

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Tafseer Surah Al-Imraan (verses 32-46)

قال الله تعالى: {قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكَافِرِينَ}

Say (Oh Muhammad: "Obey Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad).") But if they turn away, then Allah does not like the disbelievers. (Verse 32)

Allah describes those who refuse to surrender to Him and His Messenger by obeying His commands and those who turn away from Islamic legislation as disbelievers. However, Sheikh ibn Al-Uthaymeen further explained some important benefits, saying, "Understand that not everyone who does not follow the commandments of Allah is a disbeliever. Only if a person arrogantly denies the command then he is a disbeliever."

Also, If someone hates what Allah legislated then this person is also a disbeliever. All his deeds in this world will be nullified and no good deed will be accepted from him. Allah says,

قال الله تعالى: {ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَرِهُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ}

That is because they hate that which Allah has sent down (this Quran and Islamic laws, etc.), so He has made their deeds fruitless.

Surah Muhammad [47:9]

But if a Muslim does not obey Allah due to weakness in his Iman (faith) and is not able to resist his desires while believing that he should obey Allah, knowing he is sinful, then he is still a Muslim, although he will be described as a disobedient Muslim.

The issue of declaring someone to be a disbeliever (making takfeer) is a serious matter left to the grounded Scholars, and is not for the layman to take in to his hands.

So do not be hasty to label someone as a disbeliever. In our time, this has become a trial. People indiscriminately label others to be disbelievers without

following what is established in this matter. The matter of declaring someone a disbeliever is only in accordance to the judgement of the Quran and Sunnah.

The khawaarij (deviant groups such as ISIS/Daesh, al-Qaa'ida in this time) take verses such as:

{And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such are the disbelievers} (Surah Al-Maa'idah, 5:44) or other verses, for example, concerning the impermissibility of dealing in interest, and then go on to label everyone who falls into that category as a disbeliever. This is wrong! We must understand the difference between the two - one may commit disobedience due to weakness in faith while knowing that he should not be committing it. He is still a Muslim, albeit a disobedient one. On the other hand, those who completely reject Allah and His Messenger, hating or denying His revelation or commandments, then these people are clearly not Muslims!

Allah ends this verse with;

فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكَافِرِينَ

But if they turn away, then Allah does not like the disbelievers.

So this is only in reference to those who deny and turn away from the Islamic legislation after the proof has been established against them with clarity.

قال الله تعالى: {إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ}

Allah chose Adam, Nuh (Noah), the family of Ibrahim (Abraham) and the family of Imran above the 'alamin (mankind and jinn) (of their times).

(Verse 33)

Istafaa" is a beautiful word. Allah chose Adam as the first Prophet of mankind. Nuh (Noah), peace be upon him, was the first Messenger, and from the families of Ibrahim and Imraan came great Prophets and Messengers, peace be upon all of them.

Allah chose these particular men from the creation, and Allah's choice is always in accordance to His wisdom, knowledge and justice. He chose these individuals due to the beauty of their hearts, manners and actions. He does

not look at our appearance, family, or position. Rather, He looks at the state of our hearts, and if He finds a heart full of submission and love for His Religion and a heart that is pure and good, free from envy, malice and discontent, then Allah will choose that person to be close to Him. When Allah chooses a person to be from His beloved servants, He facilitates every goodness for him, assists him in his worship of Him and helps him to refrain from every wrongdoing.

We must take the means by which we can become the chosen, beloved servants of Allah. He has already chosen us to be Muslims, to believe in His Prophets and the Quran. Above all of that, He has chose us to be from the people of the Sunnah! These are great bounties from Allah that we must be grateful for, so that Allah may increase us in them and keep us steadfast.

قال الله تعالى: {ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ}

Offspring, one of the other, and Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower. (Verse 34)

Meaning, there was resemblance and similarity between them in their noble attributes and their beautiful ethics, and Allah is The All-Knower Who knows who deserves to be chosen. Allah told us about their stories in order for us to love them and follow them, and we ask Allah to guide us to follow their way.

قال الله تعالى: {إِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَأَةُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ}

(Remember) when the wife of Imran said: "Oh my Lord! I have vowed to You what (the child that) is in my womb to be dedicated for Your services (free from all worldly work; To serve Your place of worship), so accept this from me. Verily, You are The All-Hearer, The All-Knowing." (Verse 35)

Allah informs us of the the wife of the Prophet Imran, peace be upon him, who supplicated to Him. She had become pregnant after being barren for a long period of time and vowed to dedicate her child to the service of Allah. In the former legislations of the Prophets, peace be upon them, it was a known custom to dedicate one's child to a place of worship. The person would live there, maintain it, and dedicate his or her life to total worship in it.

