

Sura Sad, Verses 18-19

إِنَّا سَخَّرْنَا الْجِبَالَ مَعَهُ يُسَبِّحْنَ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِشْرَاقِ

Surely We made the mountains to sing the glory of Allah along with him at the evening and dawn

وَالطَّيْرَ مَحْشُورَةً ۗ كُلُّ لَّهُ أَوَّابٌ

And the birds in flocks all joined in singing with him

Reflections

- How did the mountains and the birds glorify with Nabi Dawood?
- why particularly at the times of evening and dawn? Are those special times?
- were other people also able to see and hear this glorification?
- why was Nabi Dawood chosen for this special gift from God?

Tafsir

After introducing Nabi Dawood in verse 17 as a man of strength, Almighty Allah now explains the special abilities given to this great Prophet. These two verses talk about the mountains and the birds that glorified God along with Nabi Dawood in the morning and in the evening. Both the mountains and the birds were obedient to him. Nabi Dawood was given a book known as the Psalms (*Zabur*). It contained stories, praise of God, and supplications. Nabi Dawood would recite from the Psalms in a beautiful voice which all other creatures would hear.

All of creation has some form of understanding through which they worship God. In fact the Quran says, there is not a single thing in the Heavens and the Earth except that it glorifies God. Glorification of creatures other than the human beings is through their obedience in following the path ordained for them, and the sounds that they make.

The mountains and birds glorified God just all creatures did. But when they heard the sound of Nabi Dawood reciting from the *Zabur* and glorifying God they were affected by it. They recited along with him at the same time and their sounds were in unison with his. This was the miraculous ability given to Nabi Dawood. This natural glorification, usually not perceived by others, was audible to all.

Early morning and evening are the best times for the remembrance of Allah. These are the times when night turns into day and day turns into night. This constant alternation of the night and day is often mentioned in the Quran as signs of Allah. Believers are alert to this and intensify their remembrance and glorification of Allah at those times.

Nabi Dawood was given this special gift because of his sincere love for Allah and his constant remembrance of Him. Some believe his name comes from two words – dawa (داوى) and biwud-din (بود) meaning cure through love, as in he cured his wounds with the love of God.

Relevant Verses

It was from the Grace of God that the mountains and birds glorified with Nabi Dawood.

Sura Saba, 34:10

Hadith

He [Nabi Dawood] would go out to the deserts and recite from the Zabur. And when he would recite the Zabur there was no mountain, no stone, and no bird except that it would answer him.

Source: Kamaluddin wa Tamamun Ne'mah, Shaykh Sadooq, Vol.2, pg 524

Important Lessons

- 1) Glorification of God is the practice of all creation.
- 2) A strong connection to God increases awareness of the natural happenings of the universe.
- 3) Created beings follow the lead of the human beings in worship and glorification of God.
- 4) Mornings and evenings are special times for the remembrance of Allah.

Story

Once when Nabi Dawood finished glorifying God, a small frog came to him. 'O Dawood' asked the frog 'are you pleased with your worship of God today.' Nabi Dawood said he was pleased. The frog then told him 'O Prophet of God, do not be too pleased with your glorification of God. Each night I and my kind glorify God a thousand times and each glorification is followed by three praises. We do this from our home in the water. After that when we hear the sound of a bird flying above the water and realize that it is hungry, we jump up and show ourselves so the bird may catch us and eat us.'

The frog was sent by God to remind Nabi Dawood to be humble. A small frog glorified God more than he did, and was ready to sacrifice his life so another creation could live.

Possible Ideas for activities

- 1) Artwork – a Prophet with mountains and birds surrounding him. Can be a painting, black and white charcoal art, a collage, a class mural . . .
- 2) Let students recite different glorifications of God they know (Tasbihate Arba', dhikr of ruku and sujud . . .) They can recite it individually, in groups, and then all together. Discuss how the experience felt.
- 3) Discuss humility and the lesson from the frog.

Sources:

Āytaullāh Nāsir Makārim Shirāzī (ed), *Tafsīr-e Namūneh*;
Aghae Muhsin Qaraati, *Tafsire Nur*
Shaykh Rizwan Arastu, *God's Emissaries: Adam to Jesus*