

An account of Hizqil

According to a tradition of Shaykh Tabarsi, the people of The Israelites left the city to save themselves from the epidemic. Some said they left the city due to war. Some said they belonged to the family of Hizqil the third Khalifah of Musa. The first was Yusha' ibn Nun, the second Kalab bin Yuqanna and the third Hizqil known as Ibn Al Majus because in his old age his mother beseeched Allah for a son and Allah fulfilled her wish and Hizqil was born.

According to another tradition, people called him Dhulkifl because he saved seventy Prophets from the tyrants. He asked the people to leave the country as early as possible and said it would be better if I would be killed instead of all of you. Thus, they all were saved from the cruel tyrant. After that, the Jews came to him and asked about them. He said that he does not know where they have gone. They all left but Allah kept him under His security.

There are different opinions about the population of The Israelites. Some say that the population was about 3,000 to 10,000 people or 40,000 to 60 or 70,000 people and that they all died by the curse of Shamoun. At that time, the city's name was 'Ovardan'. Some said Hizqil also cursed them. According to 'Ali ibn Ibrahim, they were staying in one of the city of Syria. In that city, there was a plague and they all died. Their bones were scattered all along the way. One of the Prophets passing by that way saw the bones lying here and there. He raised his hands in prayer. So Allah brought them back to life and they all returned to their own houses. They lived for many years and died according to their time.

Hanaran asked about this from Imam al-Baqir. Imam replied that this incident happened twice. They got a new life twice meaning Allah made them alive twice. They lived for many years i.e.. according to the years prescribed to them on earth and then died. Imam says Allah the Glorified said,

“Have you not considered those who went forth from their homes, for fear of death, and they were thousands, then Allah said to them, Die; again He gave them life; most surely Allah is Gracious to people, but most people are not grateful.” (2:243)¹

According to another tradition, Imam al-Baqir and Imam as-Sadiq have narrated this when the people asked the explanation of the above Ayat. They described as follows:

The people of The Israelites lived in a town of Syria. The population of the city was about 70,000. Once a plague started in the city. At once, the rich people left the city and went to another place to save themselves from death but the poor stayed there. As the epidemic spread and people started dying those people started thinking that if they had left the city they too would have been saved. After that, they decided that the next time there was an epidemic they would not stay in the city. When they were struck again by the epidemic they all left their houses and went to another city. The houses of that city were vacant because the people of that city had also died by an epidemic. Their dead bodies were annihilated except their bones. The people of The Israelites settled in the empty houses. Again by the order of Almighty they all died. Many years passed. Once a caravan passed by the way where the bones were scattered. They saw the bones lying on the way. They collected the bones, kept them aside, and cleared the way for the passers-by.

Hizqil passed this way. When he saw the human bones lying in a bad condition he grieved and wept much. He raised his hand to Allah and prayed: O Allah! Make them alive again in the same way as you have taken away their lives so that the city can again be prosperous and they can increase the number of your followers and true believers. Allah was pleased with him and asked, "O Prophet! Do you want me to make them alive?" The Prophet replied, "Yes, My Lord." Then Allah answered his prayer and Hizqil saw the scattered bones regaining their original form until the parts of their bodies came to their original form and they were alive. They met each other, thanked Allah, performed prayers and thanked Allah again and again. Seeing this the Prophet said "I witness that Allah is one and Almighty."

According to the tradition of Imam as-Sadiq, these people regained their lives on Navroz (21st of March). Allah asked the Prophet to spray water on their bones. He did so and the people became alive again. According to the Prophet, there were about 30,000 people. From that day, on every Navroz, the people of Aazam spray water on each other but they do not know the real reason.²

According to hadith, an atheist accepted Islam by listening to the arguments of Prophet. The Prophet narrated, "A group of The Israelites left their city to save themselves from death. By Allah's order they all were destroyed and died. Their body parts and bones were dispersed. Allah sent Hizqil towards that city. He raised his hands for Dua and they all regained their life."

Imam al-Ridha visited Al-Ma'mun and argued with the Christians that "You believe that 'Isa is Allah because he used to bring the dead back to life. Even Yusha' used to make dead men alive. Then why don't you believe him to be a God? Even Prophet Hizqil made 35,000 dead people alive after 60 years. Why don't you consider him to be a God?" Then he said, "Don't you know that these people were Palestinians which are also discussed in Torah—the Holy Book of Palestinians. Many Palestinians were killed then Allah sent Hizqil to Palestine and by his Dua all became alive." After that Imam al-Ridha narrated the incident that took place when the plague spread and the people left the city to save themselves. He also said that the residents of the city drew a boundary in the city in which the bodies of dead people were kept. By passing that way Hizqil made them alive by the order of Allah.

There is a tradition from Imam al-Baqir that King Kabath decided to send his troops to destroy Jerusalem. The people gathered and went to Hizqil and requested him to relieve them from this trouble. He said, "I will pray to Allah about it in the night." He prayed to Allah and Allah promised to save the people from the cruel king. Allah ordered the Angel of wind to take away the life of the king's troops and they all died. In the morning Hizqil informed his people that the troops have been killed. The people of Palestine came out of the city and saw them dead. After that Hizqil thought to himself that there is no difference between him and Sulayman. He became depressed about the incident and became ill. Then he pleaded to Allah to cure him from that unbearable disease. Allah ordered him to go near the fig tree and apply its juice on his chest. When he applied it, he was cured.³

According to a tradition of Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq, Allah revealed to the Prophet to inform the king that he would expire on a particular day. Hizqil informed the king. When the king heard the news, he came down from his throne, wept and pleaded to Allah to keep him alive until his son grew up and sat on the throne. Allah heard his prayer and asked the Prophet to tell the king that Allah has extended his life by another fifteen years. He said, "O Allah! The people trust me and trust my words. They have never heard a lie from me. When I inform the king about this the people will think that I am a liar." Allah said, "You are my true believer. You must obey and listen to Me. Do as I say and keep on preaching to them."

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1. This is the true incident of The Israelites. They left their houses to save themselves from death, but they died. Again Allah made them alive. No doubt Allah is merciful but many people do not thank him. Shi'ah scholars have also agreed and accepted this).
 2. The people are spraying colored water on each other on Navroz day like the Hindus. This custom is not indicated in any Islamic books. This is strictly prohibited. Allah and his Prophets are displeased with this. Allah, Mercy on them.
 3. Note: From the above discussion it is clear that Hizqil came after Sulayman and he was the third Khalifah of Musa.

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