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 Ibn ‘Ādil. *Lubāb*.
 Ibn ‘Āshūr. *Tafsīr*.
 Ibn ‘Aṭīyya. *Muḥarrar*.
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See also: ALLAH MOST HIGH; AḤMAD; BOOKS; CANONICAL RECITATIONS; CRITERION; IBRĀHĪM, UPON HIM PEACE; INJIL; JIBRĪL; MUḤAMMAD, UPON HIM BLESSINGS AND PEACE; NIGHT OF QADR; OCCASIONS OF REVELATION; PRESERVED TABLET; QUR’ĀN; RAMADAN; REVELATION; SPEECH OF ALLAH; TORAH; ZABŪR.

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DHŪ-L-KIFL UPON HIM PEACE

This article comprises the following sections: i. Usage; ii. The Meaning of “Dhū-l-Kifl”; iii. Identification; iv. A Prophet of the Children of Isrā’īl; v. Is Dhū-l-Kifl Ḥizqīl?; vi. The Shrine of Dhū-l-Kifl/Ḥizqīl; vii. Not a Prophet, but Righteous Worshipper; viii. Al-Kifl, Repentant Israelite; ix. Bibliography.

Usage

Dhū-l-Kifl is explicitly mentioned along with several other prophets in two Makkan verses (Q 21:85; 38:48), without him being directly named as a prophet (*nabī*) or messenger (*rasūl*) (see PROPHETHOOD AND MESSENGERSHIP). In Sūrat al-Anbiyā’ (“The Prophets,” Q 21, that names sixteen prophets), he is named in the company of two other prophets: *And Ismā‘īl and Idrīs and Dhū-l-Kifl—all were among the steadfast (al-ṣābirīn). And we admitted them into Our mercy. Lo! They are among the righteous (al-ṣāliḥīn)* (Q 21:85-86). In Sūrat Ṣād (Q 38, also known as Sūrat Dāwūd), he is mentioned along with two prophets, one of whom is again Ismā‘īl: *And recall Ismā‘īl and al-Yasa‘ and Dhū-l-Kifl—and all [of them] were elect (al-akhyār)* (Q 38:48) (see IDRĪS, UPON HIM PEACE; ISMĀ‘ĪL, UPON HIM PEACE; AL-YASA‘, UPON HIM PEACE). Many major exegetes hold that the miracle of this-worldly resurrection mentioned in Q 2:243 pertains to him (see ANONYMOUS MENTIONS), as detailed below.

The Meaning of “Dhū-l-Kifl”

The phrase Dhū-l-Kifl is a genitive construct (*iḍāfa*) comprising the singular masculine possessive particle *dhū* and the substantive *kifl*. Such constructs, as an honorific or a title, refer to a characteristic feature or trait. *Kifl* may mean a grand bounty (*ḥazz*) from Allah, referring to him as a man of bounty (*dhā ḥazz*); or it may mean “doubling,” in that Dhū-l-Kifl received a two-fold or manifold recompense (*di‘f tharwāb*, see al-Māwardī; Abū-l-Su‘ūd; and Abū Ḥayyān, all *sub* Q 21:85; Rāghib, *sub k-f-l*) (for Qur’anic reference to a “double share” (*kiflayn*) of mercy, see Q 57:28).

Based on the reports from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī

(21-110/642-728) and Muqātil b. Sulaymān al-Balkhī (d. 150/767), Dhū-l-Kifl is identified with the Biblical prophet Hizqīl who was instrumental in saving the lives of seventy prophets from being killed by the Jews (al-Ṭabarānī, *sub* Q 2:243). Abū Ishāq Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Thaʿlabī al-Naysābūrī (d. 427/ca.1035) says that when the Jews came and asked Hizqīl about the whereabouts of the seventy prophets, he did not disclose their whereabouts and thus he was named Dhū-l-Kifl (*Kashf*, *sub* Q 2:243).

Other Qurʾānic meanings associated with the term *kifl* and its cognates include *kafīl*, the Guarantor, an Attribute of Allah Most High (Q 16:91, see BEAUTIFUL NAMES OF ALLAH); foster-care (*kafāla*; see ADOPTION; GUARDIANSHIP) (*cf.* Q 3:37, 44; 20:40; 28:12; 38:23) and, in a more juristic sense, attaching liability (whether a person, debt, or value) of the person's standing surety (*kafīl*) to that of the original party without restriction. *Kifl* can also refer to a share of sin (see Q 4:85) (Ālūsī; Māwardī, both *sub* Q 21:85; Ibn Manzūr; ʿAbd al-Bāqī; al-Saḥāranfūrī, *Hāshiya*, K. al-Kafāla).

