Stories from the Qur'an
Series 22

A Successor upon the Earth

The Story of Prophet David and His Judgements According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

STORIES FROM THE QUR'AN

SERIES 22

A SUCCESSOR UPON THE EARTH

The Story of Prophet David and His Judgements According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith

يَٰدَاوُۥدُ إِنَّا جَعَلۡنَٰكَ خَلِيفَةٗ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ فَٱحۡكُم بَيۡنَ ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ ٱلۡهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٞ شَدِيدُۢ بِمَا نَسُواْ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡحِسَابِ

"[We said], "O David, indeed We have made you a successor upon the earth, so judge between the people in truth and do not follow [your own] desire, as it will lead you astray from the way of Allah." Indeed, those who go astray from the way of Allah will have a severe punishment for having forgotten the Day of Account."

SURAH SAD 38:26

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise is due to Allah, who made Prophet David a successor upon the earth, made iron pliable for him, and made the mountains and the birds glorify Him along with him. Blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who taught that the just will be upon pulpits of light, and upon his family and his Companions.

This eBook is specially dedicated to my beloved wife,

ZAHARAH MOHD LATIF;

my dear children,

MUHAMMAD HAFIZ, NOOR HAZWANI, ABDUL HAKIM, NOOR HIDAYAH, NOR AQILA and **NOR ATIQAH**;

and my sons- and daughters-in-law,

FAZILAH, MALEK, HANIN, FAIRIZAL and **FIRWAN**.

May Allah make us just in our judgements, with our families and in whatever we are entrusted with; and may we never follow our own desires. May this knowledge be ‘ilmun yuntafa‘u bih, knowledge that brings benefit.

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ABOUT THE COVER OF THIS EBOOK

The cover of this eBook does not depict any human being. It shows the **scenery** of a **mountain range** at dawn, with **a flock of birds** flying in the sky, and **a valley with fertile fields** at its foot.

The mountains and birds are taken from the words of Allah: ***"O mountains, repeat [Our] praises with him, and the birds [as well]"*** (34:10). The fields recall the judgement of Prophet David and Prophet Solomon ***"concerning the field"*** (21:78).

The cover does not depict Prophet David, Prophet Solomon or any figure. The **dark blue band** at the bottom, framed by **fine gold lines**, is where the author's name appears.

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SUPPORT & DONATIONS

Colour guide: green box = verses of the Qur'an; gold box = Hadith; brown box = archaeological note; blue table = comparison. Underlined blue narrator names can be clicked to open the narrator's page on sunnah.com.

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A SUCCESSOR UPON THE EARTH

In Series 21, a young man named David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ (Dawud) killed Goliath, and ***"Allah gave him the kingship and prophethood"***. This series tells of David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ as ***king, prophet and judge***: a servant strong in worship, tried in his judgement, who repented, and whom Allah appointed as a ***successor (khalifah) upon the earth***.

The story of Prophet David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ is spread across several surahs: Sad (38:17–26), Al-Anbiya' (21:78–80) and Saba' (34:10–13). Allah also gave him a scripture: ***"to David We gave the book [of Psalms]"*** (17:55) — the Zabur.

