



**MUSLIM INTER-SCHOLASTIC TOURNAMENT 2010**

# Islamic Scholastic Bowl

## **Topic II: Parables and Stories from the Quran**

**Excerpts from "Stories of the Quran"**

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## **BIOGRAPHY OF IBN KATHEER**

(700 -774 A.H.)

(May Allah bless his soul)

`Imad Ad-Deen Isma`il Ibn `Umar IbnKatheer Al-Basri Ad-Dimashqi was born in 700 A.H., or shortly afterwards. After the decease of his father, Ibn Katheer, aged seven then, headed for Damascus, accompanied by his elder brother. He owed much of his learning to Ibn Ashginah, Al-Amadi, Ibn `Asakir and others, may Allah be pleased with them all. He immensely revered Ibn Taimiyah, may Allah bless his soul, whose views he believed, defended and mostly abided by, particularly as regards divorce. It was on account of this that he went through an ordeal and was made to suffer a lot.

Ibn Katheer was widely acclaimed for the sublime degree of learning that he so admirably attained. Scholars have unanimously attested to his well-versedness, particularly in the fields of the exegesis of the Glorious Qur'an, Hadith and history. Ibn Habeeb describes him as "the leader of all men engaged in the exegesis (of the Qur'an). He amassed and categorized all (the knowledge) he heard. People marveled at his fatwas and benefited from his teachings. His fatwas grew widely popular all across the country. He was renowned for his precision and was proclaimed as the beacon of history, Hadith and exegesis (of the Qur'an)." Ibn Hijji, one of his students, owed: "Of all our contemporaries, he (Ibn Katheer) was the best at memorizing authentic Hadiths and the most knowledgeable as to assessing the degree of reliability and honesty of Hadith-narrators as well as authentic and non-authentic Hadiths. His comrades and mentors acknowledge every word of the above. I would frequently visit him, and every time I was in his company I benefited from him."

Ibn Katheer lost his eyesight shortly before he died in 774 A. H. He was buried at the Sufis cemetery along with his mentor Ibn Taimiyah. Among his best-known works is his masterpiece in history Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah (The Beginning and the End) .He also interpreted part of Al Bukhari's Sahih (book of authentic Hadiths). By and large, Ibn Katheer's admirable knowledge and well-versedness are best manifested to whoever reads his two best celebrated masterpieces; his interpretation and his book of history.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(1)

## **The Story of Habil and Qabil**

### **"Able and Cain"**

#### **The First Crime on Earth**

Allah the Almighty says:

**{And (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him» recite to them (the Jews) the story of the two sons of Adam (Habil and Qabil) in truth; when each offered a sacrifice (to Allah), it was accepted from the one but not from the other. The latter said to the former: "I will surely kill you." The former said: "Verily, Allah accepts only from those who are Al-Muttaqun (the pious)." "If you do stretch your hand against me to kill me, I shall never stretch my hand against you to kill you: for I fear Allah, the Lord of the `Alamin (mankind, jinn, and all that exists)." "Verily, I intend to let you draw my sin on yourself as well as yours, then you will be one of the dwellers of the Fire; and that is the recompense of the Zalimin (polytheists and wrong-doers);" So the Nafs (self) of the other (latter one) encouraged him and made fair-seeming to him the murder of his brother; he murdered him and became one of the losers; Then Allah sent a crow who scratched the ground to show him to hide the dead body of his brother; He (the murderer) said: "Woe to me! Am I not even able to be as this crow and to hide the dead body of my brother?" Then he became one of those who regretted}. (Al-Ma'idah, 27-31)**

Narrated As-Sadiy on the authority of Abu Malik and Abu Salih after Ibn 'Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) and on the authority of Ibn Mas`ud and other Companions that Adam (Peace be upon him) used to get the male brought by one birth married to the female brought by the other. Hence, it was supposed that Abel would get married to Cain's sister who was better and more beautiful than anyone else. At the same time, Cain wanted to keep her for himself. Adam (Peace be upon him) ordered him to allow' Abel to marry her, but he totally refused. Then, Adam (Peace be upon him) ordered both (Abel and Cain) to offer a sacrifice to Allah Almighty. Meanwhile, Adam set forth towards Mecca to perform Pilgrimage. Just before leaving, Adam tried to entrust (the affairs of) his children to the heavens, the earth and finally to the mountains, but all declined to shoulder the (heavy) trust. Thereupon, Cain accepted the trust and after

Adam went away they (Abel and Cain) offered their sacrifices to Allah. Abel offered a fat she-goat, while Cain offered a bundle of bad plants. Later, a fire came down from heaven and consumed the sacrifice offered by Abel and left untouched that of Cain. Cain became livid with rage and said to his brother: I will kill you so as not to marry my sister, Abel said: **{Verily, Allah accepts only from those who are Al-Muttaqun (the pious)}**.

'Abdullah Ibn `Amr (May Allah be pleased with both of them) said: By Allah! The murdered (Abel) was stronger (than the murderer, Cain), but he refused to stretch his hand against his brother to kill him due to his piety and God-fearing.

Abu Ja`far Al-Baqir mentioned that Adam (Peace be upon him) was present there when they offered their sacrifices. After Abel's sacrifice was accepted, Cain said to his father, Adam: "It was accepted only from him because you invoked Allah for his sake." And, he secretly intended something against his brother. One day, Abel was late and Adam sent Cain to look for him. The two brothers met and Cain said: "Your sacrifice was accepted and mine was not." Abel said: **"{Verily, Allah accepts only from those who are Al-Muttaqun (the pious)}**". Cain got angry and hit his brother with an iron rod and Abel fell dead at once.

It was said: Cain killed Abel by throwing a rock at his head while he was asleep. It was also said: Cain choked Abel violently and bit him to death as beasts do. However, Abel's saying when Cain threatened to kill him: **{If you do stretch your hand against me to kill me, I shall never stretch my hand against you to kill you: for I fear Allah, the Lord of the" Alamin (mankind, jinn, and all that exists)}** (Al-Ma'idah, 28) indicated his good morals and ethics, his fear from Allah, and perfect piety that he may harm his brother, in contrast with the odious deed intended by his brother, Cain. For this, Abu Bakrah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) as saying: "'When two Muslims confront each other and the one amongst them attacks his brother with a weapon, both of them get into Hell-Fire.' He (Ahnaf, one of the sub-narrators) said: 'I said, or it was said: Messenger of Allah! It may be the case of one who kills, but what about the slain (why he would be put in Hell-Fire)?' Thereupon, he (Peace be upon him) said: 'He also intended to kill his companion. "

Allah the Almighty says: **{Verily, I intend to let you draw my sin (on yourself) as well as yours, then you will be one of the denizens of the Fire; and that is the recompense of the Zalimun (polytheists and wrong-doers)}**. (Al-Ma'idah, 29) i.e. I do not intend to fight against you though I am myself far stronger and tougher than you are, but you will **{draw my sin on yourself as well as yours}**, i.e. you will bear the sin of murdering

me along with your previous sins.<sup>1</sup>

Narrated Imam Ahmed, Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi on the authority of Sa'd Ibn Abu Waqqas his statement upon the ordeal of `Uthman Ibn `Affan that reads: I testify that Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) said: "There will be soon a period of turmoil in which the one who sits will be better than one who stands and the one who stands will be better than one who walks and the one who walks will be better than one who runs." Someone said: 'Allah's Messenger! What is your opinion if someone entered my home and stretched his hand to kill me?' Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) said: 'Be just like the son of Adam (Abel). "Narrated by Ibn Mardwiyah after Hudhaifah Ibn Al- Yaman in another wording as saying: "Be just like the best of Adam's two sons."

Imam Ahmed transmitted after Mu`awiyah and Waki` their saying: We were told by Al- A ` mash on the authority of `Abdullah Ibn Murrah after Masruq after `Abdullah Ibn Mas`ud (May Allah be pleased with him) as saying: The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said, "None (no human being) is killed or murdered (unjustly), but a part of responsibility for the crime is laid on the first son of Adam who invented the tradition of killing (murdering on earth). " (Ahmed's Musnad)

However, there is a cave, called the "Blood Cave", in a mountain located to the northern part of Syria. It is thought to be the scene of the crime where Cain killed his brother Abel. The people living there came to know this through the People of the Book (Christians and Jews) and only Allah Almighty knows the validity or realness of this. .Al-Hafiz Ibn `Asakir mentioned in the biography of Ahmed Ibn Katheer that "He (Ahmed) saw in a dream Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him), Abu Bakr, `Umar and Abel. Ahmed came to know from Abel -who took an oath of that- it was his own blood (that was spilt there (in that very cave)). Abel said that he had asked Allah Almighty to make the invocations and supplications offered in that place acceptable. Allah accepted his own invocations and His Messenger, Muhammad (Peace be upon him) believed in that and said: I (Allah's Messenger), Abu Bakr and `Umar used to visit that place every Thursday. "However, it is to be stated that this narration represents only a vision. Even if it were true, no religious ruling can ever be based on such a thing; and Allah knows best!

Allah Almighty says: **{Then, Allah sent a crow who scratched the ground to show him how to hide the dead body of his brother. He (the murderer) said: "Woe to me! Am I not even able to be as this crow and to hide the dead body of my brother? "Then he became one of those who regretted}**. (Al-Ma'idah, 31) Some interpreters said: "After Cain had killed

<sup>1</sup> As for the Prophetic Hadith that was transmitted by some other narrators that reads: "The killer will bear all sins of the slain", no one even knows its degree of validity: whether it be Authentic, Good, or even Weak. I cannot be found in any of the Prophetic Hadith Compilations.

his brother, he carried him on his back for a full year (not knowing what to do with his brother's corpse!)." Others said: He carried him on his back for one hundred years till Allah Almighty sent two crows who fought against one another. One of them was killed. The murderer scratched the ground to hide the body of the dead crow. Seeing him doing that, Cain said: Woe to me! Am I not even able to do as this crow and to hide the dead body of my brother? Then, he buried the body of his dead brother and covered it with earth.

