

Section 1: The Narrative of Moses

Surah Al-Qasas – Verses 1-3

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

طسم

تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ

نَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ نَبَأِ مُوسَىٰ وَفِرْعَوْنَ بِالْحَقِّ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

1. “Ta. Sin. Mim.”

2. “There are verses of the Book (that makes the truth) clear.”

3. “We recite to you some of the story of Moses and Pharaoh in truth, for a people who believe.”

The Qur'an, the eternal miracle of Islam, has been formed of these very Arabic letters. If you think that it is the word of a human, you may bring the like of it, too.

This is the fourteenth Surah of the Qur'an which begins with ‘the abbreviated letter’, and the form Ta.

Sin. Mim., in particular, is for the third and the last time that has been mentioned in the Qur'an.

As we have cited repeatedly, the Abbreviated letters of the Qur'an have different interpretations which we have referred to at the beginning of Suras of Al-Baqarah, 'Al-i-'Imran, and Al-'A'raf.

Moreover, there are a lot of traditions which indicate that the letters Ta. Sin. Mim., in the Qur'an are some abbreviation signs of the attributes of Allah or sacred places, but this does not hinder the famous commentary, which we have repeatedly emphasized on, that Allah desires to make clear this fact to all that this great Heavenly Book which is the source of a great revolution in the history of man and contains the complete program of the happy life of humankind, has been formed of a simple means such as alphabetical letters which everybody can pronounce.

This is the ultimate greatness of the Qur'an that it produces such an extraordinary important product from such simple materials which every body possesses.

Perhaps this is for the same reason that immediately, after these abbreviated letters, it refers to the greatness of the Qur'an and implies that these great verses are the verses of the Book manifest, the Book which is clear itself and makes clear the man's way of happiness both.

It says:

"There are verses of the Book (that makes the truth) clear."

The Qur'anic phrase */kitabun mubin/* has been rendered to '***Protected Tablet***' in some verses of the Qur'an, like Surah Yunus, No. 10, verse 61 where it says:

"...not anything lesser than that or greater but are (recorded) in a Clear Book."

and Surah Hud, No. 11, verse 6 where it says:

"...All is (recorded) in a Clear Book",

but in the verse under discussion, with the frame reference of mentioning */'ayat/* (verses) and the phrase */natlu 'alayka/* (We recite to you) mentioned in the next verse, it means 'Qur'an'.

Here the word Qur'an has been qualified by */mubin/* (clear), and the Arabic word */mubin/*, as understood from lexicon, is used both in the senses of 'transitive' and 'intransitive' case, viz. it means something which is 'clear' and 'makes clear'. So, the Holy Qur'an, with its clear content, makes clear the Truth from untruth, and the true way from false way.

After mentioning this short proposition, referred to in the above, in the next verse the Qur'an points to the life story of Moses and Pharaoh where it says:

"We recite to you some of the story of Moses and Pharaoh in truth, for a people who believe."

The application of the word /min/, here, points to this fact that whatever is mentioned here is a part of the concerning adventurous story the statement of which has been appropriate and necessary.

And the application of /bil haqq/ in the verse points to this fact that whatever has been mentioned here is free from any superstition, old fables, and false matters; and it is a recitation with truth and exact reality.

The application of the phrase /liqaumin yu'minun/ (for a people who believe) is an emphasis on this fact that those believers who were under pressure at that time in Mecca, and the like of them, should reach to this fact, by hearing this story, that how abundant the enemy's power, number of persons, and their forces is, and how the number of believers is apparently little and they are under pressure, the power of Allah is above all and they must not feel weakness in themselves.

The Lord Who caused Moses to be brought up in the bosom of Pharaoh to destroy him; the Lord Who made the oppressed slaves as the governors on the earth, and made the cruel oppressors abject, mean, and annihilated; the Lord Who protected a little baby in the rushing waves of water, and buried thousands of thousand strong people of Pharaoh inside the sea, is able to save you, too.

Yes, the main target of these verses is believers, and this recitation has been accomplished for them. They are the believers who can be respired by it and find their way to the aim among the mass of difficulties.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 4

إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضِعُّ طَائِفَةً مِّنْهُمْ يُذَبِّحُ
أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

4. "Verily Pharaoh exalted himself in the land (of Egypt) and divided its people into sections, weakening a group of them, he slaughtered their sons and spared alive their females, verily he was of the mischief-makers."

The Arabic word /šiya'/ is the plural form of /ši'ah/ which originally means 'following' and 'obeying', but since in a group there are some persons who usually follow some others, this word is used in the sense of a group, too.

The Arabic word, /nisa'/ means 'women', but in this verse it may mean 'daughters' because it has come as the opposite of 'sons'.

The word /fir'aun/ is not the name of a person, but it had been the title of the kings of Rome.

However, in this verse, the Qur'an says:

“Verily Pharaoh exalted himself in the land (of Egypt)...”

Pharaoh was a very weak person who, as the result of ignorance, lost his own personality and went astray so far that he claimed to be deity.

The application of the Arabic word /'al 'ard/ (the land) in the verse is an indication to the land of Egypt and around it, and since a great part of the habituated land of the earth at that time was that area, this term has been used in an absolute form. This is also probable that the existence of Alif and Lam at the beginning of the word /'ard/ is for agreement and points to the land of Egypt.

However, in order to strengthen the bases of his cruel oppression, Pharaoh committed a number of crimes:

At first, Pharaoh tried to produce disunity among people. This was the same policy that had been forming the main foundation of the oppressors in the length of history. The dominion of a little minority over a great majority is often impossible save by the principle of: ‘cast division and govern’.

They have always been afraid of ‘the unity of the word’ and ‘the word of unity’. They terribly feared of the close relation of the rows of people with each other, and for this reason the only way of their protection is ‘class government’, the same thing that Pharaoh and the like have done in any age.

The verse continues saying:

“...and divided its people into sections...”

