

KHUTBA

Friday 06.01.12

English

Story of Prophet Solomon (pbuh) Part 2 of 2

All thanks are due to Allah, the Most-Generous. I bear witness that there is nothing worthy of worship except him. He has no partners. May Allah send peace and blessings upon his final messenger.

And then, Servants of Allah, today we will talk about Prophet Solomon (PBUH) story with the Hoopoe.

He set out to find the hoopoe bird, which could detect water under the ground. He sent signals all over the hoopoe to call on him, but it was nowhere to be found. In anger, he declared that unless the bird had a good reason for its absence, he would punish it severely.

The hoopoe eventually came to Solomon and explained the reason for its delay. ***"I have discovered something of which you are not aware. I have come from Sheba (Sab'a) with important news." Solomon became curious, and his anger subsided. The bird continued: Sab'a is ruled by a queen named Bilkis (Bilqis), who has plenty of everything, including a splendid throne. But in spite of all this wealth, Satan has entered her heart and the hearts of her people. She rules their minds completely. I was shocked to learn that they worship the sun instead of Allah the Almighty." To check the hoopoe's information, Solomon sent a letter to the queen with the bird. He instructed the bird to remain hidden and to watch everything. The Queen of Sheba Sends Gifts The hoopoe dropped the letter in front of the queen and flew away to hide. She excitedly opened and read it: "Verily! It is from Solomon, and verily! It reads: 'In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, and Most Merciful; be you not exalted against me, but come to me as Muslims (true believers who submit with full submission).'" (27:22-31)***

The queen was very disturbed and hurriedly summoned her advisors. They reacted as to a challenge, for they felt that there was someone challenging them, hinting at war and defeat, and asking them to submit to his conditions. They told her that they could only offer advice, but it was her right to command action. She sensed that they wanted to meet Solomon's invasion threat with a battle. However, she told them: "Peace and friendship are better and wiser; war only brings humiliation, enslaves people and destroys the good things. I have decided to send gifts to Solomon, selected from our most precious treasure. The courtiers who will deliver the gifts will also have an opportunity to learn about Solomon and his military mighty."

Solomon's Rejects the Queen's Gifts

Solomon's reconnaissance team brought him the news of the arrival of Bilkis' messengers with a gift. He immediately realized that the queen had sent her men on a probing mission thus, he gave orders to rally the army. The envoys of Bilkis, entering amidst the well-equipped army, realized that their wealth was nothing in comparison to that of the kingdom of Solomon's palace floors, which were made of sandalwood and inlaid with gold.

They noticed Solomon surveying his army, and they were surprised at the number and variety of soldiers, which included lions, tigers, and birds. The messengers stood in amazement, realizing that they were in front of an irresistible army. The envoys marveled at the splendor surrounding them. They eagerly presented their queen's precious gifts and told Solomon that the queen wished that he would accept them as an act of friendship. They were shocked by his reaction: he did not even ask to open the covers of the containers! He told them: "Allah have given me plenty of wealth, a large kingdom, and prophethood. I am, therefore, beyond bribery. My only objective is to spread the belief in *Tawheed*, the Oneness of Allah." He also directed them to take back the gifts to the queen and to tell her that if she did not stop her kind of worship he would uproot her kingdom and drive its people out of the land.

The Queen Decides to Visit Solomon

The queen's envoys returned with the gifts and delivered the message. They also told her of the wonderful things they had seen. Instead of taking offense, she decided to visit Solomon. Accompanied by her royal officials and servants, she left Sheba, sending a messenger ahead to inform Solomon that she was on her way to meet him.

Solomon asked the jinns in his employ whether anyone among them could bring her throne to the palace before she arrived. One of them said: "I will bring it to you before this sitting is over." Solomon did not react to this offer; it appeared that he was waiting for a faster means. The jinns competed with each other to please him. One of them named Ifrit said: "I will fetch it for you in the twinkling of an eye!" No sooner had this one - who had the knowledge of the Book - finished his phrase than the throne stood before Solomon. The mission had, indeed, been completed in the blinking of an eye.

Solomon's seat was in Palestine, and the throne of Bilqis had been in Yemen, two thousand miles away. This was a great miracle performed by one of those sitting with Solomon. When Bilqis arrived at Solomon's palace, she was welcomed with pomp and ceremony. Then, pointing to the altered throne, Solomon asked her whether her throne looked like that one. She looked at it again and again. In her mind she was convinced that her throne could not possibly be the one she was looking at, as hers was in her palace; et, she detected a striking similarity and replied: "It is as if it were the very one, and resembles mine in every respect." Solomon judged that she was intelligent and diplomatic.

