

Quran Appreciation - Fall Term (Sep - Dec 2017) The Story of Lady Hannah and Lady Maryam (a)

Concern for future generations

Verse for the session

وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

and I have named her Maryam and I seek Your protection for her and her progeny from Shaytan, the outcast

(Sura Aale Imran, verse 36)

Reflections

- why did she choose the name Maryam?
- she does not only pray for her child, but also for her progeny.
- the first thing she asks for the child is protection from Shaytan. Why?

Cross reference verses

- 1) **Shaytan** - Shaytan promises to lead the progeny of Nabi Adam astray - 7:16-17, 17:62, he is an open enemy -2:208.
- 2) **Concern for progeny** - Nabi Ibrahim and Nabi Ismail pray for their progeny - 2:128, Nabi Zakariyya prays for his progeny, 3:38, Nabi Ibrahim prays for his progeny to be from those who establish prayer - 14:40, The prayer of believers - 25:74,

Tafsir

Lady Hannah names the baby Maryam. The name means a servant, or worshipper, in the language of that place. This choice of name shows the love for God that Lady Hannah had and her servitude to Him. She had a strong desire that her child should be a true worshipper of God. Although the child was not what she had expected it does not make a difference to her love for God and her intention that her child should be dedicated to God. She immediately names her as a worshipper of God showing that male or female, she would fulfill her vow to dedicate her child.

A good name is the right of a child and names have an effect on human beings. When a child is given a good name that has a virtuous meaning he or she tries to live up to that name. The name has an impact on people who meet the person and its effects last a lifetime. The Holy Prophet (s)

says it is the responsibility of every parent to choose a good name for their child. He gave such importance to good names that he changed the names of some of the companions after they accepted Islam. Names can be words that have good meanings or names of Prophets, Imams, and other respected personalities.

Lady Hannah is concerned that her child, and the children born from her, should be good servants of God. So she asks for protection from Shaytan who always tried to lead human beings astray. That is her first prayer for her child. Shaytan is an open enemy of the human being. In many places in the Quran (see cross reference verses) he promises to lead the human being astray.

To fight against the whisperings of Shaytan is the constant struggle of a believer. He uses different tactics to lead people astray. He allows them to justify their deeds (or lack of), he gives them excuses, inclines them towards laziness and comfort, puts doubts in their hearts, . . . and generally uses many ways to turn people away from God. Only God can help a person be strong against his tactics. That is why believers often seek refuge in Allah from the Shaytan.

Lady Hannah was a very spiritual woman. Her conversation with Allah, her concern for her child's protection and purity, all reveal how strong her faith was and how connected she was to God.

Story about Shaytan

Once, Shaytan came to Prophet Yahya Ibn Zakariya (a). Seeing that he had in his possession numerous ropes, Yahya (a.s) inquired: "O' Iblis! What are these ropes that you hold in your hand?" Shaytan replied: "These ropes are the various attachments, inclinations and desires that I have found in the children of Adam."

(He would pull people towards his side through such attachments and desires. These are not real ropes but are metaphorical)

Yahya (a) asked: 'Does there exist a rope for me too?'

Satan said: 'Yes. When eat your fill, you experience weightiness and it is for this reason you become disinclined with respect to your prayers, dhikr and supplications.'

Hearing this, Yahya (a) vowed: 'By Allah! Never shall I eat to my fill, ever again.'

(Source: <https://www.al-islam.org/anecdotes-reflection-part-3-sayyid-ali-akbar-sadaaqat/50-satan#5-prophet-yahya-and-satan>)

Important Lessons

1) A good name is important. It is one of the rights of a child.

- 2) Believers are concerned about their descendants.
- 3) We must seek protection of Allah from Shaytan often. We need to counter his whisperings and struggle against him.

Ideas

1) Let students write their name in Arabic and the meaning. They could also choose a few other names they like and discuss/write why they like those names.

2) Activities on Shaytan (please modify as appropriate)

<http://scripturelady.com/satans-stop-signs/>

https://www.sermons4kids.com/resisting_temptation_group_activities.htm

<http://www.parentinglikehannah.com/2015/09/teaching-kids-about-satan.html> (a good one with points about how to explain Shaytan to children)