Yes, Pharaoh divided the people of Egypt into two separate groups: Coptic group and Sebtian group. Coptic ones were the native people of that land, and all the governmental positions, means of comfort, and castles and wealth were under their control.

Sebtians were the emigrant Children of Israel who were in the grips of Coptic ones as slaves, retainers, and handmaidens. Poverty and deprivation had fully surrounded them and they had to do the most labour—some works without enjoying any interest.

(The Arabic word /'ahl/ is used in the verse for this group, because the Children of Israel had lived for a long time in that land and they had verily become the people of it.)

When we hear that for building a grave such as the famous Pyramid called ‘Khofo’ and to be located close to the capital of Egypt, Cairo, the kings of Egypt make one hundred thousand slaves work during twenty years and thousands of them are killed in this event by means of lash or because of the pressure of working, we may guess the whole things.

His second crime was that he oppressed a group of the people of that land.

The verse says:

“...weakening a group of them, he slaughtered their sons and spared alive their females...”

Pharaoh had ordered his men to find the boys born among the Children of Israel and slay them and if the child was a girl they should keep her alive to become a slave maid.

What Did He Want to Do By This Action of His?

It is said that he had seen in his dream that a piece of fire came from Jerusalem and covered all the houses of Egypt. It burnt the houses of Coptic ones but the houses of the Children of Israel remained safe. He wanted the learned people and interpreters of dreams to explain his dream.

They said that there would come out a man from Jerusalem who might have the power of destruction of Egypt and the government of its kings.

It is also said that some of soothsayers told him that there would be born a boy among the Children of Israel who could destroy his government.¹

At last, this event caused that Pharaoh decided to slay the new born boys of the Children of Israel.

This is also probable that the former Divine prophets had delivered the glad tidings of the advent of Moses (as) and his specialties, thus, the people of Pharaoh, being informed of this fact, were terrified and tried to stand against it.²

But the occurrence of the phrase:

“...he slaughtered their sons...”

next to the phrase:

“...weakening a group of them...”

points to another matter.

It implies that, in order to weaken the Children of Israel, the people of Pharaoh had designed this evil plan that they would annihilate the male generation of the Children of Israel who could stand against the people of Pharaoh and fight with them, and to keep their females alive in order that they could serve them, because those girls and women alone had not the power of struggling against them.

Another clear evidence for this statement is Surah Mu'min (Qafir), No. 40, verse 25 which implies that the act of slaying boys and keeping girls alive continued even after the rising of Moses (as).

It says:

“So when he brought to them the truth from Us, they said: ‘Slay the sons of those who believe with him and keep their women alive’; and the struggle of the unbelievers will only come to a

state of perdition.”

The phrase: ‘keep their women alive’ apparently indicates that they wanted to keep the girls and women alive either for that those females might serve them, or for their lusts, or both of them.

In the last sentence of this verse, as a conclusion and also for stating the reason, the Qur’an says:

“...verily he was of the mischief- makers.”

Shortly speaking, the act of the people of Pharaoh was wholly making mischief in the land. His self-superiority was a mischief. Inventing a kind of life with class division in Egypt was another mischief. Torturing the Children of Israel, slaying their sons and using their daughters as slaves was their third mischief. In addition to these, there were many other corruptions in them, too.

It is natural that those who seek their self-superiority are only the protectors of their own interests; and protecting the personal interests never agrees with protecting the social interests, which needs justice, benevolence, and donation. Therefore, whatever it may be, its result is mischief in all dimensions of life.

By the way, the Arabic word /yuʿabbihu/, derived from /ʿabaha/, shows that the behaviour of the people of Pharaoh with the Children of Israel in slaying them was like killing animals.

There have been cited many stories concerning this crime of the people of Pharaoh. Some of the commentators say that Pharaoh had ordered his men to take the pregnant women of the Children of Israel under an exact control, and only the Coptic midwives were allowed to be the mission of their child-birth; so that if the child was a boy they would immediately inform the Egyptian authorities about the event and they would come and take their prey.³

It is not exactly clear that how many of the babies of the Children of Israel were killed in this program. Some have said that its number was about ninety thousand, while some others said it was one hundred thousand.

They imagined that by these horrible crimes, they could hinder the rising of the Children of Israel and the certain accomplishment of the will of Allah.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verses 5-6

وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتَضَعُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ

وَنُمَكِّنَ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنُرِيَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَحْذَرُونَ

5. “And We have intended to bestow (Our) favour upon those who were oppressed in the earth, and to make them leaders (in faith) and make them heirs.”

6. “And to grant them power in the earth, and to show Pharaoh and Haman, and their hosts, what they were dreading from them.”

The worldly government of the oppressed ones and also supporting them in the length of history is Allah’s will. There is no doubt that when Allah’s will is issued for a thing to occur, that thing will certainly be performed and no barrier can hinder it.

The holy Qur’an says:

“Verily when He intends a thing, His command is, ‘Be’, and it is!”⁴

So, in this verse, it says:

“And We have intended to bestow (Our) favour upon those who were oppressed in the earth, and to make them leaders (in faith) and make them heirs.”

Then, in the next verse, it says:

“And to grant them power in the earth, and to show Pharaoh and Haman, and their hosts, what they were dreading from them.”

How much these two verses are expressive and hope-giving! They are expressed in the form of Arabic present tense (which shows the continuation of action) and as a general law so that no one imagines that it belongs only to the oppressed ones of the Children of Israel and the government of Pharaoh.

The verse implies that Pharaoh intended to disperse the Children of Israel and destroy their power and greatness, but Allah (s.w.t.) intended them to become strong and victorious.

Pharaoh wanted that their power could be in the hand of the oppressors forever, but Allah (s.w.t.) intended to give the government to the oppressed ones, and finally it happened exactly the same.

By the way, the application of the Arabic word /minnat/, as we have formerly said, too, is in the sense of ‘to bestow merits and bounties’, and this usage is completely different from the verbal /minnat/ that we reiterate a bounty in order to belittle the opposite party, which is certainly a blameworthy action.

