



A STORY TO READ ALOUD

The Story of Prophet Zakariya (AS)

زكريا

*An old man whispers the quietest dua ever prayed, and Allah answers
with a son.*

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The Story of Prophet Zakariya (AS)

“My Lord, do not leave me alone, and You are the best of inheritors.”

Al-Anbiya 21:89

Come with me. Today, we're going on a journey... far, far away... and long, long ago.

Picture a very old man. His back is bent. His hands shake a little when he lifts them. His hair has gone completely white, every single strand of it.

He is standing all alone in a quiet corner of a great stone house of worship. The lamps are low. Everyone else has gone home. And he thinks nobody in the whole world can hear him.

So he whispers. Not out loud. Not even in a normal voice. A whisper so small and so soft that it barely makes any sound at all... the kind of whisper you make when you are asking for something you have wanted for a very, very long time.

And the moment that tiny whisper leaves his lips... it is heard.

Not by the walls. Not by the lamps. Not by anyone walking past outside.

It is heard by Allah.

Who was this old man? And what did he whisper? Let me tell you. This is the story of Prophet Zakariya... alayhi salaam.

Long, long ago... in a blessed land... there lived a man named Zakariya.

Zakariya was a prophet of Allah. He was gentle, and wise, and everybody in his town knew him. He spent his days in the sanctuary, the beautiful stone place where people came to pray, teaching them, and guiding them, and reminding them to worship Allah alone.

Zakariya had lived a long, long life. He had seen many, many years come and go. And in all those years... Allah had given him so much.

But there was one thing Zakariya did not have.

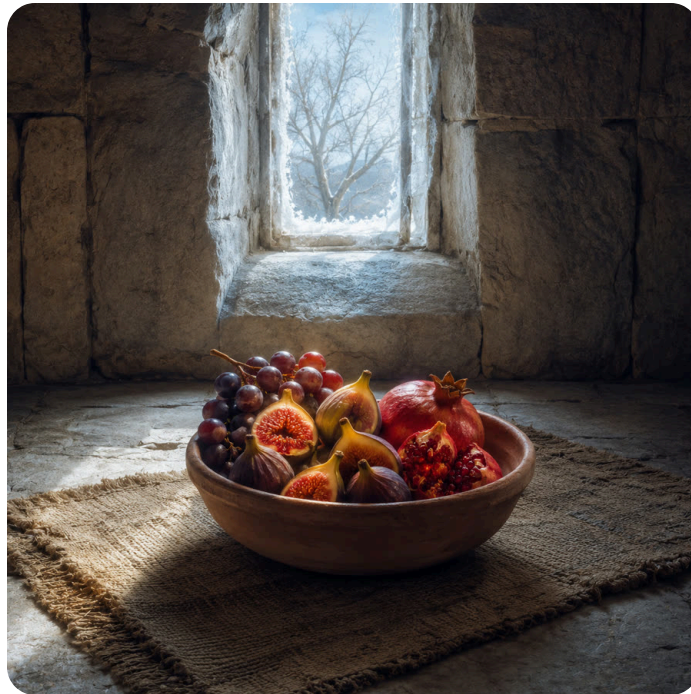
He had no children.

Not one. He and his wife had grown old together... and their house had always been quiet. No little feet running down the hallway. No small voice calling out for him at night. No child to sit beside him and learn... and one day, when he was gone, to carry on teaching the people

about Allah.

And Zakariya was old now. So old. His bones had grown weak, and his head had caught fire with white hair, that is how Allah describes it in the Qur'an. His wife was old too. In the whole world, there was no ordinary way left for them to have a child.

So Zakariya did what he had always done. He kept worshipping. He kept teaching. He kept hoping quietly, in his heart... the way you might hope for something and never say it out loud, in case saying it out loud makes it hurt.



The Fruit Out of Season

Now, in that same sanctuary, there was a young girl that Zakariya took care of. Her name was Maryam.

Maryam had her own small room in the sanctuary, a quiet place, just for her, where she worshipped Allah. And Zakariya used to look after her. He would check on her, and make sure she had everything she needed.

One day... he stepped into her room... and he stopped.

There, beside her, was fruit.

Fresh fruit. Beautiful fruit. Sweet, ripe, perfect fruit.

And Zakariya stood there and blinked, because... it was the wrong time of year. It was the sort of fruit that only grows in summer, sitting there in the middle of winter. Or the sort that only grows in winter, sitting there in the middle of summer. It was fruit that simply should not have been there. Not in that season. Not in that room.

"Maryam," he said gently, "where is this from?"

And Maryam looked up at him and answered, very simply:

"It is from Allah."

"Indeed, Allah provides for whoever He wills... without any measure."

Zakariya stood very still.

Because something had just woken up inside his old heart.

If Allah could bring summer fruit into a winter room... if Allah could give without counting, without limits, without waiting for the season to be right...

...then maybe. Maybe Allah could give an old man a child.

And right there, right then, Zakariya called upon his Lord.

The Qur'an tells us exactly how he called. It says he called his Lord a secret call. A hidden one. A whisper meant for nobody's ears but Allah's.



The Secret Whisper

And this is what he said.

"My Lord... my bones have grown weak... and my head is aflame with white hair..."

