

# Sura 28 - The Story

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## THE CHAPTER OF THE STORY

(XXVIII. Mecca.)

IN the name of the merciful and compassionate God. TA SIN MIM. Those are the signs of the perspicuous Book; we recite to thee from the history of Moses and Pharaoh in truth unto a people who believe.

Verily, Pharaoh was lofty in the land and made the people thereof sects; one party of them he weakened, slaughtering their sons and letting their women live. Verily, he was of the despoilers. And we wished to be gracious to those who were weakened in the earth, and to make them models, and to make them the heirs; and to establish for them in the earth; and to show Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts what they had to beware of from them. And we inspired the mother of Moses, 'Suckle him; and when thou art afraid for him then throw him into the river, and fear not and grieve not; verily, we are going to restore him to thee, and to make him of the apostles!'

And Pharaoh's family picked him up that he might be for them a foe and a grief; verily, Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts were sinners. And Pharaoh's wife said, 'He is a cheering of the eye to me, and to thee. Kill him not; it may be that he will profit us, or that we may take him for a son;' for they did not perceive. And the heart of Moses' mother was void on the morrow; she well-nigh disclosed him, had it not been that we bound up her heart that she might be of the believers.

And she said to his sister, 'Follow him up.' And she looked after him from afar, and they did not perceive. And we made unlawful for him the wet-nurses. And she said, 'Shall I guide you to the people of a house who will take care of him for you, and who will be sincere respecting him?'

So we restored him to his mother that her eye might be cheered, and that she might not grieve, and that she might know that the promise of God is true, though most of them know not. And when he reached puberty, and was settled, we gave him judgment and knowledge; for thus do we reward those who do well. And he entered into the city at the time the people thereof were heedless, and he found therein two men fighting; the one of his sect and the other of his foes. And he who was of his sect asked his aid against him who was of his foes; and Moses smote him with his fist and finished him. Said he, 'This is of the work of Satan, verily, he is a misleading obvious foe.'

Said he, 'My Lord! verily, I have wronged my soul, but forgive me.' So He forgave him; for He is forgiving and merciful. Said he, 'My Lord! for that Thou hast been gracious to me, I will surely not back up the sinners.'

And on the morrow he was afraid in the city, expectant. And behold, he whom he had helped the day before cried (again) to him for aid. Said Moses to him, 'Verily, thou art obviously quarrelsome. And when he wished to assault him who was the enemy to them both, he said, 'O Moses! dost thou desire to kill me as thou didst kill a person yesterday? thou dost only desire to be a tyrant in the earth; and thou dost not desire to be of those who do right!' And a man came

from the remote parts of the city running, said he, 'O Moses! verily, the chiefs are deliberating concerning thee to kill thee; go then forth; verily, I am to you a sincere adviser!' So he went forth therefrom, afraid and expectant. Said he, 'Lord, save me from the unjust people!'

And when he turned his face in the direction of Midian, he said, 'It may be that my Lord will guide me to a level path!' And when he went down to the water of Midian he found thereat a nation of people watering their flocks.

And he found beside them two women keeping back their flocks. Said he, 'What is your design?' They said, 'We cannot water our flocks until the herdsmen have finished; for our father is a very old man.' So he watered for them; then he turned back towards the shade and said, 'My Lord! verily, I stand in need of what Thou sendest down to me of good.'

And one of the two came to him walking modestly; said she, 'Verily, my father calls thee, to reward thee with hire for having watered our flocks for us.' And when he came to him and related to him the story, said he, 'Fear not, thou art safe from the unjust people.' Said one of them, 'O my sire! hire him; verily, the best of those whom thou canst hire is the strong and faithful.' Said he, 'Verily, I desire to marry thee to one of these daughters of mine, on condition that thou dost serve me for hire eight years; and if thou shalt fulfil ten it is of thyself; for I do not wish to make it wretched for thee; thou wilt find me, if it please God, of the righteous!'

Said he, 'That is between you and me; whichever of the two terms I fulfil, let there be no enmity against me, for God over what we say keeps guard.'