In these two noble verses Allah (s.w.t.) has removed the curtain from His Will concerning the oppressed ones, and states five affairs in this ground which are closely connected to each other.

The first thing is that Allah intends to give them His bounties by saying:

“And We have intended to bestow (Our) favour...”

Another thing is that Allah intends to make them leaders when He says:

“...and to make them leaders (in faith)...”

The third thing is that Allah intends to make them the heirs of the government of the oppressors, where He says:

“...and make them heirs.”

The fourth is that Allah gives them a strong and lasting government:

“And to grant them power in the earth...”

The fifth is that Allah showed their enemies that which they were afraid of and they had mobilized all their forces against them:

“...and to show Pharaoh and Haman, and Their hosts, what they were dreading from them.”

Such is Allah's favour and grace unto the oppressed ones. But who are the oppressed, and what qualities do they have? We will state about them later.

Haman was Pharaoh's famous minister, and he was so influenced in the court of Pharaoh that in the above verse the forces of Egypt are called the forces of Pharaoh and Haman.⁵

By the way, it was said that these verses do not speak about a private, local, and limited program related to the Children of Israel, but they are stating a general law for all centuries and the entire people and generations.

The first abovementioned verse says:

“And We have intended to bestow (Our) favour upon those who were oppressed in the earth, and to make them leaders (in faith) and make them heirs.”

This is a glad-tidings upon the field of triumph of the truth over the untruth and faith over disbelief.

This is a glad-tidings for all the free men who seek for the government of justice and wiping the elements of injustice and cruelty.

An example of the outward existence of Allah's Will was the actual government of the Children of Israel and annihilation of the government of Pharaoh.

And a more complete example of it was the government of the Prophet of Islam (S) and his followers after the advent of Islam. It was the government of the faithful, poor, indigent and purified oppressed people who were always mocked and despised by the Pharaohs of their time and were under their pressure, injustice and cruelty.

At last, by the hand of this very group, Allah opened the gates of the castles of those kings and brought them down of the throne of power and humiliated the tyrants.

And a vaster example of it will be the advent of the government of Justice and Truth all over the world by Hadrat Mahdi (may our souls be sacrificed to him).

These verses are among the verses that clearly give the glad tidings of the advent of such a government. Some Islamic traditions indicate that, commenting on this verse, the Imams of Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) have pointed to this great advent.

We read in Nahj-ul-Balaqah from Ali (as) who said:

“The world will bend towards us after having been refractory as the biting she-camel bends towards its young.”

Then Amir-ul-Mu'minin (as) recited the verse:

“And We have intended to bestow (Our) favour upon those who were oppressed in the earth, and to make them leaders (in faith) and make them heirs.”⁶

Also the same Imam (as), commenting on the above verse, said:

*“They are the progeny of Muhammad (S). Allah will raise their Mahdi after their trouble (and pressure they receive); then He will give them honour and make their enemies despised.”*⁷

Imam Zayn-ul-'Abidin, Ali-ibn-il-Husayn (as), once in a tradition said:

*“By the One Who raised Muhammad (S) legitimately as the giver of glad tidings and warner, verily the righteous of us Ahl-ul-Bayt and their followers are like Moses and his followers. ... (Finally we will be victorious and they will be destroyed and the government of the truth and justice will be ours.)”*⁸

Of course, the worldly government of Mahdi (as) at the end will never hinder the limited Islamic government to be formed before it by the oppressed ones against the oppressors. Then whenever they prepare its conditions the certain promise and Divine Will will be accomplished for them and they will gain this victory.

Some Traditions Upon the Advent of Mahdi (as)

Fadl-ibn-Shathan narrates from Hassan-ibn-Mahbub, from Malik-ibn-'Atiyyih, from 'Abu-Hamzah Thabit-ibn-'Abi-Safiyyih Dinar, from Imam Baqir (as) who said:

“The night before 'Ashura Imam Husayn (as) delivered a great sermon for his companions and informed them that whoever was with him would become martyr and he (as) let them go out of that land and would rescue themselves if they desired. Some of them said earnestly that they might never separate

from him.

Then he delivered a sermon again and said:

“I give you glad tidings of Paradise. By Allah, after we become martyr, we will remain (in the bounty of Allah) how long He desires. Then Allah will bring you and us out at the time of the advent of Our Qa’im. Then he will take vengeance from the oppressors. Then you and I will see them in chains, yokes, and kinds of punishment and tortures.”

Some one asked:

“O son of the Prophet of Allah! Who is your Qa’im?”

He (as) said:

‘He is the seventh son of my son, Muhammad–ibn–Ali, Al–Baqir, and he is Allah’s proof, the son of Hassan–ibn–Ali–ibn–Muhammad–ibn–Ali–ibn–Musa–ibn–Ja’far–ibn–Muhammad–ibn–Ali my son, and he is the one who will be absent for a long time, then he will reappear and fill the earth with equity and justice as it was filled with tyranny and injustice.’⁹

In this tradition Imam Husayn (as) has spoken about his return to this world as well as the martyrs of Karbala.

Shaykh Hurr ‘Amili has narrated the last part of this tradition from the book entitled ‘Ithbat–ur–Raj’ah, by Fadl–ibn–Shathan.¹⁰

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“The first person to whom the earth (grave) will cleave and he returns to the world is Husayn–ibn Ali (as).”¹¹

Imam Baqir (as) said to Bukayr–ibn–’A’yun:

“Verily the Messenger of Allah (S) and Ali (as) will return (to this world).”¹²

Imam Husayn (as) said:

“I am the first person to whom the earth will cleave and I will come out of it and this is contemporary with the return of Amir–ul–Mu’minin and the raising up of our Qa’im.”¹³

Imam Sadiq (as) said:

“Accompany with Qa’im, there will come out twenty seven persons from behind Kufah, fifteen ones of them are from the people of Moses (as), those who used to guide (to the Truth) and called (people) to justice...”¹⁴

Imam Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali (as) said:

"I asked the Messenger of Allah:

'O' Messenger of Allah! Is Mahdi from us, the progeny of Muhammad, or from other than us?'

