ibid; <https://www.al-islam.org/quran-and-hadith-allamah-sayyid-saeed-akhtar-ri...> [23] [3]
23. Prophethood is only for men [Surah Yusuf, verse 109]. Women are not made Prophets because it is a difficult job. Women are gentle so Allah (SwT) did not burden them with this tiresome job. But this does not mean that in piety they cannot reach to levels where they can receive revelations. [4]
24. Marefat, Muhammad Hadi, Amoozish e Ulume Qurani, pp. 14–16. [5]
25. Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 38 of Surah at Ta–Ha. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn. [6]
26. Ibid [7]
27. Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 7 of Surah al–Qasas. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn. [8]
28. Ibid [9]
29. The Bible, NIV, Numbers, Chapter 26, verse 59. [10]
30. Please refer the footnotes under Numbers, Chapter 26, verse 59, The Bible, NIV, p. 89. [11]
31. The Bible, NIV, Numbers, Chapter 26, verse 59. [12]
32. The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 6, verses 16–18. [13]
33. The Bible, NIV, Genesis, Chapter 46, verse 11. [14]
34. The Bible NIV, Exodus, Chapter 6, verse 20; Note: such a marriage is prohibited in the Jewish law. Refer: [https://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/468337/jewish/Prohibited-...](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/468337/jewish/Prohibited-...) [24]. So the possibility is that such a marriage was allowed before Prophet Moses (‘a) Just like Prophet Jacob married two sisters while they were both living. [15]
35. The Bible, NIV, Numbers, Chapter 26, verse 59. [16]
36. The Bible, NIV, Luke, Chapter 23, verse 29. [17]
37. The Bible, NIV, Hosea, Chapter 9, verse 13. [18]
38. <https://www.the> [13] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/exodus/2.html [19]
39. <http://the> [22] Biblehub.com/exodus/2-1.htm [20]
40. <http://the> [22] Biblehub.com/exodus/2-1.htm [21]
41. The Bible NIV, Exodus, Chapter 6, verse 20; <https://www.the> [13] Biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+6:20&version=NIV [22]
42. Or Jochabed, a daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi [23]
43. The Bible NIV, Numbers, Chapter 26, verse 59; <https://www.the> [13] Biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Numbers+26:59&version=NIV [24]
44. The Bible NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 1; <http://the> [22] Biblehub.com/exodus/2-1.htm [25]
45. The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 2; <http://the> [22] Biblehub.com/exodus/2-2.htm
- Note: Instead of the word “fine” the words “beautiful” (New American Standard The Bible), “goodly” (King James The Bible) has been used. [26]
46. <http://the> [22] Biblehub.com/exodus/2-2.htm [27]
47. Majma al–Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 163. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [28]
48. Al–Mizan, Persian Translation, vol. 16, p. 10. [29]
49. Zanan e Namuneh, p. 270. [30]
50. Mafatih al–Ghaib, vol. 24, p. 580; Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 25; Majma al–Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18 p. 163. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [31]
51. Majma al–Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 163. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software [32]
52. Ibid; Mafatih al–Ghaib, vol. 24, p. 580; Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 25. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [33]
53. Qissehay e Qur’an, p. 224. [34]
54. Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 26. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [35]
55. Translation by Shakir. [36]
56. Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 7 of Surah al–Qasas. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–

Thaqalayn.❏❏

- [57.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 39 of Surah Ta–Ha. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.❏❏
- [58.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 39 of Surah Ta–Ha. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.❏❏
- [59.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 39 of Surah Ta–Ha, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.❏❏
- [60.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 39 of Surah Ta–Ha. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.❏❏
- [61.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian Translation, vol. 16, p. 11.❏❏
- [62.](#) Qurtubi: cited from The Study Qur'an, p. 947.❏❏
- [63.](#) Fakhr Al Razi: cited from The Study Qur'an, p. 947; Mafatih al–Ghaib, vol. 24, p. 579. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software.❏❏
- [64.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian Translation, vol. 16, p. 10.❏❏
- [65.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 7 of Surah al–Qasas. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.❏❏
- [66.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 7 of Surah al–Qasas. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.❏❏
- [67.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 7 of Surah al–Qasas. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.❏❏
- [68.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 7 of Surah al–Qasas, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.❏❏
- [69.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 7 of Surah al–Qasas, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.❏❏
- [70.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 7 of Surah al–Qasas. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.❏❏
- [71.](#) The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 3.❏❏
- [72.](#) bulrushes is the papyrus. It grows on the banks of the Nile, and in marshy grounds; the stalk rises to the height of six or seven cubits above the water, is triangular, and terminates in a crown of small filaments, resembling hair. This reed was of the greatest use to the Egyptians; the pith serving them for food, and the woody part to build vessels with; which vessels frequently appear on various monuments of Egyptian antiquity. Boats were made of this reed.❏❏
- [73.](#) Fate, destiny❏❏
- [74.](#) [https://www.the](https://www.thebiblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/exodus/2.html) [13] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew–henry–complete/exodus/2.html❏❏
- [75.](#) The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 3.❏❏
- [76.](#) Surah Ta–Ha, verse 39.❏❏
- [77.](#) The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 3.❏❏
- [78.](#) Surah Ta–Ha, verse 39, Translation by Shakir.❏❏
- [79.](#) The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 3.❏❏
- [80.](#) [https://www.the](https://www.thebiblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/exodus/2.html) [13] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew–henry–complete/exodus/2.html❏❏
- [81.](#) Surah al–Qasas, verse 7.❏❏
- [82.](#) Qissey haye Qur'an, 224; Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 26. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software.❏❏
- [83.](#) Alusi, Ruh al–Ma'ani fi Tafsir al–Qur'an al–Adhim, vol. 10, p. 259. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software.❏❏
- [84.](#) Qissey haye Qur'an, 227; Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 32 ; Majma alBayan, vol. 18, p. 164. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software.❏❏
- [85.](#) Al–Mizan, Persian Translation, vol. 16, p. 14.❏❏
- [86.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 33. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software❏❏
- [87.](#) Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software.❏❏
- [88.](#) The Study Quran, p. 948.❏❏
- [89.](#) The Study Qur'an, p. 948.❏❏
- [90.](#) Some translations (for example: Aurbury) have used the word empty instead of desolate. Please refer to The Study Qur'an, p. 948.❏❏
- [91.](#) Tabari: cited from The Study Qur'an, p. 948; Ruh al–Ma'ani fi Tafsir al–Qur'an al–Adhim, vol. 10, p. 259. Accessed by

Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [1]

92. Tabari: cited from The Study Qur'an, p. 948. [2]

93. Fakhr Al Razi: cited from The Study Qur'an, p. 948; Mafatih al-Ghaib, vol. 24, p. 581. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [3]

94. Ibid [4]

95. Ruh al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Adhim, vol. 10, p. 259. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software [5]

96. Al-Mizan, Persian Translation, vol. 16, p. 14. [6]

97. Al-Mizan, Persian Translation, vol. 16, p. 13. [7]

98. Qamus e Qur'an, vol. 3, p. 47. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software [8]

99. Al-Mizan, Persian Translation, vol. 16, p. 13. [9]

100. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 10 of Surah al-Qasas, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [10]

