

### **Al-Imran (The Family of Imran) [3:36]**

فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ  
أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَىٰ وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ  
وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذَرِيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ﴿٣٦﴾

When she was delivered, she said: "O my Lord! Behold! I am delivered of a female child!"- and Allah knew best what she brought forth- "And no wise is the male Like the female. I have named her Mary, and I commend her and her offspring to Your protection from the evil one, the rejected."

### **MUHAMMAD HUSAIN TABA TABAI (AR)**

**QUR'AN:** *So when she brought her forth, she said: "My Lord! Surely I have brought it forth a female":* By putting a feminine pronoun in "brought her forth", the Qur'an did away with the necessity of a longer description. What this concise sentence actually stands for is this: When she brought forth that which was in her womb and came to know that it was a female, she said: "My Lord! I have brought it a female." This last sentence, although an informative, was in fact an exclamation to show her disappointment.

**QUR'AN:** *and Allah knew best what she brought forth, and the male is not like the female:* These are parenthetic sentences, and the speaker of both is Allah, not the woman of 'Imran; even the second sentence is not spoken by her.

There is no doubt that the first sentence is a saying of Allah, commenting on her sorrowful cry. The words, "and Allah knew best what she brought forth", in effect convey the following idea: Allah knew that she had delivered a female child; but He intended to fulfill through this daughter of hers all her hopes and expectations, in a far better way. Had the wife of 'Imran know what Allah's plans were in making her child a female, she would not have shown any sorrow and disappointment. As the later events showed, the male child she hoped for could not accomplish what Allah intended this female child to achieve. Suppose, she were given a son, instead of the daughter she got; what could that son achieve? He, like 'Isa, could be made a prophet; he could give eyes to the blind and heal the lepers; he could raise a few men from the dead. And this was the utmost he could do.

But this female child, which Allah has given to the wife of 'Imran, will be a means to complete the word of Allah; she will bring forth a son without a father; Allah will make her and her son together a sign for the people; that son will talk with people in his cradle; he will be a spirit and a word of Allah; his likeness before Allah will be like Adam; and there will be many manifest signs in giving this daughter, Maryam, to the wife of 'Imran and giving to Maryam a son, 'Isa, rather than giving a son directly to 'Imran's wife.

Now it should be clear that the words, "and the male is not like the female", are spoken by Allah. Had they been uttered by the wife of 'Imran, she would have said, 'and the female is not like the male'; she would not have reversed the syntactic arrangement as the Qur'anic sentence has done. If a man hopes to get a very good thing or to be awarded a very high status, and then he gets an inferior thing or a lower rank, he regretfully says; The thing I got is not what I expected and hoped for. He would never say: The thing I hoped for is not like that which I got.

In view of the above explanation, the definite articles in "the male" and "the female", (or at least "the female") refer to the particular son and daughter spoken about; and the meaning would be as follows: The male she hoped for is not like the female she was given.

Many exegetes have taken the sentence, "and the male is not like the female", to be a part of the speech of the woman of 'Imran. Then they were faced with the difficulty of explaining its apparently reversed syntactic arrangement. They have tried without success to bring about some worthwhile explanation. Any interested reader should consult their books.

**QUR'AN:** *and I have named her Maryam, and I commend her and her offspring into Thy protection from the accursed Satan:* It is said that Maryam in their language means the worshipper and the servant. In that case, it is easy to see why she hastened to name the child soon after delivery and mentioned the name to Allah. Apparently, when she found out that the child was not a male (who could easily be released for worship of Allah and service of the synagogue), she hastened to give the child the name, Maryam – thus dedicating her for the said worship and service. The words, "and I have named her Maryam", implied that she had dedicated that female child to the worship of Allah and released her for the synagogue's service. The words were in effect a sort of renewed vow, and that is why Allah accepted her offering in these words: "So her Lord accepted her with a good acceptance and made her grow up a good growing".

Thereafter, she commended Maryam and her offspring to the protection of Allah from the accursed Satan, in order that she might dedicate herself for Divine worship and remain devoted to the service of the synagogue, in a way that the name might truly represent the named.

