

22248 - The Prophet of Allaah Yahyaa

the question

Could you give us some information about the Prophet of Allaah Yahyaa (peace be upon him)?

Detailed answer

Shaykh al-Shanqeeti (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

“(It was said to his son): ‘O Yahyaa (John)! Hold fast the Scripture [the Tawraat (Torah)]”

[Maryam 19:12 – interpretation of the meaning]

This means, ‘Hold fast the Tawraat’, i.e., by taking it seriously and striving. That is to done by fist understanding the texts correctly, then acting upon them in all aspects, believing in its tenets, regarding as permissible that which it permitted and regarding as forbidden that which it forbade, adhering to its etiquette, learning lessons from its stories, and adhering to it in all other ways. Most of the mufasssireen say that what is meant here by al-kitaab (the Scripture) is the Tawraat (Torah).

“And We gave him wisdom while yet a child”

[Maryam 19:12 – interpretation of the meaning]

The scholars have a number of opinions as to what is meant by wisdom, all of which are close in meaning and refer to one thing, which is that Allaah gave him understanding of the Scripture, so that he understood it and acted upon it whilst he was still a child.

“And (made him) sympathetic to men”

[Maryam 19:13 – interpretation of the meaning]

This is mentioned in conjunction with wisdom, i.e., We gave him sympathy (or compassion) from Us. Hanaan (sympathy, compassion) means the mercy, compassion and empathy that was

instilled in him. The word hanaan is widely used among the Arabs to refer to mercy and compassion, for example, they say, “Hanaanak wa hanaaneeka yaa Rabb”, meaning, I ask for Your mercy O Lord.

“and pure from sins”

[Maryam 19:13 – interpretation of the meaning]

This is mentioned in conjunction with the above, and means, ‘We gave him purity’ i.e., he was free from sin and disobedience because he obeyed Allaah and drew close to Him by means of that which pleases Him.

“and he was righteous”

[Maryam 19:13 – interpretation of the meaning]

This means, he obeyed the commands of his Lord and avoided that which He forbade. So he never committed any sin and was never blamed for any such action.

“And dutiful towards his parents”

[Maryam 19:14 – interpretation of the meaning]

The word barr (dutiful) refers to one who does acts of kindness, i.e., We made him honour his parents a great deal, i.e., he was very kind towards them and treated them in a gentle manner.

“and he was neither arrogant nor disobedient”

[Maryam 19:14 – interpretation of the meaning]

This means that he was not too arrogant to obey Allaah or to obey his parents. Rather he was obedient towards Allaah and humble towards his parents. This is the view of Ibn Jareer. Jabbaar (arrogant) means one who is very oppressive towards people and mistreats them. Everyone who is arrogant towards people and does them wrong is described as jabbaar.

“And Salaam (peace) be on him the day he was born, and the day he dies, and the day he will be raised up to life (again)!”

[Maryam 19:15 – interpretation of the meaning]

Ibn Jareer said: “Salaam (peace) be upon him means”, may he be safe and secure. The apparent meaning is that “And Salaam (peace) be on him the day he was born” is a greeting from Allaah to Yahyaa, and the meaning is safety and security.

In Soorat Aal ‘Imraan Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“... noble, keeping away from sexual relations with women, a Prophet, from among the righteous”[Aal ‘Imraan 3:39]

The word sayyid (translated here as “noble”) means one who is obeyed and followed by a large number of people.

The word husoor (translated here as “keeping away from sexual relations with women”) means that he kept himself away from women even though he was able to have relations with them, as an act of devotion to Allaah. That was permissible according to his law, but the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is to marry, not to remain celibate...

In the phrase “a Prophet, from among the righteous”, the word Nabi (Prophet) is derived from the word naba’, meaning important news, because the Revelation is important news from Allaah. The righteous are those whose belief, actions, words and intentions are correct. Righteousness is the opposite of immorality or corruption. Allaah described Yahyaa as righteous and He described the Prophets in a similar manner in Soorat al-An’aam, where He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And Zakariyya (Zachariya), and Yahya (John) and ‘Eesa (Jesus) and Ilyas (Elias), each one of them was of the righteous”

[al-An’aam 6:85]