

An Account of Idris

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an

“And mention Idris in the Book, surely he was a truthful man, a Prophet. And We raised him high in heaven. (19:57–58)

From authentic books, it is narrated from Wahab that Idris was a well-built man with a broad chest. He had less hair on his body and more on his head. His one ear was bigger than the other. He had scanty hair on his chest and spoke in a low voice. While walking his feet used to come close to one another. He is known as Idris because he used to teach about the magnanimity of Allah and the excellence of Islam. He pondered about the majesty, grandiose and glory of Allah – that the sky, the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars and clouds and all other creations have a creator who by His power has created them, formed and arranged them.

Guilty is the one who does not worship Him Who has the right to be worshipped. With this in mind, he formed a private conference among his nation and advised, them remember Allah. He also warned them about His chastisement. He invited them towards His worship. Due to this propagation, the people started to join him. At first, they numbered seven, then reached seventy, then seven hundred, then one thousand people became his followers. Then he (Idris) said to them, “Let us select a hundred pious people.” So from the one thousand, seventy were selected, then from the seventy, ten were selected and from the ten, seven people were finally chosen.

Then he said, “Come, let the seven of us pray and all the others shall say ‘Amen’. Perhaps our Creator may guide us due to our prayers.” They placed their hands on the earth and prayed, but nothing happened. They raised their hands towards the sky and prayed. Allah revealed upon Idris and selected him as His Messenger. Allah guided him and his companions towards His Worship. So they were involved in the worship of Allah and did not associate with anyone so much so that Allah raised Idris to heaven. Except for a few, most of those who had believed in Idris deviated and there were disputes and differences among them. Nuh was appointed over them.

According to a hadith from Abu-Dharr, it is narrated that thirty books were revealed on Idris and other

traditions state that he was the first person who had initiated writing with a pen. He also used to stitch clothes and wear them. Before this, the people used to cover their private parts with leaves. Idris used to stitch clothes and worship and praise Allah.

From reliable traditions it is narrated from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq that Masjid as-Sahlah was the residence of Idris where he used to stitch clothes and worship Allah. Allah fulfills the desire of one who supplicates at that place and will elevate his status on the Day of Judgment as it was the place of Idris.

It is narrated from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq that at the early part of the Prophethood of Idris there lived a tyrant king. Once when he went out for a stroll and passed through a land rich in greenery, which belonged to a pious believer. This believer had abandoned all false religions and was disgusted with transgressors. He kept aloof from them. The king liked that piece of land for himself, so he inquired from his vizier regarding its owner. The vizier replied that it belonged to a certain believer from their kingdom. The king called the believer and said that he wanted his piece of land. The believer replied that his family needed the plot of land more than the king. The king asked him to sell it to him but the believer was adamant which made him angry and his facial expressions changed. In that very condition, he returned to his kingdom. The king had a wife from Iraq (Barak) whom he loved very much and whom he consulted frequently. On reaching his kingdom, he called her. She saw that he was in a very angry mood and inquired as to what had aroused his temper. He narrated the incident of the believer's land.

She replied that only he gets angry who does not have the power to take revenge. "If you don't want to execute or behead him without any excuse then I will show you a way to kill him by which the land will be yours and even his family members will not blame you for his death." The king asked her what plan she had in mind. She replied that one of her group (from Azarak) will be sent to arrest him and he would testify that the person has turned away from the king's religion. "In this way you can kill him and seize his land." The king agreed to her suggestion. So groups from Iraq, who followed the queen's religion and who considered lawful the slaughtering of a believer were called. They testified before the king that that man had turned away from the state religion. On hearing this, the king ordered his execution and captured his land.

Allah was angry at the believer's murder and He revealed to Idris to go and tell the tyrant ruler, "Was he not content with killing the believer that he also usurped his land impoverishing family? I swear by My majesty and power that I will avenge his murder in the Resurrection Day and in this world, I will abolish your rulership. I will change your honor and status into humiliation and disgrace. And dogs will devour the flesh of your wife. Has My tolerance and endurance, which was supposed to test you, made you arrogant?"

Idris addressed the king, "O tyrant ruler! I am the messenger of Allah!" and then narrated to him the divine message. The king ordered Idris to leave his court and warned him that he would not be able to save himself. The king told his wife about his discussion with Idris. She said, "Do not to fear the Messengership of Idris's God. I will send someone to kill Idris so that the messengership of his God is

nullified.” The king agreed to her suggestion and gave his consent.

