*The Story Of The Prophet `Uzair*

*Ramadan – Ashton Central Mosque – 26/07/13*

Or (such as) he who passed by a town, and it was completely devastated upon its trellises. He said, "However will Allah give life to this (town) after its death?" So Allah made him die a hundred seasons; (i.e., years) thereafter He made him rise again.

***The Theme Of This Story Is About Hope.***

This story encourages us to place trust in Allah. `Uzair wondered whether it is possible to revive this land. Allah (SWT) let him go through this process by himself. Allah (SWT) made him die and then brought him back to life in the same way He did with the land. Humans are like the nations, they have ups and downs throughout their lives. Everyone experiences stages of weakness and strength. Allah (SWT) says

Allah is (He) Who created you out of weakness, thereafter He made even after weakness power; thereafter He made even after power weakness and hoariness. He creates whatever He decides, and He is The Ever-Knowing, The Ever-Determiner

***The Aspects Of Era Preceded By `Uzair***

Two hundred years after Solaiman (AS) (Solomon's) death, `Uzair was born. Jerusalem had ups during Solaiman's era. There were many military, scientific, and architectural advancements. The winds and Jinn were subjected to him. The queen of Saba' was astonished when she saw these advancements. Shortly after Solaiman's death, people were divided into sects and his powerful kingdom was divided and invaded by Nebuchadnezzar whose ambition was to make his kingdom in Iraq stronger than that of Solaiman's. He destroyed the homes, killed and enslaved people and burned everything. Jerusalem became a barren place as described in the Qur'an (it was completely devastated upon its trellises)

The curve changes completely from up to down. There is still a light of hope, however. You should know and teach your children that there is always hope for a new renaissance.

***Why Did Allah Choose `Uzair?***

`Uzair, who was a pious and model worshipper, was one of the prophets sent to the Israelites. Although Allah (SWT) did not reveal any divine books to him, `Uzair was one of the four persons (Musa (AS) (Moses), Dawud (AS) (David) and Yoush ibn Noon) who memorized the Torah. During his era, no one except `Uzair memorized the Torah.

The story of `Uzair represents the true application of Allah's attributes mentioned in this ayah. Allah, (SWT) the Ever-Living, can give life and make to die as He did with `Uzair. This also is asserted by the situation where Ibrahim (AS) (Abraham) asked Allah (SWT) to show him how He gives life to the dead.

***The Life Of The Prophet `Uzair***

He lived in a town at a traveling distance of a day and a night from Jerusalem. He had a farm, a four-person family and a 20-year old maid. He went to Jerusalem at the age of forty and experienced this miraculous incident (he was raised at the same age). His main focus was how to revive this nation again. At that time, Jerusalem was ruined by Nebuchadnezzar. Allah (SWT) revealed to `Uzair to set out to Jerusalem for a certain mission, namely making renaissance. `Uzair, whose ambition was to attain the gifts of the Day of Judgment, made use of his potentials and worldly tools and executed Allah's command, Hence, everyone, whatever his ambition was, should not neglect the main mission for which Allah (SWT) created us. We are to reform our country and the earth as a whole. After that, attaining the highest levels of paradise should be our motive to achieve that.

***'Uzair's Migration To Jerusalem***

He bade farewell to his family, rode his donkey and headed to Jerusalem. He found it an empty deserted town. He knew that Allah (SWT) sent him there for reformation, so he decided to remain. Likewise, you are ordered to reform; try to set things right in your own country. Allah praises this nation for its reformative role, "You have been the most charitable nation brought out to mankind: you command beneficence, and forbid malfeasance…"

***Providing Sustenance On Earth***

'Uzair carried a basket containing grapes and figs, and a pack containing a few loaves of bread to eat during his journey to Jerusalem. Surprisingly, such a small quantity of food sufficed him for a hundred years. This is how Allah (SWT) provides for his bondmen. He may provide people with the sustenance of the whole year in one day. Every human being's sustenance is determined in the Preserved Tablet. Nevertheless, man is never satisfied with what he has and needs more.

Allah (SWT) states in Hadith Qudsi that He provides man with all what he needs, but man always wants more. Allah (SWT) asserts that if you are healthy, safe, have enough food only for the current day, then you are in the best state aspired in this worldly life.

'Uzair hoped for reformation. Despite being homeless, lacking of food, he began to rebuild the country. You have to take reformative actions in any field, such as Literacy, social work, and so on. Reformation is a persisting duty you should adhere to insofar as implanting a shoot even if in the Day of Judgment, according to the Prophet's (SAWS) teaching.

"However will Allah (SWT) give life to this (town) after its death?"

After a long day of hard work, 'Uzair climbed a cave to take a rest. He looked down at Jerusalem and kept asking himself, "However will Allah give life to this (town) after its death?"