101. Ibid [11]

102. Ibid [12]

103. [https://www.the \[13\] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/exodus/2.html](https://www.the [13] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/exodus/2.html) [13]

104. Her name is mentioned in the hadith when she came to assist Khadijah ('a) in the birth of Fatima ('a) Please refer: Ordoni, Abu Muhammad, Fatima the Gracious, p. 45; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 19, p. 19, tr. 11 cited in the footnotes of God's Emissaries- Adam to Jesus, p. 339 [14]

105. Al-Mizan, Persian Translation, vol. 16, p. 15. [15]

106. See Surah al-Qasas, 28:8: "Then Pharaoh's kinsmen picked him up...". [16]

107. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 34. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [17]

108. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 34. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [18]

109. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 35. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [19]

110. Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 119. Note: It is not a word-to-word translation. It is just the gist of the meaning. [20]

111. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 11 of Surah al-Qasas, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [21]

112. Ibid [22]

113. Ibid [23]

114. Ibid [24]

115. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 16, p. 15; Mafatih al-Ghaib, vol. 24, p. 582. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [25]

116. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 168. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. [26]

117. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 12 of Surah al-Qasas, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [27]

118. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 11 of Surah al-Qasas, Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [28]

119. Ibid [29]

120. Ibid [30]

121. Ibid [31]

122. Ibid [32]

123. Ibid [33]

124. Ibid [34]

125. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 40 of Surah at Taha. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [35]

126. Ibid [36]

127. Ibid [37]

128. Ibid [38]

129. Holy Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 7 [39]

- [130. <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/exod...>](https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/exod...) [25]
- [131. Holy Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 4](#)
- [132. Holy Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 7–8](#)
- [133. Holy Bible NIV, Exodus, Chapter 15, verse 21–22](#)
- [134. Holy Bible NIV, Micah, Chapter 6, verse 4](#)
- [135. A Cushite is from Cush, a region south of Ethiopia, where the people are known for their black skin.](#)
- [136. Holy Bible NIV, Numbers, Chapter 12, verse 1–16; Note: Numbers, Chapter 12 verses 1 to 16 cited from <http://biblehub.com/numbers/12-16.htm>](#) [26]
- [137. Holy Bible, NIV, Deuteronomy, Chapter 24, verses 8–9.](#)
- [138. Holy Bible NIV, Numbers, Chapter 20, verse 1.](#)
- [139. A Prophet has a grave job. It's a strenuous task. Allah the merciful did not want to burden the woman with this difficult task. But a woman can reach the status of a prophet spiritually and sometimes even go beyond the prophet. Like in the case of Maryam \(‘a\) where Prophet Zakariyah \(‘a\) was inspired to pray for a child after seeing the heavenly food sent down to her.](#)
- [140. Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 35. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software.](#)
- [141. Ibid; Majma al–Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 169; Mafatih al–Ghaib, vol. 24, p583. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. Note: Majma al–Bayan, Persian translation mentions Pharaoh instead of Haman.](#)
- [142. Ibid](#)
- [143. Ibid](#)
- [144. Nur ath–Thaqalayn, vol. 4, p. 117; Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 35–36. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software. Note: It is possible for a baby to be hungry for a few days and still survive. For example, in the earthquake in Kirmanshah, Iran 2017 a baby was found from under the rubble after 3 days.](#)
- [145. The Study Qur’an, p. 949.](#)
- [146. Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 16, p. 36. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software.](#)
- [147. Surah al–Shu’ara, verse 18; Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 203. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software.](#)
- [148. Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, pp. 118–119. Note: It is not a word–to–word translation. It is just the gist of the meaning.](#)
- [149. See Surah al–Qasas, 28:7.](#)
- [150. See Surah al–Qasas, 28:11.](#)
- [151. Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 119. Note: It is not a word–to–word translation. It is just the gist of the meaning.](#)
- [152. Ibid, verse 9; Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 120. Note: It is not a word–to–word translation. It is just the gist of the meaning.](#)
- [153. Al–Mizan, vol. 16, p. 16.](#)
- [154. See Surah al–Baqarah, 2:259 & 2:260.](#)
- [155. Mafatih al–Ghaib, vol. 24, p. 582,583. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software.](#)
- [156. Al–Mizan, Persian Translation, vol. 16, p. 16.](#)
- [157. See Surah al–Hijr, 15:9.](#)
- [158. Surah al–Room, 30:2–4.](#)
- [159. Surah al–Fath, 48:27.](#)
- [160. Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 13 of Surah al–Qasas. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.](#)
- [161. Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 13 of Surah al–Qasas. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.](#)
- [162. Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 13 of Surah al–Qasas. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.](#)
- [163. Mathew Henry’s Complete Commentary on the whole Bible.](#)
- [164. Literally means: comfort to her eyes.](#)
- [165. Literally means: comfort to my eyes and your eyes.](#)

[166.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 13 of Surah al–Qasas. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗

[167.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 13 of Surah al–Qasas. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗

[168.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 13 of Surah al–Qasas. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗

[169.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 13 of Surah al–Qasas. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗

[170.](#) Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn, under verse 40 of Surah Ta–Ha. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath–Thaqalayn.🔗🔗

[171.](#) Ibid🔗🔗

[172.](#) The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 10🔗🔗

[173.](#) [https://www.the](https://www.thebiblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/exodus/2.html) [13] Biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew–henry–complete/exodus/2.html🔗🔗

[174.](#) Tafsir e–Namuneh, vol. 15, p. 203. Accessed by Jami Tafasir, Nur Software🔗🔗

[175.](#) The Bible, NIV, Exodus, Chapter 2, verse 10.🔗🔗

[1] [1]

SHARES

## Chapter 5: Sarah (‘a)

### [According to the Qur’an](#)

Sarah (‘a) has been recognized as a role–model in Qur’anic commentaries, contrary to the opinion of some writers<sup>1</sup> who have called her “the jealous wife” and the “matriarch”.<sup>2</sup> Ayatullah Jawadi Amuli writes:

Pious and good people can be taken as role–models. Pious men or women are the role model for the mankind and not the role model just for men or women. Qur’an has mentioned four women role models. (Two good<sup>3</sup> and two bad<sup>4</sup>).

In the Qur’an a good man or woman are a role model for all the good human beings and an evil man or woman are role–models for all the evil people.<sup>5</sup>

After the above introduction, the first woman that he mentions as a role model in the Qur’an is Sarah (‘a).<sup>6</sup> Sarah (‘a), the wife of Nabi Ibrahim (‘a), has been mentioned briefly in the Qur’an. Allah (SwT) mentions her in the story of ‘the honored guests of Nabi Ibrahim (‘a)’. This story has been narrated in five different Surahs, i.e.: *Hud*, *adh–Dharyat*, *al–Hijr*, *al–Ankabut* and *as–Saffat*.<sup>7</sup> However, Sarah (‘a) herself is only mentioned in two of these Surahs namely *Hud* and *adh–Dharyat*.

