

Stories in the Holy Qur'an

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Qur'anic stories are profound and meaningful, containing sublime goals. Indeed Allah - the Gracious has, in the Holy Qur'an presented many moral and social teachings and decrees through stories and parables. A point particularly emphasized in the Holy Qur'an by Allah is the fact that the Holy Qur'an is a Divinely-Revealed Book. Thus, we can say that one of the goals behind narrating stories in the Holy Qur'an has been to prove that the Holy Qur'an is the Book of Allah, revealed by Him to Prophet Muhammad(PBUH), for Prophet Muhammad(PBUH) was illiterate and also had no contact with Jewish and Christian scholars and yet presented exact and current accounts of the preceding Divine Prophet(AS), including Prophet Ibrahim/Abraham(AS) Prophet Musa/Moses(AS), Prophet Isa/Jesus(AS) and Prophet Yusuf/Joseph(AS). Another sacred goal behind the Holy Qur'an's narrating stories has been to prove that Divine religions share the same principles. A careful study of the stories narrated in the Holy Qur'an tells us that all Qur'anic stories originate from the same root and that they share the same Divine messages; all Divine religions aim at leading human beings out of the darkness of ignorance into light and salvation and to fulfill this shared goal, they all follow the same clear principle, namely to promise rewards for doing good and punishment for evil-doing. And as we see, all Divine Prophets (AS) have pursued the goals of inviting mankind towards attention to their origin, Resurrection, the eternal life in the Hereafter, following Allah's Messengers (AS) and other like supreme objectives.

Thus we can say that by narrating stories and parables, the Holy Qur'an, means, among other facts to stress that all Divine religions have

Divinely-revealed messages and that to study and ponder upon the Qur'anic stories about the fate of past peoples can be very instructive, *“They said: ‘Our father, what’s wrong with you that you do not trust us with Joseph? We are quite sincere about him.’”* Al- Yusuf, 11

And that Allah has offered clear accounts so we may take lessons from them, since Allah’s Sunna (laws, rules) are invariable and constant and so, if we observe that through disobeying Allah’s Commands, certain peoples in the past have perished, we should try not to do the same, since as per the Holy Qur’an, the same fate will be ours, too, if we disobey Allah. There are also certain verses of the Holy Qur’an which convey peace of mind for Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his followers, since sometimes the pressures inflicted by opponents were really annoying. One of those peace-giving verses is the following:

“There was no answer from his folk except they said: ‘Kill him or burn him up! Yet God saved him from the fire; in that are signs for folk who believe.’” Al-Ankabut, 24

Thus, we can conclude that all the stories presented in the Holy Qur’an are true and real accounts of the significant events in the world and all contain significant lessons of life and worship. In fact, in the Holy Qur’an, Allah has taken into account all dimensions to human soul and not just one or two. And unlike man-made stories, the Qur’anic stories are not for amusement, but for guiding, teaching and correcting and for the purpose of presenting moral principles in the most comprehensive manner, so human beings can find salvation. And in this regard the role of Islamic scholars and Qur’anic commentators can be considered of vital significance, since through clear interpretations they can help people in particular the youth understand the Divine messages conveyed through Qur’anic stories much better. No doubt, Qur’anic stories being the words of Allah are at the highest level of wisdom, beauty and

attraction. They are in fact miracles containing lessons for every aspect of human life. Far from being imaginary, the stories of the Holy Qur'an present realities, as well as perfect models for human beings to follow. As admitted by every person of sound mind, the sentences and expressions used in the Holy Qur'an are beyond the abilities of human beings, and so they are the words of Allah - The Almighty Creator Himself. The text of the Holy Qur'an contains religious teachings, moral principles, words of wisdom, religious laws and stories and also mentions a number of Divine Messengers (AS) including Prophet Nuh (AS) and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). According to some researchers there are up to 116 stories in the Holy Qur'an.

In the Holy Qur'an, there are some long stories, including the stories of Prophet Yusuf(AS) and Prophet Musa(AS) and also less lengthy ones including the stories about Prophet Nuh(AS) , Prophet Dawood(AS) , and also short stories such as the stories about Prophet Salih(AS) and Prophet Zachariah(AS) . It is also to be mentioned that while reading and/or listening to man-made stories repeatedly become boring, reading and listening to Qur'anic stories and parables become more interesting and refreshing with repetition and this should be regarded as another proof for the fact that the Holy Qur'an is a miracle, a Divine miracle, never losing it's attraction, freshness and life-giving light. And of course, no instruction and guideline needed by human beings of all times and in all places have been ignored by the Holy Qur'an. As a matter of fact, in the Holy Qur'an, eloquence, beauty, wisdom, perfection, elevation and salvation are presented in a miraculously comprehensive manner.