Then the Messenger of Allah said:

*'But he is of us with whom Allah will end the religion as He began it with us, and by us people will be delivered from disturbances the same as they were delivered from polytheism; and by us they will be brethren after the sedition of the enemy as they became brethren after the enmity of polytheism.'*¹⁵

Abu Sa'id-il-Khudri narrates from the Prophet (S) that verily he said:

*"At the time of Mahdi, my Ummah will be favoured a bounty the like of which they had never been favoured. The sky will gradually send (bounties) down on them and the earth will not restrain anything of its plants but it brings them out."*¹⁶

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

*"Mahdi (as) will come out while there will be a cloud above his head in which a caller will call: 'This is Mahdi, the viceroy of Allah; then do follow him'."*¹⁷

By the way, the great learned Hasan-ibn-Solayman Al-Hilly has written a book upon the virtues of Ahl-ul-Bayt (as), in which he has recorded many narrations about Raj'at (returning to this world), and the Late 'Allamah Majlisi has stated around two hundred explicit traditions widely transmitted from the immaculate Imams and said:

"More than forty notables of Shi'ah, such as: Shaykh Tusi, Shaykh Mufid, Sayyid Murtada 'Alam-ul-Huda, Shaykh Saduq, Kulayni, and the like have referred them in their valuable works."

He says:

"If the traditions of Raj'at were not widely transmitted, there could not be any one to claim widely transmitted of."

Also The Late Tabarsi in Majma'-ul-Bayan, when discussing Raj'at, says:

"It has been narrated widely transmitted from the Imams of Ahl-ul-Bayt that at the time of raising of Mahdi (as) Allah will cause some of his friends and followers to return to this world, who had formerly passed away, in order to help him and get the reward of his assistant and see his victorious government and become happy.

Allah will also bring back some of his enemies to be taken vengeance and be killed as punishment, and

to be involved of being abject and contemptible by seeing Mahdi's glory and grandeur."¹⁸

For proving Raj'at, the Late Shaykh-i-Tusi, in his valuable commentary, Tibyan, has reasoned to many holy verses of the Qur'an, and then he has claimed that some of the traditions of Raj'at are widely transmitted.

The Late Shaykh Hurr 'Amily, by means of different statements, has also proved that the traditions of Raj'at are widely transmitted. There have been recorded five hundred and twenty traditions in the valuable book entitled "Iqath" concerning Raj'at.¹⁹

Upon the explanation of Tahthib, the Late Muhaddith Jaza'iri has stated that he had seen six hundred and twenty traditions about Raj'at.²⁰

However, the abovementioned matters have been taken from the book entitled: Raj'at-i-Daulat-i-Karimeh Khandan-i-Wahy, pp. 141, 142.

Who The Oppressed and Oppressors Are

We know that the Arabic term /mustad'af/ is derived from the word /da'f/ (weakness). But, here, it does not mean someone who is weak, unable, and not having power, it means someone who has powers both in actuality and potentiality but he has been under serious pressure from the side of the unjust and tyrants so that he is in weakness, chains, and yokes.

He always tries to break the chains in order to become free, and send the oppressors away so that he can establish the right religion and justice everywhere.

Allah has promised such a group that He will help them and give them the government of the earth. This promise is not for those shiftless and coward people who are not ready even to make a shout, let alone that they enter the field of struggle and be sacrificed.

That day, the Children of Israel could become the heirs of the government of Pharaohs, too, when they supported their leader, Moses (as), and mobilized their forces in a single row. They completed the remaining faith that they had inherited from their grand father Abraham (as) with the invitation of Moses (as), and after wiping out superstitions from their thought, they became ready to raise.

Of course, there are various kinds of Mustad'af (oppressed). They are ideological, cultural, economical, ethical and political oppressed. That which the Qur'an has emphasized on more, are the political and ethical oppressed.

No doubt the arrogant tyrants, in order to strengthen the bases of their tyrannical policy, at first try to mentally and culturally weaken their preys and to economic weakness so that power and ability may not remain for them and they do not think about raising and taking the rein of government in their hand.

In five occurrences of the holy Qur'an the oppressed are referred to in which the words are about the believers who were under the pressure of the oppressors.

In one place, the Qur'an invites the believers to struggle in the way of Allah and helping the Faithful oppressed ones.

It says:

“And what has happened to you that you should not fight in the way of Allah and for the weak among men, women, and children who say: ‘Our Lord! Take us out of this town whose people are oppressors, and appoint for us from You guardian, and appoint for us from You helper!’”²¹

Only in one instance the Qur'an speaks about the ones who are unjust and cooperate with disbelievers while they claim that they are oppressed but the Qur'an negates their claim, where it says:

“... ‘In what state were you?’ They will reply: ‘We were oppressed in the land’. (The angels) will say: ‘Was not Allah’s land vast so that you could have migrated therein?’...”

But since they did not so, their abode is Hell.²²

Yet, the Qur'an has, however, supported the oppressed everywhere and has mentioned them fairly and has considered them the under-pressure-believers who are strugglers and are in the grace of Allah.

The General Style of All Oppressors

It was not only Pharaoh who, for the captivity of the Children of Israel, slaughtered their men and kept their women alive to be as maid servants, but all the tyrants of history used to do like that and caused the active powers to be useless by any means they could.

Wherever they could not break the men, they broke their manliness. They stopped the spirit of bravery, courage and faith in them by spreading means of corruption, narcotic materials, expansion of indecency, sexual libertinage, the development of liquor and gambling, and kinds of unsafe amusement so that they could continue their self-interest government with peace of mind.

But the Divine prophets, specially the Prophet of Islam (S), tried to awaken the inactive powers of the young persons; and even taught manliness to women and set them in the row of men against the oppressors.