The story begins when Allah (SwT) asks,

***“Did you receive the story of Abraham’s honoured guests?” (51:24).***

These guests were angels in the form of men, but Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) didn’t realize that they were angels. When they saw Nabi Ibrahim (‘a), they exchanged greetings with him. Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) welcomed the strangers, and then informed his wife so that they could prepare a grand meal for them. Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) ***“brought a fat calf” (51:26), “roasted” (11:69)*** it and served his guests. Surprisingly, he saw that they did not touch it or try to eat it. ***“He said, ‘Will you not eat?’” (51:27).*** He became uneasy, suspicious of their intentions, and ***“he felt a fear of them” (51:28).***

In many cultures, refusing to eat from offered food was considered a sign of hostility or ill-will. [8](#) The angels sensed his unease, ***and “they said, ‘Do not be afraid! We have been sent to the people of Lot” (11:70)*** to punish them ***“and they gave him the good news of a wise son” (51:28).*** His wife, Sarah, who was ***“standing by, suddenly menstruated” (11:71)*** [9](#) after years of being barren and infertile.

She started *crying* with joy, as the angels ***“gave her the good news of the birth of Ishaq, and of Yaqub, the son of Ishaq” (11:71).***

***“She beat her face, and said, ‘A barren old woman!’” (51:29).***

***“Oh, my! Shall I, an old woman, bear children, while this husband of mine is an old man?! That is indeed an odd thing! (11:72).***

She was completely taken by surprise. It was not normal for an old couple like them to have a baby. [10](#) It has been narrated that she was 99 years old and that Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) was 120. [11](#)

The angels responded to her by saying, ***“Are you amazed at Allah’s dispensation? [That is] Allah’s mercy and His blessings upon you, members of the household of Nabi Ibrahim (‘a)” (11:73).***

Perhaps, they wanted to remind her that this was not the first time that Allah (SwT) had bestowed his blessings on their family. For example, Allah (SwT) had saved Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) from the fire of Nimrud. Then the angels informed Sarah (‘a) that Allah (SwT) had decided what to do: He wanted to bless them with a child in this old age which would be a sign of Allah’s (SwT) greatness.

***“Indeed He is the All-wise, the All-knowing” (51:30)***

***“Indeed He is all-laudable, all-glorious” (11:73).***

Ayatullah Jawadi Amuli writes:

The wife of Ibrahim (‘a), the friend of God [12](#), is one of the exemplary women, who talked to the angels and received the glad tidings from them. Allah in Nabi Ibrahim’s (‘a) old age gave him the glad tidings of a wise son. The same good news, in the same manner, was given to his wife as well. [13](#)

## Related Verses from the Qur'an

- Surah adh-Dhariyat, ayah # 24–30

*“Did you receive the story of Abraham's honoured guests?” (51:24).*

*“When they entered into his presence, they said, ‘Peace!’ ‘Peace!’ He answered, an unfamiliar folk” (51:25).*

*“Then he retired to his family and brought a fat [roasted] calf” (51:26).*

*“And put it near them. He said, ‘Will you not eat?’” (51:27).*

*“Then he felt a fear of them. They said, ‘Do not be afraid!’ And they gave him the good news of a wise son” (51:28).*

*“Then his wife came forward crying [with joy]. She beat her face, and said, ‘A barren old woman!’” (51:29).*

*“They said, ‘So has your Lord said. Indeed He is the All-wise, the All-knowing” (51:30).*

- Surah Hud, ayah # 69–73

*“Certainly Our messengers came to Abraham with the good news. And said, ‘Peace!’ ‘Peace!’ He replied. Presently he brought [for them] a roasted calf” (11:69).*

*“But when he saw their hands not reaching for it, he took them amiss and felt a fear of them. They said, ‘Do not be afraid. We have been sent to the people of Lot” (11:70).*

*“His wife, standing by, laughed as We gave her the good news of [the birth of] Isaac, and of Jacob, after Isaac” (11:71).*

*“She said, ‘Oh, my! Shall I, an old woman, bear [children], and [while] this husband of mine is an old man?! That is indeed an odd thing!’” (11:72).*

*“They said, ‘Are you amazed at Allah's dispensation? [That is] Allah's mercy and His blessings upon you, members of the household. Indeed He is all-laudable, all-glorious” (11:73).*

## Explanatory Comments and Lessons Derived

## The Honoured Guests

### Surah adh- Dhariyat, ayah # 24

هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ ضَيْفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ

***“Did you receive the story of Abraham's honoured guests?” (51:24).***

### Surah Hud, ayah # 69

وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ بِالْبُشْرَى

***“Certainly Our messengers came to Abraham with the good news” (11:69).***

- بِالْبُشْرَى (*Bushra*) in the verse is the good news of the birth of Nabi Ishaq(‘a). The following verses where the angels give the news of the birth of Nabi Ishaq (‘a) to Sarah (‘a) is a proof to this. [14](#)
- رُسُلٌ (*Rusul*) were the angels that were sent by Allah (SwT) to Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) to give him the good news of the birth of Ishaq (‘a) and to punish the people of Nabi Lut (‘a). There is a controversy on the number of angels. Ibn Abbas said that they were three: *Jibraeel*, *Mikaeel* and *Israfeel*. [15](#) Imam Sadiq (‘a) said they were four. He added *Karobeel* to the three. [16](#) Others said nine and some went upto twelve. [17](#) But all the commentators agree that they were more than two because the word *Rusul* is a plural (جمع), which comprises of not less than three. [18](#)
- Allah (SwT) calls them ‘*honored guests*’ maybe because they were the agents of Allah (SwT) sent on a mission or it could be because of the honour and respect that Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) showed to them. [19](#)

## Peace

### Surah Hud, ayah # 69

قَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ

***“And said, ‘Peace!’ ‘Peace!’ He replied” (11:69).***

**Surah adh– Dhariyat, ayah # 25**

إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ قَوْمٌ مُنْكَرُونَ

***“When they entered into his presence, they said, ‘Peace!’ ‘Peace!’ He answered, an unfamiliar folk.” (51:25).***

- Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) said, *“an unfamiliar folk”* in his heart as he could not recollect seeing them before.[20](#) But some commentators believe that he addressed them saying “you are an unfamiliar folk”[21](#) Tabatabai refutes this opinion saying that for a noble, hospitable host it is unlikely to say this to his guests as soon as they enter.[22](#) If he would have said that loudly then the angels would have introduced themselves. Moreover in the following verses when he sees that they don’t eat, it proved all the more that he did not know them.[23](#)
- The angels said [24](#)سَلَامًا, (*Salaman*) meaning peace be upon you once and Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) answered in a better way saying [25](#)سَلَامٌ, (*Salamun*) meaning peace be upon you always.[26](#)
- These verses teach us that:
- Guests should be honored.[27](#)
- The guest should greet (say *salam*) when he enters.[28](#)
- It is obligatory on the host to respond and return his greeting.[29](#)

- The response should be better.[30](#)

### [An amazing meal](#)

Surah Hud, ayah # 69

فَمَا لَبِثَ أَنْ جَاءَ بِعِجْلٍ حَنِيدٍ

***“And he made no delay in bringing a roasted calf” (11:69).*** [31](#)

Surah adh- Dhariyat, ayah # 26

فَرَاغَ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ فَجَاءَ بِعِجْلٍ سَمِينٍ