Among the friends of Idris there were some who used to attend the royal court. Idris had informed them of the revelation to him and of his conveying the message to the king. They were fearful that Idris would be killed. The queen sent forty Iraqi men to kill Idris. They reached the place where Idris used to sit with his companions but did not find him there, so they returned. When his friends saw that they had come to kill Idris they dispersed and then met Idris. They informed him that forty men had come to kill him, so he should be cautious.

Idris prayed to Allah, “O my Sustainer! You sent me to that tyrant to deliver Your message to him. He threatened me and is after my blood. Allah revealed to Idris to keep away from the king. “I swear by My honor that I will enforce My law on him and prove your word and My messengership to be true.” Idris said, “O my Nourisher, I have a wish.” Allah said, “Ask me and I shall fulfill it.” Idris said, “Till such time as I allow, there should be no rains.” Allah said, “The country will be ruined and people will starve to death.” Idris said, “Whatever may happen, this is my wish.” Allah replied, “All right. I accept it, and until the time you pray I will not send rain. I am the most truthful to My promise.” Hearing this Idris briefed his companions about his discussion with Allah and said, “O my friends leave this country and go to some other place.” There were twenty of them and they spread out to different areas. The people came to know about the prayers of Idris.

Idris himself sought refuge on a hill. Allah appointed an Angel who used to bring food to him every evening. Idris fasted during the day and broke his fast in the evening when the Angel brought food to him. Allah destroyed the kingdom of the tyrant king. The king was killed, his kingdom destroyed and the flesh of his wife was eaten by dogs due to their transgression against a believer.

Another unjust tyrant oppressor occupied the throne. Twenty years passed without a drop of rain. The people were in severe hardships and difficulties and their condition deteriorated. They used to bring food supplies from far off countries. When their condition turned from bad to worse they discussed among themselves that this calamity was due to the prayer of Idris who had asked Allah that until the time he allowed there should be no rains. “We are not aware of his whereabouts because he has concealed himself from us.” They decided that as Allah is more Merciful than Idris prays to Him and repents so that it rains on their land and in the neighboring areas. So they wore coarse clothes and applied mud on their head and standing on the earth they wailed, cried and repented to Allah. Allah felt pity on them and revealed upon Idris that, “Your people are repenting, wailing and weeping and I am God the Beneficent and Merciful and the one who accepts repentance and forgive sins. I have mercy on them and wish to fulfill their desire for rains. I have no obstruction save that you had requested me not to send rains until you pray for it. Therefore, O Idris you pray to me that I may send rains for them.”

Idris said, “O my Nourisher, I will not pray for rains.” Allah once again revealed on Idris to pray for rains. Idris again refused. So Allah recalled the Angel who was appointed to bring food for Idris. When it was evening and the food did not arrive Idris became restless but waited patiently. The second day when

again the food did not arrive his restlessness increased. On the third day he lost his patience and appealed to Allah, "O my Nourisher before taking my soul, you have discontinued my sustenance?" Allah revealed, "O Idris! You are complaining in three days but you are not concerned about your nation that has suffered for twenty years? I informed you that they were suffering, and I was merciful on them and I wished that you pray for rain so that I send rain. But you abstained from it, so I wanted you to know what hunger is and you lost your patience and complained. Now come out of the cave and search for your sustenance. I have left you on your own."

Hearing this Idris came down from the hill to procure food. When he came near the town he saw smoke coming out from a house. An old lady had made two chapattis and was roasting them on the fire. He requested her to give him something to eat, as he was very weak and restless due to hunger. She said that due to the curse of Idris, Allah has not given left them anything that they can feed anyone, and swore that except for the two chapattis there was nothing in the house. She told him to leave the city and go somewhere else for food. Idris requested that at least give me one chapatti so that I can save my life and can start walking. She said I have only these two chapattis, one for me and the other for my son. If I give you my chapatti, I will die and if I give you my child's he would die. I don't have anything else to give you."

Idris said, "Your son is young, half a chapatti will suffice him and half will help me to live." The woman ate her share and distributed the other one between Idris and her son. When the child saw Idris eating from his share of the chapatti, he started crying and was so disturbed that he died. The woman shouted out, "Stranger! you have killed my child." Idris said, "Do not fear, by the order of Allah I will make him alive." Saying this he kept his hands on the shoulder of the boy and said, "O soul who has left the body of this child, by the order of Allah return to his body again. I am Idris the Messenger of Allah." The boy was alive once more. The woman saw this and said, "I witness that you are Prophet Idris." And she ran out shouting, "O people! Congratulations to you and glad tidings that we will be relieved of our troubles and sufferings as Idris has returned to our city." Idris came out and reached the palace of the first tyrant king, which was on a hill. A group of people came and complained, "O Idris! In these twenty years, you did not have any mercy on us. We were involved in such difficulties and miseries and many of us starved to death. We request you now pray to Allah for rains." Idris replied, "I will not pray until the time this tyrant king and the people of your city come to me walking, barefoot and request me." When the king heard this, he sent forty people to kill Idris. When they reached near Idris, he cursed them and they all died. When the king heard this, he sent 500 people to arrest him. They came to Idris and said, "We have come to take you to the king." Idris replied, "Look at these forty men (who had come before you to take me); see how they are lying dead. If you all do not go back you too will meet the same fate."

