

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

Growth in all aspects of Life

Verse for the session

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا

So her Lord accepted her with a good acceptance and made her grow up a good growing and gave her into the charge of Zakariya

(Sura Aale Imran, verse 37)

Reflections

- what growing is referred to here?
- how can growth be good? or bad?
- If you think of God as the gardener who makes us grow, what are we growing into?

Cross reference verses

- 1) **Believers grow in stages.** Comparison to the growth of the tree - 48:29. To vegetation growing from the earth - 71:17

Tafsir

When Allah accepts Maryam (a), He nurtures her growth and progress. The word *anbata* here is the same word used for the growth of plants and the progress towards perfection of a tiny seed. A similar term of growth is used in Sūratul Fath where Allah talks about the growth of those who are with the Holy Prophet (s): like a seed that puts forth its sprout, then strengthens it so it becomes stout and stands firmly on its stem, delighting the sowers (Q 48:29).

Allah helped facilitate the growth of Lady Maryam into a virtuous and spiritual woman. Growth is towards perfection, to the fulfillment of the actual purpose of existence. All aspects of lady Maryam's life were perfected; her worship and closeness to God, her Akhlaq and character, her knowledge and wisdom . . . such that she was then chosen as one of the four special women of the Islamic Ummah. According to the Holy Prophet (s) these are Asiya the wife of Firaun, Maryam the mother of Nabi Isa (a), Khadija, the wife of the Holy Prophet (s), and Fatima Zahra the daughter of the Holy Prophet (s).

The inner potential of human beings can be nurtured into progressive growth leading to perfection. Just as a seed has potential that can be nurtured by skilled gardeners and can eventually become a beautiful plant; a human being has potential that can be nurtured. Under the care and guidance of Divine leaders with their wisdom and knowledge, a human being can bloom and make manifest the potential that Allah has placed inside him.

Conditions for Growth

Plants (nabaat), grow from the earth and evolve toward the source of light, but they must be "cultivated". There are four fundamental stages in cultivation. They are:

1. Cleaning or changing the environment. This includes removing weeds (harmful things), internal and external debris from the soil.
2. Breaking up the soil - to prepare for sowing seeds.
3. Sowing / planting seeds.
4. Nurturing - which includes plenty of sunlight and water.

(from http://www.islamicbulletin.org/newsletters/issue_21/life.aspx)

These are the basic steps we must follow when we grow plants, or grow a garden of plants. These steps can also be applied to us and our spiritual life as believers.

Important Lessons

- 1) A human being is always growing, physically as well as emotionally, mentally and spiritually.
- 2) There must be nurturing of good growth by providing the necessary requirements.
- 3) Allah gives us situations in life through which we grow.

Ideas

- 1) Children can do an activity on the growth of a tree.
- 2) Play a game where you put up different scenarios or circumstances in life. Let children go around in groups and write how each helps them grow in different ways. (Example; failing a test. Opportunities for Growth in it - learning to take disappointment, not resenting others success, working harder next time, taking things more seriously . . .)

Check this: <http://thunterajh.blogspot.ca/2011/07/there-tree-in-that-seed.html>