

سُورَةُ الْفِيلِ

Sūrah al Fīl

(THE ELEPHANT)

Revealed at Makkah, it has five Āyāt and only one Section.

In the Name of Allah

The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful.

1. Have you not seen how your Rabb dealt with the fellows of the elephant?
2. Did He not set their stratagem at nothing?
3. And He sent against them birds in flocks.
4. They hurled upon them clay stones.
5. Then He rendered them as stubble devoured.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ ﴿١﴾

أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضَلُّلٍ ﴿٢﴾

وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ ﴿٣﴾

تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارٍ مِّنْ سِجِّيلٍ ﴿٤﴾

فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ ﴿٥﴾

Secrets of Revelation

This event took place in the year of the Holy Prophet's^{SAW} birth, when Zūnuwās, the King of Yemen, had burnt the Muslims alive in the trenches. The Christian ruler of Syria, Caesar, a Muslim of that time, deputed two of his chieftains Arbāt and Abraha to Yemen to take Zūnuwās to task, who was defeated. He fled and perished in the sea. Now Abraha killed Arbāt and himself became the ruler. People from Yemen used to visit the Holy K'abah. Abraha had a grand church built and demanded that people circumambulate it rather than going to Makkah. Yet people preferred to visit the Holy K'abah. Abraha was infuriated and proceeded with a large army to raze K'abah to the ground.

The Arab tribes gathered to put up a joint resistance, but were defeated. Abraha continued to march on, crushing any resistance enroute and finally arrived in the precincts of Makkah. The Holy Prophet's^{SAW} grandfather Ḥadhrat 'Abdul Muṭlib advised the Makkans to retire to the hills leaving the protection of the K'abah to its **Rabb** as the invading army was far too strong to be encountered.

This army had elephants with it, not hitherto known in Arabia. The powerful personal elephant of Abraha named *Mahmood* was taken to the front to lead the assault but it would not move an inch. After all efforts failed the chieftains of Abraha advised him to retreat, which he ignored. Suddenly flocks of tiny birds appeared from the sea-coast, carrying pebbles in their beaks and claws. The birds pelted those on the army of Abraha. When a pebble would hit any target, be it a soldier, a horse or an elephant, it would penetrate through and destroy it. Abraha's army started retreating in panic and utter confusion. He himself reached Yemen critically injured. The wounds caused by the pebbles had such a toxic effect that his body putrefied, all its joints disintegrated until it wasted away in fluid.

The opposition to enforce Islam today amounts to razing down the K'abah. This event carries admonition for the culprits. O' Prophet^{SAW}! Are you aware of the treatment We extended to the army with elephants, extremely proud of their might and dared destroy the K'abah to establish their own supremacy? The flocks of tiny birds were sent unto them carrying pebbles in their claws made of clay, like atomic missiles of modern age. These birds reduced Abraha's Army to a state of the fodder usually served to cattle.