

Surah 23. Al-Muminun

Asad: And [as We exalted Moses, so, too,] We made the son of Mary and his mother a symbol [of Our grace],²⁵ and provided for both an abode in a lofty mace of lasting restfulness and unsullied springs,²⁶

Malik: And We made the son of Maryam (Jesus) and his mother a sign for mankind, and gave them a shelter on a peaceful lofty ground, furnished with a fresh spring.

Pickthall: And We made the son of Mary and his mother a portent, and We gave them refuge on a height, a place of flocks and water springs.

Yusuf Ali: And We made the son of Mary and his mother as a Sign: We gave them both shelter on high ground affording rest and security and furnished with springs.^{2906 2907}

Khatab:

And We made the son of Mary and his mother a sign, and gave them refuge on high ground—a ?suitable? place for rest with flowing water.

Author Comments

25 - For my rendering of the ayah, in this instance, as "symbol", see surah {19}, note [16]. Jesus and his mother Mary are mentioned here specifically because they, too, had to suffer persecution and slander at the hands of "those who were bent on denying the truth".

26 - I.e., in paradise. The expression ma'in signifies "unsullied springs" or "running waters" (Ibn 'Abbas, as quoted by Tabari; also Lisan al-'Arab and Taj al-'Arus), and thus symbolizes the spiritual purity associated with the concept of paradise, the "gardens through which running waters flow".

2906 - The virgin birth of Jesus was a miracle both for him and his mother. She was falsely accused of unchastity, but the child Jesus triumphantly vindicated her by his own miracles (xix. 27-33), and showed by his life the meanness of the calumny against his mother.

2907 - There is no need to look far for the place where mother and child were given secure shelter. It is described in xix. 22-26. It was the place to which she withdrew to be delivered when the time drew near.

There was a fruitful palm-tree, evidently on high ground, for beneath it flowed a spring. She retired there in seclusion, and she and her child rested there until it was time for her to go to her people with her child.

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