

Uzayr Sleeps For a Hundred Years

It has been reported by Ibn Abbas (radhiAllahu anhu) and others, that Uzayr was a very righteous and a wise man. He went out one day to his farm, as was his habit. Around noon time he came to an old and deserted town, and decided to stop and rest there due to the noon time heat. He entered the ruined town and dismounted his donkey, taking figs and grapes out of his basket. He went under the shade of the khaiba tree and ate his food.

Then he got up to look at what remained of the ruins. The people had long been lost, and he saw bones.

"Oh! How will Allah ever bring this to life after its death?" (2:259)

He said this not out of doubt but out of curiosity. Just then, Allah Ta`ala sent the Angel of Death (Izra`il) to take his life. He remained dead for one hundred years.

After one hundred years had passed and there had been changes in the people of Banu Isra'il, Allah sent an angel upon Uzayr to bring him back to life in order for him to feel and see how Allah revives the dead.

The angel said: "For how long did you sleep?" He said: "A day or part of a day." He said this because he knew he had slept early in the afternoon and woke up late in the afternoon.

The angel said: "You remained asleep for one hundred years." He ate and drank the food which he had prepared before he was overtaken by that long sleep. Then the angel revived his donkey.

Allah Ta`ala said:

"And look at your donkey! We have made you a sign for the people. Look at the bones, how We bring them together and cover them with flesh." When this was clearly shown to him he said: "I know now that Allah is able to do all things." (2:259)

Uzayr Returns Home

He rode on his donkey and entered his hometown, but the people did not recognize him, nor did his household, except the maid, who was now an old woman. He asked her: "Is this the house of Uzayr?"

She said: "Yes, but the people have long forgotten Uzayr." He said: "I am Uzayr, Allah had taken my life for a one hundred years and has now returned it to me." She said: "Uzayr used to be answered when he prayed to Allah. Pray to cure me of blindness if you are Uzayr."

He prayed for her and massaged her eyes and took her by the hand. "Get up by the power of Allah," he said. The crippled woman stood up and walked; she opened her eyes and saw; her blindness was gone. She said: "I bear witness that you are Uzayr."

Uzayr Finds and Copies the Torah

She rushed to the assembly of the Israelites. Uzayr's son was one hundred eighteen years old, and his children's children now were leaders of their people. She called out to them saying: "This is Uzayr, he has come to you!" They immediately accused her of lying.

She said: "I am your old maid. He has just prayed to Allah for me, and here I am whole again, walking and seeing." The people stood up and looked at him.

His son said: "My father had a mark between his shoulders, a black mole," and they discovered it. They said: "None among us memorized the Torah since BukhtuNasr (Nebuchadnezzar) burned it, except Uzayr; and there was only one copy of the Torah, which was hidden by Sarukha. He buried it in the days of Nebuchadnezzar in a place none but Uzayr knows."

Uzayr led the people to the hidden place and took out that copy of the Torah. Its pages had rotted, and the book itself crumpled.

Uzayr sat under the shade of a tree surrounded by the children of Israel and copied out the Torah for them from that script. Henceforth, the Jews said that Uzayr is the son of Allah.

Ibrahim (alayhis salam) Curious About the Resurrection

Ibrahim lived on earth worshipping Allah and calling people to monotheism, but he was journeying to Allah, knowing that his days on earth were limited and that they would be followed by death and finally resurrection. The knowledge of life after death filled Ibrahim with peace and love and certitude. One day he was curious to how he was to be resurrected and asked Allah to show him how He brought the dead back to life.

Allah commanded Ibrahim to take four birds, cut them to pieces and mix their body parts together, then divide them into four portions and place them on top of four different hills, then call back the birds in Allah's name. Ibrahim did as he was told. Immediately the mingled parts of the birds separated to join their original bodies in different places and the birds flew back to Ibrahim.

Almighty Allah revealed:

"Remember when Ibrahim said: 'My Lord Show me how You give life to the dead.'" Allah said: "Do you not believe?"

Ibrahim said: "Yes I believe, but to be stronger in Faith." He said:

"Take four birds, the cause them to incline towards you (then slaughter them, cut them into pieces) and then put a portion of them on every hill and call them they will come to you in haste.

And know that Allah is All Mighty and All Wise."(2:260)

Questions:

- 1.) Was Uzayr a prophet or a righteous wise man of Bani Isra'il?
- 2.) For how many years did Allah ta`ala cause Uzayr to die?
- 3.) Why did Bani Isra'il claim that Uzayr was the son of Allah?
- 4.) Did Ibrahim (alayhis salam) have doubt about the resurrection?
Why then did he ask Allah how He brings the dead back to life?
- 5.) What did Allah Ta`ala instruct Ibrahim to do in order to witness how Allah brings back the dead to life?