***“Then he retired to his family and brought a fat [roasted] calf” (51:26).***

- عِجْلٍ (ijl) means a calf.[32](#) It is derived from عجله (ajaleh) which means to be hasty. A calf is supposed to be hasty in his actions. But once it grows into a cow it is not hasty anymore.[33](#) حَنِيدٍ (hanidh) means to roast in a pit[34](#) or on stones or rocks, by placing it close to the fire. The meat gets roasted and tender slowly by the heat, without the fire touching it.[35](#) سَمِينٍ (sameen) means fat.[36](#) The fat calf was chosen as an honor to his guests. [37](#) رَاغٍ (ragh) is derived from the word رَوَّغَ (rogh), which means to leave from a company unnoticed, in a deceitful manner.[38](#) Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) did not want his guests to know that he was preparing food for them fearing that they might stop him. This is normal for someone who loves guests.[39](#) فَمَا لَبِثَ ... ( he made no delay...) means he got the roasted calf right away in a manner that melted fat and juices were dripping from it.[40](#)
- One whole calf might sound like a lot of food but Qur’an does not say clearly the number of guests. Moreover there might have been his companions and his servants too.[41](#) Maybe he shared the food with his neighbors too as he was known for his generosity.[42](#)

### [Food Untouched](#)

Surah Hud, ayah # 70

فَلَمَّا رَأَى أَيْدِيَهُمْ لَا تَصِلُ إِلَيْهِ نَكِرَهُمْ

***“But when he saw their hands not reaching for it, he felt uneasy with them...” (11:70).*** [43](#)

**Surah adh- Dhariyat, ayah # 27**

فَقَرَّبَهُ إِلَيْهِمْ قَالَ أَلَا تَأْكُلُونَ

***“And put it near them. He said, ‘Will you not eat?’” (51:27).***

- نَكِرَهُمْ (*nakirahum*) means he disapproved. [44](#) ‘...their hands not reaching for it’ means when they did not extend their hands to eat from it. [45](#)
- Nabi Ibrahim (‘a), himself placed the food near them. [46](#) It is one of the etiquettes of hospitality to serve the food personally to the guest, to bring the food to the guest and not to take the guest to the food, to prepare the food without asking the guest if they ate or not, to prepare the food away from the sight of the guest, to serve the best, to serve fast especially if the guest is a traveler and not from your town, to have the food near the guest for easy access. [47](#)
- Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) thought they were human beings. Therefore, he asked, “Will you not eat?” [48](#)

## **Fear**

**Surah adh- Dhariyat, ayah # 28**

فَأَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ

***“Then he felt a fear of them. They said, ‘Do not be afraid!’” (51:28).***

**Surah Hud, ayah # 70**

وَأَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ إِنَّا أُرْسِلْنَا إِلَى قَوْمٍ لُوطٍ

***“...and felt a fear of them. They said, "Do not be afraid. We have been sent to the people of Lot" (11:70).***

- **وَجَسَّ** (*awjasa*) comes from **اِجَّاسَ** (*eejas*) which is derived from the root word **وَجَسَّ** (*wajas*), meaning panic felt in the heart or to panic because of hearing something, hidden, secret,<sup>[49](#)</sup> a hidden voice. That is why **اِجَّاسَ** (*eejas*) means an inner feeling, an inner voice.<sup>[50](#)</sup> **خِيفَةً** (*khifah*) means fear.<sup>[51](#)</sup>
- It was the custom that if one eats from someone's table he will not harm him. So when one does not eat it means that this person has an evil intention.<sup>[52](#)</sup>
- When the guests said, "*Do not be afraid. We have been sent to the people of Lot.*" Nabi Ibrahim ('a) gathered that they were angels sent on a mission and realized that they did not eat as they did not possess materialistic bodies.<sup>[53](#)</sup>

#### [Good news to Nabi Ibrahim \('a\)](#)

#### **Surah adh- Dhariyat, ayah # 28**

وَبَشَّرُوهُ بِغُلَامٍ عَلِيمٍ

***“And they gave him the good news of a wise son” (51:28).***

- There is a controversy regarding who is the '*wise son*.' Whether it is Ismael ('a) or Ishaq ('a). Tabatabai refutes the opinion of him being Ismael ('a) and asserts that it is Ishaq ('a).<sup>[54](#)</sup>

#### [Good News to Sarah \('a\)](#)

#### **Surah Hud, ayah # 71**

وَأَمْرَأَتُهُ قَائِمَةٌ فَضَحِكَتْ فَلَبَسَ رِثَاها بِإِسْحَاقَ وَمِنْ وَرَاءِ إِسْحَاقَ يَعْقُوبَ

***“His wife, standing by, laughed, suddenly menstruated as We gave her the good news of [the birth of] Isaac, and of Jacob, after Isaac” (11:71).***

- Sarah (‘a) was the daughter of Haran, and the cousin of Nabi Ibrahim (‘a).[55](#)
- قَائِمَةٌ (*qaimah*) either means that she was standing behind the curtain and listening to the conversation or she was standing nearby to serve the guests while Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) was sitting with them.[56](#)
- ضَحِكَتْ (*dhahikat*) is derived from ضَحَكَ (*dhahik*).[57](#) This word can be read in two different ways, giving two different meanings:
  1. If ض is read with a *fatha*, then it means ‘to menstruate’.[58](#) Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (‘a) also asserts this meaning.[59](#) When a palm tree matures, blooms, and gives dates, it is said [60](#) ضحك النخلة, which means that the date palm has menstruated. When the rabbits mature, the same word is used.[61](#)
  2. If ض is read with a *kasrah*, it means to laugh, showing one’s front teeth,[62](#) to be happy.[63](#)
- Allamah Tabatabai supports the first meaning where the ض is read with a *fatha*. He believes that the meaning of the verse is that Sarah (‘a) was standing by and watching the conversation taking place between Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) and the angels when she suddenly menstruated. Then, the angels gave her the glad tidings of the birth of Ishaq (‘a).[64](#) Her menstruation was a sign for her to believe and accept the good news easily.[65](#) Ayatullah Nasir Makarim Shirazi refutes this opinion, saying that this word was not used by Arabs for humans. Moreover, if Sarah (‘a) had just menstruated, indicating her fertility, then why was she surprised by the good news of Nabi Ishaq’s (‘a) birth?[66](#)
- Fakhr al-Razi and many others support the second meaning where the ض is read with a *kasrah*. To explain her laughter, commentators have discussed different possible explanations, but without proof.[67](#) The best justification that they could make was that

Sarah (‘a) was standing nearby, watching the conversation taking place between Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) and the angels. When she noticed that the guests were not eating, she became alarmed and worried. However, when the angels disclosed their identity and she realized that there were no ill-intentions, she was relieved, and laughed. When the angels saw her laughing, they gave her the good news of Ishaq (‘a), and his son, Yaqub (‘a)[68](#)

- Sarah (‘a) was given the good news of a son, Ishaq (‘a), and moreover, a grandson, Yaqub (‘a)[69](#) This was informing her that her progeny would continue beyond, and that her son would grow older and become a father himself.[70](#)
- Prophets have been named and known even before they are born.[71](#)
- Usually angels are sent on a single mission but these angels were sent on a few missions together: first, to give the good news to Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) and Sarah (‘a), and then to destroy the people of Nabi Lut (‘a).[72](#)

