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## Chapter 4: Regarding the Occultation of Prophet Ibrahim

## Chapter 4: Regarding the Occultation (Ghaibat) of Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.)

As for the occultation of Ibrahim; the friend of the Beneficent (peace be on him), it exactly resembles the occultation of our Qaim (peace be on him), rather it is more astonishing because Allah, the Mighty and Sublime kept Ibrahim (a.s.) concealed when he was in the womb, so much so that Allah through His power transferred him from her womb to her back. Then He concealed the matter of his birth till an appointed time.

1 – Narrated to us my father; and Muhammad bin Hasan – may Allah be pleased with them – they said: Narrated to us Saad bin Abdullah from Yaqoob bin Yazid from Muhammad bin Abi Umair from Hisham bin Saalim from Abi Baseer from Abi Abdullah as that he said:

"Ibrahim's father was the court astrologer of Nimrod, the son of Canaan and Nimrod did not take any step without seeking his counsel. One night Azar was studying the position of the stars and the next morning he told Nimrod, 'I saw a strange thing last night.' 'What?' asked Nimrod. He replied: 'I saw that a boy is to take birth in our country and that he would destroy us all, and only a short time is left before his mother conceives him.' Nimrod was amazed and asked if his conception has already taken place. Azar said: Not as yet. Though he had learnt that the same boy was going to be burnt in fire he didn't know that he would be saved by the Almighty. Nimrod issued a diktat that women must be separated from men. Thus except for one no woman remained in the city.

All were externed so that their men may not interact with them. Ibrahim's father slept with his wife and this resulted in the conception of Ibrahim (a.s.). His father suspected the conception and he called for an experienced women to examine if his wife was pregnant. They were so expert that if a woman was pregnant they definitely knew it. So they carefully examined Ibrahim's mother who was pregnant, but Allah, the Mighty and Sublime transferred whatever there was in her womb to her back.

The midwives said: We don't see any pregnancy. When Ibrahim (a.s.) was born his father decided to

take him to Nimrod, but his wife restrained him saying that the king would kill her son. 'Leave him to me. I shall take him to a cave and abandon him there. He will soon perish and thus you won't be an accomplice in the murder of your son.' The father agreed and Ibrahim's mother took him to a cave.

After suckling him she left him inside and closed the mouth of the cave with a boulder. The Almighty Allah caused his sustenance to flow from his thumb. He sucked his thumb and consumed the milk that flew from it. He grew up faster than ordinary children. His growth in a day was equal to a week's growth in other children. In a week he grew as much as other's grow in a month. And in a month his body developed as much as much as it develops in a year. After some days his mother took leave of Azar and came to the cave. She saw that Ibrahim (a.s.) was alive and his eyes shone like brilliant lamps. She embraced him and gave him suck. When she returned, the father asked her about Ibrahim (a.s.).

She said that it has died. 'I have buried him,' she wept. Now whenever she got a chance she used to come to the cave and suckle Ibrahim (a.s.). This continued for quite some time. When Ibrahim (a.s.) was able to crawl on his knees and his mother had come to feed him, he clung to her and pleaded her to take him with her. 'Have patience!' said the mother. 'Let me take your father's permission.'

Thus Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.) kept his being in hiding and concealed his matter till the time he emerged and announced the command of Allah and the Almighty Allah expressed his power through him. Then Ibrahim (a.s.) went into another occultation. It was at the time when the tyrant ruler had expelled him from Egypt. Thus he said:

And I will withdraw from you and what you call on besides Allah, and I will call upon my Lord; may be I shall not remain unblessed in calling upon my Lord. 1

Allah, the Mighty and Sublime said:

So when he withdrew from them and what they worshipped besides Allah, We gave to him Ishaq and Yaqoob, and each one of them We made a prophet. And We granted to them of Our mercy, and We left (behind them) a truthful mention of eminence for them. 2

That is through Ali Ibne Abi Talib (a.s.). Because Ibrahim (a.s.) had prayed to Allah, the Mighty and the High that among the latters He should appoint for them a truthful speaker. Therefore the Almighty Allah made Ali the truthful tongue for Ibrahim and Yaqoob (a.s.). Thus Ali (a.s.) informed that the Qaim shall be his eleventh descendant and with the same attestation it is that Mahdi who would fill the earth with

justice and equity just as it would have been fraught with injustice and oppression.