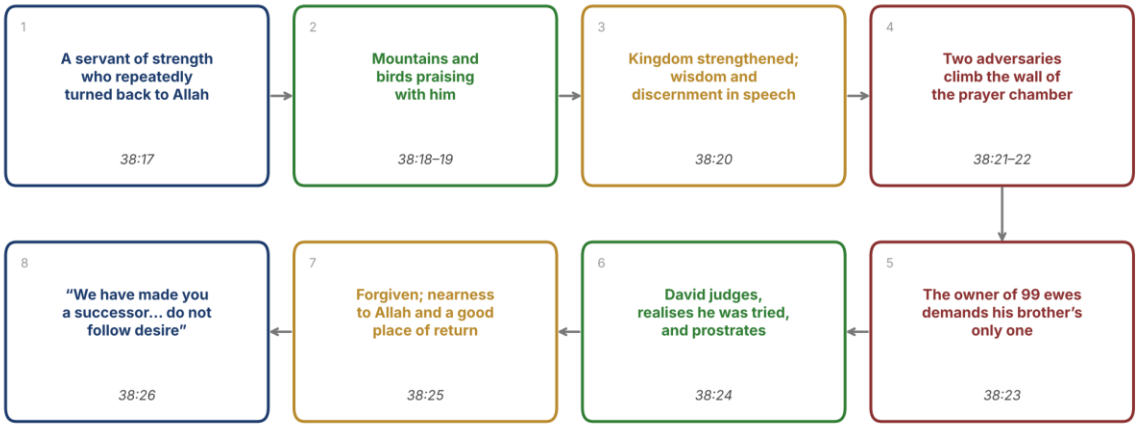


Figure 1: The flow of the story of Prophet David in Surah Sad 38:17–26 — from Allah's praise to the command to be a successor.

Note: The translation of the Qur'anic verses in this eBook is Sahih International. The translations of the Hadith are our own, from the Arabic text. The grade of each Hadith is stated in its Hadith box, with a link to sunnah.com.

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A SERVANT OF STRENGTH WHO TURNED BACK TO ALLAH

SURAH SAD 38:17

ٱصۡبِرۡ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَٱذۡكُرۡ عَبۡدَنَا دَاوُۥدَ ذَا ٱلۡأَيۡدِۖ إِنَّهُۥٓ أَوَّابٞ ١٧

Be patient over what they say and remember Our servant, David, the possessor of strength; indeed, he was one who repeatedly turned back [to Allah].

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/38:17

EXPLANATION OF VERSE 38:17 — TWO QUALITIES OF PROPHET DAVID

First: The context. The verse begins with a command to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: ***"Be patient over what they say"***. The story of David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ is told to strengthen his heart.

Second: "The possessor of strength". ***"the possessor of strength"***. The commentators explain that this was strength in worship and obedience. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 38:17

Third: "One who repeatedly turned back". The word ***awwāb*** describes one who constantly returns to Allah — through remembrance, repentance and obedience. This quality shines in the story of the two adversaries (38:24).

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3417

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّزَّاقِ، أَخْبَرَنَا مَعْمَرٌ، عَنْ هَمَّامٍ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « خُفِّفَ عَلَى دَاوُدَ ـ عَلَيْهِ السَّلاَمُ ـ الْقُرْآنُ، فَكَانَ يَأْمُرُ بِدَوَابِّهِ فَتُسْرَجُ، فَيَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ قَبْلَ أَنْ تُسْرَجَ دَوَابُّهُ، وَلاَ يَأْكُلُ إِلاَّ مِنْ عَمَلِ يَدِهِ ». رواه مُوسَى بْنُ عُقْبَةَ عَنْ صَفْوَانَ، عَنْ عَطَاءِ بْنِ يَسَارٍ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: **"The recitation (of the Zabur) was made easy for David, peace be upon him. He would order his riding animals to be saddled, and he would finish reciting before they were saddled. And he did not eat except from the work of his own hands."**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Ju'fi, from 'Abd al-Razzaq ibn Hammam, from Ma'mar ibn Rashid, from Hammam ibn Munabbih, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه. Also narrated by Musa ibn 'Uqbah, from Safwan ibn Sulaym, from 'Ata' ibn Yasar, from Abu Hurayrah.

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REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Prophets (Kitab Ahadith al-Anbiya'), chapter on the statement of Allah "And to David We gave the Zabur", Hadith No. 3417.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3417

This Hadith shows two strengths of David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: ***strength with the Book of Allah*** — reciting the Zabur in a short time — and ***strength in work*** — eating only from the work of his own hands.

MOUNTAINS AND BIRDS IN PRAISE

SURAH SABA' 34:10

۞ وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُۥدَ مِنَّا فَضْلًا ۖ يَٰجِبَالُ أَوِّبِى مَعَهُۥ وَٱلطَّيْرَ ۖ وَأَلَنَّا لَهُ ٱلْحَدِيدَ

١٠

And We certainly gave David from Us bounty. [We said], "O mountains, repeat [Our] praises with him, and the birds [as well]." And We made pliable for him iron.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/34:10

EXPLANATION OF VERSES 34:10 AND 38:18–19 — CREATION GLORIFYING WITH HIM

First: The mountains. ***"Indeed, We subjected the mountains [to praise] with him, exalting [Allah] in the [late] afternoon and [after] sunrise"*** (38:18).