"...and never, my Lord, have I been unhappy in my prayer to You."

Listen to that part again. Never have I been unhappy in my prayer to You. He was saying: every single time I have ever asked You for anything, You have answered me. You have never once turned me away. I know You. I have been asking You my whole life.

And then he asked.

"So grant me from Yourself an heir... who will inherit from me, and inherit from the family of Yaqub... and make him, my Lord, pleasing to You."

He did not ask for a child so the house would be less quiet. He asked for a child who would carry the message. Who would teach the people after him. Who would be pleasing to Allah.

That was the whisper. That was all of it. One old man, in an empty room, asking for the one thing that seemed completely impossible.

And Allah answered him.

Straight away. Right there in the sanctuary, while he was still standing in the place where he prayed.

The words came:

"O Zakariya! Indeed, We give you good news of a boy... whose name will be Yahya."

A boy. A son.

And then Allah said something so beautiful about that name, Yahya, He said: "We have not given this name to anyone before him."

A brand-new name. A name nobody in all of history had ever carried. That is how special this child was going to be.

And Zakariya, old, astonished, standing there with his heart pounding, asked the question anyone would ask.



It Is Easy for Me

"My Lord... how can I have a boy... when my wife has always been unable to have children... and I have reached extreme old age?"

He was not doubting Allah. Not for a moment. He was overwhelmed. He was asking: how? How will You do this wonderful thing?

And the answer came back, and it is one of the most amazing sentences in the whole Qur'an:

"Your Lord says: it is easy for Me."

Easy.

Think about that. The thing Zakariya thought was impossible, the thing no doctor, no medicine, no amount of waiting could ever fix, Allah called it easy.

"And I created you before," Allah said, "when you were nothing at all."

Because the One who made you out of nothing... does not find anything hard.

Zakariya's heart was so full it felt like it might overflow.

"My Lord," he said, "give me a sign."

Not because he doubted. But because when something wonderful is coming, sometimes your heart wants to hold onto it. Something to know it by. Something to say: it is really happening.

And Allah gave him a sign, the gentlest, strangest sign.

"Your sign is that you will not speak to the people for three nights... even though you are perfectly well."

Three days and three nights. His voice would work. His throat would be fine. Nothing at all would be wrong with him. But when he tried to talk to people... no words would come.

And that is exactly what happened.

The next morning, Zakariya walked out of his private prayer room and into the sanctuary, where all the people were waiting.



Three Days of Silence

He opened his mouth to tell them the wonderful news... and nothing came out.

So instead, he made signs to them, with his hands.

He gestured to them. Glorify Allah. Praise Him. In the morning... and in the evening.

And can you imagine it? A whole crowd of people, watching their teacher glowing with a happiness he could not explain, using only his hands to tell them: say Subhanallah. Say Alhamdulillah. Morning and evening. Something beautiful has happened.

For three days he could not say a single word to anyone.

But here is the loveliest part. He could not speak to people.

He could still remember Allah.

And after those three days... in Allah's own perfect time... the boy was born.

Yahya. The very first person ever to carry that name. The answer to a whisper in an empty room.

But that... is a story for another night.

That is the story of Prophet Zakariya, alayhi salaam. An old, old man with white hair and weak bones, who saw fruit out of season and let it wake up hope in his heart. Who whispered a secret prayer that nobody else could hear. And who learned that the thing he thought was impossible... was easy for Allah all along.

And now... slowly... we leave the quiet sanctuary behind... the low lamps, the cool stone, the old man smiling and signing with his hands... and we travel back home. To right here. Right now.

But carry Prophet Zakariya with you, wherever you go. Because he teaches us something we all need. That Allah hears the quiet ones. The prayers you whisper. The prayers you are almost too shy to say out loud. The ones you have been making for so long you have nearly given up on them. He hears every single one.

And He is never, ever too late.

So let us end with Prophet Zakariya's own dua. It means... my Lord, do not leave me alone... and You are the best of inheritors. Say it with me... slowly... like a secret between you and Allah...

Rabbi lā tadharnī fardan... wa anta khayrul-wārithīn.

Talk about it

Read a question aloud and let your child answer before you show the choices. Then ask: what would you have done?

1. Who whispered a secret prayer to Allah for a child?

- a. Prophet Zakariya
- b. Prophet Musa
- c. Prophet Yusuf

2. In Prophet Zakariya's story, where did the winter fruit come from?

- a. From Allah
- b. From the market
- c. From a garden

3. In Prophet Zakariya's story, what did he find in Maryam's room?

- a. Fruit out of season
- b. A silver coin
- c. A heavy book

4. What did Allah call the thing Prophet Zakariya thought impossible?

- a. An easy thing
- b. A hidden secret
- c. A faraway dream

5. In Prophet Zakariya's story, how did he make his special dua?

- a. In a tiny whisper
- b. In a loud voice
- c. In a long letter

6. In Prophet Zakariya's story, what sign did Allah give him?

- a. No speaking for three days
- b. A great flood
- c. A fire turned cool

Answers: 1a, 2a, 3a, 4a, 5a, 6a



Hear this story

Read it again online, or listen to it narrated in the Sukun Kids app.

sukunkids.app/stories/zakariya

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