

Surah al-Kahf (continued)

This juzz starts with the story of Dhul Qarnayn. There is difference of opinion on who this person was in history. Some people have suggested that this refers to Alexander, however Alexander does not fit the description of DhulQarnayn who was righteous, God fearing and a just ruler. Regardless, the main aim behind these stories is for its reader to learn a lesson and reflect.

Dhul Qarnayn was given:

- Material ability and might.
- Spritual strength and emaan.
- A vast area that he conquered.
- Reign from one far end of the East to the far end of the West.

During his conquests he passed by a tribe of people who lived in a valley, and were under constant threat of attack from a beastly people referred to as 'yajooj majooj'. On their request he built a great wall to protect them from such attack. However, when Allah wills this wall will be destroyed and 'yajooj majooj' will be released.

Dhul Qarnain despite having material resources did not rely on them, and instead rightly relied on Allah. However, the surah is highlighting the material mind set which relies solely on material ability, and the greatest representative of this materialistic mindset as mentioned by the prophet will be the dajjal.

The end of the surah addresses such materialists:

"So whoever would hope for the meeting with his Lord - let him do righteous work and not associate in the worship of his Lord anyone."

Surah Maryam

This is a Makkan surah consisting of 98 ayaat. It also contains details of tawheed, risalah, and akhirah. The surah mentions the stories of a few prophets.

The Story of Zakariyyah

Firstly, it mentions the story of prophet Zakariyyah alaihis salaam. He was 120 years old, and his wife was 98 years of age, when he prayed to Allah for a son, highlighting three things:

- I am very weak.
- I am very hopeful, as you have always responded to my prayer.
- I intend to benefit the deen through my dua.

He asked for a son with whom Allah and the people would be pleased. So he was granted a son by the name of Yahya who was a saleh, abid and zahid, and was made a prophet.

The Story of Eesa ibn Maryam

The birth of Eesa was a greater miracle than the birth of Yahya, as Eesa had no father. This surah gives a detailed account of the story of Eesa. It tells us that Maryam alaihas salaam would be occupied in worship as she secluded herself for worship in the Western part of Bayt al Maqdas.

Then angel Gibraeel came to her and breathed into her the spirit of Eesa. She then left the town closer to the time of the birth of Eesa, in order to deliver.

When she returned with Eesa, the Bani Israeel started to accuse her of indecency. Under Allah's instructions, she remained silent and pointed towards the newly born baby. Then by the command of Allah, the baby spoke and his first words were "I am the servant of Allah". He then continued to introduce himself by saying:

- I am a servant of Allah, not a God or the offspring of God.
- I have been given prophethood and revelation.
- Allah has made me blessed, and a means of goodness and mercy for mankind.
- I have been given a Shariah, especially prayer and zakah.
- I am obedient to my parents and care for my near relatives.
- I have been given the glad tidings of peace in this world and the hereafter.

The Story of Ibraheem

The subject matter of the surah then turns towards the story of Ibraheem alaihis salaam. He was born to a mushrik father who would sculpt idols. The story teaches us that when you call to the truth and you remain steadfast on this route, then:

- Allah showers his blessings.
- A great nation came from his progeny.
- Many prophets, righteous and especially the last Prophet sal Allahu alaihi wa sallam, came from his lineage.
- Every nation feels proud to associate itself with him.

The story tells us that once he was made a prophet, he initiated his mission from home, by calling his close relatives to Tawheed. He addressed his father with utmost respect, despite his harsh treatment. His father responded by threatening him and eventually, prophet Ibraheem alaihis salaam migrated from Iraq to Shaam. Allah compensated him by giving him righteous offspring in the form of the prophets Ismaeel, Ishaq and Yaqoob, alaihim us salaam.

It then mentions the fact that the followers of Musa, Haroon, Ismaeel and Idress, neglected their prayer and followed their desires. The sura also mentions the hereafter and its punishment.

The surah ends by telling us that for those people who will be conscious of Allah's pleasure and will work hard to obey Him, then Allah will put the love of these people into the hearts of mankind, which is in fact a manifestation of the love that Allah has for these obedient servants.

Surah Taha

This is a Makkan surah consisting of 135 ayaat. The story of Musa which was briefly mentioned in the previous surah, has been given in more detail in this surah. However, the story has not been given in chronological order, and the wisdom behind doing so could be so that the reader does not feel any monotony, and also, to provide the reader an opportunity to reflect on the lessons, from a different angle.

The surah starts with one of the names of the Prophet i.e. TaHa and that Allah does not want to put him to hardship by revealing this Qur'an. The reason for Allah addressing the Prophet in this manner, was due to the great lengths and efforts that the Prophet would go to, in order to recite and then to convey the message of the Qur'an to the people. The Prophet would spend part of the night standing reciting the Quran, to the extent that his feet would swell. So Allah is reassuring him that he can only invite people, and that, he does not have authority over them. Allah also consoles the Prophet sal Allahu alaihi wa sallam by telling him that He is his helper and He does not abandon his righteous servants.

The surah then gives a detailed account of the story of Musa alaihis salaam and the special blessings that he received:

- Protection from Pharoah and his army, when they would kill all new born boys.
- To put his love in the hearts of people, so they would feel affectionate towards him.
- Special arrangements for his upbringing.
- Being returned to his mother during infancy.
- Being saved from being killed for accidentally killing a Coptic man.
- Being given prophethood on the way back from Madyan.
- Being honoured with speaking to Allah directly.

The end of the surah relates the result of turning away from the message i.e on the day of Qiyamah these people will be punished.

There is also mention of the fact that humans are intrinsically 'forgetful'. This is elaborated through the mention of Adam alaihis salaam.

The people who ignore the signs are mentioned as follows:

"And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed life, and We will gather him on the Day of Resurrection blind."

He will say, "My Lord, why have you raised me blind while I was [once] seeing?"

[Allah] will say, "Thus did Our signs come to you, and you forgot them; and thus will you this Day be forgotten." (Ayat 124-126).

The last ayat tells the Prophet sal Allahu alaihi wa sallam to tell them that:

"Say, "Each [of us] is waiting; so wait. For you will know who are the companions of the sound path and who is guided."