

Prophets in the Quran: Noah

In last week’s article, we highlighted Satan’s vow to mislead as many of Adam’s children as possible. He swore, **“Allah cursed him [Satan], and he [Satan, the cursed] said: ‘I will surely take from among Your servants an appointed portion’** [Qur’an 4: 118], demonstrating his intent to deceive and lead astray. This enmity is rooted in Satan’s defiance of Allah’s order, and his refusal, to prostrate to Adam, leading to his curse and expulsion from Paradise.

From this fact, we can glean two critical observations. The first is Satan’s “reference to Allah’s supremacy”. In his vow, Satan alluded to Allah’s absolute independence and self-sufficiency, implying that Allah does not need any of His creation. This reference underscores the futility of Satan’s rebellion and his reliance on Allah’s permission to continue his efforts until the Day of Judgment. It is through this reprieve that Satan schemes against humanity, striving to exploit their weaknesses. The other observation is the “appointed portion”. Satan acknowledges his limitations, as he cannot mislead everyone. He recognizes that his influence will only affect those predisposed to accepting his call—the “appointed portion” of Allah’s servants. This means that only those who willingly choose to follow him will be led astray. Importantly, Satan operates not out of independent power but within the framework of Allah’s divine knowledge and de-

cree. Allah, in His infinite wisdom, already knows who will choose to align with Satan’s path and who will resist his temptation.

Satan knew that the people who lived after Adam, Seth, and Idris (Enoch)—peace and blessings be upon them all—still vividly remembered their forefathers’ teachings, rooted in monotheism and righteousness. He understood that persuading them to deviate from the worship of Allah alone would require cunning and subtlety, as their hearts were still inclined toward their pure heritage.

Disguising himself as a stranger visiting for trade, Satan approached the people, engaging them in conversation about their ancestors. He spoke highly of their piety and righteousness, subtly planting the idea that such virtuous individuals should not be forgotten. “Would it not be fitting,” he suggested, “to find a way to honor their memory so that future generations may learn of their virtues and be inspired?”

The people, captivated by the idea, agreed. After some deliberation, someone proposed marking the graves of their righteous ancestors with large stones as a memorial. Satan, delighted by this suggestion, encouraged it in his subtle way. His plan had taken root without revealing its true intent. Satan never does anything with his hand, that is, he does not act, all he can do is to tempt, whisper, or persuade, that is, all he can do is to talk so he leads those who follow him to



Guest Column

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make suggestions and then follow through what they decided themselves.

As time passed and generations succeeded one another, Satan returned, once again in the guise of a helpful stranger. This time, he approached them with another seemingly harmless suggestion: “Wouldn’t it be wonderful if these stones bore engravings or images to depict the righteous ones they honor? This way, their appearances and stories could be preserved, making it easier for your children and their descendants to remember and “revere” them.”

True to his deceptive nature, Satan did not present these ideas directly as commands but worked quietly, manipulating their thoughts and inclinations. The people, unaware of the sinister intent behind these suggestions, complied. What began as a well-meaning effort to honor the memory of their ancestors eventually opened the door to grave misguidance. Satan’s strategy of gradualism had laid the foundation for what would later become the practice of idol worship—an act of associating partners with Allah that contradicts the very essence of monotheism.

This episode powerfully reminds us that even small

deviations from the path of righteousness, when left unchecked, can lead to significant corruption over time. Satan’s subtle manipulations demonstrate the importance of remaining vigilant and adhering steadfastly to the principles of faith.

Satan’s plan, rooted in gradual manipulation, eventually succeeded. For a few generations, the reverence that people once showed toward the stones marking the graves of their righteous ancestors turned into outright worship. What had initially begun as a seemingly harmless act of respect evolved into a profound deviation from the path of monotheism.

As time passed, the teachings of Adam, Seth, and Idris (Enoch)—peace be upon them—were slowly forgotten, altered, and corrupted. The purity of their guidance gave way to practices that prioritized worldly desires and satisfied personal whims. The original call to worship Allah alone was replaced by customs and beliefs that reflected human inclinations rather than divine commandments.

