

Prophets in the Qur'an: Noah, Part 2

Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) was sent to his people when monotheism was abandoned in favor of idol worship, forgetting the teachings of their forefathers – Adam, Seth, and Enoch (peace be upon them all). When Satan succeeded in leading humanity toward idolatry, Allah (Allah is the name of God in Arabic and Aramaic, pronounced with an emphatic “L”) sent messengers (like Noah) to guide people back to the path of monotheism and remind them of their ancestors’ original teachings.

The Qur'an tells us synopses of Noah's story in different chapters in the Qur'an. Some would sum the story up and give the moral from it, others are reminders of the mercy of Allah (sending messengers). God says: **“23. We sent Noah to his people. He said, ‘O my people, worship Allah, you have no god other than Him. Will you not be reverent?’ 24. But the notables among his people, who disbelieved, said, ‘This is only a human like you, aspiring to gain dominance over you. Had Allah willed, He would have sent down angels. We never heard of this from our forefathers (of old). 25. He is nothing but a man possessed. Just ignore him for a while.’ 26. He (Noah) said, ‘My Lord, help me, for they have rejected me’. 27. So We (Allah, the pronoun “we” is used for glorification) inspired him: ‘Build the Ark under**

Our observation and by Our inspiration. Then, when Our command arrives, and the oven overflows, load into it a pair of every kind, along with your family, except those against whom the word has already been pronounced (sentenced to punishment). And do not address me concerning those who did wrong; they are to be drowned.’ 28. Then, when you and those with you are settled in the Ark, say, ‘Praise be to Allah, who has saved us from the wrongdoing people.’ 29. And say, ‘My Lord, land me a blessed landing, for you are the best transporter.’ 30. Surely in this (story) are lessons. We are always testing. 31. Then, after them, We established another generation.” [Qur'an 23: 23-31]. From these verses, we know that Prophet Noah was chosen from among the best of his people. He received the revelation to call his people to worship God alone and abandon idol worship.

Associating anything with God the Almighty carries profound consequences. It undermines human freedom and their full potential of intellectual capacity. Allah created humans with minds designed to seek knowledge, particularly the fundamental truth that He, alone, is the Creator. When people engage in polytheism or reject faith in Allah the Almighty, they lose not only their freedom but also their mental clarity and life's noble purpose.



Guest
Column

HATIM HEGAB

Such misguided worship enslaves people to Satan – himself a mere servant – and chains them to their lower desires.

God sent Prophet Noah with His divine message in this spiritual and intellectual crisis. Among his people, Noah stood alone, untainted by the corrupting influence of polytheism.

Noah's reasoning with his people: Allah sent Noah to guide his people. As an eloquent speaker and deeply patient man, Noah drew his people's attention to the profound mysteries of life and the universe's wonders. He told them that the alternation of night and day is a miracle (hint at the solar system as we know it today). He explained how the sun sustains lives, nurturing plants and animals, while the moon and stars serve for calculating time, navigation, and marking seasons. Noah emphasized that the heavens and earth belong solely to the Divine Creator, making it impossible for multiple deities to exist. He (Noah) revealed how Satan had deceived them for generations and declared it was time for this deception to end. Noah reminded his people of Allah's immense honor

and care for humankind, emphasizing how He created them, fulfilled their needs, and blessed them with reason. He explained that worshiping idols and associating others with Him was a grave misuse of this divine gift of intellect. Prophet Noah urged them to worship Allah alone, warning of the severe punishment that would follow if they continued their wrongdoing.

Division among Noah's people: Noah's words fell upon his people like a thunderclap, jarring their dormant minds. Their reaction was similar to someone suddenly awakened from sleep beneath a crumbling wall – though the warning aims to save them, their first response might be confusion or anger. His warning split the people into two groups. His message among the weak, poor, and suffering found fertile ground, offering mercy and hope to soothe their wounds. However, the wealthy, powerful, and ruling elite met his words with cold skepticism. These privileged members of society, believing their interests were best served by maintaining the status quo, launched a campaign of verbal resistance against Noah, this response that has echoed throughout history when the powerful face calls for change.

The disbelievers' arguments: Noah's opponents first challenged him by pointing out that he was merely human like themselves. Noah read-

ily acknowledged this truth, explaining that Allah had purposefully sent a human messenger to guide human beings – had the earth been populated by angels, an angelic messenger would have been sent instead.

The struggle (arguing) between Noah and the polytheists persisted. At first, the ruling class dismissed his message, assuming it would fade away on its own – a pattern repeated with nearly all prophets. However, they shifted their approach when they noticed his teachings gaining traction among the poor, the helpless, and laborers. Mocking and taunting him, they said: **“27. The notables among his people who disbelieved said, ‘We see in you nothing but a human like us, and we see that only the lowliest among us have followed you, those of immature judgment. And we see that you have no advantage over us. We think you are liars.” [Qur'an 11: 27].**

The rulers were tired of Noah's arguments. Allah the Exalted related their attitude: **“32. They said, ‘O Noah, you have argued with us, and argued much. Now bring upon us what you threaten us with – if you are truthful.’ 33. He said, ‘It is Allah who will bring it upon you – if He wills – and you will not escape it.’ 34. ‘My advice will not benefit you – much as I desire to advise you – if Allah intends to confound you. He is your Lord; and to Him,**

you will be returned.’” [Qur'an 11: 32-34].

The arguing intensified between Noah, who genuinely cared for his people and persisted in delivering Allah's message, and his people, who remained entrenched in their arrogance. As the debates dragged on and their arguments against Noah's message crumbled one by one, the disbelievers resorted to their final tactic - they began hurling insults at Allah's prophet. **“60. The leaders of his people said: ‘Verily, we see you in plain error (mentally unstable).” [Qur'an 7: 60].** Noah responded in the manner of the prophets: **“61. O, my people! There is no error in me, but I am a Messenger from the Lord of the Alamin (all that exists). 61. I convey unto you the messages of my Lord and give sincere advice to you. And I know from Allah what you know not.” [Qur'an 7: 61-62]**

Noah tirelessly called his people to believe in Allah, reaching out to them day and night, both in public and private. Despite his efforts – offering examples and pointing to Allah's signs in creation – their resistance only intensified. They turned away from his presence, blocked their ears, and covered their faces, allowing their pride to prevent them from embracing the truth he presented.

Author: hatim.hegab@gmail.com

More Information: icstillwater.org/school