She then supplicated, ending it with,

“You are The All-Hearing, All-Knowing,” meaning He listens and comprehends what we say, and then responds to it, since as As-samee’ means The One Who responds to the supplications.

As is recommended, she chose the most appropriate name to supplicate to Allah with.

قال الله تعالى: [فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَىٰ وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ}

Then when she gave birth to her [child Maryam], she said, "Oh my Lord! I have given birth to a female child," – and Allah knew better what she brought forth, – "And the male is not like the female, and I have named her Maryam (Mary), and I seek refuge with You (Allah) for her and for her offspring from Shaitaan (Satan), the outcast." (Verse 36)

She said, **"Oh my Lord! I have given birth to a female child,"**

Imran's wife thought she was going to have a boy, and that, because he was male, he would be most suited to this vocation due to his physical strength. However, she gave birth to a girl whom she named Maryam, may Allah be pleased with her.

Allah knew what she delivered, but she said this in an apologetic manner since she had vowed to dedicate her child to Allah’s worship, but this was more suited for a male.

And the male is not like the female, and I have named her Maryam (Mary), and I seek refuge with You (Allah) for her and for her offspring from Shaitaan (Satan), the outcast.

Observe the beautiful manners of the wife of Imran, the mother of Maryam - the manner in which she supplicated to Allah, and how she apologised and sought refuge in Allah. So how did Allah respond to her?

قال الله تعالى: [فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّىٰ لَكِ هَذَا قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ}

So, her Lord (Allah) accepted her with goodly acceptance. He made her grow in a good manner and put her under the care of Zakariyya. Every time he entered Al-Mihrab to (visit) her, he found her supplied with sustenance. He said: "Oh Maryam! From where have you got this?" She said, "This is from Allah." Verily, Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills, without limit."

(Verse 37)

Here Allah did not use His name Allah, but used the name Ar-Rabb- The Nurturer. He accepted her supplication with goodly acceptance. He allowed Maryam to grow in a wholesome manner.

Allah took care of all her affairs. He chose Prophet Zakariyya, peace be upon him, who was the husband of her maternal aunt, to be her caretaker. Allah chose the best person to be in charge of Maryam's affairs. He was a Prophet, possessing knowledge of Allah with the beautiful manners needed to be the guardian of a child.

Maryam then stayed in the place of prayer, which is a unit of a room set aside for the worship of Allah. Whenever Zakariyya entered the room to check on Maryam, he found her supplied with sustenance in the form of fruits, food, and water. He was amazed by this and wondered about it because neither did he bring her anything nor did he see anyone enter the place.

He said, "**Oh Maryam! From where have you got this?**" She replied, "**This is from Allah.**" Verily, Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills, without limit."

These words of Maryam struck Zakariyya, even though he knew that Allah provides for all of us. However, seeing these provisions sent directly by Allah to Maryam, who did not have to exert any effort to get them, made him hopeful that Allah could provide him with a child even though his wife was barren and old.

Indeed, Allah is able to do everything, even if the worldly means have been cut off for Allah's means are never exhausted! So this profound incident that reminded Zakariyya of Allah's ability to provide for whomever He wishes,

inspired him to supplicate to Allah himself for that which apparently seemed impossible.

قال الله تعالى: {هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ}

At that time Zakariyya invoked his Lord, saying: "Oh my Lord! Grant me from You, a good offspring. You are indeed the All-Hearer of invocation." (Verse 38)

Here we see an example of how the Prophets invoked Allah as Zakariyya supplicated here, saying, **"Oh my Lord! Grant me from You, a good offspring."**

Did Zakariyya only ask for an offspring? No. Rather, he asked for a good offspring, because the real matter is not just having children, but having righteous children who love Allah, and whom Allah loves.

He continued: **"You are indeed The All-Hearer of invocation."** Here, he beautifully affirmed that Allah is The One Who hears and responds to all supplications.