Second: The birds. ***"And the birds were assembled, all with him repeating [praises]"*** (38:19). The Qur'an tells us that all creation glorifies Allah; but for David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, that glorification was ***in harmony with his own***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 34:10

Third: A beautiful voice. The scholars mention that David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was given a very beautiful voice in reciting the Zabur. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ referred to it when praising the recitation of a Companion:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 5048

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ خَلَفٍ أَبُو بَكْرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو يَحْيَى الْحِمَّانِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا بُرَيْدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي بُرْدَةَ، عَنْ جَدِّهِ أَبِي بُرْدَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى ـ رضى الله عنه ـ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ لَهُ « يَا أَبَا مُوسَى لَقَدْ أُوتِيتَ مِزْمَارًا مِنْ مَزَامِيرِ آلِ دَاوُدَ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Musa رضى الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said to him: **"O Abu Musa, you have been given one of the flutes (mizmar) of the family of David."** (Meaning: a beautiful voice in reciting the Qur'an.)

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muhammad ibn Khalaf Abu Bakr, from Abu Yahya al-Himmani, from Burayd ibn 'Abdullah ibn Abi Burdah, from his grandfather Abu Burdah ibn Abi Musa, from Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Virtues of the Qur'an (Kitab Fada'il al-Qur'an), chapter on a beautiful voice in reciting the Qur'an, Hadith No. 5048. Also narrated by Muslim (No. 793).

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GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:5048

"The flutes of the family of David" is a figure of speech for a beautiful voice in reciting the Book of Allah — not a musical instrument. This Hadith encourages us to recite the Qur'an beautifully.

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IRON MADE PLIABLE

SURAH SABA' 34:11

أَنِ ٱعۡمَلۡ سَٰبِغَٰتٖ وَقَدِّرۡ فِي ٱلسَّرۡدِۖ وَٱعۡمَلُواْ صَٰلِحًاۖ إِنِّي بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ بَصِيرٞ ١١

[Commanding him], "Make full coats of mail and calculate [precisely] the links, and work [all of you] righteousness. Indeed I, of what you do, am Seeing."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/34:11

EXPLANATION OF VERSES 34:10–11 AND 21:80 — KNOWLEDGE THAT PROTECTS

First: A miracle. ***"And We made pliable for him iron"*** (34:10).

Second: Precise craftsmanship. ***"Make full coats of mail and calculate [precisely] the links"***. The command ***wa qaddir fis-sard*** means to measure the links precisely — not so loose that they are easily pierced, nor so tight that they become heavy. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 34:11

Third: To protect people. ***"And We taught him the fashioning of coats of armor to protect you from your [enemy in] battle"***. ***"So will you then be grateful?"*** (21:80). Knowledge given by Allah is used to ***protect life***, together with the command: ***"and work [all of you] righteousness"***.

In Series 21 (Sahih al-Bukhari 2072), the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said that David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ ate from the work of his own hands — and this was part of that work.

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TWO MEN CLIMB THE WALL OF THE PRAYER CHAMBER

SURAH SAD 38:21

وَهَلۡ أَتَىٰكَ نَبَؤُاْ ٱلۡخَصۡمِ إِذۡ تَسَوَّرُواْ ٱلۡمِحۡرَابَ ٢١

And has there come to you the news of the adversaries, when they climbed over the wall of [his] prayer chamber.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/38:21

SURAH SAD 38:22

إِذۡ دَخَلُواْ عَلَىٰ دَاوُۥدَ فَفَزِعَ مِنۡهُمۡۖ قَالُواْ لَا تَخَفۡۖ خَصۡمَانِ بَغَىٰ بَعۡضُنَا عَلَىٰ بَعۡضٖ فَٱحۡكُم بَيۡنَنَا بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَلَا تُشۡطِطۡ وَٱهۡدِنَآ إِلَىٰ سَوَآءِ ٱلصِّرَٰطِ ٢٢