Historians said: Adam became very sick at heart and felt great sorrow for his dead son, Abel. Mujahid said: Cain was brought punishment very soon afterwards. On the same day he killed his brother, Abel, his foot was tied up to his thighbone and his face was forcibly directed up to the sun disk. His face used to go where the sun goes as a way of punishment and penalty in return for what he had done to his own brother. Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) said: "There is no sin more recurring punishment (very rapidly) in the present life, along with what awaits for its doer in the Hereafter, than transgression and severing the ties of relationship. "

Imam Abu J a' far mentioned in his Tarikh "History" on the authority of some people who had said: Eve gave birth to forty children through twenty births. Ibn Ishaq viewed the same and he mentioned their names in detail. However, nothing is sure of their names or numbers. Only Allah knows best and no one else can know their exact number! Others said: there were one hundred and twenty births, in each one a male and a female were born. The first among them were Cain and his sister Qalimah, and the last ones were `Abdul Mughith and his sister Ummul Mughith. Then, humans increased in number and spread into the earth. Allah Almighty says: **{O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allah through Whom you demand (your mutual rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you}**. (An-Nisa', 1)

Historians said: Adam did not die till he saw from among his progeny and offspring four hundred thousand persons (400.000). Only Allah knows best!

Allah, the Almighty says: **{It is He Who has created you from a single person (Adam), and (then) He has created from him his wife [Hawwa' (Eve)], in order that he might enjoy the pleasure of living with her. When he had sexual relation with her, she became pregnant and she carried it about lightly. Then when it became heavy, they both invoked Allah, their Lord (saying): "If You give us a Salih (good in every aspect) child, we shall indeed be among the grateful." But when He gave them a Salih (good in every aspect) child, they ascribed partners to Him (Allah) in that which He has given to them. High be Allah, Exalted above all that they ascribe as partners to Him}**. (Al-A'raf, 189, 190) Adam

was mentioned first to draw the attention of the reader of the Qur'an, then whom was mentioned second was the whole race of mankind. This is done by way of mentioning the whole race of mankind after mentioning the forefather thereof; Allah the Almighty says: **{And indeed We created man (Adam) out of an extract of clay (water and earth). Thereafter We made him (the offspring of Adam) as a Nutfah (mixed drops of the male and female sexual discharge and lodged it) in a safe lodging (Womb of the woman)}**. (Al-Mu'minun, 12, 13); and in: **{And indeed We have adorned the nearest heaven with lamps, and We have made such lamps (as) missiles to drive away the Shayatin (devils)}**. (Al-Mulk, 5) Where it is wellknown that the "lamps as missiles" are not the same as lamps of adornment, but He turned from a single category or person to the whole race.

Adam (Peace be upon him) was. the father of mankind. He was created by the Hand of Allah Who breathed out of His Soul into him, Who made the Angels prostrate themselves before him, Who taught him names of everything, and Who made him dwell in His spacious Paradise. Narrated Ibn Hibban in his Sahih on the authority of Abu Dharr his saying: "I said, O Allah's Messenger! How many were the Prophets of Allah?" He (Peace be upon him) said: 'One hundred twenty-four thousands.' I said: 'O Allah's Messenger! How many were the Messengers among them?' He (Peace be upon him) said: 'Three hundred and thirteen, a great number!' I said: 'O Allah's Messenger! Who was the first among them?' He (Peace be upon him) said: 'Adam.' I said: 'O Allah's Messenger! Was he a Prophet sent with a Message?' He (Peace be upon him) said: 'Yes, Allah the Almighty created him with His Hand, then, breathed into him out of His Soul, then, He fashioned him (in a very proper manner). "

In the Night Journey Hadith that can be found in the two Sahihs -Al-Bukhari and Muslim -Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) said: "So the gate was opened and we went over the nearest heaven and there we saw a man sitting with some people on his right and some on his left. When he looked towards his right, he laughed and when he looked towards his left he wept. Then he said, 'Welcome! O pious Prophet and pious son!' I asked Gabriel: 'Who is he?' He replied: 'He is Adam and the people on his right and left are the souls of his offspring. Those on his right are the people of Paradise and those on his left are the people of Hell and when he looks towards his right he laughs and when he looks towards his left he weeps. " (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Regarding the Prophetic Hadith that reads: "Then, I passed by Yusuf (Joseph) and I found him to be granted half of beauty."Some scholars explained that it means that he was given half of the beauty Adam was granted. Indeed, this is very suitable and convincing! That Allah, the Almighty created Adam, fashioned him by His Hand and breathed into him out of His Soul, for all these Allah the Almighty must have created the best of all things.

It was narrated on the authority of `Abdullah Ibn 'Umar and' Abdullah Ibn 'Amr that: When Allah the Almighty created Paradise, the Angels said: "'Our

Lord! Make this for us for You created for mankind the present world in which they eat and drink.' Allah the Almighty said: 'By My Glory and Loftiness! I will not equalize between the pious from among those whom I created with My Hand, and those whom When I said "Be ", they were!" It was narrated in the two Sahihs -Bukhari and Muslim that Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) as saying: Allah, the Exalted and Glorious created Adam in His own image with His length of sixty cubits, and as He created him He told him to greet that group, and that was a party of angels sitting there, and listen to the response that they give him, for it would form his greeting and that of his offspring. Adam then addressed them: Peace be

upon you! They (the angels) said: May there be peace upon you and the Mercy of Allah, and they made an addition of "Mercy of Allah ". So he who would get into Paradise would get in the form of Adam, his length being sixty cubits, then the people who followed him continued to diminish in size up to this day. "(Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(4)

## Story of the Heifer

Allah the Almighty says:

**{And (remember) when Musa (Moses) said to his people: "Verily, Allah commands you that you slaughter a cow." They said, "Do you make fun of us?" He said, "I take Allah's Refuge from being among Al-Jahilun (the ignorant or the foolish). " They said, "Call upon your Lord for us that He may make plain to us what it is!" He said, "He says: 'Verily, it is a cow neither too old nor too young, but (it is) between the two conditions', so do what you are commanded " They said, "Call upon your Lord for us to make plain to us its color." He said, "He says: 'It is a yellow cow, bright in its color, pleasing the beholders.'" They said, "Call upon your Lord for us to make plain to us what it is. Verily, to us all cows are alike. And surely, if Allah wills, we will be guided." He [Musa (Moses)] said, "He says: 'It is a cow neither trained to tilt the soil nor water the fields, sound, having no other color except bright yellow. ' "They said, "Now you have brought the truth." So they slaughtered it though they were near to not doing it. And (remember) when you killed a man and fell into dispute among yourselves as to the crime. But Allah brought forth that which you were hiding. So We said: "Strike him (the dead man) with a piece of it (the cow)." Thus Allah brings the dead to life and shows you His Aya: (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) so that you may understand}. (Al-Baqarah, 67-73)**

'Abdullah Ibn 'Abbas, `Ubaidah As-Salmani, Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, As-Sadiy and other earlier scholars said: An old man from among the Children of Israel was very rich, and he had some nephews who wished he would die soon to inherit him. One day, one of them on purpose murdered him at night and threw him on the road -or at the door of one of his own brothers. In the morning, the people found the dead body and they disputed over him. His nephew -the murderer -came and began to weep and cry. Some people said: Why do you dispute over him? Why do not you go to Allah's Prophet (Peace be upon him)? His nephew came and complained to Musa (Moses (Peace be upon him)». Musa (Peace be upon him) said: by Allah! Anyone who knows anything about this murdered man, he should let us know. But, no one knew anything about it. Thereupon, they asked Musa (Peace be upon him) to ask his Lord concerning this issue. Musa (Peace be upon him) asked his Lord and he was commanded to order them to slaughter a cow, **{Verily, Allah commands you that you slaughter a cow. They said, Do you make fun of us?}** i.e. we ask

you about the murdered and you say so! **{He said, I take Allah's Refuge from being among Al-Jahilun (the ignorant or the foolish)}** i.e. I take Allah's Refuge from saying other than that He revealed to me; and that was His Answer to what you had wanted me to ask Him.

Ibn 'Abbas, 'Ubaidah, Mujahid, `Ikrimah, As-Sadiy, Abu Al-`Aliyah and others said: If they were to slaughter any cow, they would fulfill the purpose thereof. But, they made it difficult for themselves (by asking so many questions thereof), and thus Allah the Almighty made it difficult for them (by stipulating so many conditions for the desired cow). They asked about its description, color and age; and they were answered with what was scarce and dear (in a way to make it hard for them to find it). The point is that they were commanded to slaughter neither a too old cow, nor a too young, but (it is) between the two conditions. This view was held by Ibn `Abbas, Mujahid, Abu Al-`Aliyah, `Ikrimah, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and others. Then, they pressed themselves with their questions through asking about its color. And they were answered to make it **{yellow cow, bright in its color, pleasing the beholders}**, which is very rare and dear.

Then, they asked: **{They said, "Call upon your Lord for us to make plain to us what it is. Verily, to us all cows are alike. And surely, if Allah wills, we will be guided." He [Musa (Moses)] said, "He says: 'It is a cow neither trained to tilt the soil nor water the fields, sound, having no other color except bright yellow.'** "They said, "Now you have brought the truth." So they slaughtered it though they were near to not doing it}. It is said that they could not find a cow with all these descriptions but with a man who was righteous and good to his father. They asked him to submit it to them, but he refused. They tried to seduce him as to its price till they offered him what equals its weight in gold. But, he refused. Then, they offered him an amount of gold that equals its weight ten-times. Finally, he accepted their offer and submitted it to them. Then, Musa (Peace be upon him) commanded them to slaughter it **{So they slaughtered it though they were near to not doing it}** i.e. while they were hesitant.