And when Moses had fulfilled the appointed time, and was journeying with his people, he perceived from the side of the mountain a fire; said he to his people, 'Tarry ye here; verily, I have perceived a fire, haply I may bring you good news therefrom, or a brand of fire that haply ye may be warmed.'

And when he came to it he was called to, from the right side of the wady, in the blessed valley, out of the tree, 'O Moses! verily, I am God the Lord of the worlds; so throw down thy rod;' and when he saw it quivering as though it were a snake, he turned away and fled and did not return. 'O Moses! approach and fear not, verily, thou art amongst the safe. Thrust thy hand into thy bosom, it shall come out white, without hurt; and then fold again thy wing, that thou dost now stretch out through dread; for those are two signs from thy Lord to Pharaoh and his chiefs; verily, they are a people who work abomination!'

Said he, 'My Lord! verily, I have killed a person amongst them, and I fear that they will kill me: and my brother Aaron, he is more eloquent of tongue than I; send him then with me as a support, to verify me; verily, I fear that they will call me liar!' Said He, 'We will strengthen thine arm with thy brother; and we will make for you both authority, and they shall not reach you in our signs; ye two and those who follow you shall gain the upper hand.' And when Moses came to them with our manifest signs, they said, 'This is only sorcery devised; and we have not heard of this amongst our fathers of yore.'

Moses said, 'My Lord knows best who comes with guidance from Him, and whose shall be the issue of the abode. Verily, the unjust shall not prosper!'

And Pharaoh said, 'O ye chiefs! I do not know any god for you except me; then set fire, O Haman! to some clay and make for me a tower, haply I may mount up

to the God of Moses; for, verily, I think he is of those who lie!

And he grew big with pride, he and his armies in the land, without right; and they thought that they to us should not return. And we overtook him and his army, and we flung them into the sea; behold, then, how was the end of the unjust!

But we made them models calling to the fire; and on the resurrection day they shall not be helped; and we followed them up in this world with a curse; and on the resurrection day they shall be abhorred! And we gave Moses the Book, after that we had destroyed the former generations, as an insight to men and a guidance and a mercy; haply they may be mindful!

Thou wast not upon the western side when we decided for Moses, but afar off; nor wast thou of the witnesses. But we raised up (other) generations, and life was prolonged for them; and thou wast not staying amidst the people of Midian, reciting to them our signs; but we were sending our apostles.

Nor wast thou by the side of the mountain when we called; but it is a mercy from thy Lord, that thou mayest warn a people to whom no warner has come before thee; haply they may be mindful! And lest there should befall them a mishap for what their hands have sent before, and they should say, 'Our Lord! why didst thou not send to us an apostle? for we would have followed thy signs and been of the believers.'

And when the truth comes to them from us they say, 'We are given the like of what Moses was given.' Did they not disbelieve in what Moses was given before?-they say, 'Two works of sorcery back up each other;' and they say, 'Verily, we do disbelieve in all.'

Say, 'Bring, then, a book from God which shall be a better guide than both, and I will follow it, if ye do tell the truth!' And if they cannot answer thee, then know that they follow their own lusts; and who is more in error than he who follows his own lust without guidance from God? verily, God guides not an unjust people! And we caused the word to reach them, haply they may be mindful! Those to whom we gave the Book before it, they believe therein; and when it is recited to them they say, 'We believe in it as truth from our Lord; verily, we were resigned before it came!' These shall be given their hire twice over, for that they were patient, and repelled evil with good, and of what we have bestowed upon them give alms.

And when they hear vain talk, they turn away from it and say, 'We have our works, and ye have your works. Peace be upon you! we do not seek the ignorant!' Verily, thou canst not guide whom thou dost like, but God guides whom He pleases; for He knows best who are to be guided. And they say, 'If we follow the guidance we shall be snatched away from the land.' Have we not established for them a safe sanctuary, to which are imported the fruits of everything as a provision from us? but most of them do not know.

