

Jesus in the Quran

Lesson 3



Training the Disciples

- Although Jesus was a universal messenger who was appointed by God to teach and guide all people, he expended great effort to train and nurture the disciples so that they could continue his mission after him.
- This was a common practice of all prophets, messengers and imams. They had a public education plan but also mentored and trained a select few among their followers who showed greater potential for spiritual growth.

Training the Disciples

عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام قال: إن عيسى بن مريم عليه السلام لما أن مر على شاطئ البحر رمى بقرص من قوته في الماء، فقال له بعض الحواريين: يا روح الله وكلمته لم فعلت هذا وإنما هو من قوتك؟ قال: فعلت هذا لدابة تأكله من دواب الماء وثوابه عند الله عظيم.

“Jesus once passed along the coast of a nearby sea and took a small loaf of bread which was part of his own rations with him and flung it into the water. When his disciples questioned him about this, he replied, ‘I did this so the creatures of the sea could eat it. The reward for such an act before God is great.’-Imam al-Sadiq (a)

Training the Disciples

قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) يَا مَعْشَرَ الْخَوَارِجِينَ لِي إِلَيْكُمْ حَاجَةٌ أَقْضُوهَا لِي قَالُوا
فُضِّيتَ حَاجَتُكَ يَا رُوحَ اللَّهِ فَقَامَ فَعَسَلَ أَقْدَامَهُمْ فَقَالُوا كُنَّا نَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِهَذَا يَا رُوحَ اللَّهِ فَقَالَ إِنَّ
أَحَقَّ النَّاسِ بِالْخِدْمَةِ الْعَالِمُ إِنَّمَا تَوَاضَعْتُ هَكَذَا لِكَيْمَا تَتَوَاضَعُوا بَعْدِي فِي النَّاسِ كَتَوَاضَعِي لَكُمْ

Jesus once said: “O disciples! I have a favor to ask you. Please do it for me.” They replied in unison, “Consider it done, O Spirit of God!” At this, he stood and washed their feet. They told him, “It was more fitting that we do this, O Spirit of God!” At this he said, “The person most fit to serve is a scholar. I have only humbled myself like this so that you will humble yourselves before people just as I have humbled myself before you.”

Training the Disciples

ثُمَّ قَالَ عِيسَى (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) بِالتَّوَّاضِعِ تُعْمَرُ الْحِكْمَةُ لَا بِالتَّكْبَرِ وَكَذَلِكَ فِي السَّهْلِ يَنْبُتُ الزَّرْعُ
لَا فِي الْجَبَلِ.

Then Jesus said, “Wisdom is imparted through humility, not through pride, just as plants grow in soft soil, not in rock.”

Training the Disciples

قَالَتِ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ لِعِيسَى يَا رُوحَ اللَّهِ مَنْ نَجَالِسُ قَالَ مَنْ يُذَكِّرُكُمْ اللَّهَ رُؤْيَتْهُ وَيَزِيدُ فِي عِلْمِكُمْ
مَنْطِقَهُ وَيُرْغِبُكُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَمَلُهُ.

The disciples once asked: “O Spirit of God! Whose company should we keep?” He replied, “He whose outward aspect reminds you of God, whose speech increases your knowledge, and whose actions make you desirous of the hereafter.”

Training the Disciples

قَامَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) خَطِيباً فِي بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ فَقَالَ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ لَا تُحَدِّثُوا
الْجُهَّالَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ فَتَظْلِمُوا هَا وَلَا تَمْنَعُوا هَا أَهْلِهَا فَتَظْلِمُوهُمْ.

Jesus stood and addressed the Children of Israel saying: “O Israelites! Do not share wisdom with the foolish, lest you wrong it; and do not withhold it from those who seek it, let you wrong them.”

Heavenly Food

- Jesus once exhorted the disciples to fast for thirty days and promised that they could ask anything of God, and he would grant it.

إِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

“And when the disciples said, ‘O Jesus son of Mary! Can your Lord send down to us a tray laden with food from heaven? He said, “Fear God, if you are truly believers.” Quran 5:112

Heavenly Food

قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ صَدَقْتَنَا وَنَكُونَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ

“They said, “We want to eat from it, and we want our hearts to find peace, and we want to know that you have told us the truth, and we want to be among those who testify.” Quran 5:113

Heavenly Food

قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيداً لِأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا
وَآيَةً مِنْكَ وَارْزُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ

“Jesus son of Mary said, ‘O God! O Lord! Send down to us a tray laden with food from heaven which will be the starting point of a festival for us and for the coming generations of our people and a sign from you; and through it provide for us, for you are the best of providers.” Quran

5:114

Heavenly Food

قَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مُنَزِّلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بَعْدُ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنِّي أُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا لَّا أُعَذِّبُهُ أَحَدًا مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ

“God said, “I shall send it down to you. But should any of you refuse to believe after this, I shall punish him in a way that I shall not punish anyone else in all of creation.” Quran 5:115

Satan Tries to Deceive Jesus

- According to some traditions, Satan attempted to inflate Jesus with pride by recounting all of the miraculous aspects of his life.
- Imam al-Sadiq says that Satan appeared to Jesus on a mountain and said:

أليس تزعم أنك تحيي الموتى؟ قال عيسى: بلى، قال إبليس: فاطرح نفسك من فوق الحائط، فقال عيسى: ويلك إن العبد لا يجرب ربه

“Don’t you claim to revive the dead? ”Yes”, Jesus replied. Satan said: “Throw yourself off this cliff [and then revive yourself]. Jesus retorted: “Woe be to you! A slave does not test his Lord.”

