

### Learning Objectives:

- To learn the key points from Holy Qur'an Surah An Naml Verses 1-31
- To understand how true repentance washes off sin.

### ACTIVITY                      Holy Qur'an:                      Key points from Surah An Naml Verses 1-31

RESOURCE: Lajna Ima'illah UK Ta'lim Syllabus October 2018 - January 2020, Page 14-43

Time: 30 min

- The second verse has used two descriptive words for the Qur'an, the Book and the Qur'an. The use of these two words implies a mighty prophecy that the Holy Book of Islam will continue to be preserved in the form of a book till the end of time and that it will be widely studied and read, the word **قرآن** meaning a book that is read. This prophecy was made at a time when the very art of printing had not yet been known and it was made to a people most of whom could not even read or write. The prophecy has met with marvellous fulfilment. Even the most hostile opponent of Islam can hardly deny the fact that no other book is so widely and frequently read as the Qur'an.
- The verse three points to the two prominent characteristics of the Qur'an to which repeated reference has been made in it, (1) that it is a guidance and (2) that it gives good tidings to the believers. These characteristics signify that the Qur'an contains all those rules of conduct, precepts and ordinances which are required for man's moral and spiritual development and progress and are essential for the achievement of the goal of human life, and that it also holds out to believers the promise that if they acted upon its teaching they will enjoy prosperity, prestige and power in this world and the pleasure and nearness of God in the life to come.
- Verse 5 explains that it is a law that if a person pursues an evil course, thinking that he is not accountable for what he does he begins to justify his conduct as good and proper and so it begins to appear to him in that light. This, in fact, is the consequence of his own conduct but inasmuch as it comes about in accordance with a Divine law. it is attributed to God, because it is God Who has ordained that disbelief in the Hereafter should result in evil deeds appearing beautiful in the eyes of disbelievers; otherwise God only commends good and righteous deeds and has made disbelief, transgression and disobedience hateful and repugnant (49: 8).
- The verse 7 is a clear denial of the charge that the Holy Prophet had his own ideas written down and collected in the form of a book and called it "the Qur'an." It also constitutes an unequivocal declaration of the fact that the Prophet learnt the Qur'an direct from the Wise and All-Knowing God.

- The fire mentioned in verse 8 does not mean Moses has seen the actual fire. It was a vision that Moses had seen, fire symbolizing the love of God. It is worthy of note that most of the major incidents connected with Moses that have been mentioned in the Qur'an, were not incidents which actually took place in the material and physical world but were visions which symbolized great land-marks in his spiritual development and prophetic mission.
- The fire was not God, nor was God in the 'fire.' Holy is He and exalted far above assuming any material shape or being confined to space. The 'fire' was a manifestation of God which cast its reflection upon all that was near.
- Briefly, the nine signs mentioned in verse 13 were: The Signs (1) of the rod and (2) the white hand (7:108-109); (3) of lice; (4) frogs; and (5) locusts; (6) of blood; (7) and storm; (7:134); (8) of drought and (9) destruction of fruits (7: 131).
- After a brief account of Moses, the Founder of the Israelite Dispensation and its greatest Prophet, the present Verse 16 and the following several verses make a special mention of David and Solomon. Of all the Israelite Prophets particular reference to these two Prophets in the verse possesses a special significance. David was a great warrior and a mighty and sagacious statesman. He was the Founder of the Judean dynasty at Jerusalem and the real builder of the Hebrew kingdom. Through him all the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba became united and organized into a powerful nation whose kingdom extended from the Euphrates to the Nile.
- The special reference in these verses to these two mighty Israelite kings implies a prophecy that rulers of as mighty, even mightier, empires and enjoying as great, even greater, glory and prosperity will also rise among the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad who was the like of Moses. The words "We gave knowledge to David and Solomon" may either mean that God endowed them with wisdom and knowledge in abundance as is apparent from the wise decisions they made or that being Divine Messengers God disclosed to them the secrets of the unknown and imparted to them special understanding and realization of Divine attributes which constitute the fountain-head of all knowledge.
- The verse 17 mentions, Solomon was heir to both the temporal power and prophetic office and spiritual knowledge of his father, David. The word 'heir' here has special reference to the spiritual heritage of David because whereas kingship and temporal power and property descend from father to son, prophethood does not. Birds and insects have their own means of communication. Migratory birds fly from one region to another with the change in weather. They fly in flocks and their flight is orderly. Similarly, ants live in communities and the bees have a well-regulated system of government. This could not be possible without there being some means of communication between them. This means of communication may be called their language. Prophets David and Solomon are stated here to have been taught the language of birds which may be taken as signifying that they had learnt how to make

use of birds. The art of using birds for carrying messages from one place to another had been very much developed by Solomon and frequent use of it made in the management of the far-flung empire over which he ruled.