Then, Musa (Peace be upon him) instructed them with the Command of Allah to strike the dead man with a piece of the cow. Some scholars said: with part of its thighbone, or with part of the flesh between its shoulders. When they stroke him with part thereof, he was resurrected by Allah the Almighty. Musa (Peace be upon him) asked him: who's your murderer? He said: it was my nephew who killed me. Then, he died again. Allah the Almighty says **{Thus Allah brings the dead to life and shows you His Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) so that you may understand}** i.e. as you witnessed the revival of that dead man by the Command of Allah the Almighty, He can do the same to all the dead people when He wishes to. He, Almighty Allah, says **{The creation of you all and the resurrection of you all are only as (the creation and resurrection of) a single person. Verily, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Seer}**. (Luqman, 28)

(5)

## Moses and Al-Khadir

Allah, the Almighty says:

**{And (remember) when Musa (Moses) said to his boy-servant: "I will not give up (travelling) until I reach the junction of the two seas or (until) I spend years and years in travelling." But when they reached the junction of the two seas, they forgot their fish, and it took its way through the sea as in a tunnel. So when they had passed further on (beyond that fixed place), Musa (Moses) said to his boy-servant: "Bring us our morning meal; truly, we have suffered much fatigue in this, our journey." He said: "Do you remember when we betook ourselves to the rock? I indeed forgot the fish,; none but Shaitan (Satan) made me forget to remember it, it took its course into the sea in a strange (way)!" [Musa (Moses)] said: "That is what we have been seeking;" So they went back retracing their footsteps; Then they found one of Our slaves, on whom We had bestowed mercy from Us, and whom We had taught knowledge from Us; Musa (Moses) said to him (Al-Khadir): "May I follow you so that you teach me something of that knowledge (guidance and true path) which you have been taught (by Allah)?" He (Al-Khadir) said: "Verily you will not be able to have patience with me! And how can you have patience about a thing which you know not;" Musa (Moses) said: "If Allah wills, you will find me patient, and I will not disobey you in aught;" He (Al-Khadir) said: "Then, if you follow me, ask me not about anything till I myself mention of it to you;" So they both proceeded, till, when they embarked the ship, he (Al-Khadir) scuttled it; Musa (Moses) said: "Have you scuttled it in order to drown its people? Verily, you have committed a thing Imr (a Munkar -evil, bad, dreadful thing); " He (Al-Khadir) said: "Did I not tell you, that you would not be able to have patience with me?" [Musa (Moses)] said: "Call me not to account for what I forgot,<sup>4</sup> and be not hard upon me for my affair (with you);" Then they both proceeded, till they met a boy, and he (Al-Khadir) killed him; Musa (Moses) said: "Have you killed an innocent person who had killed none? Verily, you have committed a thing Nukr (a great Munkar prohibited, evil, dreadful thing)!" (Al-Khadir) said: "Did I not tell you that you can have no patience with**

<sup>4</sup> Narrated Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: "Allah forgives my followers those (evil deeds) their own selves may whisper or suggest to them as long as they do not act (on it) or speak." (Sahih Al-Bukhari) Narrated Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: "If somebody eats something forgetfully while he is fasting, then he should complete his fast, for Allah has made him eat and drink." (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

**me?" [Musa (Moses)] said: "If I ask you anything after this, keep me not in your company, you have received an excuse from me; " Then they both proceeded, till, when they came to the people of a town, they asked them for food, but they refused to entertain them; Then they found therein a wall about to collapse and he (Al-Khadir) set it up straight; (Musa (Moses)] said: If you had wished, surely, you could have taken wages for it!" (Al-Khadir) said: "This is the parting between me and you, I will tell you the interpretation of (those)things over which you were unable to hold patience. As for the ship, it belonged to Masakin (poor people) working in the sea. So I wished to make a defective damage in it, as there was a king behind them who seized every ship by force. And as for the boy, his parents were believers, and we feared lest he should oppress them by rebellion and disbelief. So we intended that their Lord should change him for them for one better in righteousness and nearer to mercy. And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the town; and there was under it a treasure belonging to them; and their father was a righteous man, and your Lord intended that they should attain their age of full strength and take out their treasure as a mercy from your Lord. And I did them not of my own accord. That is the interpretation of those (things) over which you could not hold patience}. (Al-Kahf, 60-82)**

Some of the People of the Book said: the one who met Al-Khadir was Musa Ibn Misha Ibn Yusuf Ibn Ya`ub Ibn Ishaq Ibn Ibrahim, father of the Prophets. But, the most authentic view is that he was Musa Ibn `Imran, the Prophet sent by Allah to the Children of Israel.

Narrated Imam Al-Bukhari: I was told by Al-Hamidi after Sufyan after `Amr Ibn Dinar after Sa`id Ibn Jubair as saying: I said to Ibn `Abbas: "Nauf Al-Bakali claims that Moses (the companion of Al-Khadir) was not the Moses of Banu Israel but he was another Moses." Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) remarked that the enemy of Allah (Nauj) was a liar. Narrated Ubai bin Ka`b: The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: "Once Prophet Moses stood up and addressed Banu Israel. He was asked: "Who is the most learned man amongst the people?" He said: "I am the most learned." Allah admonished Moses as he did not attribute absolute knowledge to Him (Allah). So Allah inspired to him, "At the junction of the two seas there is a slave of mine who is more learned than you." Moses said: "O my Lord! How can I meet him?" Allah Almighty said: "Take

a fish in a large basket (and proceed) and you will find him at the place where you will lose the fish." So Moses set out along with his (servant) boy, Yusha` bin Nun and carried a fish in a large basket till they reached a rock, where they laid their heads (i. e. lay down) and slept. The fish came out of the basket and it took its way into the sea as in a tunnel. So it was an amazing thing for both Moses and his (servant) boy. They proceeded for the rest of that night and the following day. When the day broke, Moses said to his (servant) boy: **{Bring us our early meal. No doubt, we have suffered much fatigue in this journey}**. Moses did not get tired till he passed the place about which he was told. There the (servant) boy told Moses: **{Do you remember when we betook ourselves to the rock, I indeed forgot the fish}**. Moses remarked: **{That is what we have been seeking. So they went back retracing their footsteps}**, till they reached the rock. There they saw a man covered with a garment (or covering himself with his own garment). Moses greeted him. Al-Khadir replied saying: "How do people greet each other in your land?" Moses said: "I am Moses." He asked: "The Moses of Banu Israel?" Moses replied in the affirmative and added: "May I follow you so that you teach me of that knowledge which you have been taught." Al-Khadir replied: "Verily! You will not be able to remain patient with me, O Moses! I have some of the knowledge of Allah which He has taught me and which you do not know, while you have some knowledge which Allah has taught you which I do not know." Moses said: "Allah willing, you will find me patient and I will not disobey you in aught. So both of them set out walking along the seashore, as they did not have a boat. In the meantime a boat passed by them and they requested the crew of the boat to take them on board. The crew recognized Al-Khadir and took them on board without fare. Then a sparrow came and stood on the edge of the boat and dipped its beak once or twice in the sea. Al-Khadir said: "O Moses! My knowledge and your knowledge have not decreased Allah's knowledge except as much as this sparrow has decreased the water of the sea with its beak." Al-Khadir went to one of the planks of the boat and plucked it out. Moses said: "These people gave us a free lift but you have broken their boat and scuttled it so as to drown its people." Al-Khadir replied: "Didn't I tell you that you will not be able to remain patient with me." Moses said: "Call me not to account for what I forgot." The first (excuse) of Moses was that he had forgotten. Then they proceeded further and found a boy playing with other boys. Al-Khadir took hold of the boy's head from the top and plucked it out with his hands (i.e. killed him). Moses said: "Have you killed an innocent soul who has killed none." Al-Khadir replied: "Did I not tell you that you cannot remain patient with me?" Then they both proceeded till when they came to the people of a town, they asked them for food, but they refused to entertain them. Then they found there a wall on the point of collapsing. Al-Khadir repaired it with his own hands. Moses said: "If you had wished, surely you could have taken wages for it." Al-Khadir replied: "This is the parting between you and me." The Prophet (Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) added: "May Allah be Merciful to Moses! Would that he could have been more patient to learn more about his story with Al-Khadir." (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

Allah the Almighty says: **{And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the town}**, As Suhaili said: they were Asram and Sarim sons of Kashih. **{And there was under it a treasure belonging to them}**, i.e. the treasure was gold, or some kind of knowledge. However, the most likely view is that it was some kind of knowledge inscribed on a golden board.

Al-Bazzar said: I was told by Ibrahim Ibn Sa'id Al-Jauhari after Bishr Ibn Al-Mundhir after Al Harith Ibn 'Abdullah Al- Yahbasi after 'Iyad Ibn `Abbas Al-Ghassani after Ibn Hujairah after Abu Dharr as saying: "The treasure mentioned in Allah's Book (the Glorious Qur'an) was a solid golden board where it was inscribed: I wondered at the one who affirmed faith in the Divine Decree and then he exerted himself; and I wondered at the one who remembered Hell-Fire and then he laughed; and I wondered at the one who remembered death and then he became heedless of the meaning of 'There is no god but Allah.'" The like was narrated by Al-Hasan Al-Basri, ` Umar the freed slave of `Afrah and Ja`far As-Sadiq.

Allah's Saying: **{And their father was a righteous man}**, i.e. their seventh or tenth grandfather. However, this proves that the righteousness of the father benefits his own children and their children.

Allah's Saying: **{as a mercy from your Lord}** , this is a textual proof that Al-Khadir was a Prophet and that he did not do anything out of his own desire but as ordered by Allah the Almighty.

### **Al-Khadir's Name, Lineage and Prophethood: Is He Still Alive?**

The real name, lineage and status of Al-Khadir are controversial. This can be added to the very important question: is he still alive?

Al-Hafiz Ibn `Asakir said: He is said to be Al-Khadir son of Adam. Ibn Qutaibah said: His name was Balya -or Aylya -Ibn Malakan Ibn Faligh Ibn `Abir Ibn Shalikh Ibn Arfakhshdh Ibn Sam Ibn Noah (Peace be Upon him).

Isma`il Ibn Abu Uwais said: His name was Al-Mu`amir Ibn Malik Ibn `Abdullah Ibn Nasr Ibn Lazd.

Others said: He is Khadrin Ibn `Amyaiyl Ibn Al-afiz Ibn Al-`Iys Ibn Ishaq Ibn Prophet Ibrahim (Peace be upon him). There are so many other views pertaining to his name and lineage.

Imam Al-Bukhari said: I was told by Muhammad Ibn Sa'id Al-Asbahani after Ibn Al-Mubarak after Mu`amir after Hammam on the authority of Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: "AlKhadir was named so because he sat over a barren white land, it turned green with plantation after (his sitting over It)."

Qabisah narrated on the authority of Ath-Thauri after Mansur after Mujahid as saying: Al-Khadir was named so because everything around him used to turn into green when he stands for prayer. It was stated earlier that Moses and

Yusha` (Peace be upon them) went back retracing their footsteps, till they reached the rock. There they saw a man covered with a green garment (or covering himself with his own garment). Moses greeted him. Al-Khadir replied saying: "How do people greet each other in your land?" Moses said: "I am Moses." He asked: "The Moses of Banu Israel?" Moses replied in the affirmative and added: "May I follow you so that you teach me of that knowledge which you have been taught... etc."