#### Sarah (‘a) Talks to Angels

#### **Surah adh-Dhariyat, ayah # 29**

فَأَقْبَلَتْ امْرَأَتُهُ فِي صَرَّةٍ فَصَكَّتْ وَجْهَهَا وَقَالَتْ عَجُوزٌ عَقِيمٌ

***“Then his wife came forward crying [with joy]. She beat her face, and said, “A barren old woman!” (51:29)***

#### **Surah Hud, ayah # 72**

قَالَتْ يَا وَيْلَتَى أَأَلِدُ وَأَنَا عَجُوزٌ وَهَذَا بَعْلِي شَيْخًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ

***“She said, ‘Oh, my! Shall I, an old woman, bear [children], and [while] this husband of mine is an old man?! That is indeed an odd thing!’” (11:72).***

- The word صَرَّةٌ (*sarrah*) is derived from the word صرير (*sareer*) which means a door that makes a creaking, screeching sound[73](#) while opening and closing. It also means

crowd.<sup>74</sup>In the verse, the word صَرَّةَ (sarrah) means a loud cry<sup>75</sup> or to exclaim<sup>76</sup>, similar to crying out in excitement when hearing something amazing, saying, “Oh wow!”

- صَك (sak) means to hit hard,<sup>77</sup> to slap your own face.<sup>78</sup> In some eastern cultures, women do this when they are astonished.<sup>79 80</sup>
- بَعْل (bal) means someone who is self-sufficient and can support himself. For example, a date palm that does not need to be irrigated by a spring or river and suffices on rainwater alone is called بَعْل (bal). <sup>81</sup> A husband is known by this term as he is self-sufficient and provides for his family.
- Women are emotional. Usually they cannot hold back their emotions.<sup>82</sup>
- Women can reach a high status, such that they can talk to angels.<sup>83</sup>
- To be surprised does not contradict one’s faith and belief in God – it is a natural human reaction.<sup>84</sup>
- Sarah (‘a) was surprised as she was both barren and old.<sup>85</sup> It was something that was not heard of before. A woman of her age to get pregnant was embarrassing too.<sup>86</sup>
- If Allah (SwT) wants something, then everything is possible. Even an old couple can have a child because Allah’s power is not restricted.<sup>87</sup>

#### The Angels Reply

#### **Surah Hud, ayah # 73**

قَالُوا أَتَعْجَبِينَ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ رَحِمَتُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ إِنَّهُ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ

***“They said, ‘Are you amazed at Allah’s dispensation? [That is] Allah’s mercy and His blessings***

***upon you, members of the household. Indeed, He is all-laudable, all-glorious” (11:73).***

**Surah adh-Dhariyat, ayah # 30**

قَالُوا كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ

***“They said, ‘So has your Lord said. Indeed He is the All-wise, the All-knowing” (51:30).***

- **مَجِيدٌ** (*majeed*) means *karim*,[88](#) someone who is noble and the invitation to eat at this person’s table is open for all, as his generosity extends to all.[89](#)
- The angels asked Sarah (‘a), *“Are you amazed at Allah’s dispensation?”* because they were aware that Sarah (‘a) knew the power of Allah (SwT), so she shouldn’t have been surprised; this was a rhetorical question.[90](#)
- Allah (SwT) is the creator of all things. Nothing is difficult for Him, and if He wants, He can give the seemingly impossible in the most unexpected of ways.[91](#)
- As *He is all-laudable, all-glorious*, He is the source of every good action and generosity. He extends His mercy and blessings to whomsoever He wishes.[92](#)
- The word **كَذَلِكَ** (*kadhalik*) in the verse refers to the glad tidings given to Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) and Sarah (‘a). When Sarah (‘a) was young, she was barren, but in old age, Allah (SwT) decided to give them a child. Whenever Allah (SwT) decides to give someone something, it is through His wisdom, and despite circumstances that might seem better or worse. He is *the All-knowing* means that nothing is hidden from Him.[93](#)

### **According to the Bible**

Bible has given a detail account of Sarah. Her name was Sarai until God changed it to Sarah. [94](#)She was the half-sister[95](#) of Abraham. She was very beautiful. So whenever Abraham would travel with her, he would introduce her as his sister instead of wife, to save himself from being killed. There are two similar episodes (Pharaoh and Abimelech) narrated in the Bible that talks about how the rulers liked

Sarah and they took her away from Abraham. Finally when they realize that she is married they return her to him.[96](#)

Bible narrates that she was barren.[97](#) Both she and her husband yearned for an offspring. Then she offers her slave Hagar to her husband hoping she would get a child for them.[98](#) But to her dismay when Hagar got pregnant, she was haughty to her mistress.[99](#)

One day, she complained about Hagar to her husband. Abraham asked her to do whatever she liked in this matter. So Sarah mistreated Hagar. Finally Hagar could not bear her ill treatment and ran away.[100](#) In the desert, angels convinced her to return to her mistress. Thus, she returned and gave birth to Ishmael. [101](#)

When Abraham was ninety-nine years old God asked him to change Sarai's name to Sarah. Then he told him that Sarah will have Isaac. Through him she will become the mother of nations.[102](#) Abraham laughed and said to himself that how was it possible for a hundred-year-old man and a ninety-year-old woman to have a child.[103](#) Then God assured him that she will have a child by the same time next year.[104](#)

One day, Abraham had three strangers visit him. One of them was the Lord. Abraham welcomes them and serves them a roasted calf, milk, curds and freshly baked bread by Sarah. They eat the food, and ask for Sarah as she was listening to them in the tent. Then, they give Abraham the good news of a son to which Sarah laughs. She laughs and wonders how she can have a child while she and her husband are both past the age of childbearing.[105](#) The Lord asks Abraham why Sarah laughed and why she says "*will I really have a child, now that I am old?*"[106](#) Then the Lord continues and says that there was nothing difficult for the Lord and assures Abraham that he will return next year and that she will have a son. Sarah becomes scared, and lies saying that she did not laugh.[107](#)

God keeps His promise, and Sarah has Isaac.[108](#) When he got weaned, she noticed that his elder brother Ishmael would mock at him. Moreover, she did not want Ishmael to have a share in the inheritance. So she asked Abraham to drive him and his mother out of the house.[109](#)

Finally at the age of hundred and twenty-seven Sarah died. She was buried in a cave that Abraham bought at a high price.[110](#)

With regards to Abraham's hospitality of the guests, Matthew Henry writes beautifully "Religion does not destroy, but improve, good manners, and teaches us to honour all men. Decent civility is a great ornament to piety. He was very earnest and importunate for their stay, and took it as a great favour..."[111](#)

With regards to Sarah being in the tent, Matthew Henry writes that, "It was the modest usage of that time that the women did not sit at meal with men, at least not with strangers, but confined themselves to their own apartments; therefore Sarah is here out of sight... The daughters of Sarah must learn of her to be

chaste, keepers at home..." [112](#)

Regarding Sarah's laughter, he writes "It was not a pleasing laughter of faith, like Abraham's, but it was a laughter of doubting and mistrust. She denied, saying, 'I did not laugh', thinking nobody could contradict her: she told this lie, because she was afraid; but it was in vain to attempt concealing it from an all-seeing eye; ... It is a shame to do amiss [113](#), but a greater shame to deny it..." [114](#)