They said, "O Idris, you have involved us in hunger for twenty years and now you are cursing us. Is there no mercy in your heart?" Idris replied, "I will not go to that tyrant nor will I pray for the rains until that tyrant and all the people don't come to me walking barefoot." Hearing this, the people returned to the king and repeated the statement of Idris. So the King together with the people came to Idris and all

stood helplessly before him and requested him to pray for rain. Idris prayed. That very same moment clouds gathered in the sky, there was thunder and lightening and it started raining. It rained so much that they feared they would drown. Finally, they all returned home.¹

It is related from Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq that an angel was under the wrath of Allah and his hair and wings were cut off and he was lying on an island for a long time. When Allah appointed Idris, that angel came to Idris and requested him to pray for him so that Allah may be pleased with him and return his hair and wings. Prophet Idris prayed for him and Allah restored his hair and wings. The angel asked Idris, "Do you wish anything from me?" Idris said, "Yes, I wish that you take me up to the heavens so that I can see the Angel of Death. Because thinking of him I cannot live without fear. The angel took the Prophet to the 4th heaven on his wings. There he saw the Angel of Death sitting, moving his head in a peculiar way. Idris saluted him and asked him the cause for turning his head in that manner. The Angel of Death replied, "Allah has ordered me to take your soul between the 4th and 5th heaven." Idris pleaded, "O Allah! How is it possible when the distance up to the 4th heaven is 500 years of travel and the distance between the 4th and 5th heaven is another 500 years of travel? "This is the distance between one heaven and another." saying this, the Angel of Death took away his soul. These are the words of Allah, which means

"And we raised him high in heaven" (19:57)

Imam as-Sadiq narrates that he is known as Idris because he used to give excessive teachings from the book of Allah.

In a tradition from Amir al-Mu'minin it is narrated that after the death of Idris Allah raised him to an elevated position and sustained him with the bounties of heaven.

In a reliable tradition, it is narrated by Imam Muhammad al-Baqir that the Holy Prophet said, "An angel was very near to Allah. Due to some laxity or laziness, Allah sent him down to earth. He came to Idris and requested him to intercede with Allah on his behalf. Idris agreed and fasted for three days without breaking the fast and spent three nights in worship due to which he was exhausted and weak. Then he prayed to Allah and interceded for this angel. Allah gave the permission to that angel to ascend to the skies. At that time that angel said, "I wish that you would ask from me something in return." Idris said, "I wish to meet the Angel of Death so that I can befriend him, because due to his remembrance no bounty is worth rejoicing." The angel seated him on his wings and took him up to the 1st heaven. Then he took him higher until they reached between the 4th and the 5th skies where he met the Angel of Death. They saw the Angel of Death weeping and asked him the reason of his grief. The Angel of Death replied, "Just now when I was beneath the skies there was an order from Allah to take the soul of Idris between the 4th and 5th heaven." When Idris heard this he fell down from the wings of the angel and immediately his soul was taken away. As Allah says, "We have mentioned in the Book."

In another tradition it is narrated from 'Abdullah Ibn Suhas that Idris used to travel from city to city and used to fast. When it was night, he used to halt and he was provided his sustenance at that very place.

The angels used to take his good deeds to the skies like other people's deeds. The Angel of Death wished to meet Idris and after getting permission he came to Idris and said, "I wish to be in your company." Idris agreed. They became friends and were together for a long time. He would fast during the day and at night when he used to get sustenance, he used to eat. He used to invite the Angel of Death to eat with him but he said, "I don't require food," and remained busy in prayers. Idris used to sleep due to fatigue but the Angel of Death was neither lazy nor tired; neither did he sleep. In this manner some days passed until one day they passed by an orchard. The grapes were ripe. The Angel of Death asked Idris whether they should take some of the grapes and break their fast. Idris replied, "Glory be to Allah, I invited you to eat from my share of sustenance and you refused. You are now inviting me to eat other people's grapes without their permission. You have recompensed my companionship in a nice way. Tell me who are you?" He replied, "I am the Angel of Death." Idris said, "I have one request from you." The Angel of Death asked him what it was. Idris said, "I wish you to take me up to the skies." The Angel of Death took Allah's permission, seated him on his wings and took him up to the skies.