### **The Story Indicated His Prophethood in Four Aspects:**

**First:** Allah the Almighty says: **{Then they found one of Our slaves, on whom We had bestowed mercy from Us, and whom We had taught knowledge from Us}**. (Al-Kahf, 65)

**Second:** Moses says to Al-Khadir: **{Musa (Moses) said to him (Al-Khadir): "May I follow you so that you teach me something of that knowledge (guidance and true path) which you have been taught (by Allah)?" He (Al-Khadir) said: "Verily you will not be able to have patience with me! And how can you have patience about a thing which you know not." Musa (Moses) said: "If Allah wills, you will find me patient, and I will not disobey you in aught." He (Al-Khadir) said: "Then, if you follow me, ask me not about anything till I myself mention of it to you"}**. (Al-Kahf, 66-70) So, were he not a Prophet, Moses would not address him that way, and he would not answer Moses that way as well. Moses sought his company because he wanted to get some of the knowledge Al-Khadir was given by Allah and that which Moses did not get. Were Al-Khadir anything but a Prophet, he would not be infallible. Thus, Moses would not be keen to accompany him because Moses himself was an honorable Prophet and an infallible Messenger. Were Al-Khadir anything but a Prophet, Moses would not take the trouble of searching for him for eighty years. When Moses met with Al-Khadir, Moses highly respected him and followed him submissively to gain as much as possible of his divine knowledge.

**Third:** Al-Khadir intentionally killed the boy. He would not do that without an inspiration from Allah Almighty ordering him to. This incident can stand as a separate proof that Al-Khadir was a Prophet. It can stand as well, as a proof that he was infallible. Al-Khadir killed the boy because he was inspired that the boy would be a disbeliever when he grows up and that his parents would follow him due to their earnest love for him. So he killed him to save the faith of the parents. This indicated that he was an infallible Prophet.

**Fourth:** When Al-Khadir interpreted and explained for Moses the actions he took and clarified everything to him he added: **{As a mercy from your Lord. And I did them not of my own accord}**, i.e. I did not do that out of my desire, instead, I was ordered to by divine inspiration. All these indicated his Prophethood and infallibility.

## Is Al-Khadir Still Alive?

The majority of scholars said: "Al-Khadir is still alive because he was the one who buried Adam (Peace be upon him) after the Deluge and thus he was affected by the invocation of Adam that he who buries him will live long." Some people said: "he is still alive because he drank of the spring of life."

There are so many narrations and stories on which those who viewed the existence of Al-Khadir today based their opinion. But, all the narrations and Hadiths pertaining to that issue are weak and invented and those who narrated them are not infallible.

'Abdur Razzaq said: I was told by Mu' amir that Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri said: "One day Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) narrated to us a long narration about Ad-Dajjal and among the things he narrated to us, was: 'Ad-Dajjal will come, and he will be forbidden to enter the mountain passes of Medina. He will encamp in one of the salt areas neighboring Medina and there will appear to him a man who will be the best or one of the best of the people. He will say: 'I testify that you are Ad-Dajjal whose story Allah's Messenger has told us. 'Ad Dajjal will say (to his audience): 'Look, if I kill this man and then give him life, will you have any doubt about my claim?' They will reply: 'No.' Then Ad Dajjal will kill that man and then will make him alive. The man will say: 'By Allah, now I recognize you more than ever! 'Ad-Dajjal will then try to kill him (again) but he will not be given the power to do so. ", Mu'amir said: I was told that the man who stands against the Dajjal is Al-Khadir and that his neck on that day would be covered with brass.

Sheik Abu Al-Faraj Ibn Al-Jawzi refuted all these Hadiths and proved them all to be invented, and he proved the Chains of Transmission of the narrations and stories of the Prophet's Companions and followers to be weak and fallible. Indeed, Ibn Al-Jawzi was very powerful and authentic in doing so.

As for those who claimed Al-Khadir to be dead such as Imam Al-Bukhari, Abu Al-Husain Ibn Al-Munadi and sheik Abu Al-Faraj Ibn Al-Jawzi, they held as their textual proofs what follows: Allah the Almighty says: **{And We granted not to any human being immortality before you (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)): then if you die, would they live forever?}**. (Al-Anbya', 34) So if Al-Khadir was a human being, he would be affected by this ruling: he is mortal, he must die. Allah the Almighty says: **{And (remember) when Allah took the Covenant of the Prophets, saying: "Take whatever I gave you from the Book and Hikmah (understanding of the Laws of Allah), and afterwards there will come to you a Messenger (Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) confirming what is with you; you must, then, believe in him and help him." Allah said: "Do you agree (to it) and will you take up My Covenant (which I conclude with you)?" They said: "We agree." He said: "Then bear witness; and I am with you among the witnesses (for**

**this**)). (Al 'Imran, 81) Ibn 'Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) said: Allah took the Covenant of all the Prophets to believe in Muhammad and support him if he appears during their lifetimes. In addition, they should take the Covenant of all their own nations to believe in him and support him in the same way. Thereupon, were Al-Khadir a Prophet or a Wali (protector or guardian), he would be involved in that Covenant and that were he alive during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), he would follow him and present himself before him paying allegiance and absolute faith.

Imam Ahmed narrated: I was told by Shuraih Ibn An-Nu'man after Hashim after Mujalid after AshShi'bi after Jabir Ibn 'Abdullah that the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: "By Him in Whose Hand my soul is! Were Moses alive, he would do nothing but follow me." This is the decisive view which the earlier Qur'anic Verse indicates that all Prophets -if they happen to live during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad -are ordered to follow him and practice his own Shari`ah. On the Night Journey, he (Peace be upon him) was raised far above them all.<sup>5</sup> When they descended to Jerusalem and the time for Prayer was due, he (Peace be upon him) was ordered to lead them all (in Prayer). This showed that he is the greatest Imam and the last Prophet who is most honored and respected (May Allah grant him and them all mercy).

Thereupon, if Al-Khadir were alive, he would be joining forces with Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), and he would follow his religion in every minute detail. This is Prophet `Isa (Jesus (Peace be upon him)) when he will descend by the end of time, he will rule over the whole world in accordance with this honorable legislation of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). However, there is nothing to certify that Al-Khadir has met together with Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) in a single day or even witnessed any fight with him against the polytheists or the infidels. On the day on which the Battle of Badr was fought, the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) cast a glance at the infidels, and they were one thousand (1000) while his own Companions were three hundred and nineteen (319). Allah's Prophet (Peace be upon him) turned (his face) towards the Qiblah. Then, he stretched his hands and began his supplication to his Lord: 'O Allah! Accomplish for me what Thou hast promised to me. O Allah! Bring about what Thou hast promised to me. O Allah! If this small band of Muslims is destroyed, Thou will not be worshipped on this earth.' He (Peace be upon him) continued his supplication to his Lord, stretching his hands, facing the Qiblah, until his mantle slipped down from his shoulders. So Abu Bakr (May Allah be pleased with him) came to him, picked up his mantle and put it on his shoulders. Then he (Abu Bakr) embraced him from behind and said: O Prophet of Allah! This prayer of yours to your Lord will suffice you, and He will fulfil for you what He has promised you. So Allah, the Glorious and Exalted, revealed (the Qur'anic verse): **{(Remember) when you sought help of your**

<sup>5</sup> I.e. Near Sidrat-ul-Muntaha (a lote-tree of the utmost boundary over the seventh heaven beyond which none can pass). (Translator)

**Lord and He answered you (saying): I will help you with a thousand of the angels each behind the other (following one another) in**

**succession}**. (Al-Anfal, 9) So Allah helped him with angels." (Sahih Muslim)

However, this 'small band of Muslims' consisted, then, of the chiefs from among the Muslims and the angels, foremost among whom was Jibril (Gabriel (Peace be upon him)). Thus, if Al-Khadir were alive, his presence, then, would be the best thing he could ever do. Narrated Al-Qadi Abu Ya`la Muhammad Ibn Al-Husain AlFara' Al-Hanbali: Some people asked some of our companions about Al-Khadir, was he dead? They answered: "Yes."

Some people claim that Al-Khadir was present during all these past events but no one could see him because he was invisible. Obviously, this claim is groundless and is based only on illusions. Indeed, if he was still alive during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), he would certainly join him in his fight against the polytheists of the tribe of Quraish. See the following Hadith: Narrated Sa'd (May Allah be pleased with him): "On the Day of Uhud I saw on the right side of Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) and on his left side two persons dressed in white clothes and whom I did not see before nor after that, and they were Gabriel and Michael (may Allah be pleased with both of them)." (Sahih Muslim)

In addition, 'Abdullah Ibn `Umar (May Allah be pleased with both of them) said: "Once the Prophet (Peace be upon him) led us in the `Isha' (Night) Prayer during the last days of his life and after finishing it (the Prayer) (with Taslim, i.e. final salutation) he said: 'Do you realize (the importance of) this night? Nobody present on the surface of the earth tonight will be living after the completion of one hundred years from this night. ", (Sahih Al-Bukhari) And, `Abdullah Ibn `Umar (May Allah be pleased with both of them) narrated: "Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) led us in the `Isha' (Night) Prayer at the latter part of the night and when he had concluded it by salutations he stood up and said: 'Have you seen this night of yours? At the end of one hundred years after this (night) none would survive on the surface of the earth (from among my Companions).' Ibn `Umar said: People were (not understanding) these words of the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) which had been uttered pertaining to one hundred years. Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) in fact meant (by these words) that on that day none from amongst those who had been living upon the earth (from amongst his Companions) would survive (after one hundred years) and that would be the end of this generation." (Sahih Muslim) And, Jabir Ibn `Abdullah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: "I heard Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) as saying this one month before his death: 'You asked me about the Last Hour whereas its knowledge is with Allah. I, however, take an oath and say that none upon the earth, the created beings (from amongst my Companions), would survive at the end of one hundred years." This Hadith has been narrated on the authority of Ibn Juraij with the same chain of transmitters, but there is no mention of the words: "one month

before his death." (Sahih Muslim) So, even if Al-Khadir were alive during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), he would, then, be dead in accordance with these above-mentioned Hadiths. And, Allah knows best!