And also that there shall be an occultation for him and that the people shall be confused about him, due to which many groups would go astray and many shall be guided. And this will indeed come to pass just as he has put on the garb of creation." And he (Ali) has mentioned in the tradition of Kumayl Ibne Ziyad Nakhai: Indeed the earth shall remain established through a Divine Proof who shall either be apparent and well–known or concealed and hidden so that the proofs of Allah and His clear evidences do not become invalid.

I have quoted both the narrations with the chain of narrators in this book in the chapter wherein are mentioned reports of Amirul Momineen (a.s.) regarding the occurrence of occultation. And these two reports are repeated here because it was needed to be quoted in the incident of Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.).

And there was another occultation for Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.) in which he undertook journey to other parts for the purpose of religious propagation.

2 – Narrated to us my father; and Muhammad bin Hasan – may Allah be pleased with them – they said: Narrated to us Saad bin Abdullah; and Abdullah bin Ja'far al–Himyari, all of them from Ahmad Muhammad bin Isa from Hasan bin Mahboob from Malik bin Atiya from Abi Hamza Thumali from Abi Ja'far (a.s.) that he said:

"One day Ibrahim (a.s.) set out for a walk to derive some lessons from the creatures of Allah. Wandering through the town he reached wilderness and saw a man standing up in prayers. His voice was reaching the sky and his dress was made of hair. Ibrahim (a.s.) stood there in amazement and watched him pray. Then he sat down waiting for him to conclude the prayers. A long time passed. At last Ibrahim (a.s.) nudged him with his hand saying that he had a request from him and that he should shorten his prayers. The person concluded the prayers and turned towards Ibrahim (a.s.).

"For whom do you offer prayers?" asked Ibrahim (a.s.) "For the God of Ibrahim (a.s.)." "Who is the God of Ibrahim?" "The One who has created you and I." "I like your way," said Ibrahim (a.s.), "I wish to make you my brother for Allah's pleasure. Tell me, where do you live? So that whenever I wish, I can pay you a visit." The worshipper said, "My house is across this water," and he indicated towards the river. "And the place of my prayer is this only, if Allah wills you shall find me here."

Then this man asked Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.): "Do you want something from me?" "Yes," replied Ibrahim (a.s.), "Pray to Allah and I shall say Amen, or I will pray and you says Amen." He asked, "But what shall we pray for?" "For the sinners among the believers," replied Ibrahim (a.s.). The worshipper refused and when asked the reason he said that he was praying for a particular thing for the past three years and his prayers have not been answered so far. "I feel ashamed of requesting Allah for something about which I am not sure if it will be fulfilled," he explained.

The Ibrahim (a.s.) asked him as to what his need was that he continues to invocate Allah. The

worshipper said, "One day while busy in prayers at my usual place, I saw a handsome boy pass by. A light shone his forehead and his tresses flowed on his back. He was grazing some cows with such shiny skins, as if anointed with oil. He also had well-fed and healthy sheep. I was elated at the sight and asked him, "O young man. To whom do these cows and sheep belong?" "They are mine," replied the boy. "Who are you?" asked I. "I am Ismail, the son of Ibrahim the Khaleel of the Beneficent, the Mighty and Sublime."

At that moment I prayed to Allah that He grant me the chance to see His friend (Khaleel)." Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.) said: "I am Ibrahim, the Khaleel of the Beneficent (Rahman) and that boy is my son." The man said, "Praise be to Allah the Lord of the worlds. He has granted my prayers!" Then he kissed the cheeks of Ibrahim (a.s.) and putting his arms around his neck said, "Now you supplicate and I'll say 'Amen'." So Ibrahim (a.s.) supplicated Allah for the believers from that time unto the day of Qiyamat and requested Allah to condone their sins and to be pleased with them. The worshipper recited 'Amen' on his invocations. Imam Baqir (a.s.) says: "Ibrahim's (a.s.) prayer is effective for our Shias right upto the day of Qiyamat."

- 1. Surah Maryam 19:48
- 2. Surah Maryam 19:49-50

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