- In verse 18 mention of three words 'Jinn', 'men' and 'birds' may also have been used in a metaphorical sense signifying respectively "big men," "ordinary men" and "highly spiritual men." In this sense of the words the verse would mean that while on military expeditions Solomon had all these three classes of men with him because they all had their usefulness.
- The valley of Naml does not mean the valley of ant as is generally misunderstood but the valley where a tribe named Naml lived. In Arabia it was not an uncommon practice that tribes were named after animals and beasts such as Banu Asad, Banu Taghlab, Banu Kalb, Banu Naml, etc. Moreover, the use of the words (enter) and (your habitations) in the verse lends powerful support to the view that Naml was a tribe. Thus, **نملة** means a person of the tribe of **النمل**; a Namlite. The said Namlite was possibly their leader and had ordered the people to get out of the way of the army of Solomon and enter their houses.
- The entire wording of the verse 20 shows that Solomon was extremely pleased with the good opinion a Namlite expressed about his own and that of his army's power and piety.
- In verse 21 the "Hudhud" was not a bird but a man, even a very responsible officer of State who had been entrusted with an important political mission by Solomon to the Queen of Sheba. The practice of exchange of envoys seems to be quite popular in Solomon's time. It is also a known fact that men are named after birds and animals. Further in verse 23, it appears that "Hudhud" was sent on an important State mission and he brought for Solomon an important piece of news.
- In verse 24, "Hudhud" proceeds to give detailed information about the place against which Solomon was marching. The words, "she has been given everything," show that Queen of Sheba ruled over a very prosperous people who had attained very high degree of civilization. She possessed all those things which had made her a powerful monarch. The Sabaeans worshipped the sun and the stars, a creed which in all likelihood had been imported into Yemen from Iraq with which the people of Yemen were in close contact by way of the sea and the Persian Gulf.
- In verse 28, it explains that birds are never known to speak the truth or tell lies. The verse affords yet one more proof of "Hudhud" being not a bird but an important official in Solomon's government.
- In verse 29, the words, "then withdraw from them," "Hudhud" had been taught proper etiquette which he had to observe while presenting Solomon's letter to the Queen.

- Some Christian Orientalists, as is their wont, have vainly sought to impugn the Divine origin of the Qur'an by trying to show that the expression Bismillah has been borrowed from earlier Scriptures. In the verse 31, the expression Bismillah is shown to have been used by Prophet Solomon. So there can be no question of its being borrowed or plagiarized by the Qur'an. What the Qur'an claims is only this that no other Scripture has used this expression in the form and manner in which it has done. And the charge is also belied by facts of history that the Holy Prophet took this expression from Pre-Islamic Arabs. The Arabs had never used it before it was revealed in the Qur'an. On the contrary, they had a special aversion for the use of the Divine attribute Al -Rahman (25: 61) which forms an integral part of Bismillah.

**ACTIVITY                      HADITH NUMBER 30:      True Repentance Washes Off Sin**

RESOURCE: Lajna Ima'illah UK Ta'lim Syllabus October 2018 - January 2020, Page 66-67

Time: 10 min

Narrated by Abū ‘Ubaidah bin ‘Abdullāh, Allāh be pleased with him on the authority of his father: Said the Prophet of Allāh (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him):

“The one who repented of sin was like one who had never sinned.” (Ibn Mājah)

The philosophy of taubah (repentance) is deeply concerned with spirituality and also exercises tremendous impact on morals of men. Through taubah one is helped to remain full of hope from God and thus is enabled to elevate his moral standard. It is a pity, however, that most of the religions, except Islām, have, by banging the door of repentance (taubah) on man, promoted on the one hand, distrust of God and on the other, pessimism and moral degeneration.

It is totally fallacious and unreasonable to argue that acceptance of repentance encourages sin.

Far from emboldening in sinfulness, true repentance serves as a means of purifying a man. Islām has laid down such hard conditions as make true taubah a grave spiritual revolution and a basic mental change. As is clear from the Holy Qur’ān and the Ḥadīth, these conditions are three:

1. The repenting person should be contrite of his sin with a true heart and seek forgiveness and protection with heartfelt sincerity.
2. That he should take a vow that he shall abstain from such transgression and sinful acts in future and should seek the help of God in this behalf.
3. That if it is possible to make practical amends for the wrong and sin he has committed, he should do so. If, for example, he has misappropriated somebody’s

property he should recompensate him and if he has usurped the rights of someone, he should restore the same to the rightful party.

No sensible person can find fault with the taubah governed by such conditions. The truth is that sincere repentance (taubah) is a death which grants man a new life, opening the way to the mercy, compassion and protecting love of God. Islām alone opens the door to true repentance.