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(7)

## **Bilqis(Queen of Sheba)**

Allah the Almighty says:

**{He inspected the birds, and said: "What is the matter that I see not the hoopoe? Or is he among the absentees? "I will surely punish him with a severe torment, or slaughter him, unless he brings me a clear reason." But the hoopoe stayed not long: he (came up and) said: "I have grasped (the knowledge of a thing) which you have not grasped and I have come to you from Saba' (Sheba) with true news." "I found a woman ruling over them: she has been given all things that could be possessed by any ruler of the earth, and she has a great throne. I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allah, and Shaitan (Satan) has made their deeds fair-seeming to them, and has barred them from (Allah's) Way: so they have no guidance." [As Shaitan (Satan) has barred them from Allah's Way] so they do not worship (prostrate themselves before) Allah, Who brings to light what is hidden in the heavens and the earth, and knows what you conceal and what you reveal. Allah, La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Lord of the Supreme Throne! [Sulaiman (Solomon)] said: "We shall see whether you speak the truth or you are (one) of the liars."Go you with this letter of mine, and deliver it to them, then draw back from them, and see what (answer) they return." She said: "O chiefs! Verily! Here is delivered to me a noble letter. "Verily it is from Sulaiman (Solomon), and verily, it (reads): In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful: "Be you not exalted against me, but come to me as Muslims (true believers who submit to Allah with full submission). She said: "O chiefs! Advise me in (this) case of mine. I decide no case till you are present with me (and give me your opinions)." They said: "We have great strength, and great ability for war, but it is for you to command: so think over what you will command." She said: "Verily kings, when they enter a town (country), they despoil it and make the most honorable amongst its people the lowest. And thus they do. "But verily! I am going to send him a present, and see with what (answer) the Messengers return." So when (the messengers with the present) came to Sulaiman (Solomon), he said: "Will you help me in wealth? What Allah has given me is better than that which He has given you! Nay, you rejoice in your gift!" [Then Sulaiman (Solomon) said to the chief of her messengers who brought**

the present]: "Go back to them. We verily shall come to them with hosts that they cannot resist, and we shall drive them out from there in disgrace, and they will be abased." He said: "O chiefs! Which of you can bring me her throne before they come to me surrendering themselves in obedience?" A `Ifrit (strong one) from the jinn said: I will bring it to you before you rise from your place (council). And verily, I am indeed strong, and trustworthy for such work." One with whom was knowledge of the Scripture said: "I will bring it to you within the twinkling of an eye!" Then when he [Sulaiman (Solomon)] saw it placed before him, he said: "This is by the Grace of my Lord -to test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful! And whoever is grateful, truly, his gratitude is for (the good of) his own self, and whoever is ungrateful, (he is ungrateful only for the loss of his own self. Certainly my Lord is Rich (Free of all needs), Bountiful." He said: "Disguise her throne for her that we may see whether she will be guided (to recognize her throne), or she will be one of those not guided." So when she came, it was said (to her): "Is your throne like this?" She said: "(It is) as though it were the very same." And [Sulaiman (Solomon)] said: "Knowledge was bestowed on us before her, and we were submitted to Allah (in Islam as Muslims before her)." And that which she used to worship besides Allah has prevented her (from Islam), for she was of a disbelieving people. It was said to her: "Enter As-Sarh" (a glass surface with water underneath it or a palace): but when she saw it, she thought it was a pool, and she (tucked up her clothes) uncovering her legs. (Sulaiman (Solomon)) said: "Verily, it is a Sarh (a glass surface with water underneath it or a palace)." She said: "My Lord! Verily, I have wronged myself, and I submit [in Islam, together with Sulaiman (Solomon)] to Allah, the Lord of the `Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)}. (An-Naml. 20-44)

Allah the Almighty narrates what had happened between Sulaiman and the hoopoe. All kinds of birds had pioneers or chosen ones who were charged with certain tasks and who periodically attend themselves before Sulaiman, as a habit of the troops with their kings. Ibn `Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) and others mentioned that the mission of the hoopoe was to search for water in deserts and barren areas. Indeed, the hoopoe has the ability -as granted by Allah the Almighty -to see and identify the locations of underground waters. Sulaiman's hoopoe used to search for underground water and then to lead his troops thereto; they dig the land to get the water out and use it in fulfilling their needs.

One day, Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) wanted the hoopoe, he missed him and did not find him in his appointed position so, he said: **{What is the matter that I see not the hoopoe? Or is he among the absentees?}** i.e. he is not here, or I can not see him. **{I will surely punish him with a severe**

**torment}** Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) threatened that he would punish him with some kind of penalty; **{or slaughter him, unless he brings me a clear reason}** i.e. a clear excuse that may save him from my punishment. Allah the Almighty says: **{But the hoopoe stayed not long}** i.e. his absence was not so long, then **{he (came up and) said}** to Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) **{I have grasped (the knowledge of a thing) which you have not grasped}** i.e. I got to know that which you did not; **{and I have come to you from Saba' (Sheba) with true news}**. That **{I found a woman ruling over them: she has been given all things that could be possessed by any ruler on earth, and she has a great throne}**, he is describing the status of the kings and rulers of Sheba in the Yemen: they had a mighty and glorious kingdom along with strong and competent troops. During that period, their king died and left no heirs but a daughter whom they raised as their queen.

Ath-Tha`labi and others mentioned that after her father's death, the people appointed a man under whose rule corruption and mischief prevailed. She proposed to him in marriage and he married her. At their first night together she gave him wine till he got drunk and then she beheaded him and hanged his head on her door. Thereupon, the people raised her over the throne as their queen. She was Bilqis Bint As-Sairah. Her father was called Al-Hudhad, or Shurahil Ibn Dhi Jadan Ibn As-Sairah Ibn Al-Harith Ibn Qais Ibn Saifi Ibn Saba' Ibn Yashjub Ibn Ya`rub Ibn Qahtan. Her father was one of the noblest kings. He refused to get married to Yemeni women. It is said that he got married to a woman from the Jinn whose name was Raihanah Bint As-Sakan who gave birth to that woman whose name is Balqamah, to be known later as Bilqis.

Ath-Tha`labi transmitted on the authority of Sa`id Ibn Bashir on the authority of Qatadah after An-Nadr Ibn Anas after Bashir Ibn Nahik, after Abu Hurairah that Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) said: "One of Bilqis's parents was from among the jinn." (This is a strange Hadith in whose Chain of Transmission there is some kind of Weakness).

Ath-Tha`labi said: I was told by Abu`Abdullah Ibn Qabhunah on the authority of Abu Bakr Ibn Jarjah after Abu Bakrah as saying: Once, Bilqis was mentioned before Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) who said: "Such people as ruled by a lady will never be successful." (That sub-Narrator, Isma`il Ibn Muslim is Meccan and he is regarded by the Scholars of Hadith as Weak, i.e. not an authentic narrator).

It is mentioned in Sahih Al-Bukhari from the narration of `Auf on the authority of Al-Hasan, after Abu Bakra that: When Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) was informed that the Persians had crowned the daughter of Khusrau as their ruler, he said, "Such people as ruled by a lady will never be successful." (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

And, his saying: **{She has been given all things}** that could be possessed by any ruler of the earth, **{and she has a great throne}** i.e. the chair she sits

on was ornamented and studded with various jewels, pearls, gold and other magnificent things. Then, he mentioned their disbelief in Allah the Almighty and their worship of the sun instead of Allah and the deceivment of Satan to them by making their deeds look fair-seeming in their eyes, and barring them from Allah's Way, **{So they do not worship (prostrate themselves before) Allah, Who brings to light what is hidden in the heavens and the earth, and knows what you conceal and what you reveal}** i.e. He knows all secrets and revealed matters whether material or immaterial. **{Allah, La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Lord of the Supreme Throne!}** i.e. the Greatest Throne which none from among His creatures ever has.

Thereupon, Sulaiman sent the hoopoe with a letter calling them to obey Allah and His Messenger, to repent and submit themselves to his kingship and power. He sent them: **{Be you not exalted against me}** i. e. do not let your pride prevent you from obeying me, **{but come to me as Muslims}** i.e. true believers who submit to Allah with full submission. The hoopoe dropped the letter near her and waited to see what she was going to do. However, she gathered the nobles, princes and ministers to have mutual consultation, **{She said: "O chiefs! Verily! Here is delivered to me a noble letter}**, then she first read its title **{Verily it is from Sulaiman (Solomon)}**, then she read the rest thereof **{and verily, it (reads): In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful: Be you not exalted against me, but come to me as Muslims (true believers who submit to Allah with full submission)}**. Then she sought their advice in a very polite manner **{She said: O chiefs! Advise me in (this) case of mine. I decide no case till you are present with me}** i.e. that you give me your opinions, **{They said: We have great strength, and great ability for war}**, i.e. we can afford war and all it needs of strength, materials, etc. so if you want this choice, we are well prepared thereto **{but it is for you to command: so think over what you will command}**, hence, they showed full obedience to her and after showing and displaying their abilities before her they left the matter in her hands to see what should be done. Verily, her opinion was wiser and better than theirs as she knew that the sender of the letter was not to be resisted, fooled, or even deceived. **{She said: Verily kings, when they enter a town (country), they despoil it and make the most honorable amongst its people the lowest. And thus they do}**, i.e. she explains to them that if that king overpowers this kingdom of theirs, she would be the one who receives the severest of punishment and degradation. **{But verily! I am going to send him a present, and see with what (answer) the Messengers return}** she wanted to bribe Sulaiman with presents and gifts knowing that Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) would not accept from them but Islam, as she and her people were disbelievers while he and his troops are far stronger than them all. For this **{When (the messengers with the present) came to Sulaiman (Solomon), he said: Will you help me in wealth? What Allah has given**

**me is better than that which He has given you! Nay, you rejoice in your gift!}** Then Sulaiman (Solomon) said to the chief of her messengers who brought the present **{Go back to them. We verily shall come to them with hosts that they cannot resist, and we shall drive them out from there in disgrace, and they will be abased}** i.e. go back with your gifts for what I have been granted by Allah is far better than these properties, riches and presents with which you rejoice and be filled with arrogance and pride over your own people. **{We verily shall come to them with hosts that they cannot resist}** i.e. troops that are irresistible and cannot be defeated or encountered, and moreover we shall drive them out from their land, properties and wealth **{in disgrace, and they will be abased}** i.e. dragging shame, abasement and destruction.