When they entered upon David and he was alarmed by them? They said, "Fear not. [We are] two adversaries, one of whom has wronged the other, so judge between us with truth and do not exceed [it] and guide us to the sound path."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/38:22

SURAH SAD 38:23

إِنَّ هَٰذَآ أَخِي لَهُۥ تِسۡعٞ وَتِسۡعُونَ نَعۡجَةٗ وَلِيَ نَعۡجَةٞ وَٰحِدَةٞ فَقَالَ أَكۡفِلۡنِيهَا وَعَزَّنِي فِي ٱلۡخِطَابِ ٢٣

Indeed this, my brother, has ninety-nine ewes, and I have one ewe; so he said, 'Entrust her to me,' and he overpowered me in speech.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/38:23

EXPLANATION OF VERSES 38:21–23 — AN UNUSUAL HEARING

First: A startling arrival. ***"when they climbed over the wall of [his] prayer chamber"***. They did not come through the door, and David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ ***"was alarmed by them"***.

Second: A plea for justice. ***"so judge between us with truth and do not exceed [it] and guide us to the sound path"***.

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Third: The case presented. ***"Indeed this, my brother, has ninety-nine ewes, and I have one ewe"***. The one who had much demanded his brother's only one — ***"he overpowered me in speech"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 38:21

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JUDGEMENT, TRIAL AND REPENTANCE

SURAH SAD 38:24

قَالَ لَقَدۡ ظَلَمَكَ بِسُؤَالِ نَعۡجَتِكَ إِلَىٰ نِعَاجِهِۦۖ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرٗا مِّنَ ٱلۡخُلَطَآءِ لَيَبۡغِي
بَعۡضُهُمۡ عَلَىٰ بَعۡضٍ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَقَلِيلٞ مَّا هُمۡۗ وَظَنَّ
دَاوُۥدُ أَنَّمَا فَتَنَّٰهُ فَٱسۡتَغۡفَرَ رَبَّهُۥ وَخَرَّ رَاكِعٗا وَأَنَابَ۩ ٢٤

[David] said, "He has certainly wronged you in demanding your ewe [in addition] to his ewes. And indeed, many associates oppress one another, except for those who believe and do righteous deeds - and few are they." And David became certain that We had tried him, and he asked forgiveness of his Lord and fell down bowing [in prostration] and turned in repentance [to Allah].

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/38:24

SURAH SAD 38:25

فَغَفَرۡنَا لَهُۥ ذَٰلِكَۖ وَإِنَّ لَهُۥ عِندَنَا لَزُلۡفَىٰ وَحُسۡنَ مَـَٔابٖ ٢٥

So We forgave him that; and indeed, for him is nearness to Us and a good place of return.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/38:25

EXPLANATION OF VERSES 38:24–25 — A PROPHET WHO RETURNED AT ONCE

First: The judgement. ***"He has certainly wronged you in demanding your ewe [in addition] to his ewes"***.

Second: A general rule. ***"except for those who believe and do righteous deeds - and few are they"*** — an echo of the "small company" in Series 21.

Third: Realising the trial. ***"And David became certain that We had tried him, and he asked forgiveness of his Lord and fell down bowing [in prostration] and turned in repentance [to Allah]"***. Careful commentators explain that the trial concerned how David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ judged — among other views, that he ruled after hearing only one side. The Qur'an does not detail it, and we do not add to it. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 38:24

Fourth: Forgiven and honoured. ***"So We forgave him that; and indeed, for him is nearness to Us and a good place of return"***.

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Prostration of Recitation: Verse 38:24 is a place of prostration. Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما said that the prostration in Surah Sad is not one of the emphasised ones, but he saw the Prophet ﷺ prostrate in it (Sahih al-Bukhari 1069).