The evidences of these two programs are so manifest in the history of the past, and nowadays in all Islamic countries, that there is no need of mentioning them.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 7

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ فَإِذَا خِفْتِ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِي وَلَا تَحْزَنِي إِنَّا رَادُّوهُ إِلَيْكَ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ

7. ***“And We inspired unto the mother of Moses, saying: ‘Give him suck, then when you fear for him, cast him into the River and do not fear nor grieve, for We will return him unto you and make him one of the apostles’.”***

Pharaoh had been told that in that year a child would be born that if he could grow up he might destroy him. He ordered that all the newborn children should be killed. But when Moses was born, Allah inspired his mother to give him suck.

Then she should put him inside a box and cast the box into the sea. In this noble verse, there are two orders, two prohibitions, and two glad tidings unto Moses’ mother.

The two orders are:

“Give him suck”

and

“Cast him into the River”.

The two prohibitions are:

“Do not fear”

“Nor grieve”.

And the two glad tidings are:

“We will return him unto you”

and

“Make him one of the apostles”.

The Arabic word /*tauf*/ (fear) is used for a probable danger, and the Qur’anic word */huzn/* is applied for a certain anxiety.²³ The objective of the term /*yamm*/ is the Nile River in Egypt which is called ‘sea’ because of its greatness and largeness. The castle of Pharaoh had been built on its bank.

When Allah desires it, man’s enemy becomes his refuge, either:

“Then the people of Pharaoh picked him up (from the River).”²⁴

Therefore, in order to illustrate a lively example of the triumphant of the oppressed over the oppressors, in this verse Allah starts the story of Moses and Pharaoh. It specially explains the parts in which Moses is in the weakest states and Pharaoh is in his mightiest circumstances, so that it shows the triumph of the Will of Allah over the will of tyrants in its best form.

It says:

“And We inspired unto the mother of Moses, saying: ‘Give him suck, then when you fear for him, cast him into the River and do not fear nor grieve, for We will return him unto you and make him one of the apostles.’”

This short holy verse contains two commandments, two prohibitions, and two glad tidings which are a summary of a great story full of adventures, the extract of it is as follows:

The system of Pharaoh had designed a vast plan for killing the ‘new born boys’ of the Children of Israel, and even the midwives of Pharaoh were taking control over the pregnant women of the Children of Israel.

In this course, one of the midwives had friendship with Moses’ mother. (The delivery of Moses performed secretly and the signs of pregnancy were not so apparent in his mother.) When she felt that the childbirth was approaching, she went to meet her friend, the midwife. She told her that she had a child in her womb and she was in need of her kindness and friendship.

When Moses was born, a mysterious light came out from his eyes, in a manner that the midwife’s body trembled, and she felt a light of love in the depth of her heart for him, so that it brightened all parts of her heart.

The midwife turned to the mother of Moses and said:

“I had decided to inform the birth of this child to the government in order that the officials come and kill this boy (and I take my tip), but what can I do that I feel an intensive love from this child inside my heart, so that I do not wish that he receives even the slightest harm. Take care of him properly. I think that at last our final enemy is this child.”

When the midwife came out from the house of Moses’ mother, some of the spies of the government saw her and decided to enter the house. Moses’ sister informed the event to the mother and she became so hasty that she did not know what to do.

In the midst of this intensive fear that she could not think at all, she wrapped the child in a piece of cloth and threw him into the oven. Then the men of government came in and, after searching everywhere, they found nothing there save an oven full of fire.

They began making investigations from the mother of Moses. They asked what that midwife was doing there. She answered them that she was her friend and had come to see her. The spies became disappointed and went out.

Moses' mother came to her senses and asked Moses' sister where Moses was. She answered she did not know. Suddenly a cry was heard from the inside of the oven. The mother hastened toward the oven when she saw Allah had made the fire cold and safe for him, (the same Lord Who made the fire of Numrud cold and safe for Abraham). She took out her child safe and sound from the oven.

Still the mother was not in security because the officials were searching here and there and, hearing the sound of a body would be enough for a great danger to happen.

Now a Divine inspiration enlightened the heart of Moses's mother. It was an inspiration that apparently invited her to a dangerous action, but, however, she felt peace from it.

She realized that it was a Divine mission that she should fulfil it in any case. She decided to accomplish the content of this inspiration and cast her newborn child into the Nile River.

She went to an Egyptian carpenter, (a carpenter who was one of Coptic people). She asked him to make a small box for her. The carpenter asked her for what purpose she wanted that box with those qualities.

The mother of Moses, being unable to tell a lie, disclosed her plan to the carpenter and said that she was from the Children of Israel and she needed the box for her newborn son to hide him in it.

The carpenter intended to inform the event to the cruel informers. When he went to them he became dumb because of the horror he felt in his heart. He wanted to communicate the matter to the informers by only making signs, but they took his deeds as a mockery and, beating him, drove him away.

When the carpenter came out he found himself to be all right. He went again to the informers and the previous event happened to him once more. Then he was convinced that there was a Divine secret in it, and he made the box for Moses' mother and gave it to her.

Perhaps it was in the early morning, when the people of Egypt were still asleep, that the mother of Moses brought her baby with the box beside the Nile River. She sucked him for the last time, and then she put him in that special box and let it move on the water like a ship.

Soon the waves of the River took the box far from the bank. The mother was standing there, watching the scene. In a short moment she felt that as if her heart was separated from her and was moving on the waves. Had not the grace of Allah made her heart calm, she would have cried and every thing was disclosed!

Now, we may see what happened in the palace of Pharaoh as stated in the news. The only child Pharaoh had was a young daughter. She was suffering from a serious sickness. He wanted the

physicians to cure her, but he got no result from them. He betook to the soothsayers.

They said:

“O Pharaoh! We have foresighted that from the inside of this sea there will come a human into this castle that if the body of this patient be rubbed with his saliva, she will be cured.”

Pharaoh and his wife, 'Asiyah, were waiting for such an event. One day suddenly a box, which was moving on the waves of the River, attracted their attention. He ordered his men to go immediately toward the box and take it and bring it to him to see what was inside it.