When they heard the news, they rushed declaring their full submission and perfect obedience and willingness to accompany their queen in her leaving for meeting Sulaiman (Peace be upon him). When he (Peace be upon him) heard of their coming and their intention to present themselves before his hand, he said to those (Jinn) from among his present hosts if they would bring him her throne before she manage to come: **{A` Ifrit (strong one) from the jinn said: I will bring it to you before you rise from your place (council). And verily, I am indeed strong, and trustworthy for such work) i.e. before you finish your ruling council. It was said that he used to run the affairs of the Banu Israel from the beginning of the day till the noon. {Verily, I am indeed strong, and trustworthy for such work} i.e. I am strong enough to bring the throne to you, and at the same time I am to be entrusted with what it contains of the precious jewels and pearls. But {One with whom was knowledge of the Scripture said} i.e. Asif Ibn Barkhiya who was Sulaiman's maternal cousin, said it was one of the believers from among the Jinn who knew the Greatest Name of Allah the Almighty. It is also said that he was one from among the scholars of the Banu Israel. Moreover, it was said to be Sulaiman himself, which is very strange and odd opinion and which As-Suhaili described to be out of context. A fourth opinion held that it was Gabriel (Peace be upon him). {I will bring it to you within the twinkling of an eye!} i.e. before you send a messenger to the farthest place on earth and he comes back to you. It was also said: before the farthest person you can see reaches you; or before your sight gets weary of starring at some point and your eye closes; or before you regain your sight if you look to the farthest place your sight can reach then you close your eye, (which is the most likely interpretation). {Then when he [Sulaiman (Solomon)] saw it placed before him} i.e. when he saw the throne of Bilqis brought and placed before him, in this too short period, from the Yemen to Jerusalem, {he said: "This is by the Grace of my Lord -to test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful!} i.e. this is by the Grace of Allah lam granted and His Grace all people are granted testing them whether they are grateful or ungrateful. {And whoever is grateful, truly, his gratitude is for (the good of) his own self} i.e. the benefit of this returns onto himself, {and**

**whoever is ungrateful, (he is ungrateful only for the loss of his own self. Certainly my Lord is Rich (Free of all needs), Bountiful}** i.e. He is neither in need of thanking of the thankful, nor is He harmed by disbelief of the disbelievers.

Then, Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) ordered her throne to be altered and disguised to test her mentality and understanding, saying **{that we may see whether she will be guided (to recognize her throne), or she will be one of those not guided. So when she came, it was said (to her): Is your throne like this? She said: (It is) as though it were the very same}**, this is due to her understanding and clear insight that she set aside the possibility that it was her own throne for she has just left it far away in the Yemen, and that she did not know that there is any who can do this marvelous act of removing it to Jerusalem.

Allah the Almighty says pertaining to Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) and his people **{And (Sulaiman (Solomon)) said: Knowledge was bestowed on us before her, and we were submitted to Allah (in Islam as Muslims before her). And that which she used to worship besides Allah has prevented her (from Islam), for she was of a disbelieving people}** i.e. worshipping the sun to whom she used to prostrate herself and her people instead of Allah the Almighty in follow of the religion of her fathers and ancestors with no evidence or proof of this. Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) previously ordered a Sarh (a glass surface with water underneath in which there are various sorts of fish and other seacreatures) to be built. Afterwards, Bilqis was ordered to enter the Sarh while Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) was sitting on his throne, **{But when she saw it, she thought it was a pool, and she (tucked up her clothes) uncovering her legs. (Sulaiman (Solomon)) said: "Verily, it is a Sarh (a glass surface with water underneath it or a palace)." She said: "My Lord! Verily, I have wronged myself, and I submit [in Islam, together with Sulaiman (Solomon)]. to Allah, the Lord of the" Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)}**.

It was said: That when Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) wanted to marry her he asked mankind about a way of removing the hair from her legs, and they mentioned the razor, but she feared thereof. Then, he (Peace be upon him) consulted the Jinn who made the bath for him. Thus, he was the first to enter the bath.

At-Tha`labi and others said: When Sulaiman married her he returned the kingdom of Yemen to her and he used to visit her there and stay for three days a month then comes back to Jerusalem on the flying carpet. In addition, he ordered the Jinn to build him three palaces in the Yemen: Ghamdan, Salhin and Bitun. And, Allah knows best!

Ibn Ishaq transmitted after some scholars on the authority of Wahb Ibn Munabih that Sulaiman (Peace be upon him) did not marry her, but he got her married to

the king of Ramadan and let her ruling over the Yemen again, and he (Peace be upon him) subjected to her the king of the Jinn in Yemen to build her the aforementioned three palaces. This narration is not authenticated like the previous one, and Allah knows best!

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(8)

## The Story of Saba'(Sheba)

Allah the Almighty says:

**{Indeed there was for Saba' (Sheba) a sign in their dwelling-place -two gardens on the right hand and on the left,; (and it was said to them:) "Eat of the provision of your Lord, and be grateful to Him.' A fair land and an Oft-Forgiving Lord! But they turned away (from the obedience of Allah), so We sent against them Sail AI-'Arim (flood released from the dam), and We converted their two gardens into gardens producing bitter bad fruit, and tamarisks, and some few lote-trees. Like this We requited them because they were ungrateful disbelievers. And never do We requite in such a way except those who are ungrateful (disbelievers). And We placed, between them and the towns which We had blessed, towns easy to be seen, and We made the stages (of journey) between them easy (saying): "Travel in them safely both by night and day." But they said: "Our Lord! Make the stages between our journey longer," and they wronged themselves; so We made them as tales (in the land), and We dispersed them all totally. Verily, in this are indeed signs for every steadfast, grateful (person)}. (Saba', 15-19)**

Scholars of genealogy -among them was Muhammad Ibn Ishaq -said: the name of Saba' is `Abd Shams Ibn Yashjub Ibn Ya`rub Ibn Qahtan. He was the first to take captives and he was very generous to the people. As-Suhaili said: it is said that he was the first person to be crowned, and some scholars said he was Muslim and that he composed poetry in which he brought good news to the advent of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). This last saying was attributed to Ibn Didya in his book titled: [At-Tanwir fi Maulid Al-Bashir An-Nadhir]

Imam Ahmed said: I have been told by Abu `Abdur Rahman, after `Abdullah Ibn Luhai`ah, after `Abdullah Ibn Da`lah saying: I heard `Abdullah Ibn Al-`Abbas as saying: A man asked Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) about Saba', whether it was a man, a woman, or a name of a land? He (Peace be upon him) said: Verily, he was a man to whom ten sons were born. Six thereof inhabited the Yemen and four Sham (Syria). Those in Yemen were: Madhhaj, Kindah, Al-Azd, Al-Ash `ariyun, Anmar and Himyar. And those who inhabited Syria were: Laghm, Judham, `Amilah and Ghassan." The Questioner was Farwah Ibn Musaik Al-Ghatifi.

This means that the term Saba' covers all these tribes; among them also were At-Tababi`ah (Sing. Tubba`) in the Yemen. Their kings used to put crowns on as were done by kings of Persia. The Arabs used to call whomsoever rules over the Yemen and Hadramaut "Tubba'", as they used to call kings of Sham (Syria) and the Arab Peninsula "Caesar", and the ruler of Persia "Khusrau", the ruler of Egypt Fir`aun (Pharaoh), the ruler of Abyssinia "Negus", and the ruler of India "Ptolemes", and Bilqis was from among the Himyar kings who ruled the Yemen. They lived in happiness and easiness, with abundance of sustenance: fruits, plants, etc. and they were righteous people who followed the Straight Path, but when they altered the Grace of Allah and denied it, they inevitably incurred to themselves and their peoples destruction and devastation.

Muhammad Ibn Ishaq narrating from Wahb Ibn Munabah said: Allah the Almighty sent them thirteen Prophets. And, As-Sadi claimed that Allah the Almighty sent them twelve thousand Prophets. Allah knows best!

The point is, when they replaced guidance with misguidance and prostrated themselves before the sun instead of Allah the Almighty, the matter which took place during the era of Bilqis and her ancestors and that which continued till Allah sent over them a flood released from the dam. Allah the Almighty explained: **{But they turned away (from the obedience of Allah), so We sent against them Sail Al-`Arim (flood released from the dam), and We converted their two gardens into gardens producing bitter bad fruit, and tamarisks, and some few lote trees. Like this We requited them because they were ungrateful disbelievers. And never do We requite in such a way except those who are ungrateful (disbelievers)}.**

Many scholars mentioned that the Dam of Ma'rab was built to keep water behind two great mountains, and when the water raised, the people began to implant orchards and fruitful trees and many kinds of vegetables. It is said that the originator of the darn was Saba' Ibn Ya`rub who changed the course of seventy valleys forcing them to pour out water therein. In addition, he forced the water to get out from thirty springs or holes, but he died before completing it. So, the tribe of Himyar perfected it and it was of the space of one square league. Thereupon, they were living in happiness and abundance. Qatada and others said: the woman (from among them) would go putting a basket on her head, and it would be filled with fresh, ripe fruits, and they said that the air they breathed was so clean and pure that neither flies, nor harmful germs were found in their land. Allah the Almighty says: **{Indeed there was for Saba' (Sheba) a sign in their dwelling -place- two gardens on the right hand and on the left; (and it was said to them:) Eat of the provision of your Lord, and be grateful to Him. A fair land and an Oft-Forgiving Lord!}** (Saba', 15) and, **{And (remember) when your Lord proclaimed: If you give thanks (by accepting Faith and worshipping none but Allah), I will give you more (of My Blessings); but if you are thankless (i.e. disbelievers), verily My punishment is indeed severe}.** (Ibrahim, 7) But, when they

adorned other than Allah the Almighty and arrogantly dealt with His Grace -the stages (of journey) between them were easy in which they used to travel safely both by night and day -and asked Him to make the stages between their journeys longer and severer. Thus, they asked to turn the good into what is bad like the Children of Israel who asked Allah the Almighty to turn Manna and quails into herbs, cucumbers, Fum (wheat or garlic), lentils and onions. Thereupon, they were deprived that great blessing and comprehensive grace; their land was destroyed and they themselves were scattered allover the globe. Allah the Almighty says: **{But they turned away (from the obedience of Allah), so We sent against them Sail Al-`Arim (flood released from the dam)}**. Many scholars said: Allah the Almighty sent mice or rats on the bases of the darn, and when they discovered this they brought cats to eat them up, but all was in vain. The bases became very weak and finally the darn collapsed and the water drowned everything. Their good fruitful trees turned into -as explained by Allah the Almighty -bad ones: **{And We converted their two gardens into gardens producing bitter bad fruit, and tamarisks}**. And **{and some few lote-trees}** for they produce Nabk which is very few among the countless thorns they have. Allah the Almighty says: **{Like this We requited them because they were ungrateful disbelievers. And never do We requite in such a way except those who are ungrateful (disbelievers)}** i.e. We only punish -with this severe punishment those who disbelieved in Us, belied Our Messengers, disobeyed Our Orders, and violated Our Boundaries.