He then invited her into the great hall, the floor of which was laid in glass and shimmering. Thinking it was water, as she stepped on the floor, she lifted her skirt slightly above her heels, for fear of wetting it. Solomon pointed out to her that it was made of solid glass.

She was amazed. She had never seen such things before. Bilqis realized that she was in the company of a very knowledgeable person who was not only a ruler of a great kingdom but a messenger of Allah, as well. She repented, gave up sun worship, accepted the faith of Allah, and asked her people to do the same. It was finished; Bilqis saw her people's creed fall apart before Solomon. She realized that the sun which her people worshipped was nothing but one of Allah's creatures.

The sun eclipsed within her for the first time, and her heart was lit by a never fading light, the light of Islam.

Solomon is informed about the Queen of Sheba – Quranic

Almighty Allah told us this story in the Quran: ***"He inspected the birds, and said: "What is the matter that I see not a hoopoe? Or is he among the absentees? I will surely punish him with a severe torment, or slaughter him, unless he brings me a clear reason." But the***

hoopoe stayed not long, he came up and said: "I have grasped (the knowledge of a thing) which you have not grasped and I have come to you from Sheba with true news. I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given all things that could be possessed by any ruler of the earth, and she has a great throne. I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allah, and Satan has made their deeds fair seeming to them, and has barred them from Allah's Way, so they have no guidance." Al-La (this word has two interpretations) [As Satan has barred them from Allah's Way} so that they do not worship (prostrate before) Allah, or so that they may worship (prostrate before) Allah, Who brings light to what is hidden in the heavens and the earth, and knows what you conceal and what you reveal. Allah, La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Lord of the Supreme Throne! (Solomon) said: "We shall see whether you speak the truth or you are one of the liars. Go with this letter of mine, and deliver it to them, then draw back from them, and see what answer they return." She said: "O chiefs! Verily! Here is a delivered to me a noble letter. Verily! It is from Solomon and verily! It (reads): 'In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful; Be you not exalted against me, but come to me as Muslims (true believers who submit to Allah with full submission).'" She said: "O chiefs! Advise me in this case of mine. I decide no case till you are present with me." They said: "We have great strength, and great ability for war, but it is for you to command; so think over what you will command." She said: "Verily! Kings, when they enter a town (country), they despoil it, and make the most honorable amongst its people low. And thus they do. But verily! I am going to send him a present, and see with what answer the messengers return." So when (the messengers with the present) came to Solomon, he said: "Will you help me in wealth? What Allah has given me is better than that which He has given you! Nay, you rejoice in your gift!" (Then Solomon said to the chief of her messengers who brought the present): "Go back to them. We verily shall come to them with hosts that they cannot resist, and we shall drive them out from there is disgrace, and they will be abased." He said: "O chiefs! Which of you can bring me her throne before they come to me surrendering themselves in obedience?" An Ifrit (strong) from the jinns said: "I will bring it to you before you rise from your place (council). And verily, I am indeed strong, and trustworthy for such work." One with whom was knowledge of the Scripture said: "I will bring it to you within the twinkling of an eye!" then when Solomon saw it placed before him, he said: "This is by the Grace of my Lord, to test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful! And whoever is grateful, truly, his gratitude is for the good of his ownself, and whoever is ungrateful, he is ungrateful only for the loss of his ownself. Certainly! My Lord is Rich (Free of all wants), Bountiful!" He said: "Disguise her throne for her that we may see whether she will be guided (to recognize her throne), or she will be one of those not guided." So when she came, it was said to her: "Is your throne like this?" She said: "It is as though it was the very same." And Solomon said: "Knowledge was bestowed on us before her, and we were submitted to Allah (in Islam as Muslims before her)." And that which she used to worship besides Allah has prevented her from Islam, for she was of a disbelieving people. It was said to her: "Enter As-Sarh" (a glass surface with water underneath it) or a palace, but when she saw it, she thought it was a pool, and she tucked up her clothes, uncovering her legs. Solomon said: "Verily, it is Sarh paved smooth with slab of glass." She said: "My Lord! Verily, I have wronged myself, and I submit (in Islam), together with Solomon, to Allah, the Lord of the Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists)." (Ch 27:20-44 Quran)