

BILQIS' JOURNEY TO TRUTH

WITH THE NAME OF ALLAH, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL.

We read in Sura Al-Naml (ch. 27): verse 41:-

"He said: 'Transform her throne out of all recognition by her: let us see whether she is guided (to truth) or is one of those who receive no guidance'."

According to this verse Nabie Sulaiman (A.S.) had desired to know if Bilqis perceived things outwardly or whether she was able to realise the inner, deeper realities of life, i.e., the world of spiritual values.

Verse 42 reads as follows:-

"So when she arrived, she was asked, 'Is this your throne?' She said, 'It was just like this; and knowledge was bestowed on us in advance of this, and we have submitted as Muslims'."

This was her first step in spiritual progress. The line, **and knowledge was bestowed on us in advance** signifies that the queen had already become conversant with the great power and resources of Nabie Sulaiman (A.S.) and had made up her mind to give her allegiance to him.

Verse 43 says:-

"And he diverted her from the worship of others besides Allah: for she was (sprung) of a people that had no faith.

Like many human beings, Bilqis was the product of her environment. However, her visit to Nabie Sulaiman (A.S.) was most fruitful for it prevented her from lapsing into her ancestral false worship.

And verse 44 says:-

"She was asked to enter the lofty palace: but when she saw it, she thought it was a lake of water, and she (tucked up her skirt), uncovering her legs. He said: 'This is but a palace paved smooth with slabs of glass'. She said: 'O my Rabb ! I have wronged my soul: I do (now) submit (in Islam), with Sulaiman, to the Rabb of the worlds'."

The entrance to the palace was paved with slabs of glass. Bilqis had mistaken the slabs of glass for water and bared her shanks.

In this manner, he had directed her attention to the fact that as she had mistaken the transparent glass for water, similarly the sun and the other celestial bodies in the starry land which she had worshipped were not the real source of light, heat and energy. They only emitted that which Allah (S.W.T.) had bestowed upon them.

The line, **and she (tucked up her skirt), uncovering her legs,** is a symbolic indication of her fear which she felt in her search for truth, --- to abandon the warm, soothing security of her worldly glory and to venture into the unknown realm of the spirit !

The verse concludes on the note that Bilqis comes to terms with the crystal-clear light of truth, and with her perception to the difference between appearance and reality.

She now comes to the end of her journey to begin a new journey!

Worksheet

1) In which way does Bilqis represent most of humanity?

2) Nabie Sulaiman (A.S.) is known for his wisdom. Do you see it in the lesson? Explain.