قال الله تعالى: {فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَى مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ}

Then the Angels called him, while he was standing in prayer in Al-Mihrab, (saying): "Allah gives you glad tidings of Yahya (John), confirming (believing in) the Word from Allah [i.e. the creation of Isa (Jesus) [peace be upon him], the Word from Allah ("Be!" – and he was!)], noble, abstinent from every act of wrongdoing, a Prophet, from among the righteous. (Verse 39)

The letter "ف" in this Ayah indicates a quick response, and this verse is also a proof for the fact that the Angels speak. The Angels called him while he was praying in the place to pray, saying,

{ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَى مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ }

"Allah gives you glad tidings of Yahya (John), confirming (believing in) the Word from Allah [i.e. the creation of 'Isa (Jesus), the Word from Allah]. "

"The word of Allah" mentioned here is "be." This is not a reference to Isa himself, peace be upon him, because the words of Allah are from His Attributes and are therefore, not created.

Isa (Jesus) was created upon the commandment of "be" in the same way that Allah created everything else by commanding it to "be." However, the created being is completely separate from Allah.

We have to understand this clearly, since this verse is from the *mutashaabih* (unclear) verses, which people can use to place doubts in one's mind. This verse actually means that Yahya will believe in Isa as a Prophet and that Allah created him without a father, just like He created Adam and Hawwa (Adam & Eve) without a mother or a father, since if Allah intends something, He says to it, "be" and it is. Nothing is difficult for Allah, The Mighty and Majestic.

Allah said,

{ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ }

"Noble, abstinent from every act of wrongdoing, a Prophet, from among the righteous."

'as sayyid', meaning, he will be noble and honourable among his people. With regards to 'hasoorah', some scholars of tafseer stated that it means 'keeping away from sexual relations with women'. However, Sheikh Ibn Uthaymeen say that this interpretation is not appropriate since abstention from having relations is considered a physical deficiency, and the Prophets do not have any defects. So 'hasoora' in actuality means that he will be abstinent from every act of wrongdoing, whether it be lying, or having illegal sexual relations. In addition to being free of wrong-doings, he would be a noble Prophet of Allah.

Zakariyya was informed of all of this while he was there standing and praying in his place to pray. He was given the good news of a son who would be righteous and a Prophet. What a glad tidings, indeed!

قال الله تعالى: {قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي الْكِبَرُ وَامْرَأَتِي عَاقِرٌ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ}

He said: "Oh my Lord! How can I have a son when I am very old, and my wife is barren?" (Allah) said: "Thus Allah does what He wills." (Verse 40)

Did Zakariyya disbelieve in this, doubt in this or wonder how this promise of Allah could be true? Zakariyya was not refusing to believe, rather, he believed but he asked this out of amazement.

قال الله تعالى: {قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً قَالَ آيَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمَزًا وَادُّكُرُ رَبِّكَ كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ}

He said: "Oh my Lord! Make a sign for me." (Allah) said: "Your sign is that you shall not speak to mankind for three days except with signals. (Verse 41)

So Zakariyya asked Allah to appoint him a sign, and Allah replied to him saying that his sign would be that he would observe a fast of speech, i.e. that he would not be able to speak to the people, except through signs for three days.

{ وَادُّكُرُ رَبِّكَ كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ }

"And remember your Lord much (by praising Him again and again), and glorify (Him) in the afternoon and in the morning."

Meaning that he would not be able to speak about trivial things such as inquiring after someone's health, but he would be able to glorify and remember his Lord out loud.

Allah then returns to the story of Maryam, telling us how the Angels spoke to her, saying,

قال الله تعالى: {وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ}

And (remember) when the Angels said: "Oh Maryam! Verily, Allah has chosen you, purified you (from polytheism and disbelief), and chosen you above the women of the 'alamin (mankind and jinn) (of her lifetime)." (Verse 42)

What sort of purification is this? It is the purification that Allah grants His chosen ones from *shirk*, disbelief, illnesses of the heart, and evil speech. Due to this verse, it has been asked if Maryam is the best of all the the women, or the best of women of her time. Allah knows best, but according to the authentic hadith, there are four women who are the best women - Aasiya, the wife of Firaun, Maryam bint Imran, Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, and Faatimah, the daughter of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. These four women are the 'sayyidaat al-alaamin' meaning, the best of all women.

Maryam is one of the greatest women in the universe and the only people who respect her with her rightful and true honour are the Muslims. We respect her more than the Christians.