The mysterious box was put in front of Pharaoh. Those who were around him could not open it. Yes, the box of the safety of Moses should be opened by the hand of Pharaoh himself, and so it happened.

When the eyes of Pharaoh's wife were faced with the eyes of the baby, a light brightened the depths of her hearts and all those who were there, and Pharaoh's wife in particular, heartily loved him; and when the saliva of this newborn baby caused the sick person to be cured, this love was increased.²⁵

The rest of this story is shortly explained by the Holy Qur'an, which we refer to in the following pages.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 8

فَالْتَقَطَهُ آلُ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوًّا وَحَزَنًا إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا كَانُوا خَاطِئِينَ

8. “Then the people of Pharaoh picked him up (from the River) that he might be unto them an enemy and a (cause of their) grief; verily Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts were sinners.”

When anxieties and difficulties often rush, Allah is the best guide and support for the believers.

In the way of performing the commandments of Allah we must neither afraid of anything nor be anxious of any problem.

The Qur'an says:

“Then the people of Pharaoh picked him up (from the River) that he might be unto them an enemy and a (cause of their) grief...”

The Qur'anic word */altaqata/* is derived from the word */iltiqat/* which originally means: ‘reaching to something without any effort and endeavour’. And it is also for this reason that the lost things that one finds, in Arabic, are called */luqatah/*.

It is evident that the men of Pharaoh did not take the box of this baby from the waves of the river with the purpose that they would foster their enemy in their own lap, but as the Pharaoh's wife said, they wanted to take 'a refreshment of eye' for themselves, but finally it became as it happened.

The delicacy of this meaning is in this very fact that Allah intends to show His power that how He made this group, who had mobilized all their forces to kill the boys of the Children of Israel, to take care of and foster eagerly the some one for whom they applied all those cruelties in order that they could vanish him.

However, the Arabic phrase: /'alu fir'aun/ (the people of Pharaoh), used in the verse, shows that not only one person but a group of the people of Pharaoh participated in taking the box from the water, and this is an evidence for the fact that they were waiting for such a thing.

At the end of the verse, the Qur'an adds:

"...verily Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts were sinners."

They were sinners in every thing. What a sin is greater than this that they had left out the path of truth and justice, and founded the foundation of their government on vice, injustice, tyranny, and polytheism. And what a sin is clearer than this that they killed thousands of children to destroy Moses, but Allah put him in their own hands to take him, foster him and bring up their own enemy.

Raqib in Mufradat says:

"There is a difference between the Arabic words Ixatil and Imuxtil. The term Ixatil is used for the one who begins a job that he can not afford doing it and goes a wrong way, while the term Imuxtil is used for a person who begins a job that he can afford it very well, but it happens that he makes mistake and wastes it."

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 9

وَقَالَتِ امْرَأَةُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرَّتْ عَيْنٌ لِّي وَلَكَ لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ عَسَىٰ أَن يَنْفَعَنَا أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُ وَلَدًا
وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

9. "And Pharaoh's wife said: '(He will be) a joy of the eye for me and for you; do not slay him; may be he will profit us, or we may take him for a son; but they did not perceive (what they were doing)."

The women have an effective function in social affairs. (Pharaoh's wife changed the decision of Pharaoh and neither of his dignity, sovereignty, and wealth could hinder her.)

In Moses' life, a few women had an important fundamental function. They were Moses' mother, Moses' sister, Pharaoh's wife and the wife of Moses. In this verse, the function of the wife of Pharaoh in preventing him from killing Moses is stated.

The verse says:

“And Pharaoh’s wife said: ‘(He will be) a joy of the eye for me and for you; do not slay him; may be he will profit us, or we may take him for a son...”

It seems that by the face of the baby and other signs, including putting him in the box and leaving him on the waves of Nile, Pharaoh had found out that this baby belonged to the Children of Israel.

Suddenly the thought of raising up of a man from the Children of Israel and the destruction of his kingdom by his hand came into his mind and he wanted that his criminal law upon the new-born children of the Children of Israel should be executed for this baby, too.

The flatterers around Pharaoh also encouraged this kind of thought and said that there was no reason that the law might not be executed upon him.

But 'Asiyah, Pharaoh's wife, who had no son and her pure heart, which was not of the kind of that of the people of Pharaoh's court, had been the center of the love of this new-born boy, stood against all of them, and since in these kinds of family debates women often win, she became victorious there, too.

And if the event of the Pharaoh's daughter, who was cured before them, is also added to it, the triumph of 'Asiyah in this conflict will be made more clear.

But, at the end of the verse, the Holy Qur'an, in a short expressive sentence, says:

“...but they did not perceive (what they were doing).”

Yes, they did not know that the Divine operative command and the invincible Will of Allah (s.w.t.) was upon this fact that this baby should be grown up in the most important center of danger and no one had the ability and power of opposing with this Divine Will.

Yes, the providence and power of the Almighty is not only in that if He wishes to destroy a powerful and tyrannical people He sends the forces of heaven and the earth for their destruction.

Showing power is in that He appoints the arrogant tyrants themselves as the destructive of them, and influences in their hearts and thoughts so effectively that they eagerly gather the fuel-wood by the fire of which they must be burnt; or they build a prison wherein they must die; or they set up a gallows-tree on which they must be put to death.

The state of the arrogant powerful people of Pharaoh was also as this, and Moses' fosterage and deliverance, in all stages, were done by their own hand:

Moses' midwife was a Coptic woman.

The maker of the deliverance box of Moses was a Coptic carpenter.

Those who took the box from the waves of Nile were among 'The people of Pharaoh'.

The person who could open the door of the box was Pharaoh himself or his wife, 'Asiyah'.

And, finally, the secure, peaceful, and educational place of Moses, who became brave and Pharaoh-breaker was that very palace of Pharaoh! And this is the providence.