Matthew Henry writes regarding the marriage of Abraham to Hagar:

Herein, though some excuse may be made for him (Abraham), he cannot be justified...The maker of this match (would one think it?) was Sarai herself: ...It is the policy of Satan to tempt us by our nearest and dearest relations, or those friends that we have an opinion of and an affection for. The temptation is most dangerous when it is sent by a hand that is least suspected: ...It would have been much more for Sarai's interest if Abram had kept to the rule of God's law instead of being guided by her foolish projects; but we often do ill for ourselves.... he married without God's consent.... [115](#) We have here the immediate bad consequences of Abram's unhappy marriage to Hagar. A great deal of mischief it made quickly. [116](#)

Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown write regarding the said verse:

*Sarai... gave her to... Abram to be his wife*—"Wife" is here used to describe an inferior, though not degrading, relation, in countries where polygamy prevails. In the case of these female slaves, who are the personal property of his lady, being purchased before her marriage or given as a special present to her, no one can become the husband's secondary wife without her mistress consent or permission. This usage seems to have prevailed in patriarchal times; and Hagar, Sarai's slave, of whom she had the entire right of disposing, was given by her mistress' spontaneous offer, to be the secondary wife of Abram, in the hope of obtaining the long-looked-for heir. It was a wrong step—indicating a want of simple reliance on God—and Sarai was the first to reap the bitter fruits of her device. [117](#)

Matthew Henry writes in regard to her name change, "'Sarai' signifies my princess, as if her honour were confined to one family only. 'Sarah' signifies a princess – namely, of multitudes..." [118](#)

Regarding the story of Abimelech Matthew Henry writes:

The fairest marbles have their flaws, and, while there are spots in the sun, we must not expect anything spotless under it. The scripture, it should be remarked, is impartial in relating the blemishes even of its most celebrated characters. We have here: Abraham's sin in denying his wife, and Abimelech's sin thereupon in taking her... [119](#)

### [Related Verses from the Bible](#)

- Abram in Egypt:

Genesis, Chapter 12, verses 10– 20: Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe. As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, “I know what a beautiful woman you are. When the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife.’ Then they will kill me but will let you live. Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you.” When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that Sarai was a very beautiful woman. And when Pharaoh’s officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace. He treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels. But the Lord inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Abram’s wife Sarai. So Pharaoh summoned Abram. “What have you done to me?” he said. “Why didn’t you tell me she was your wife? Why did you say, ‘She is my sister,’ so that I took her to be my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go!” Then Pharaoh gave orders about Abram to his men, and they sent him on his way, with his wife and everything he had. [120](#)

- Abraham and Abimelek:

Genesis, Chapter 20, verses 2–18: and there Abraham said of his wife Sarah, “She is my sister.” Then Abimelek king of Gerar sent for Sarah and took her. But God came to Abimelek in a dream one night and said to him, “You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken; she is a married woman.” Now Abimelek had not gone near her, so he said, “Lord, will you destroy an innocent nation? Did he not say to me, ‘She is my sister,’ and didn’t she also say, ‘He is my brother?’ I have done this with a clear conscience and clean hands.” Then God said to him in the dream, “Yes, I know you did this with a clear conscience, and so I have kept you from sinning against me. That is why I did not let you touch her. Now return the man’s wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not return her, you may be sure that you and all who belong to you will die.” Early the next morning Abimelek summoned all his officials, and when he told them all that had happened, they were very much afraid. Then Abimelek called Abraham in and said, “What have you done to us? How have I wronged you that you have brought such great guilt upon me and my kingdom? You have done things to me that should never be done.” And Abimelek asked Abraham, “What was your reason for doing this?” Abraham replied, “I said to myself, ‘There is surely no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.’ Besides, she really is my sister, the daughter of my father though not of my mother; and she became my wife. And when God had me wander from my father’s household, I said to her, ‘This is how you can show your love to me: Everywhere we go, say of me, ‘He is my brother.’” Then Abimelek brought sheep and cattle and male and female slaves and gave them to Abraham, and he returned Sarah his wife to him. And Abimelek said, “My land is before you; live wherever you like.” To Sarah he said, “I am giving your brother a thousand shekels of silver. This is to cover the offense against you before all who are with you; you are completely vindicated.” Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelek, his wife and his female slaves so they could have children again, for the Lord had kept

all the women in Abimelek's household from conceiving because of Abraham's wife Sarah. [121](#)

- Hagar and Ishmael:

Genesis, Chapter 16, verses 1–6: Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; so she said to Abram, "The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her." Abram agreed to what Sarai said. So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. He slept with Hagar, and she conceived. When she knew she was pregnant; she began to despise her mistress. Then Sarai said to Abram, "You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my slave in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the Lord judge between you and me" "Your slave is in your hands," Abram said. "Do with her whatever you think best." Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her. [122](#)

### The Covenant of Circumcision

- Genesis, Chapter 17, verses 15–17: God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be **Sarah**. *I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her.*" Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will **Sarah** bear a child at the age of ninety?" [123](#)
- Genesis, Chapter 17, verses 19: Then God said, "Yes, but your wife **Sarah** will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. [124](#)
- Genesis, Chapter 17, verses 21: But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom **Sarah** will bear to you by this time next year." [125](#)

### The Three visitors

Genesis, Chapter 18, verses 1– 15: The Lord appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed

low to the ground. He said, “If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord,<sup>[a [27]]</sup> do not pass your servant by. Let a little water be brought, and then you may all wash your feet and rest under this tree. Let me get you something to eat, so you can be refreshed and then go on your way – now that you have come to your servant. “Very well,” they answered, “do as you say.” So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. “Quick,” he said, “get three seahs<sup>126</sup> of the finest flour and knead it and bake some bread.” Then he ran to the herd and selected a choice, tender calf and gave it to a servant, who hurried to prepare it. He then brought some curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared, and set these before them. While they ate, he stood near them under a tree. “Where is your wife Sarah?” they asked him. “There, in the tent,” he said. Then the Lord said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son.” Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. Abraham and Sarah were already very old, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, “After I am worn out and my lord is old, will I now have this pleasure?” Then the Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really have a child, now that I am old?’ Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son.” Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, “I did not laugh.” But he said, “Yes, you did laugh.”<sup>127</sup>

### The Birth of Isaac

- Genesis, Chapter 21, verse 1–3: Now the *Lord* was gracious to Sarah as he had said, and the *Lord* did for Sarah what he had promised. Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him. Abraham gave the name Isaac to the son Sarah bore him.
- Genesis, Chapter 21, verse 6–7: Sarah said, “God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me.” And she added, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”<sup>128</sup>

### Hagar and Ishmael Sent Away

Genesis, Chapter 21, verses 8–13: The child grew and was weaned, and on the day Isaac was weaned Abraham held a great feast. But Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was mocking, and she said to Abraham, “Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac.” The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son. But God said to him, “Do not be so distressed about the boy and your slave woman. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring<sup>[b [27]]</sup> will be reckoned. I will make the son of the slave into a nation also, because he is your offspring.”<sup>129</sup>