Idris said, "I have one more desire. I have heard that death is very difficult so I wish to taste it so as to verify that it tastes as I have heard it." The Angel of Death took Allah's permission. Then he held the breath of Idris for sometime then removed his hand and asked Idris how found it? Idris replied, "Very severe, more severe than what I have heard." Then Idris said, "I have one more desire. I want to see the fire of Hell." The Angel of Death ordered the keeper of Hell to open the door. When Idris saw it, he swooned. When he regained consciousness he said, "I have one more request. I would like to see heaven." The Angel of Death asked the permission of the keepers of Heaven and Idris entered it and said, "O Angel of Death now I will not come out of it. Allah has said every soul will have to taste death which I have tasted and Allah has said there is no one from you who will not come near Hell and I have seen it and about the heavens it is said that the people of heavens will remain in it forever."²

1. Previously we have mentioned the proofs for the messengers to be infallible thus the wish from Allah to Idris for sending rains will have to be taken up as an order on his own and due to his love. And the delay in supplicating was not due to giving up worldly perfection or name or fame or for avenging the anger of the soul but anger to the transgressors for not accepting the words of the Almighty. And often it happens that due to excessive love of the Creator they are more angry on the transgressors, more than Allah is as they don't possess the mercy and kindness which is with Allah and they can't tolerate to see a person disobeying Allah and this becomes a source of proximity with Allah and a bounty from Allah that they are warned and should never revolt or transgress against Allah and are not included in the wrath of Allah.

2. This tradition is the same as other traditions and the first tradition can be relied upon. In other books it is mentioned that Idris lived on this earth for 300 years. Some have narrated more. When he went to the skies he was appointed as the Caliph and lived for 919 years. He made his son Enamakh his Legatee who was the father of Nuh. Sayyid Ibn Tawus has narrated in the book Saad-us-Saood that I have seen in the scriptures of Idris that: O Careless people its near that death befall upon you and your complaints are severe. Sweat may be flowing from your forehead, your lips are tightened and your tongue is sealed, your mouth is dry and the whiteness of your eyes covers the black pupil and froth flows from your mouth and your whole body shivers and you are involved in the severe pangs of death. Everywhere people call you but you don't listen and you are lying dead among your dear ones. At that time you will stand as a warning for others. Thus before death,

take a lesson from it as certainly death will fall upon you. You may have a long life but in the end you will be destroyed because whoever is created has to die. And understand that death is easier than the fear of the Day of Judgment, which is after it. At another place it is written that that he said, "Understand with certainty that abstaining from disobedience of Allah is the highest wisdom and a great bounty and is one of the cause for inviting towards goodness which amounts to opening of the door to goodness and understanding because when Allah befriends any of His creatures He bestows on them intellect and wisdom and. His Prophets and His friends were guided by The Holy Spirit. For others the curtains on this world and the truth are opened so that they abstain from ignorance and follow the guidance and counsel by which it becomes ingrained in their souls. At another place it is mentioned that Remember your Lord excessively because if Allah sees that you are a helper and assistant of one another, He will accept your prayers and will fulfill your desires and will make your wishes come true and will send bounties on you from His treasure, which will never be destroyed. At another place it is said that remember your Lord at all times because when He sees that you are a supporter and helper of one another then He will accept your prayers, your wishes will be fulfilled, you will gain what you desire and He will send bounties on you from His treasure which will never be exhausted. At another place it is mentioned that when you fast, abstain your soul from every evil and impure things and fast with a pure and sincere intention only for Allah. Clean your intention with every filth because Allah will segregate people with pure hearts and pure intentions. For fasting and abstaining your mouth from food it is necessary that you be away from sins because Allah is not pleased if one just abstains from food but it is expected that you abstain from all evil when you worship. Then his heart and his thoughts should be directed towards prayers and to establishing a link with Allah and supplicate and ask your hearts' desire which will be your gain and should be expedient with humility and helplessness. And when you prostrate be away from worldly tensions, evil thoughts and bad or unexpected actions and pray the five obligatory prayers daily which has eight Surahs to be recited. Every morning three chapters and in every chapter there are three prostrations with three rosaries. At mid-day there are five chapters and another five chapters at the time of sunset. These are to be recited with prostrations. These are obligatory prayers and one who prays in addition to it, his reward is only with Allah.

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