Surah Al-Qasas - Verses 10-11

وَأَصْبَحَ فُؤَادُ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ فَارِغًا ۚ إِن كَادَتْ لَتُبْدِي بِهِ لَوْلَا أَن رَّبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ قَلْبِهَا لِتَكُونَ
مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

وَقَالَتْ لِأُخْتِهِ قُصِّيهِ ۖ فَبَصَّرَتْ بِهِ ۖ عَنْ جُنْبٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

10. "And the heart of the mother of Moses became void; she was about to disclose it had We not strengthened her heart so that she might be of the believers (in Our promises)."

11. "And she said to the sister of (Moses): 'Follow him.' So she watched him from afar while they did not perceive."

The peace of hearts is in the authority of Allah (s.w.t.).

The important thing before Allah is Faith, and in this field, men and women are equal for Him. And the peace of mind and rest of heart are among the signs of Faith.

Moses' mother sent her child on the waves of Nile, but after this event there appeared an intensive fear in her heart. The vacant place of her newborn baby, which had filled her heart, was completely sensible.

It was almost nigh for her to shout and cast out the secrets hidden in her heart.

It was nigh that she might cry and moan for the separation of her son.

But the grace of Allah (s.w.t.) was showered over her and the heart of Moses' mother was empty of everything except the remembrance of her son; and if Allah had not strengthened her heart by the light of Faith and hope, she might have disclosed the matter.

The verse says:

“And the heart of the mother of Moses became void; she was about to disclose it had We not strengthened her heart so that she might be of the believers (in Our promises).”

The Arabic word /Fariq/ means ‘empty’, and here the purpose of it is that it became void from all things save the remembrance of Moses. Some commentators have taken it with the sense of being empty from sorrow and grief; or empty from inspiration and the glad tidings that she was already given; but regarding the sentence of the holy verse, these commentaries do not seem correct.

This is completely natural that a mother, who separates her child from herself in the abovementioned manner, forgets everything but her child and goes into such a mood that, without considering the dangers that may threaten both her and her child, cries and reveals the secrets hidden in her heart.

But the Lord, Who has assigned this heavy mission for this kind and compassionate mother, strengthens her heart so firmly that she believes in the Divine promises and knows that her child is in the protection of Allah and, at last, He will return him to her and he will become a prophet.

The Arabic word /rabatna/ is derived from /rabata/ which originally means: ‘to tie an animal, or the like, somewhere to be assured that it is secure in its place’.

That is why the site of this kind of animals is called ‘Ribat’, and afterward it has been used in a vaster scope of meaning, as: ‘to guard, to strengthen, and to get firmness’; and the purpose of /rabatna ‘ala qalbiha/ in this verse is ‘strengthening the heart of this mother’, so that she believes in the Divine inspiration and tolerates this great event.

The next verse implies that Moses’ mother regained her calmness as the result of Allah’s grace, but she wanted to know the circumstance of her child.

Therefore, the verse says:

“And she said to the sister of (Moses): ‘Follow him.’...”

The Qur’anic term */qussiyuhul/* is derived from /qass/ which means ‘seeking for the traces of something’. The Arabic word /qissih/ is used in the sense of ‘story’ because it follows the different news and events.

Moses’ sister fulfilled the command of the mother and watched the affairs from a considerable distance.

The verse continues saying:

“...So she watched him from afar while they did not perceive.”

Some commentators have said that several special servants of Pharaoh had brought the child out of the castle in order to search for a nurse for him, and it was just this time that Moses’ sister saw her brother

from a distance.

But the first commentary seems more fitting.

Thus, after that when the mother of Moses returned to her own home, Moses' sister was in the bank of Nile, watching the events from afar, and by her own eyes she saw the manner how some of the people of Pharaoh took him off the water and rescued him from the horrible danger which was threatening him.

There have also been delivered some other commentaries for the Qur'anic sentence: *lhum la yaš'urun!* (*they did not perceive*).

The Late Tabarsi, particularly, believes that the repetition of this sentence in the previous verses and here about Pharaoh may point to this fact that he who was so abundantly unaware of the affairs, how did he claim divinity? How did he want to fight against the Will of Allah?

Surah Al-Qasas - Verse 12

وَحَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَرَاضِعَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَقَالَتْ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ يَكْفُلُونَهُ لَكُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُ نَاصِحُونَ

12. "And We already forbade on him all foster mothers ere until (his sister came up and) said: 'Shall I guide you unto the people of a house who will take care of him for you and they will be benevolent to him?'"

The Arabic term /maradi'/ is the plural form of /murdi'/ that means 'the woman who gives suck at the breast', and 'wet-nurse'.

If Allah does not wish something, a large system such as that of Pharaoh is impotent to supply it as the food of a baby, either.

The most elementary things, such as sucking milk of a sucking child is also done by Allah's Will, and if He does not desire, it will not happen:

(And We already forbade).

When an arrogant person was discouraged, he might easily accept the guidance and suggestion of even an unknown fellow, too.

However, the will of Allah was that this child would return to his mother soon and make her heart calm.

So, the verse says:

“And We already forbade on him all foster mothers ere...”

It is natural that, after a few hours, a newborn child, such as Moses, becomes hungry and cries impatiently. They had to search a foster mother for him, in particular that the queen of Egypt had bent her heart upon him and loved him very much.

The men of Pharaoh began searching everywhere to find a foster mother for the child, but it was surprising that he did not suck milk from any foster mother.

Perhaps the child was frightened by their features, or the flavor of their milk was not acquainted with his taste, and it was unpleasant to him. As if he wanted to throw off himself from the bosom of those foster mothers. This was that very divine genetic prohibition that He had forbidden all foster mothers on him.

Every moment, the child became hungrier and more impatient. He was ceaselessly crying and his sound was heard in the castle and caused the queen’s heart to tremble.

The officials intensified their efforts. Suddenly they met in a not so distanced place a girl who said that she knew a family who could take care of that newborn child and they would be benevolent to him.