"WE HAVE MADE YOU A SUCCESSOR UPON THE EARTH"

SURAH SAD 38:26

يَٰدَاوُۥدُ إِنَّا جَعَلۡنَٰكَ خَلِيفَةٗ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ فَٱحۡكُم بَيۡنَ ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلۡحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ ٱلۡهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٞ شَدِيدُۢ بِمَا نَسُواْ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡحِسَابِ ٢٦

[We said], "O David, indeed We have made you a successor upon the earth, so judge between the people in truth and do not follow [your own] desire, as it will lead you astray from the way of Allah." Indeed, those who go astray from the way of Allah will have a severe punishment for having forgotten the Day of Account.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/38:26

EXPLANATION OF VERSE 38:26 — THE TRUST OF A LEADER

First: An appointment from Allah. ***"O David, indeed We have made you a successor upon the earth"***. Power is not a personal possession; it is a trust.

Second: The main duty. ***"so judge between the people in truth"***.

Third: The chief enemy of justice. ***"do not follow [your own] desire, as it will lead you astray from the way of Allah"***. Desire — self-interest, bias and emotion — is the root of unjust rulings.

Fourth: The cost of forgetting the Day of Account. ***"for having forgotten the Day of Account"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 38:26

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1827

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، وَزُهَيْرُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، وَابْنُ نُمَيْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ بْنُ عُيَيْنَةَ، عَنْ عَمْرٍو، - يَعْنِي ابْنَ دِينَارٍ - عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ أَوْسٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو، قَالَ ابْنُ نُمَيْرٍ وَأَبُو بَكْرٍ يَبْلُغُ بِهِ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَفِي حَدِيثِ زُهَيْرٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم « إِنَّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَلَى مَنَابِرَ مِنْ نُورٍ عَنْ يَمِينِ الرَّحْمَنِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَكِلْتَا يَدَيْهِ يَمِينٌ الَّذِينَ يَعْدِلُونَ فِي حُكْمِهِمْ وَأَهْلِيهِمْ وَمَا وَلُوا ».

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn 'Amr رضى الله عنهما narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"Indeed, the just will be with Allah upon pulpits of light, at the right hand of the Most Merciful, Mighty and Majestic — and both His**

hands are right hands — those who are just in their judgements, with their families, and in whatever they are put in charge of."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shaybah, Zuhayr ibn Harb and Muhammad ibn 'Abdillah ibn Numayr, from Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, from 'Amr ibn Dinar, from 'Amr ibn Aws, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'As رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Government (Kitab al-Imarah), chapter on the virtue of the just ruler, Hadith No. 1827.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, the second most authentic book of Hadith after Sahih al-Bukhari.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1827

This Hadith widens the meaning of "successor": everyone who judges, leads a family or holds a trust ***must be just***, and the reward is ***pulpits of light*** with Allah.

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THE JUDGEMENT OF THE FIELD

SURAH AL-ANBIYA' 21:78

وَدَاوُۥدَ وَسُلَيۡمَٰنَ إِذۡ يَحۡكُمَانِ فِي ٱلۡحَرۡثِ إِذۡ نَفَشَتۡ فِيهِ غَنَمُ ٱلۡقَوۡمِ وَكُنَّا لِحُكۡمِهِمۡ شَٰهِدِينَ ٧٨

And [mention] David and Solomon, when they judged concerning the field - when the sheep of a people overran it [at night], and We were witness to their judgement.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/21:78

SURAH AL-ANBIYA' 21:79

فَفَهَّمۡنَٰهَا سُلَيۡمَٰنَۚ وَكُلًّا ءَاتَيۡنَا حُكۡمٗا وَعِلۡمٗاۚ وَسَخَّرۡنَا مَعَ دَاوُۥدَ ٱلۡجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحۡنَ وَٱلطَّيۡرَۚ وَكُنَّا فَٰعِلِينَ ٧٩

And We gave understanding of the case to Solomon, and to each [of them] We gave judgement and knowledge. And We subjected the mountains to exalt [Us], along with David and [also] the birds. And We were doing [that].

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/21:79

EXPLANATION OF VERSES 21:78–79 — TWO JUDGES, ONE UNDERSTANDING

First: The case. A people's sheep entered another's field at night and destroyed the crops: ***"when the sheep of a people overran it [at night]"***.

Second: Allah was witness. ***"We were witness to their judgement"***.