Allah the Almighty says: **{So We made them as tales (in the land), and We dispersed them all totally}** i.e. after the destruction of their gardens, properties and land, they needed to travel and move away. Thus, they scattered in different parts of the land as some of them moved to the Hejaz, and Khuza' ah moved to Mecca. Some of them also moved to Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah, they were the first to inhabit it. Then, they were followed by three tribes from the Jews: the Banu Qainuqa', Banu Quraizah, and Banu An-Nadir. The Jews made coalitions with the Aus and Khazraj and lived there (till the time of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him)). Some of them, moved to Sham (Syria) and afterwards they converted to Christianity: Ghassan, Amilah, Bahra', Lukham, Judham, Tanukh, Taghlab, and others.

Muhammad Ibn Ishaq, in his **The Prophet's Biography** [Kitab As-Sirah], said that the first to quit the Yemen before the Sail Al-'Arim (the flood released from the dam) was' Amr Ibn 'Amir Al-Lukhami. Lukham was the son of 'Adyi Ibn Al-Harith Ibn Murrah Ibn Azd Ibn Zaid Ibn Muha' Ibn 'Amr Ibn 'Uraib Ibn Yashjub Ibn Zaid Ibn Kahlan Ibn Saba'. It is said also by Ibn Hisham: Lukham Ibn 'Adyi Ibn 'Amr Ibn Gharib Ibn Saba'. Ibn Ishaq said: the reason behind his moving from Yemen as I was told by Abu Zaid Al-Ansari that he saw a mouse or rat digging beneath the dam of Ma'rab which was used to keep the water behind, so he realized that the dam would not stand so long, so he intended to move from the Yemen. However, he tricked his people by ordering his youngest son to slap

him on the face before the people. The son did what he was ordered to and 'Amr said: I would never live in a place where my youngest son slapped me on the face. And he offered his property to be sold. The noblemen of the Yemen said: seize the opportunity of 'Amr's rage and buy all his property. Hence, he moved along with his children and their offspring. The Azd said: we never leave 'Amr Ibn 'Amir, so they sold their properties and accompanied him in his fleeing (without knowing his real intentions). They arrived at the land of `Ak who fought against them and their war had its ups and downs.

Finally, they departed from the land of 'Ak and dispersed in the lands. Ibn Jafnah Ibn 'Amr Ibn 'Amir went to Sham (Syria), Al-Aus and Al-Khazraj went to Yathrib (Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah), Khuza'ah went to Marran, Azd As-Sarah went to As-Sarah, and Azd 'Amman went to 'Amman, then Allah the Almighty sent the flood against the dam and it was totally collapsed. The Glorious Qur'an bears witness to this incident.

As-Sadi narrated the like and Muhammad Ibn Ishaq said that 'Amr Ibn `Amir was a priest. Others said that his wife was Tarifah Bint Al-Khair Al-Himyariyah and that she was a priestess. She foretold the destruction of their country as if they saw an indication in that rat or mouse, so they did what they did, and Allah knows best! His whole story was mentioned in the Exegesis on the authority of `Ikriamh after Ibn Abu Hatim.

However, not all the people of Saba' moved from the Yemen after the collapsing of the dam, but the majority thereof stayed there. Only the people of the Dam (Ma'rab) went away and dispersed in the land. This is expressed in the Hadith mentioned earlier that was narrated by `Abdullah Ibn `Abbas, that the majority of the Yemenites did not movem from the Yemen. Only four tribes quitted and six tribes stayed. They continued to live there and the ruling was kept by them and the Tababi`ah till they were deprived of their own self-ruling - for about seventy years -by the army sent by the Negus under the command of Abraha and Aryat. Then, it was regained by Saif Ibn Dhi Yazan AI-Himyari shortly before Prophet Muhammad's birth. Then, Allah's Prophet (Peace be upon him) sent to the Yemen `Ali Ibn Abu Talib and Khalid Ibn Al-Walid, then Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari and Mu`adh Ibn Jabal to invite the people to embrace Islam. Then, Al-Aswad Al-`Ansi seized the Yemen and drove out the deputies of Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him). During the era of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq, Al-Aswad Al-`Ansi was killed and the Muslims had the upper hand in the Yemen.

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

(12)

## People of the Cave

Allah the Almighty says:

**{Do you think that the people of the Cave and the Inscription (the news or the names of the people of the Cave) were a wonder among Our Signs? (Remember) when the young men fled for refuge (from their disbelieving folk) to the Cave. They said: "Our Lord! Bestow on us mercy from Yourself, and facilitate for us our affair in the right way!" Therefore, We covered up their (sense of) hearing (causing them to go in deep sleep) in the Cave for a number of years. Then We raised them up (from their sleep), that We might test which of the two parties was best at calculating the time period that they had tarried. We narrate unto you (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) their story with truth: Truly they were young men who believed in their Lord (Allah), and We increased them in guidance. And We made their hearts firm and strong (with the light of Faith in Allah and bestowed upon them patience to bear the separation of their kith and kin and dwellings.) when they stood up and said: "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, never shall we call upon any llah (god) other than Him,' if we did, we should indeed have uttered an enormity in disbelief."These our people have taken for worship alihah (gods) other than Him (Allah). Why do they not bring for them a clear authority? And who does more wrong than he who invents a lie against Allah. (The young men said to one another): "And when you withdraw from them, and that which they worship, except Allah, then seek refuge in the Cave; your Lord will open a way for you from His Mercy and will make easy for you your affair (i.e. will give you what you will need of provision, dwelling)." And you might have seen the sun, when it rose, declining to the right from their Cave, and when it set, turning away from them to the left, while they lay in the midst of the Cave. That is (one) of the Ayat (proofs, evidences, signs) of Allah. He whom Allah guides, he is the rightly guided,' but he whom He sends astray, for him you will find no Wali (guiding friend) to lead him (to the Right Path). And you would have thought them awake, whereas they were asleep. And We turned them on their right and on their left sides, and their dog stretching forth his two forelegs at the entrance [of the Cave or in the space near to the entrance of the Cave (as a guard at the gate)]. Had you looked at them, you would certainly have turned back from them in flight, and would certainly have been filled with awe of them. Likewise, We awakened**

**them (from their long deep sleep) that they might question one another. A speaker from among them said: "How long have you stayed (here)?" They said: "We have stayed (perhaps) a day or part of a day." They said: "Your Lord (Alone) knows best how long you have stayed (here). So send one of you with this silver coin of yours to the town, and let him find out which is the good lawful food, and bring some of that to you. And let him be careful and let no man know of you. "For, if they come to know of you, they will stone you (to death or abuse and harm you) or turn you back to their religion; and in that case you will never be successful." And thus We made their case known (to the people), that they might know that the Promise of Allah is true, and that there can be no doubt about the Hour. (Remember) when they (the people of the city) disputed among themselves about their case, they said: "Construct a building over them,. their Lord knows best about them,." (then) those who won their point said (most probably the disbelievers): "We verily shall build a place of worship over them." (Some) say they were three, the dog being the fourth among them; and (others) say they were five, the dog being the sixth, guessing at the unseen; (yet others) say they were seven, and the dog being the eighth. Say (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)): "My Lord knows best their number; none knows them but a few." So debate not (about their number) except with the clear proof (which We have revealed to you). And consult not any of them (people of the Scripture -Jews and Christians) about (the affair on the people of the Cave. And never say of anything, "I shall do such and such thing tomorrow." Except (with the saying), "if Allah will!" And remember your Lord when you forget and say: "It may be that my Lord guides me unto a nearer way of truth than this." And they stayed in their Cave three hundred (solar) years, adding nine (for lunar years). Say: "Allah knows best how long they stayed. With Him is (the knowledge on the Unseen of the heavens and the earth. How clearly He sees, and hears (everything)! They have no Wali (Helper, Disposer of affairs, Protector) other than Him, and He makes none to share in His Decision and His Rule."(Al-Kahf, 9-26)**

The reason behind the revelation of these verses and those relating the story of Dhul-Qarnain was cited by Muhammad Ibn Ishaq in his biography of the Prophet: that the people of Quraish sent to the Jews asking them for things to test the Prophet (Peace be upon him) with. The Jews said: ask him about a group of people who disappeared in the past and none has any knowledge about them; about a man who traveled through the land; and about Ar-Ruh (the Spirit). Thereupon, Almighty Allah revealed His Statement, **{And they ask you (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) concerning the Ruh (the Spirit); Say: "The Ruh (the Spirit) is one of the things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord. And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little"} (Al-Isra', 85) and, {And they ask you about Dhul-**

**Qarnain. Say (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)): "I shall recite to you something of his story"} (Al-Kahf, 83) and here He says: {Do you think that the people of the Cave and "Ar-Raqim" the Inscription (the news or the names of the people of the Cave) were a wonder among Our Signs?}, i.e. they are not more amazing than what We have given you of the great news, astonishing signs and gigantic wonders. However, a cave is a hole in the mountain. Mentioned Shu' aib Al-Jiba'i: their cave was called "Haizam". As for "Ar-Raqim", Ibn 'Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) said: I do not know what it means! Some scholars such as Ibn Jarir and others said: it is the record where their news and names are written thereafter. It was also said: it is the name of the mountain their cave was in. However, many other things were said pertaining to this, but the knowledge thereof rests only with Allah the Almighty Who knows the best! Shu'aib Al-Jiba'i said: their dog was called "Himran".**