The verse continues saying:

“...until (his sister came up and) said: ‘Shall I guide you unto the people of a house who will take care of him for you and they will be benevolent to him?’”

She implied that she knew a woman from the Children of Israel whose chest was full of milk and she had a heart full of affection. She had lost her child and was ready to undertake giving suck to the baby of the castle.

The officials become happy and took the mother of Moses to Pharaoh’s castle. When the child smelt the mother’s smell, he eagerly pressed her nipple in his mouth and he got a new life from her milk.

The light of joy was seen in the eyes of the audience, specially those officials who, after a tiresome research, had gained their aim and were happier than others. Pharaoh’s wife could not hide her happiness from others for this event.

Perhaps they told the foster where she was that they sought everywhere for her. They wished she had come sooner. They admired her and also her milk which was a resolver of their difficulty.

Some Islamic narrations indicate that when Moses accepted the nipple of the mother, Haman, the minister of Pharaoh, said:

“I think you are the real mother of this child. Why did he accept only your breast from among those many women?”

She said:

“O king! It is because I am a sweet-smelling woman and my milk is also very sweet. Up to now there has been no child given to me but he (she) has accepted my nipple.”

The audience verified her words and each of them gave her a precious present.²⁶

Imam Baqir (as) in a tradition said:

“It did not last longer than three days that Allah returned the baby to his mother.”²⁷

Some have said that this Divine genetic prohibition of the milk of others for Moses was that Allah did want that this great prophet drink the milk which was polluted with unlawful food, polluted with properties gained by larceny, crime, bribery, and usurping other’s rights.

He should drink a pure milk such as the milk of his mother so that he could stand against the pollutions and fight against the impious ones.

Surah Al-Qasas – Verse 13

فَرَدَدْنَاهُ إِلَىٰ أُمِّهِ كَيْ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا وَلَا تَحْزَنَ ۗ وَلِتَعْلَمَ أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

13. “Thus did We restore him to his mother that her eye might be refreshed, and that she might not grieve, and that she might know that the promise of Allah is true, but most of them do not know.”

Never do the Divine promises fail, but the majority of people are those who see only the surface of the things and have no understanding of the wise secrets and devise plans of Allah. Of course, for the people of Truth the aims are important, not the titles.

Finally, the child was returned to the bosom of the mother, though this time the mother was employed as a foster mother. But the title is no important, the return of the child was important.

Therefore, this verse says:

“Thus did We restore him to his mother that her eye might be refreshed, and that she might not grieve, and that she might know that the promise of Allah is true, but most of them do not know.”

There arises a question here: Did the people of Pharaoh give the child to the mother to suck him and during this time, every day, or now and then, she had to bring the child into the castle of Pharaoh in

order that the Queen of Egypt might have a new visit from him? Or did they keep the child inside the court and Moses' mother came there in special times and sucked him?

There is not any clear evidence for either of these two probabilities, but the first one seems more fitting.

And also, was Moses transported to the castle of Pharaoh after the end of his sucking period? Or did he usually keep his relation with the mother and his family and used to have familiar intercourse between these two?

Some commentators have said that after the sucking period she gave him to Pharaoh and his wife, 'Asiyah, and Moses was fostered by them and in their hands.

Here there are cited some other stories about the childish but expressive acts of Moses unto Pharaoh that mentioning all of them takes a long space.

But this sentence that, after that Moses was appointed to prophethood, Pharaoh told him:

"... 'Did we not cherish you as a child among us, and you tarried among us for (many) years of your life?'"

shows that Moses had lived in the castle of Pharaoh for a length of time and had remained there for some years.

It is understood from the commentary of Ali-ibn-'Ibrahim that Moses remained in the castle of Pharaoh with utmost honour until the period of his puberty, but his theistic statements made Pharaoh very inconvenient, so much so that he decided to kill Moses.

Moses left the castle and entered the city where he confronted the conflict of two men: one from the Coptic people and the other was from among the Children of Israel.²⁸

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1. Majma'ul-Bayan, Vol. 7, P. 239, and Fakhr-i-Razi, in Tafsir-i-Kabir, following the verse.
 2. Tafsir-i-Fakhr-i-Razi, following the verse
 3. Tafsir-i-Kabir-i-Fakhr-i-Razi, following the verse
 4. Surah Yasin, No. 36, verse 82
 5. More explanation about Haman, Allah willing, will be given in the commentary of verse 38 in the current Surah.
 6. Nahj-ul-Balaqah, saying No. 209
 7. Qiybat by Shaykh Saduq, according to Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 3, P. 110
 8. Majma'ul-Bayan, following the verse
 9. Mokhtasar 'Ithbat-ur-Raj'ah, seventh tradition; and Kifayat-ul-Mahdi, P. 50
 10. 'Ithbat-ul-Hudat, Vol. 3, P. 569
 11. Mizan-ul-Hikmah, Vol. 4, P. 1982
 12. Ibid
 13. Ibid
 14. Ibid

15. 'Iqd-ul-Durar, P. 142
16. 'Iqd-ul-Durar, P. 169
17. Kashf-ul-Qummah, Vol. 2, P. 485
18. Majma'ul-Bayan, Vol. 7, P. 234; and Tafsir-us-Safi, Vol. 4, P. 76
19. Kitab-ul-'Iqaz, P. 31 and P. 430
20. Bayan-ul-Furqan, Vol. 5, P. 288
21. Surah An-Nisa', No. 4, verse 75
22. Ibid, verse 97
23. The Commentary of Al-Mizan
24. The current Surah, verse 8
25. This part of the narration is said by Ibn-'Abbas, recorded in the commentary of Fakhr-i-Razi, and there or also other narrations recorded in the commentary of 'Abul-Futuh and Majma'-ul-Bayan.
26. The Commentary by Fakhr-i-Razi, Vol. 221, P. 231
27. Tafsir-us-Safi, Vol. 3 under verse 40 from Surah Ta-Ha
28. The Commentary of Ali-Ibn-'Ibrahim, according to Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, Vol. 4, P. 117

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