Third: A more precise understanding. ***"And We gave understanding of the case to Solomon"***. The commentators report from some Companions and Successors that David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ ruled the sheep should be handed to the owner of the field, while Solomon عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ proposed that the field owner benefit from the sheep while the sheep owner restored the field. These details are ***reports of tafsir, not a Hadith of the Prophet***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 21:78

Fourth: Both are praised. ***"to each [of them] We gave judgement and knowledge"***. A difference in understanding does not lower the rank of a sincere judge.

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	The Judgement of the Field	The Judgement of the Two Women
The case	A field overrun by a people's sheep at night (21:78)	Two women; a wolf took one child (Sahih al-Bukhari 3427)
David's ruling	Also judged; "We were witness to their judgement" (21:78)	The child went to the older woman
Solomon's ruling	"We gave understanding of the case to Solomon" (21:79)	Called for a knife to test them — the child went to the younger
Lesson	"To each We gave judgement and knowledge" (21:79)	A true mother's love is revealed when tested

Figure 2: Two judgements of Prophet David and Prophet Solomon — in the Qur'an and in authentic Hadith.

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TWO WOMEN AND ONE CHILD

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ told of another judgement involving David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and his son Solomon عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3427

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الْيَمَانِ، أَخْبَرَنَا شُعَيْبٌ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الزِّنَادِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، حَدَّثَهُ أَنَّهُ، سَمِعَ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَقُولُ « مَثَلِي وَمَثَلُ النَّاسِ كَمَثَلِ رَجُلٍ اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا، فَجَعَلَ الْفَرَاشُ وَهَذِهِ الدَّوَابُّ تَقَعُ فِي النَّارِ ». وَقَالَ « كَانَتِ امْرَأَتَانِ مَعَهُمَا ابْنَاهُمَا جَاءَ الذِّئْبُ فَذَهَبَ بِابْنِ إِحْدَاهُمَا، فَقَالَتْ صَاحِبَتُهَا إِنَّمَا ذَهَبَ بِابْنِكِ. وَقَالَتِ الأُخْرَى إِنَّمَا ذَهَبَ بِابْنِكِ. فَتَحَاكَمَتَا إِلَى دَاوُدَ، فَقَضَى بِهِ لِلْكُبْرَى فَخَرَجَتَا عَلَى سُلَيْمَانَ بْنِ دَاوُدَ فَأَخْبَرَتَاهُ. فَقَالَ ائْتُونِي بِالسِّكِّينِ أَشُقُّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا. فَقَالَتِ الصُّغْرَى لاَ تَفْعَلْ يَرْحَمُكَ اللَّهُ، هُوَ ابْنُهَا. فَقَضَى بِهِ لِلصُّغْرَى ». قَالَ أَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ وَاللَّهِ إِنْ سَمِعْتُ بِالسِّكِّينِ إِلاَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ، وَمَا كُنَّا نَقُولُ إِلاَّ الْمُدْيَةُ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: **"There were two women, each with her son. A wolf came and took away the son of one of them. Her companion said: It took your son. The other said: Rather, it took your son. So they went to David for judgement, and he judged that the child belonged to the older one. Then they went out to Solomon son of David and told him. He said: Bring me a knife, and I will cut him in two between them. The younger one said: Do not do it, may Allah have mercy on you — he is her son. So he judged that the child belonged to the younger one."**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Abu al-Yaman al-Hakam ibn Nafi', from Shu'ayb ibn Abi Hamzah, from Abu al-Zinad, from 'Abd al-Rahman al-A'raj, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Prophets (Kitab Ahadith al-Anbiya'), Hadith No. 3426–3427. Also narrated as No. 6769, and by Muslim (No. 1720).

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3427

First: David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ judged by the outward evidence. The child was with the older woman, and there was no other proof.

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Second: Solomon عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ tested the heart. He never meant to cut the child; he wanted to see ***who would give up her claim to keep the child safe***. A true mother would rather see her child given to another than see him die.

Third: Wise judgement combines outward evidence with an understanding of human nature — as Allah says: “to each [of them] We gave judgement and knowledge” (21:79).