How many a city have we destroyed that exulted in its means of subsistence? These are their dwellings, never dwelt in after them, except a little; for we were the heirs.

But thy Lord would never destroy cities until He sent to the metropolis thereof an apostle, to recite to them our signs; nor would we destroy cities unless their people were unjust. Whatever thing ye may be given, it is a provision for

this world's life and the adornment thereof; but what is with God is better and more enduring; have ye then no sense?

Is He to whom we have promised a goodly promise, which he shall meet with, like him to whom we have given the enjoyment of the life of this world, and who upon the resurrection day shall be of the arraigned? And on the day when He will call them and will say, 'Where are those associates which ye did pretend?' And those against whom the sentence is due shall say, 'Our Lord! these are those whom we have seduced; we seduced them as we were seduced ourselves: but we clear ourselves to thee;-they did not worship us!'

And it will be said, 'Call upon your partners; and they will call upon them, but they will not answer them, and they shall see the torment; would that they had been guided.'

And the day when He shall call them and shall say, 'What was it ye answered the apostles?' and the history shall be blindly confusing to them on that day, and they shall not ask each other. But, as for him who turns again and believes and does right, it may be that he will be among the prosperous. For thy Lord creates what He pleases and chooses; they have not the choice! Celebrated be the praise of God! and exalted be He above what they associate with Him! Thy Lord knows what they conceal in their breasts and what they manifest.

He is God, there is no god but He; to Him belongs praise, in the first and the last; and His is the judgment; and unto Him shall ye return!

Have ye considered, if God were to make for you the night endless until the resurrection day, who is the god, but God, to bring you light? can ye not then hear?

Say, 'Have ye considered, if God were to make for you the day endless until the day of judgment, who is the god, except God, to bring you the night to rest therein? can ye not then see?' But of His mercy He has made for you the night and the day, that ye may rest therein, and crave of His grace, haply ye may give thanks. And the day when He shall call them and shall say, 'Where are my partners whom ye did pretend?' And we will pluck from every nation a witness; and we will say, 'Bring your proof and know that the truth is God's;' and that which they had devised shall stray away from them. Verily, Korah was of the people of Moses, and he was outrageous against them; and we gave him treasuries of which the keys would bear down a band of men endowed with strength. When his people said to him, 'Exult not; verily, God loves not those who exult! but crave, through what God has given thee, the future abode; and forget not thy portion in this world, and do good, as God has done good to thee; and seek not evil doing in the earth; verily, God loves not the evildoers!'

Said he, 'I have only been given it for knowledge which I have!' did he not know that God had destroyed before him many generations of those who were stronger than he, and had amassed more? But the sinners need not to be asked concerning their crimes.

And he went out amongst the people in his ornaments; those who desired the life of this world said, 'O would that we had the like of what Korah has been given! verily, he is endowed with mighty fortune!'

But those who had been given knowledge said, 'Woe to you! the reward of God is better for him who believes and does right; but none shall meet with it except

the patient. And we clave the earth with him and with his house; and he had no troop to help him against God, nor was he of those who were helped!

And on the morrow those who had yearned for his place the day before said, 'Ah, ah! God extends provision to whom He pleases of His servants, or He doles it out; had not God been gracious to us, the earth would have cleft open with us!

Ah, ah! the unbelievers shall not prosper!

That is the future abode; we make it for those who do not wish to be haughty in the earth, nor to do evil, and the end is for the pious. He who brings a good deed shall have better than it; and he who brings an evil deed-those who do evil deeds shall only be rewarded for that which they have done. Verily, He who hath ordained the Koran for thee will restore thee to thy returning place. Say, 'My Lord knows best who brings guidance, and who is in obvious error; nor couldst thou hope that the Book would be thrown to thee, save as a mercy from thy Lord! be not then a backer up of those who misbelieve; and let them not turn thee from the signs of God, after they have been sent down to thee; but call unto thy Lord and be not of the idolaters; and call not with God upon any other god; there is no god but He! everything is perishable, except His face; His is the judgment, and unto Him shall ye return!