## The Death of Sarah

Genesis, Chapter 23, verses 1–20: Sarah lived to be a hundred and twenty–seven years old. She died at Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her. Then Abraham rose from beside his dead wife and spoke to the Hittites.<sup>[a [27]]</sup> He said, “I am a foreigner and stranger among you. Sell me some property for a burial site here so I can bury my dead.” The Hittites replied to Abraham, “Sir, listen to us. You are a mighty prince among us. Bury your dead in the choicest of our tombs. None of us will refuse you his tomb for burying your dead.” Then Abraham rose and bowed down before the people of the land, the Hittites. He said to them, “If you are willing to let me bury my dead, then listen to me and intercede with Ephron son of Zohar on my behalf so he will sell me the cave of Machpelah, which belongs to him and is at the end of his field. Ask him to sell it to me for the full price as a burial site among you.” Ephron the Hittite was sitting among his people and he replied to Abraham in the hearing of all the Hittites who had come to the gate of his city. “No, my lord,” he said. “Listen to me; I give<sup>[b [27]]</sup> you the field, and I give<sup>[c [27]]</sup> you the cave that is in it. I give<sup>[d [27]]</sup> it to you in the presence of my people. Bury your dead.” Again Abraham bowed down before the people of the land and he said to Ephron in their hearing, “Listen to me, if you will. I will pay the price of the field. Accept it from me so I can bury my dead there.” Ephron answered Abraham, “Listen to me, my lord; the land is worth four hundred shekels<sup>[e [27]]</sup> of silver, but what is that between you and me? Bury your dead.” Abraham agreed to Ephron’s terms and weighed out for him the price he had named in the hearing of the Hittites: four hundred shekels of silver, according to the weight current among the merchants. So Ephron’s field in Machpelah near Mamre – both the field and the cave in it, and all the trees within the borders of the field – was deeded to Abraham as his property in the presence of all the Hittites who had come to the gate of the city. Afterward Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave in the field of Machpelah near Mamre (which is at Hebron) in the land of Canaan. So the field and the cave in it were deeded to Abraham by the Hittites as a burial site. [130](#)

## Comparison of the Qur’an and the Bible

- The Qur’an mentions Sarah (‘a) by mentioning her as Ibrahim’s ‘wife’ and does not mention her name. The Bible mentions her by name.
- The Bible mentions that her name was changed from Sarai to Sarah whereas the Qur’an does not mention this.
- Both the Qur’an and the Bible relate the story of guests who come to their home, and that Nabi Ibrahim (‘a) serves them a calf.

- The Qur'an mentions that the guests did not eat the food offered whereas the Bible mentions that they ate from it. As such, the Qur'an mentions that Nabi Ibrahim ('a) got anxious when they did not eat of it, and this does not take place in the Bible.
- The Bible says that one of visitors was God himself, whereas the Qur'an mentions that the men were all angels sent by Allah (SwT).
- Both the Qur'an and the Bible say that the visitors were angels sent to destroy the people of Nabi Lut ('a).
- In the Qur'an, the angels talk directly to Sarah ('a) and inform her of the birth of her son Ishaq ('a) and her grandson Yaqub ('a). In the Bible, Sarah overhears the Lord telling Abraham *"I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son."*
- The Qur'an says that the angels gave the good news of having a son to both Nabi Ibrahim ('a) and Sarah ('a) directly whereas the Bible says that the good news was given directly only to Abraham.
- The Bible states that Sarah ('a) only wondered how they could have a child at such late ages, whereas the Qur'an states that she expressed this directly to the angels.
- Both the Qur'an and the Bible mention that the angels mention that if Allah (SwT) wants something to happen, everything is possible and under His control.
- The Bible mentions that Sarah laughs to herself and the Lord asks Abraham why she laughed. Sarah lies, saying that she did not laugh, but the Lord rejects her words. The Qur'an, according to some opinions, possibly mentions that she laughed, but does not mention anything about her lying.

- The Bible mentions the stories of Sarah being taken away by Pharaoh and Abimelech whereas the Qur'an has not mentioned it.
- The Bible mentions that Sarah mistreated Hagar but the Qur'an has not mentioned it.
- The Bible mentions that Hagar got arrogant in front of Sarah after she got pregnant but the Qur'an does not mention this.
- The Bible mentions that Sarah asked Abraham to exile Hagar and Ishmael but the Qur'an has not mentioned this.
- The Bible mentions that Sarah saw Ishmael mock Isaac but the Qur'an has not mentioned it.
- The Bible mentions the burial of Sarah but the Qur'an has not mentioned it.

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1. Stowasser.❧❧

2. Women in the Qur'an, Traditions, and Interpretations, p. 43.❧❧

3. Maryam ('a) and Asiyah ('a).❧❧

4. The wives of Nabi Nuh ('a) and Lut ( a).❧❧

5. Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 116: Note: It is not a word-to-word translation. It is the gist of the meaning.❧❧

6. Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 117.❧❧

7. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 496.❧❧

8. The Study Qur'an, p. 1276.❧❧

9. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 476.❧❧

10. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 485.❧❧

11. The Study Qur'an, p. 580.❧❧

12. The friend of God is one of the titles of Nabi Ibrahim ('a) in the Islamic tradition. The Arabic is rendered Khalilullah.❧❧

13. Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 117: Note: It is not a word-to-word translation. It is the gist of the meaning.❧❧

14. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 476.❧❧

15. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, Persian translation, vol. 12, p. 90. Accessed by Jame Tafaseer, Nur Software.❧❧

16. Ibid❧❧

17. Ibid, vol. 23, p. 313.❧❧

18. Ibid, p. 477.❧❧

19. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 22, p. 355.❧❧

20. Ibid❧❧

21. Rooh al-Ma'ani, vol. 14, p. 13; Rooh al-Ma'ani, vol. 27, p. 10 cited in Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 26, p. 566. [1][2]
22. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 26, p. 567. [1][2]
23. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 566. [1][2]
24. [تسليم عليك سلاما](#): It is a jumle feliyeh, which denotes a single action [1][2]
25. [سلام عليكم](#): It is a jumle ismiyeh which denotes a consistency and stability. [1][2]
26. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 26, p. 566. [1][2]
27. Tafsir e Nur, under verse 25 of Surah al-Dharyat. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [1][2]
28. Ibid [1][2]
29. Ibid [1][2]
30. Ibid [1][2]
31. Shakir's translation. [1][2]
32. Qamus e Qur'an, vol. 4, p. 295. Accessed by Jame Tafaseer Nur software. [1][2]
33. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 22, p. 356. [1][2]
34. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 12, p. 91. [1][2]
35. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 9, p. 205. [1][2]
36. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 23, p. 313. [1][2]
37. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 22, p. 356. [1][2]
38. Qamus e Quran, vol. 3, p. 148; Isfahani, Raghīb, Al-Mufradat fi Garib il Qur'an, p. 213 [1][2]
39. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 23, p. 313. [1][2]
40. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, 10, p. 478. [1][2]
41. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 9, p. 205–206. [1][2]
42. Ibid, vol. 22, p. 356. [1][2]
43. Irving's translation. [1][2]
44. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 479. [1][2]
45. Ibid [1][2]
46. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 22, p. 357. [1][2]
47. Tafsir e Nur, under verse 24–27 of Surah al-Dharyat. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn. [1][2]
48. Ibid, vol. 18, p. 567. [1][2]
49. Qamus e Quran, vol. 7, p. 182. [1][2]
50. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 22, p. 357. [1][2]
51. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 567. [1][2]
52. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 22, p. 357; Ibid, vol. 9, p. 206; Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 479. [1][2]
53. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 479. [1][2]
54. Ibid, vol. 10, p. 499: Tabatabai has a detail discussion on this issue here. [1][2]
55. Al-Tabarsi, Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 12, p. 91. [1][2]
56. Al-Tabarsi, Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 12, p. 91. [1][2]
57. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 482. [1][2]
58. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 12, p. 93; Qamus e Qur'an, vol. 4, p. 173; Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 482; Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 118. [1][2]
59. Qamus e Qur'an, vol. 4, p. 173; Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 12, p. 93. [1][2]
60. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 12, p. 93. [1][2]
61. Ibid; Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 9, p. 208. [1][2]
62. Qamus e Qur'an, vol. 4, p. 173. [1][2]
63. Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 118. [1][2]
64. Qamus e Qur'an, vol. 4, p. 173; Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 482. [1][2]
65. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 482. [1][2]
66. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 9, p. 208. [1][2]
67. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 483. [1][2]