'Uzair was not in doubt, but asked himself how it could be. He slept, beside him were his grapes and figs and his donkey was tied before him - to wake up after hundred years. Allah (SWT) gave him a practical answer to his question.

***Why Allah (SWT) Made Him Die For Hundred Years?***

Every hundred years, a set of ideas appear and prevail the world, such as communism and capitalism, to become old fashioned and substituted by a new set of ideas after another century. Therefore, every century Allah (SWT) chooses one of his bondsmen to renew the missionary activity. Our current ideas are about to be out of date; a new world is about to be born in which only those with a high level of education and novel ideas will play the most significant roles. Prepare yourself and your children to take the initiative.

***Timing Of 'Uzair's Resurrection***

Allah (SWT) says what can be translated as, "Or (such as) he who passed by a town, and it was completely devastated upon its trellises. He said, "However will Allah give life to this (town) after its death?" So Allah made him die a hundred seasons; (i.e. years) thereafter He made him rise again…"

Nebuchadnezzar died after a hundred years, and the people of Jerusalem returned to their home to find it in ruins. They rebuilt the country leaving 'Uzair's unfinished home as a remnant. Allah (SWT) brought 'Uzair back to life to teach those people their religion.

Proving a hundred-year death for both believers and materialists

For believers, it is stated in the Ever-Glorious Qur'an that Allah (SWT) is the Ever-Living and the Superb Upright Sustainer. In addition, the story of giving life to the dead is mentioned many times in the Ever-Glorious Qur'an:

* The story of Saul and Goliath.
* The story of the People of the Cave.
* The story of bringing birds back to life at the request of Ibrahim.

For materialists, resurrection can be compared to the recognized scientific phenomenon of winter sleep. Moreover, it can be compared to waking up after sleep, which the Prophet (SAWS) considered as returning to life after death.

***Why Allah Sent Down An Angel To 'Uzair?***

When 'Uzair was brought back to life, Allah (SWT) sent down an angel asking him, "How long have you lingered?" He said, "I have lingered a day or part of a day." He said, "No indeed, you have lingered a hundred seasons…"

Allah's mercy is evident here. If 'Uzair left the cave suddenly to see Jerusalem full of life, he would certainly have a shock. He sent down an angel to disclose to him the experience he had underwent. This situation discloses part of the role of angels who surround and shade us with their wings.

Proving a hundred-year death

Just as he left them when he slept, the grapes, figs, and bread were not spoiled. That was why he thought that he only slept for one day or even for part of a day. However, when he looked at his donkey, he found that it had turned into pieces of bones. Allah (SWT) caused the time to pass over the donkey but not over any other thing found in the same place. It was as if only one more day was added to his age; his beard, fingers, and food remained unchanged unlike the donkey.

Do not you believe that one day Jerusalem will be return to the Muslims and that other Arab countries will proceed forward? Look at the miraculous signs of Allah, (SWT) how Allah (SWT) expanded the time for some creatures and withheld it for others! Get up and work hard to revive this nation; have hope in success, and utilize this month to learn a new profession. This is the first motivation that can bring the Muslim nation back to life. That was why Allah (SWT) caused `Uzair to die and then brought him back to life. Glory be to Allah (SWT), the Expander and Withholder.

***`Uzair's Arrival To Jerusalem***

`Uzair went to Jerusalem to tell its people what happened to him. He did not fear that they might belie him, just as the Prophet (SAWS) (peace be upon him) did during the event of al-Isra' and Mi`raj. Do not ever feel shy about telling the truth? `Uzair's people belied him at first, but when he told them that the last thing he did was building a house, they asked him to describe the building to them. To their surprise, his description suited the building they found and left as a relic. However, they asked him for more evidence. One of them said that when Nebuchadnezzar entered Jerusalem, his grandfathers had a copy of Torah and he brought it so that `Uzair would recite it. When he did, they believed him and he remained in Jerusalem for one year preaching and calling them to do good. If you promise Allah (SWT) to stop smoking, to wear the veil, or to carry out a certain task, never break your promise.

***`Uzair's Return To His Town***

After carrying out his mission, `Uzair returned home and found everything changed. All of his family, but his grandsons who were older than him, had died. He only found his 120-year-old maid who had lost her eyesight. When he told her that he is `Uzair, she did not believe him and demanded a proof. She said, "`Uzair's supplications were answered. Ask Allah (SWT) to return my eyesight to me so that I would see you and confirm if you are `Uzair or not." He did and she regained her eyesight. She recognized him and went out to inform the people about the return of `Uzair. Glory is due to Allah (SWT). I ask Allah (SWT) to give life to our countries communities families and to give up hope.