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"WORK, O FAMILY OF DAVID, IN GRATITUDE"

SURAH AN-NAML 27:15

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُۥدَ وَسُلَيْمَٰنَ عِلْمًا ۖ وَقَالَا ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى فَضَّلَنَا عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

And We had certainly given to David and Solomon knowledge, and they said, "Praise [is due] to Allah, who has favored us over many of His believing servants."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/27:15

David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and Solomon عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ did not boast of their knowledge and kingdom. They said: ***"Praise [is due] to Allah, who has favored us over many of His believing servants"***.

And Allah commanded: ***"Work, O family of David, in gratitude"*** — ***"And few of My servants are grateful"*** (34:13). Gratitude is not only words but ***deeds***: night prayer, fasting, the work of one's hands and justice — as David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ did (Sahih al-Bukhari 1131, Series 21). Tafsir Ibn Kathir 34:13

WHAT THE QUR'AN DOES NOT TELL

The story of David in the Bible (the Books of Samuel) contains details ***unworthy of a prophet***, and some of them entered books of tafsir as Israiliyyat. Careful scholars such as Ibn Kathir and al-Qadi 'Iyad rejected them.

THE POPULAR STORY AND WHAT REVELATION SAYS

THE POPULAR STORY	WHAT THE QUR'AN AND AUTHENTIC HADITH SAY
David fell for the wife of his commander (Uriah) and sent her husband to the front line to be killed.	Rejected. Not mentioned in the Qur'an or authentic Hadith, and it contradicts Allah's praise: "Our servant… he was one who repeatedly turned back" (38:17).
The "ninety-nine ewes" meant David's ninety-nine wives.	The Qur'an mentions a case brought for judgement (38:23). This allegorical reading comes from Israiliyyat reports.
The two men who climbed the wall were angels in disguise.	The Qur'an only says "the adversaries" (38:21). It does not say who they were.
David wept until grass grew from his tears for forty days.	The Qur'an only says that he asked forgiveness, prostrated and repented (38:24).
The Psalms in the Bible are the original Zabur.	The Qur'an says "to David We gave the book [of Psalms]" (17:55). Its original text has not been preserved.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTE: THE TEL DAN STELE AND THE "HOUSE OF DAVID"

In **1993 and 1994**, an archaeological team led by Avraham Biran found fragments of an **inscribed stone stele** at **Tel Dan**, in the north of Palestine. It is written in **Old Aramaic** and dated to about the **9th century BCE**. It contains the phrase **bytdwd**, read by **the majority of scholars** as "House of David" — that is, the dynasty descended from David.

The stele is considered the **earliest widely accepted reference outside the Bible** to David as the founder of a dynasty. It is displayed in the Israel Museum. A minority of scholars propose other readings, but its authenticity is accepted because it was found in controlled excavations.

Claim not included. Claims about the discovery of "David's palace" in Jerusalem and of cities directly tied to David's reign remain disputed. Therefore, **those claims are not included**.

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JUSTICE, REPENTANCE AND GRATITUDE

The story of Prophet David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ is the story of a leader who had everything — a kingdom, knowledge, a scripture, a beautiful voice and skilled hands — yet ***returned to Allah at once*** when tried. His greatest trust was ***to judge with justice and not follow his own desire***.

A BRIEF COMPARISON

GIFT	RESPONSIBILITY AND LESSON
Kingdom and power (38:20)	Judge in truth and do not follow desire (38:26)
The Zabur and a beautiful voice (17:55)	Recite the Book of Allah beautifully (Sahih al-Bukhari 3417, 5048)
Iron made pliable (34:10)	Knowledge to protect people, and gratitude (21:80)
Judgement and knowledge (21:79)	Humility in accepting a more precise understanding (21:78–79)
Nearness to Allah (38:25)	Seek forgiveness and repent at once when tried (38:24)

LESSONS FROM THIS STORY

First: True strength is strength in obedience. (38:17).

Second: Recite the Book of Allah beautifully. (Sahih al-Bukhari 5048).

Third: Knowledge and technology are for protecting people. (21:80; 34:11).

Fourth: Hear both sides before judging. (38:21–24).

Fifth: The noble return to Allah at once when they err. (38:24–25).

Sixth: Power is a trust; desire is the enemy of justice. (38:26).