Similar genitive constructs (*idāfa*) in the Qurʾān include *Dhū-l-Qarnayn* (*q.v.*) (Q 18:83, 86, and 94; *lit.* “the possessor of two horns”); *Dhū-l-Nūn* (Q 21:87: “man of the whale,” that is, Prophet Yūnus, upon him peace (*q.v.*)); *dhū-l-awṭād* (Q 38:12: “owner of lofty structures,” referring to Pharaoh (*q.v.*)); *dhū-l-ayd* (Q 38:17: “owner of great prowess,” that is, Prophet Dāwūd, upon him peace (*q.v.*)); *dhū mirra* (Q 53:6: “owner of great strength,” referring to Arch-Angel Jibrīl, upon him peace (see ANGELS)); and *dhū quwwa* (Q 81:20: “possessor of great power,” an epithet used for Jibrīl, upon him peace) (*q.v.*, see al-Suyūṭī, *al-Muzhīr*, *sub* *al-adhwāʿ wa-l-dhawāt*).

Identification

The exegetes identify Dhū-l-Kifl as: (i) a Prophet of the Children of Isrāʾīl; (ii) another name for Prophet Ilyās, Yūshaʿ; al-Yasaʿ, or Zakariyyā; (iii) another name for the son of Prophet Ayyūb, Bishr b. Ayyūb; (iv) another name for the Biblical Prophet Hizqīl; (v) a cousin of Prophet al-Yasaʿ; (vi) a Righteous Man; and (vii) a Repentant Israelite (see below).

A Prophet of the Children of Isrāʾīl

Exegetes who named Dhū-l-Kifl as a Prophet of the Children of Isrāʾīl (*q.v.*) include the following, in chronological order: Muqātil, Abū-l-Layth Naṣr b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Samarqandī (d. 375/985), Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn b. Masʿūd al-Farīrāʾ al-Baghawī (d. 516/ca.1122), Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad

b. ʿUmar al-Rāzī (544-606/1150-1210), Nāṣir al-Dīn Abū Saʿīd ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar al-Bayḍāwī (d. 685/ca.1286), Abū-l-Barakāt ʿAbd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Maḥmūd al-Nasafī (d. 710/1310), ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Khāzin (d. 741/ca.1340), Muḥammad b. Yūsuf Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī (654-745/1256-1344), ʿImād al-Dīn Ismāʿīl b. ʿUmar Ibn Kathīr (700-774/1300-1372) (*sub* Q 4:163), Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar b. ʿAlī Ibn ʿAdil al-Dimashqī al-Ḥanbalī (d. 775/ca.1373), Abū-l-Suʿūd Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-ʿImādī (898-982/ca.1492-1574), Muḥammad Thanāʾ Allāh al-Mazharī (1143-1225/1730-1810), Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Mālikī al-Ṣawī (1175-1241/1761-1825), Abū-l-Faḥl Shihāb al-Dīn al-Sayyid Maḥmūd b. ʿAbdallāh al-Ālūsī (1217-1270/1802-1854), Sayyid Quṭb (1324-1385/1906-1966), Muḥammad al-Tāhir Ibn ʿAshūr (1296-1393/1879-1973) (*sub* Q 6:84), Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Ṣābūnī (1349-1442/1930-2021), and Wahba b. Muṣṭafā al-Zuḥaylī (1350-1436/1932-2015) (*Tafsīrs*, all *sub* Q 21:85 unless specified above).

Those who attribute prophethood to Dhū-l-Kifl reason that since two Qurʾānic mentions list him in the company of other prophets, it suggests that he was one of them. His inclusion among the steadfast (*ṣābirīn*), righteous (*ṣāliḥīn*) (Q 21:85-86), and the elect (*akhyār*) (see ELECTION) (Q 38:48) further strengthens this opinion as the Qurʾān “described them as steadfast and righteous in an absolute sense and this is because they embodied all types of steadfastness and righteousness, which they attained due to Allah’s mercy and grace” (Māturīdī, *sub* Q 21:85); see INFALLIBILITY OF PROPHETS). The latter term (*akhyār*) is exclusively used for the prophets and Dhū-l-Kifl is described as such in Q 38:47-48. In support of his opinion, the early exegete Muqātil glosses *raḥma* (“mercy”) in Q 21:86 as “prophethood” (*nubuwwa*): *And We admitted them unto Our mercy*—namely, Ismāʿīl, Idrīs, and Dhū-l-Kifl (*Tafsīr*).

A variant view maintains that Dhū-l-Kifl is a Prophet, but he is the same as a Prophet who is also known by another name. Such attributions include the Prophets Ilyās, Yūshaʿ, and al-Yasaʿ, upon them peace. This dual nomenclature is similar to that used for certain other Prophets who have two Qurʾānic names: Muḥammad, who is also called Aḥmad (*q.v.*), Yūnus / Dhū-l-Nūn (“the man of the whale”), ʿĪsā (*q.v.*) / al-Masīḥ (“the anointed”), and Yaʿqūb (*q.v.*) / Isrāʾīl, upon them blessings and peace (Abū Ḥayyān; Ibn ʿAshūr; Ālūsī, all *sub* Q 21:85). His identification with Ilyās, upon him peace, is also the view of Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Abū Manṣūr al-Māturīdī