68. Ibid ;Mafatih al-Ghaib, vol. 18, p. 374. Accessed by Jame Tafaseer Nur software
69. Zan dar Aine Jalal wa Jamal, p. 118.
70. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 482.
71. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 71 of Surah Hud. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn.
72. Ibid
73. Al Mawrid Dictionary, p. 694.
74. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 568.
75. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 23, p. 314; Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 568.
76. The Study Qur'an, p. 1277.
77. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 22, p. 359.
78. Majma al-Bayan, Persian translation, vol. 23, p. 315.
79. Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 22, p. 359.
80. Female Personalities in the Qur'an and Sunna: Examining the Major Sources of Imami Shi'i Islam, p 78.
81. Ibid
82. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 29 of Surah al-Dharyat. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn.
83. Ibid, under verse 72 of Surah Hud; Angels are not material. When they are seen in the forms of human beings it is an apparition (tamathul). It is like a dream where people see human beings and talk to them. But in reality those people are not physically present. An apparition is someone you think you see but who is not really there as a physical being. So it was Sarah ('a) who saw the angels in the form of a men but in reality the angel had not transformed into a man: Refer: Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 14, p. 47 – 52.
84. Ibid
85. Ibid, under verse 72 of Surah Hud; Tafsir e-Namuneh, vol. 9, p. 209.
86. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 485.
87. Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn, under verse 72 of Surah Hud. Accessed by the application of Tafsir Nur ath-Thaqalayn.
88. Al Mufradat fi Garib il Qur'an, p. 760.
89. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 485.
90. استفهام انکاری: Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 485.
91. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 485.
92. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 10, p. 486.
93. Al-Mizan, Persian translation, vol. 18, p. 568.
94. Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 17, verse 15.
95. Holy Bible, NIV, Genesis, Chapter 20, verse 12: Note: such a marriage is prohibited in the Jewish law. Plz refer: [https://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/468337/jewish/Prohibited-...](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/468337/jewish/Prohibited-...) [24]. So the possibility is that such a marriage was allowed at the time of Prophet Abraham or maybe she was his cousin.
96. Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 12, verses 10–20; Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 20, verse 1–18.
97. Holy Bible, NIV, Genesis, Chapter 16, verse 1.
98. Holy Bible, NIV, Genesis, Chapter 16, verse 2.
99. Holy Bible, NIV, Genesis, Chapter 16, verse 4.
100. Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 16, verse 6.
101. Holy Bible, NIV, Genesis, Chapter 16, verses 7–15.
102. Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 17, verse 16.
103. Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 17, verse 17.
104. Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 17, verse 21.
105. The Bible, NIV, Genesis, Chapter 18, verse 12.
106. Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 18, verse 13.
107. The Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 18, verse 1–15.
108. The Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 21, verse 1– 7.

- [109.](#) Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 21, verse 8–13. [1] [1]
- [110.](#) Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 23, verses 1–20. [1] [1]
- [111.](#) Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 18, verses 1–8. [1] [1]
- [112.](#) Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 18, verses 9–15. [1] [1]
- [113.](#) Meaning: to wrong, to make a mistake. [1] [1]
- [114.](#) Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 18, verses 9–15. [1] [1]
- [115.](#) Matthew Henry commentary on the whole Bible (complete), Genesis 16, verses 1–3. Accessed by Bible Study tools: <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/gene...> [28] [1] [1]
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- [119.](#) Ibid, Genesis 20 [1] [1]
- [120.](#) Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 12, verses 10 – 20. [1] [1]
- [121.](#) Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 20, verses 2– 18; <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+20&version=NIV> [27] [1] [1]
- [122.](#) Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 16, verse 1–6. [1] [1]
- [123.](#) Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 17, verses 15– 17. [1] [1]
- [124.](#) Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 17, verse 19. [1] [1]
- [125.](#) Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 17, verse 21; <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+17&version=NIV> [27] [1] [1]
- [126.](#) about 36 pounds or about 16 kilograms according to The Bible NIV under the verse. [1] [1]
- [127.](#) The Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 18, verses 1– 15. [1] [1]
- [128.](#) The Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 21, verses 1–3, 6–7. [1] [1]
- [129.](#) Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 21, verse 8–13. [1] [1]
- [130.](#) Holy Bible NIV, Genesis, Chapter 23, verses 1–20. [1] [1]

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## Conclusion

The stories of these outstanding women are filled with many lessons. It has guidance for everyone: parents and children, men and women, young and old. In this short research paper, we have learned many lessons from the different aspects of the lives of these exalted women, we have discussed and explored their service and obedience to Allah (SwT), their patience and their strong will. We have established their strong faith, their reliance on Allah (SwT), their love for Him, their certainty in Him, and their hope in Him. We have discussed the defining features of these women as exemplary and how this is nothing other than their sincere connection and devotion to their Lord.

Some of the lessons learned from these stories include understanding how the will of Allah (SwT) always

prevails, and seeing how He (SwT) is the master planner. Through these stories, we have seen His power, and that anything is possible if He wills; He just has to say 'Be' and it is. We have understood that piety is the best quality one may have, that one should stay obedient to the commands of Allah (SwT), and that relying on Allah in all circumstances, no matter how difficult is of utmost importance, especially when supporting the Hujjat<sup>1</sup> of Allah.

If one studies the lives of these women deeply, one will definitely find many more treasures of guidance in these stories. There is still room for more work regarding other great women that are remembered in the Qur'an, and in the Islamic tradition.

I conclude by asking for Allah's help in guiding us so that we are able to ponder more on the verses of the Qur'an, and that we can take advantage of the unlimited amount of guidance in its words and chapters. There are solutions to the essential problems of humanity in the Qur'an, and we can learn much of it in these stories...

آخِرُ دَعْوَاهُمْ أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

**‘... And their concluding call: ‘All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds’” (Surah Yunus, 10:10).**

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<sup>1</sup>. The proof of Allah. ﷻ

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