The fact that the Jews knew about them nullifies the claim of some interpreters that they were after Jesus (Peace be upon him) and that they were Christians. However, it is clear that their people were idol-worshippers. Many interpreters and historians said that they lived during the lifetime of a king called "Diqyanus" and that they were sons of some nobles or kings. They met on a feast day and saw the rituals their people were performing in worship of the idols. At this very moment, Allah removed the veils from their hearts and they realized that their people were wrong-doers. Consequently, they deserted the religion of their people and resorted to the worship of Allah Alone. It is also laid: that each one of them when guided by Allah to the True Religion, abandoned his people and they coincidentally gathered in one place. Imam Muslim transmitted in his Sahih the following Prophetic Hadith which supports that meaning: "Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) as saying: Souls are troops collected together and those who familiarized with each other (in the heaven from where these come) would have affinity, with one another (in the world) and those amongst them who opposed each other (in the Heaven) would also be divergent (in the world)." That, they asked one another about their affair and hence, they agreed on deserting and abandoning their people and fleeing with their true religion. Allah the Almighty says: **{We narrate unto you (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) their story with truth: Truly they were young men who believed in their Lord (Allah), and We increased them in guidance. And We made their hearts firm and strong (with the light of Faith in Allah and bestowed upon them patience to bear the separation) of their kith and kin and dwellings.) when they stood up and said: "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, never shall we call upon any Ilah (god) other than Him; if we did, we should indeed have uttered an enormity in disbelief. "These our people have taken for worship alihah (gods) other than Him (Allah). Why do they not bring for them a clear authority? And who does more wrong than he who invents a lie against Allah}. (Al-**

Kahf, 13-15) "Clear authority" here means obvious evidence or proof. **{And who does more wrong than he who invents a lie against Allah. (The young men said to one another): "And when you withdraw from them, and that which they worship, except Allah,}** (Al-Kahf, 15, 16) i.e. when you deserted them and their idols that they used to worship others instead of Allah the Almighty. Our Prophet Ibrahim (Peace be upon him) said: **{And (remember) when Ibrahim (Abraham) said to his father and his people: "Verily, I am innocent of what you worship, except Him (i.e. Allah Alone I worship none) Who did create me; and verily He will guide me "}**. (Az-Zukhruf, 26, 27) Thus, some of these young men said: as you did desert your people's religion, you should also desert them in body and figure so as to be safe from the possibility that their evil may touches you, **{then seek refuge in the Cave,. your Lord will open a way for you from His Mercy and will make easy for you your affair (i.e. will give you what you will need of provision, dwelling)}**, (Al-Kahf, 16) i.e. Allah will draw on you His cover, protect you and reward you with the best of all rewards. Then, Allah described the cave to which they resorted stating that its door is to the north saying: **{And you might have seen the sun, when it rose, declining to the right from their Cave, and when it set, turning away from them to the left}**, i.e. the sun rises on the western side of their cave, then it declines to the right side thereof. And, when it sets its rays come towards the cave from its eastern side. Here, the wisdom is that the sun enters their cave on its rising and setting in order to refresh the air from time to time. **{While they lay in the midst of the Cave. That is (one) of the Ayat (proofs, evidences, signs) of Allah}**, i.e. their stay on this state for a very long period of time without eating and drinking is one of the Signs of Allah and a proof of His Magnificent Ability. **{He whom Allah guides, he is the rightly guided,. but he whom He sends astray, for him you will find no Wali (guiding friend) to lead him (to the Right Path). And you would have thought them awake, whereas they were asleep}**, for their eyes were open in order to be kept sound. **{And We turned them on their right and on their left sides}**, it was said: they used to be turned from one side to the other once every year. However, the number of the turnings is known only to Allah the Almighty Who knows best!

Allah the Almighty says: **{And their dog stretching forth his two forelegs at the entrance [of the Cave or in the space near to the entrance of the Cave (as a guard at the gate)]}**, i.e. their dog which accompanied them when they abandoned their people did not enter the cave with them, instead, it stayed at the entrance stretching forth his two forelegs thereat. This is for it was highly disciplined and also as a sign of honor to them because the angels do not enter a house in which there is a dog. Thus, the dog

was blessed because he was in their company. However, many tales and narrations were invented with regard to the dog's name and color.

Scholars differed on the location of this cave. Some of them said: It is in the land of Aylah (i.e. Jerusalem). Others said: It is in the land of Ninawa. And others said: it is in the Sham (Syrian territories) which is more proper and Allah knows best!<sup>8</sup> After Allah the Almighty gave us perfect and complete description of them and made us as seeing them, He said: **{Had you looked at them, you would certainly have turned back from them in flight, and would certainly have been filled with awe of them}**, i.e. because of the dignity and loftiness of their appearance. The addressed her is not only Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) but also all mankind because it is a human nature to feel awe when seeing a magnificent or dignified thing. Then, Allah the Almighty awakened them (from their long deep sleep) after three-hundred and nine years; then a speaker from among them said: **{"How long have you stayed (here)?" They said: "We have stayed (perhaps) a day or part of a day." They said: "Your Lord (Alone) knows best how long you have stayed (here). So send one of you with this silver coin of yours to the town}** the coins they had were called "Dafsus". **{And let him find out which is the good lawful food, and bring some of that to you}**, i.e. to eat thereof. This is a sign of their piety and godfearing. **{And let him be careful}** during entering that town **{and let no man know of you. For, if they come to know of you, they will stone you (to death or abuse and harm you) or turn you back to their religion; and in that case you will never be successful}**, i.e. if you turn back to their religion after you are saved by Allah the Almighty. All this because they thought they slept a day or part of a day, and they did not imagine to have slept for more than three-hundred years. The period in which almost everything have changed and their generation passed away and other generations inhabited the land. Thus, when one of them went to the town to get the food, he feared that the people would recognize him, so he disguised. Instead, the town and its people found him to be a stranger and feared that he might be a spy or that he could harm them in any way. Some scholars said that he escaped from them. But, others said: he informed them with the news and took them to the cave to see his companions. When they approached the cave, he entered it and told his companions all about the period they spent sleeping in the cave and they confessed it to be the Divine Decree of Allah the Almighty. It was said: They went on sleeping; and others said: They all fell dead.

<sup>8</sup> On the sixties, an archeologist called Muhammad Tayseer Zabyan discovered a cave in Jordan, six miles away from Amman, in a region called " Ar-Rajeeb" whose description goes with that which is mentioned in the verses. The great scholar, Abu Al-A' la Al-Maududi visited it and agreed with many scholars who viewed the same opinion. And, I myself visited it in 1986. (Majdi M. AshShahawi)

As for the people of the city, it was said that they could not see their place in the cave. Or, they could not enter the cave because of their cowardice, or feeling their lofty dignity. However, they (the people of the city) disputed among themselves about their case, some of them said: **{Construct a building over them}**, i.e. block the cave's gate to prevent them from getting out or anyone from touching them with harm. But, those who won their point said: that will be blessed because its nearness to these righteous and godly people. This was common in the previous eras and periods prior to Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). But, Islam rejects this deed (building places of worship over the graves of anyone even if it is a Prophet): the Prophet (Peace be upon him) said: "May Allah curse the Jews and Christians for they built the places of worship at the graves of their Prophets." The Prophet (Peace be upon him) was warning (Muslims) against what the previous nations used to do with the graves of their pious people.

Allah the Almighty says: **{And thus We made their case known (to the people), that they might know that the Promise of Allah is true, and that there can be no doubt about the Hour}**, i.e. to let the people know that resurrection is true and that there can be no doubt about the Hour if they know that these young men slept for more than three hundred years then they were awoken unchanged. So, He Who kept them in this state all that period, is capable to resurrect and give life again to the dead bodies after they undergo decomposition. Really, the believers do not doubt this in the least: **{Verily, His Command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, 'Be!' -and it is!}**. (Ya-Sin, 82)

Then, He says: **{(Some) say they were three, the dog being the fourth among them,' and (others) say they were five, the dog being the sixth, guessing at the unseen,' (yet others) say they were seven, and the dog being the eighth}**, as Allah cited the dispute of the people among themselves as to their number. He cited three sayings, the first two He refuted and the third He stated, a matter which indicates that the third is the true one. However, Allah guided His Prophet (Peace be upon him) to the good manners to be followed in such a case: that one should say "Allah knows best!" For this, Allah the Almighty says: **{My Lord knows best their number}**.

His Statement: **{None knows them but a few}, from among the people. (So debate not (about their number) except with the clear proof (which We have revealed to you)}**, i.e. an easy debate and do not exert yourself in such matters. **{And consult not any of them (people of the Scripture -Jews and Christians) about (the affair of) the people of the Cave}**, as He concealed their number from the very beginning of the story, saying: **{Truly they were young men who believed in their Lord (Allah)}**.

(Al-Kahf, 13) So, if there was any benefit in mentioning their number, Allah the Almighty would certainly revealed it to us from the very beginning!

Allah the Almighty says: **{And never say of anything, "I shall do such and such thing tomorrow." Except (with the saying), "if Allah will!" And remember your Lord when you forget and say: "It may be that my Lord guides me unto a nearer way of truth than this "}**, this is a great and high moral lesson taught by Allah the Almighty that when anyone wishes to do something, he should say "If Allah wills", because man cannot know what is hidden with Allah for tomorrow or for the future. Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Prophet (Peace be upon him) as saying that "Sulaiman Ibn Dawud, the Messenger of Allah, observed: I will have an intercourse with seventy wives during the night; all of them will give birth to a male child who will fight in the cause of Allah. His companion or the angels said to him: Say, "If Allah wills." But he (Sulaiman) did not say so, and he forgot it. And none of his wives gave birth to a child, but one who gave birth to a premature child. Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon him) said: Had he said Insha'Allah (if Allah so willed), he would not have failed and his desire would have been materialized. "

Allah the Almighty says: **{And remember your Lord when you forget}**, for forgetting may be caused by the Devil, and remembering Allah gets the Devil out of one's heart and thus he remembers what he has forgotten. **{And say: "It may be that my Lord guides me unto a nearer way of truth than this"}**, i.e. if there were controversies and disputes about something, one should resort to Allah Who can facilitate it and make it so easy. Then, Allah the Almighty says: **{And they stayed in their Cave three hundred (solar) years, adding nine}**, i.e. for lunar years. **{Say: Allah knows best how long they stayed}**, i.e. if you are asked about this and you do not know exactly the answer, you should only attribute the matter to Allah the Almighty **{With Him is (the knowledge on the Unseen of the heavens and the earth)}**, i.e. He knows the Unseen and gives knowledge thereof to none but Whom He wishes from among His creatures; **{How clearly He sees, and hears (everything)!}**, i.e. He puts everything in its proper place with His Perfect Knowledge and Justice. Then, He says: **{They have no Wali (Helper, Disposer of affairs, Protector) other than Him, and He makes none to share in His Decision and His Rule}**, i.e. He is the only Disposer of affairs and He is the King Who rules over everything.