Satan Misguides Jesus' Followers

- When Satan realized that his efforts to misguide Jesus were in vain, he turned his attention to his followers.
- According to one narration, Satan makes the following vow after news reaches him about the miraculous birth of Jesus:

فقال إبليس: لأضلن به أربعة أخماس الناس

“Satan said: I will misguide four fifths of all humanity through him.”

The Plot to Assassinate Jesus

- For 33 years Jesus worked miracles, taught and demonstrated wisdom, and challenged the corrupt leadership of the temple.
- He amended and abrogated some laws of the Torah and presented God's revelation in the form of the Evangel.
- Tragically, like all of the prophets of the past, the powers that be saw him as a threat to their worldly interests.
- Jewish leaders and their Roman allies conspired to put an end to this "new religion" by killing Jesus.

The Plot to Assassinate Jesus

- God informed Jesus of the nefarious plot:

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ خذْ الكتابَ بقوةِ وَإِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلدُّنْيَا آيَةً وَإِنِّي جَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ مَن يَشَاءُ لِيُخَوِّذَهُمْ فَيَقْضِيَهُمْ فِيهَا فَمَن يَدْرَأُ أَصْحَابَ الْأَنْبَاءِ مَا أَجْرُهُمْ يَوْمَ يَعْلَمُونَ

“And God said: ‘O Jesus! I shall take you from them, and I shall raise you into My proximity, and I shall free you of the filth of those who have not believed, and I shall make those who follow you dominate those who do not believe in you until the Day of Resurrection. Then to Me will be your return whereupon I shall judge among you concerning that about which you used to differ.” Quran 3:55

The Plot to Assassinate Jesus

- On the 21st of Ramadan Jesus summoned his twelve disciples in a house.
- When they arrived, they did not see Jesus and suddenly he appeared before them.
- He informed them of God's promise to him that he would be raised up within the hour and that he would be saved from those who wished to kill him.

The Plot to Assassinate Jesus

فلما أراد الله أن يرفعه أوحى إليه أن يستودع نور الله وحكمته وعلم كتابه شمعون بن
حمون الصفا خليفته على المؤمنين

”...when God decreed to raise Jesus [to the heavens] he revealed to him that he must convey the light of divine guidance, His wisdom and the knowledge of God’s book to Simon Peter, his rightly appointed successor and his vicegerent over the believers.”- The Prophet (s)

The Plot to Assassinate Jesus

فأيكم يلقي عليه شبحي فيقتل ويصلب ويكون معي في درجتي؟ فقال شاب منهم: أنا يا روح الله،

- Then Jesus looked at each of them in the eye and asked:

“Which of you is willing to be disguised like me and to be killed and crucified in my place? Whoever accepts this burden shall be with me at my station in paradise.” One of the younger disciples said: I shall do it, O Spirit of God!”

The Plot to Assassinate Jesus

- Jesus turned to the rest and said:

: أما إن منكم لمن يكفر بي قبل أن يصبح اثنتي عشرة كفرة فقال له رجل منهم: أنا هو يا
نبي الله؟ فقال له عيسى: أتحمس بذلك في نفسك فلتكن هو

“There is one among you who shall go against me twelve times before morning.” One of them asked nervously: “Is it I?” Jesus told him: “If you feel it within you, then it shall be you.”

The Plot to Assassinate Jesus

ثم قال لهم عيسى عليه السلام: أما إنكم ستفترقون بعدي على ثلاث فرق: فرقتين مفتريتين على الله في النار، وفرقة تتبع شمعون صادقة على الله في الجنة

Jesus then said to them: “After I am raised up, you shall become divided into three factions. Two will fabricate lies against God and for it, enter the fire. Only one group will faithfully follow Simon Peter and for it, enter paradise.”

The Plot to Assassinate Jesus

إن اليهود جاءت في طلب عيسى من ليلتهم فأخذوا الرجل الذي قال له عيسى عليه السلام: إن منكم لمن يكفر بي قبل أن يصبح اثنتي عشرة كفرة، و أخذوا الشاب الذي ألقى عليه شبح عيسى فقتل وصلب، وكفر الذي قال له عيسى

“The Jewish leaders came in pursuit of Jesus. They apprehended the young disciple whom they perceived to be Jesus along with the disciple whose betrayal Jesus had prophesized moments earlier.”

Source: Bihar al-Anwar, v. 14, p. 337

The Plot to Assassinate Jesus

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ
وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا

“And [for] their saying, “Indeed, we have killed the Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, the messenger of God.” And they did not kill him, nor did they crucify him; but [another] was made to resemble him to them. And indeed, those who differ over it are in doubt about it. They have no knowledge of it except the following of assumption. And they did not kill him, for certain.”- Quran 4:157

The Plot to Assassinate Jesus

بَل رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

“Rather God raised him up into His proximity and God is indeed All-Mighty and Wise.” Quran 4:158