

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

Lady Maryam in the Temple of Jerusalem

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

- how did the Lord accept Lady Maryam? (biqabulin *hasanin* - good, gracious, pleasant . . .)
- what made the offering of Lady Maryam being dedicated to the temple so beautiful that it was accepted so well (sincerity of intention, love of God, closeness to God . . .)

Cross reference verses

- 1) **Asking for acceptance.** Nabi Ibrahim and Ismail ask for acceptance of their actions - 2:127.
- 2) **Acceptance of deeds** - Allah accepts the offering of Habil but not that of Qabil - 5:27.
- 3) God accepts the best of the deeds of the believers - 46:16

Tafsir

This verse shows the status of Lady Hannah with Allah. Her offering of her daughter to serve Allah in the temple of Jerusalem is accepted graciously, as in accepted with pleasure. Note that the pronoun 'ha' in taqabbalaha shows that it is Maryam herself who is accepted by Allah. By accepting her it means she was now chosen to be a special servant of Allah destined for great service to Him.

The acceptance of Lady Maryam was conveyed through the facilitation of her entry into the temple. Although they had always accepted boys before, the priests agreed to let a female in and made arrangements for her. Some Mufassirin also say the acceptance was conveyed to Lady Hannah through *Ilham* - an inner voice giving a message from Allah.

The verse shows how the sincere action of Lady Hannah resulted in so many different ways in which Allah looked after her daughter - she was accepted into the temple, Allah caused her to

grow both physically and spiritually, and he made Prophet Zakariya her guardian. All issues are looked after when you trust God and do things for Him only. Imam Ali (a) says; *If a man sets right matters between himself and Allah, then Allah sets right matters between him and other people; and if a man sets right the affairs of his next life then Allah sets right for him the affairs of this world.* (Nahjul Balagha, Hadith #89)

Lady Maryam entered the temple. For her entire childhood she remained in the temple. Her work was to serve the worshippers and the priests. Apart from that she spent her time in worship. Through the priests, especially her uncle Zakariya, she learned about God and other details about the law of religion. As she grew up her uncle Zakariya made her a special room in the temple which was for her alone. According to the Quran this was in the eastern part of the temple (19:16) and was within the mihrab (3:37), or the place of worship. It was her sanctuary of worship. Only Prophet Zakariya was allowed to visit her there.

Acceptance of Deeds

All good deeds are performed with the hope that Allah will accept them. When the deed is carried out with the intention to please Allah and in obedience to His commands, there must be the hope that it will be accepted. When accepted it is a fulfilling of obligation, and a means to achieve a closer connection to Allah.

The two conditions of acceptance are:

- a) Good action - done properly in line with the teachings of Islam about it
- b) Good doer - done with faith, sincerity, focus, and effort.

Signs of acceptance of deeds

- when you get a chance to do a good deed (tawfiq) that itself is a sign of acceptance of previous good deeds. When a good deed is accepted it brings with it more chances of other good deeds.
- an internal satisfaction and happiness after a good deed that makes you feel closer to Allah. It is not pride but pleasure at having been able to do something to please God.
- the ability to stay away from sins for a while. When a salaah is accepted from a believer he/she will not be inclined to sin for a while, at least till the next salaah time. Taqwa is the result of a good deed that is accepted. It creates a protective barrier between the believer and sins.

Dua for acceptance of Salaah (attached)

Important Lessons

- 1) We must make sure to follow the conditions of acceptance for any good deed we do.
- 2) When God accepts a deed a lot of barakah results, blessings that affect all aspects of life.
- 3) Always ask Allah to accept your deeds.

Ideas

- 1) Discuss and do some activities on the Baytul Muqaddus - the temple where Lady Maryam lived as a child. Children could draw it or make a 3d figure.

See: <https://www.al-islam.org/pilgrimage-sites/jerusalem>

- 2) Children can memorize the verse for acceptance of deeds (See 2:127). Talk about when the verse can be recited. They can write the verse, make a card of it, a bookmark . . . etc.