Seventh: The just will be upon pulpits of light. (Sahih Muslim 1827).

Eighth: Wisdom combines evidence with an understanding of the human heart. (21:79; Sahih al-Bukhari 3427).

Ninth: Gratitude is a deed, not merely a word. (34:13).

CONCLUSION

Each of us is a "successor" in our own sphere — at home, at work, in society. The story of Prophet David عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ invites us to judge with justice, to listen before deciding, to repent at once when we err, and to thank Allah for every blessing with deeds.

May Allah make us among ***al-muqsiṭīn***, those who are just in their judgements, families and trusts. Amin.

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In sha Allah, the series **Stories from the Qur'an** will continue with the story of Prophet Solomon عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ — with the same method: the Qur'an, authentic Hadith, and solid archaeological findings only.

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ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

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SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:261

مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمۡوَٰلَهُمۡ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنۢبَتَتۡ سَبۡعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنۢبُلَةٖ مِّاْئَةُ حَبَّةٖۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُضَٰعِفُ لِمَن يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٢٦١

The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/2:261

SURAH SABA' 34:39

قُلۡ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبۡسُطُ ٱلرِّزۡقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنۡ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقۡدِرُ لَهُۥۚ وَمَآ أَنفَقۡتُم مِّن شَيۡءٖ فَهُوَ يُخۡلِفُهُۥۖ وَهُوَ خَيۡرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ٣٩

Say, "Indeed, my Lord extends provision for whom He wills of His servants and restricts [it] for him. But whatever thing you spend [in His cause] - He will compensate it; and He is the best of providers."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/34:39

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2588

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ، وَابْنُ، حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - وَهُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « مَا نَقَصَتْ صَدَقَةٌ مِنْ مَالٍ وَمَا زَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا بِعَفْوٍ إِلاَّ عِزًّا وَمَا تَوَاضَعَ أَحَدٌ لِلَّهِ إِلاَّ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Charity does not decrease wealth.

Allah does not increase a servant who forgives except in honour. And no one humbles himself for the sake of Allah except that Allah raises him in rank."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya bin Ayyub, Qutaibah bin Sa'id and 'Ali bin Hujr, from Isma'il bin Ja'far, from al-'Ala' bin 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman bin Ya'qub, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه .

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtue, Good Manners and Joining the Ties of Kinship (Kitab al-Birr wa al-Silah wa al-Adab), chapter on the encouragement of forgiveness and humility, Hadith No. 2588.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2588

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1631

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ - يَعْنِي ابْنَ سَعِيدٍ - وَابْنُ حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - هُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « إِذَا مَاتَ الإِنْسَانُ انْقَطَعَ عَنْهُ عَمَلُهُ إِلاَّ مِنْ ثَلاَثَةٍ إِلاَّ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ جَارِيَةٍ أَوْ عِلْمٍ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ أَوْ وَلَدٍ صَالِحٍ يَدْعُو لَهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "When a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: an ongoing charity, knowledge that is benefited from, or a righteous child who prays for him."

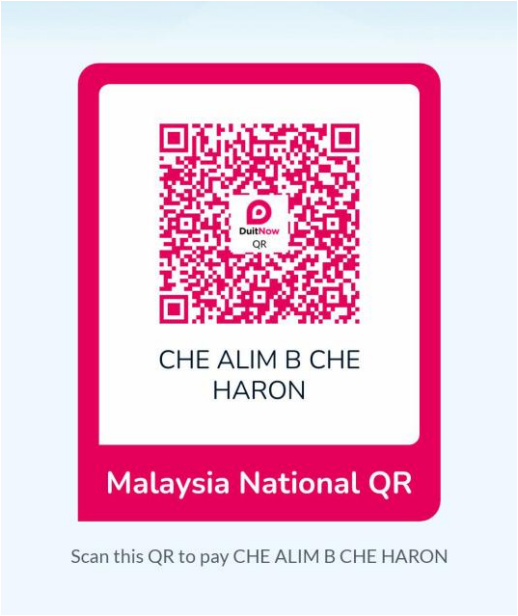
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GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1631

JAZAKUMULLAHU KHAIRAN KATHIRA



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