

## Sūrat al-Hud Verse 42

وَهِيَ تَجْرِي بِهِمْ فِي مَوْجٍ كَالْجِبَالِ وَنَادَى نُوحٌ ابْنَهُ وَكَانَ فِي مَعْزِلٍ يَا بُنَيَّ ارْكَب مَعَنَا وَلَا تَكُن مَعَ  
الْكَافِرِينَ

11:42 - And it sailed along with them amid waves like mountains. Nuh called out to his son, who stood aloof, 'O my son! 'Board with us, and do not be with the non-believers'

### Questions for Reflection

- 1) Visualize the scene of the ark sailing. What must be some emotions felt by the people on it?
- 2) What is 'standing aloof' a sign of?
- 3) Prophet Nuh tells his son two things. What is he worried about?

### Commentary

When the flood began, dark clouds covered the sky. Rain poured down from the sky in a way never seen before on the earth. It was followed by thunder and lightning. It rained for many days and nights. The waves were huge, and the ark began rolling on the waves. The tumultuous movement of the ark is symbolic of the stormy ups and downs a believer goes through to survive. Safety and salvation are not easy or smooth journeys.

Many scholars, including Allama Tabatabai, believe that the flood was global. The entire earth was covered with water. Only the people on the ark survived. The scholars trace all current races of human beings to the three sons of Nuh (a) who survived after him: Ham, Sam (Shem), and Yafith (Japheth). A few scholars say the flood was local to the area where the Prophet lived.

Prophet Nuh had four sons. Only Kan'an did not believe in him. He refused to board the ark with other members of his family and stood on the side, watching. The Prophet called out to him. He was concerned, both as a father and a Prophet. His address 'O my son' shows kindness and love for his son. He told him to board the ship, and to not be from the group of non-believers. Till the last moment the Prophet did not give up hope. He tried to talk to him, hoping that his words would enter the hardened heart of his son. He also did not give up his duty till the end.

Scholars believe that Prophet Nuh was not aware of his son's disbelief before the flood. Note that he said 'do not be *from* the non-believers, rather than 'do not be *a* non-believer'. If the Prophet knew he was a non-believer he would not have asked him to board the ark.

It is likely that the conversation of the Prophet and his son took place before the ark started to move on the waves. After that it would not have been possible for anyone to embark. A question raised is why did the Prophet only try to convince his son to board the ark? The following answers are given in Tafsir;

- a) A person has a greater responsibility regarding his own children, compared to the rest of society. Duty first begins at home. A father has responsibility in the upbringing and salvation of his children.

- b) Because he stood on the side watching, the Prophet may have thought he was considering embarking and the Prophet tried to encourage him.
- c) The Prophet wanted to show people the coming flood was a reality. His concern for his son was evidence that something was about to happen which would destroy people.

### Lessons

- 1) Salvation is not a smooth journey.
- 2) Never give up hope, till the end. Nor forsake your duty.
- 3) Duty first begins at home.

### Cross reference verses

- 1) The flood – 54:11-14
- 2) Duty begins at home – 20:132

### Connecting topics

- 1) The Flood

[https://en.wikishia.net/view/Flood\\_of\\_Nuh\\_\(a\)](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Flood_of_Nuh_(a))

- 2) A Father's duty

<https://aboutislam.net/counseling/ask-the-scholar/family/whats-the-fathers-duty-to-his-children/>

(Note: This is a non-shia site. But it is important to bring up some points from it about the role played by fathers)

<https://www.muslim.sg/articles/4-powerful-stories-in-the-quran-about-the-role-of-a-father>

- 2) Not losing Hope in God's mercy

<https://www.al-islam.org/greater-sins-volume-1-sayyid-abdul-husayn-dastghaib-shirazi/second-greater-sin-yas-deaspair>

<https://en.al-shia.org/hope-allahs-forgiveness/>

### Interesting Links

Story of the flood in the bible - [https://www.livius.org/articles/misc/great-flood/flood1-t-bible\\_1/](https://www.livius.org/articles/misc/great-flood/flood1-t-bible_1/)