قال الله تعالى: {يَا مَرْيَمُ اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ}

"Oh Maryam! Submit yourself with obedience to your Lord (Allah, by worshipping none but Him Alone) and prostrate yourself, and bow down along with those who bow down." (Verse 43)

Qunoot means to submit to Allah with continuous and correct obedience. For example, when the time of *dhuhr* comes, the most appropriate and correct act of worship at that time would be to perform the prayer, and when your husband returns home from work, hungry and tired, then the correct act of worship at this time is to leave everything - whether that be memorising the Quran, seeking knowledge, or other optional acts of worship - to attend to him. This is performing worship at its correct time. So 'qunoot' is to do what Allah loves for for you to be doing at that time. Allah said, "**and prostrate yourself, and bow down along with those who bow down,**" meaning, so pray to Allah among those who pray to Him and worship Him.

قال الله تعالى: {ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَقُولُونَ أَفَلَمْ نَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ يَوْمَ مَرْيَمَ

وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذِ يَخْتَصِمُونَ

This is (a part) of the news of the Ghaib (Unseen, i.e. the news of the past nations of which you have no knowledge) which We reveal to you (Oh Muhammad). You were not with them, when they cast lots with their pens as to which of them should be charged with the care of Maryam; nor were you with them when they disputed. (Verse 44)

Allah continues by saying that whatever He has revealed concerning the stories of Zakariyya, Maryam, Yahya, Isa, and other than them are all from the ghaib [unseen]. They are past incidents which the Prophet Muhammad, who was illiterate, was unaware of, and whose details were unknown to the people of his time.

{وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذِ يُلْقُونَ أَقْلَامَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ}

“You were not with them, when they cast lots with their pens as to which of them should be charged with the care of Maryam”

Everyone desired to be the guardian of Maryam because she was the daughter of a great leader, a nobleman [Imran], a good Prophet and teacher. They wanted to take care of his daughter in order to repay him for his goodness towards him. Allah said they drew lots with their pens in order to determine who would be her guardian. We do not know how Zakariyya beat the people to this, but Allah made him victor. **"Nor were you with them when they disputed"** This dispute took place before they cast the lots; they all wanted to care for her, and subsequently decided to settle the matter in this manner. Zakariyya won and was thus given the honor of looking after Maryam.

قال الله تعالى: {إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْهُ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ}

(Remember) when the Angels said: "Oh Maryam! Verily, Allah gives you the glad tidings of a Word ["Be!" – and he was! i.e. 'Isa the son of Maryam] from Him, his name will be the Messiah Isa, the son of Maryam, held in honour in this world and in the Hereafter, and will be one of those who are near to Allah" (Verse 45)

The Angels conveyed to Maryam the glad tidings of a son who would be born to her, whose name would be Al-Maseeh Isa, the son of Maryam.

Why is Isa, peace be upon him, called Al-Maseeh? Al-Maseeh comes from the verb masaha which means to wipe or pass one's hand over the face. Isa, peace be upon him, was able to restore the sight of a blind person by wiping his hand over the blind person's face. This is one of the reasons why he is called Al-Maseehah. In addition, the word comes from yansa al arda - yansa is to travel throughout the land, to all points of the compass, and this is what will happen when 'Isa returns before the Day of Judgement. As for Maseeh-Ad-Dajjal, then he is called maseehah because one of his eyes are wiped off since al-mansooaha means to be wiped off. The true Maseeh, Isa, will kill the false Maseeh, by Allah's will.

قال الله تعالى: {وَيُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ}

He will speak to the people, in the cradle and in manhood, and he will be one of the righteous. (Verse 46)

Isa was able to speak to the people while still an infant. The Quran states that he was a few hours old when he spoke to defend his mother, Maryam, against the accusation of fornication that the Jews levelled against her. The Quran tells us how she was freed from this vile accusation when her newborn son spoke with such eloquence that even an adult would not have been able to match. Maryam was commanded to refrain from speaking, and Allah, The All-Powerful, made the newborn reply to the slanderers.

{وَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ}

"And he will be one of the righteous."

Isa, upon him be peace, is one of the righteous Prophets and from amongst the five greatest Messengers of firm resolve (the rest being, Muhammad, Ibrahim, Nuh and Musa). Maryam received the glad tidings of a noble and righteous son who would be strengthened and supported with great miracles before she had even given birth to him, and this was an immense blessing and honour bestowed by Allah upon His chosen servant.

Above is a transcription of a class given by teacher Zaynab El-Kateb and it is based on the Tafseer of Surah Ali-Imraan by Shaikh Ibn Al-Uthaymin, may Allah have mercy on him.