This tragic turn of events highlights how incremental shifts, when left unchallenged, can lead to significant decline. It also underscores Satan’s persistence in exploiting human weaknesses, such as the desire for comfort, familiarity, and attachment to tradition, to lead people away from the worship of Allah. The outcome serves as a timeless warning to remain steadfast in faith and

vigilant against subtle deviations that may corrupt the essence of monotheism.

Allah, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, appointed righteous individuals as His messengers to guide humanity. These chosen messengers were blessed with divine guidance and tasked with reminding people of their true purpose: to worship Allah alone. Through them, Satan’s efforts to lead humanity astray would not go unchallenged and humans will have no excuse.

Noah (pbuh) was the first of these messengers. His mission was a direct response to the spread of corruption and the influence of Satan among his people. Noah was sent to remind them of their Creator, to call them back to righteousness, and to warn them of the grave consequences of their persistent disobedience and idolatry.

In Islamic teachings, Prophet Nuh (Noah) is one of the five prophets of strong resolve. This esteemed group also includes Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses), Isa (Jesus), and Muhammad (peace be upon them all).

Noah is mentioned in several chapters of the Qur’an, with each instance offering a unique perspective on his story. The Qur’an does not detail Noah’s ancestors or lineage, as Islam emphasizes that all prophets come from noble lineages. More importantly, the focus lies on the lessons derived from their tireless efforts to guide people toward the path of God, highlighting the moral and spiritual

messages in their struggles.

The Qur’an does not specify when Noah (peace be upon him) was born. However, Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was once asked about the time span between Adam and Noah, to which he replied, *“Ten centuries”*. This indicates a significant period separating the two prophets, emphasizing the continuity of divine guidance throughout human history.

Noah (pbuh) was sent as a messenger to his people to call them to the worship of Allah alone, turning them away from idolatry and the corrupt practices they had adopted. His people had strayed far from the monotheistic message of their ancestors and had fallen into polytheism and moral decay.

Noah’s story stands as a timeless lesson, illustrating the ongoing struggle between truth and falsehood, guidance and misguidance. It also exemplifies Allah’s enduring mercy and justice, as He continuously provides humanity with opportunities to return to the straight path through the guidance of His messengers. Next week, we will continue the story of Noah, as mentioned in the Qur’an. Allah says: **“We sent Noah to his people. He said, ‘O my people! Worship Allah; you have no god other than Him. I fear for you the torment of a tremendous Day.’”** [Qur’an 7: 59]

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Pope calls for commitment to protect life, doubles down on abortion in New Year’s message

ROME – Pope Francis ushered in the New Year with a renewed appeal for the faithful to reject abortion, calling for a “firm commitment” to protect and respect life from conception to natural death. Francis, 88, celebrated a New Year’s Day Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica on

Wednesday that was dedicated to Mary, the mother of Jesus.

In his homily, he prayed that everyone learns to care for “every child born of a woman” and to protect “the precious gift of life: life in the womb, the lives of children, the lives of the suffering, the poor,

the elderly, the lonely and the dying.”

“I ask for a firm commitment to respect the dignity of human life from conception to natural death, so that each person may cherish his or her own life and all may look with hope to the future,” he said, using the terminology of

the church’s opposition to abortion and euthanasia.

In recent years, the Argentine Jesuit has been speaking out more emphatically about abortion than he did at the start of his pontificate. After two doctrinaire popes, Francis complained in the first months of his papacy

in 2013 that the church had become obsessed by “small-minded rules” about hot-button issues such as abortion.

Francis now regularly refers to procuring an abortion as “hiring a hitman to solve a problem.”

He recently sparked outrage in Belgium when

he criticized its abortion law as “homicidal” and announced he wanted to beatify Belgium’s late king who abdicated for a day rather than approve legislation legalizing the procedure.

—AP

Worship at the church of your choice this week

“See, I will create new heavens and a new earth.

The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.”



Isaiah 65:17

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JB Bond, Senior Pastor

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Kids' Church	11:20 a.m.
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9 am

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Friday Mass
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