She confidently talks with Allah about the offspring of Maryam, without any condition or proviso. Such words cannot be spoken in the presence of Allah by someone who knows nothing of the future. What the future holds for a man is a part of the unseen and its knowledge is reserved for Allah. However, she talks here in the same assured way as she did when she made the vow first: "My Lord! Surely I vow to Thee what is in my womb, to be devoted ....." This confidence shows that she had the knowledge that she would get from 'Imran a son of good faith and deed; when she became pregnant and 'Imran died, she became absolutely sure that what she carried in her womb was the same promised son; when she delivered a daughter and became aware of her mistaken guess, she at once understood that that promise would be fulfilled through that daughter, that she would get that son from the offspring of that daughter. As soon as she realized this fact, she transferred her vow from the son she hoped for to the daughter she was given, named it Maryam (i.e. one who worships and serves), and entrusted her and her offspring to the protection of Allah against the accursed Satan.

All these aspects of the story may be understood from meditation on the words of Allah.

### **MIR AHMED ALI (AR)**

When a female was born, Hanna, wife of Imran, was disappointed, because she had vowed to dedicate her son to the service of Allah, as it was a custom in those days to give one of the sons over to the temple in Jerusalem. Yet she named her daughter Maryam which, in Hebrew, means "maid-servant of God"; and brought her to the sanctuary. The priests unwillingly accepted Maryam on Hanna's plea that her daughter was assigned by her to God's service before her birth. She entrusted her daughter and her offspring (Isa) to Allah and invoked Him to keep both of them safe from satanic influence.

Zakariyya, husband of Hanna's sister, and Maryam's maternal uncle, was chosen by casting lots to take charge of Maryam. As soon as she reached the age of puberty, he erected a high balcony where she used to stay the whole day, praying; and in the evening, he used to take her with him to her abode. The room in which she slept and lived during the night was always locked and its key was kept with him.

Ibna Hajjar and Abu Dawud relate that once the Holy Prophet visited Bibi Fatimah, took some water in his hand from a wooden cup, sprinkled it over her head and shoulders, and repeated the exact words of Hanna's prayer, revealed in this verse.

In fulfilment of the Holy Prophet's prayer, Bibi Fatimah was chosen by Allah as the superior most woman of the worlds, and eleven divinely commissioned guides (Imams) were born in her posterity.

### **AYATULLAH KAMAL FAQIH IMANI AND SEVERAL SCHOLARS**

The spouse of 'Imran, son of Mathan, was Mary's mother and grand mother of Jesus (a.s.) . Her name was Hannah. She had a sister by the name of 'Isha' who was Zachariah's wife. Her father's name was Faghuth. Thus, both Mary and Yahya (John ) were cousins for each other.

The term /muharrir/, mentioned in the verse, means 'freed' for serving in Jerusalem so that another person does not appoint her upon doing one's own affairs.

*" (Remember ) when the wife of 'Imran said: ... "*

It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) who has said:

Allah revealed 'Imran that He would give him a son who could heal the blind and the leprous and raise the dead to life by Allah's leave, and He would make of him a prophet unto the Children of Israel. 'Imran informed his wife of that matter.

So, when Hannah became pregnant with Mary, she said:

*"... ' My Lord! Verily I vowed to You what is within my womb to be (dedicated ) for You (for Your service ) freed, therefore accept from me; ..."*

Here, the phrase ' accept from me ' means that, I ask You to accept my vow with Your consent.

*" ...Verily You are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing'."*

*" So, when she delivered her, she said: ..."*

The spouse of 'Imran wished to deliver a son, but when she delivered Mary she became ashamed and, with her head hung, bashfully said:

*"... ' My Lord! I have delivered a female (child ), ..."*

'Imran's wife expressed this statement with sigh and regret, because she hoped to deliver a son and hence she vowed to devote him for the service of the Lord in the place of worship.

*"... and Allah knew best what she delivered. and the male is not like the female; ..."*

And You know that, for the aim I have vowed, son and daughter are not alike. A female can not afford the duties concerned to a male as he is able to perform them. Therefore, to magnify her she-child, Allah, in reply to her, said:

*"... and Allah knew best what she delivered- ..."*

This response means that the Lord is more cognizant than her to Mary and what is concerned to her due to the important affairs that her mother dose not know.

*"... and I have named her Mary, ..."*

It is recognized from this sentence that naming Mary with this appellation was done by her mother at the time of delivery. By the way, it should be noted that the term Mary, in their lexicon, meant 'a saint worshipping lady '. So, this kind of naming had been a sign of ultimate love and affection of that pure mother for dedicating her dear child alongside the path of the servitude of Allah (s.w.t.) . That is why, after performing this auspicious naming, she asked the Lord to protect this child and the progeny that would come into being from her thereafter from the temptations of Satan and to keep them in His merciful shelter.

*"... and I commend her and her offspring into Your protection from the accursed Satan'. "*