

THE BEE AS A MIRACULOUS CREATURE: AN ANALYSIS OF ISLAMIC NARRATIVES

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Аннотация. В данной статье освещаются содержание и духовно-нравственные пласты распространенной среди пчеловодов легенды, связывающей происхождение пчел с пророком Айюбом (мир ему). Мед описывается как средство исцеления, а пчела — как существо, направляемое божественной мудростью. В статье анализируется гармония легенды с общими кораническими идеями (терпение, исцеление, благодать), а также её роль в продвижении таких ценностей в культуре пчеловодства, как честность, чистота, благословение и трудолюбие. Особо отмечается, что данная легенда является не каноническим религиозным текстом, а устной традицией в рамках интерпретационно-народных представлений.

Ключевые слова: Пчела, пророк Айюб, легенда, исцеление, терпение, культура пчеловодства, духовно-нравственные ценности, народные представления, благодать.

Abstract. This article explores the content and spiritual-moral dimensions of a legend widely popular among beekeepers, which links the origin of bees to Prophet Ayyub (a.s.) (Job). In this narrative, honey is depicted as a means of healing, while the bee is portrayed as a creature guided by divine wisdom. The article analyzes the harmony of the legend with general Quranic themes (patience, healing, blessing), as well as its role in promoting values such as honesty, purity, abundance, and diligence within the culture of beekeeping. It is specifically noted that the legend is not a formal religious text but rather an oral tradition within the framework of interpretative folk perceptions.

Keywords: Honeybee, Prophet Ayyub (Job), legend, healing, patience, beekeeping culture, spiritual and moral values, folk perceptions, blessing.

Introduction

Throughout human history, religious and philosophical approaches to nature and its blessings have always held a central place. In particular, beekeeping has been revered not only as an agricultural activity but also as a source of high spirituality and divine wisdom. The

existence of the specific Surah “An-Nahl” (The Bee) in the Qur’an and the emphasis on divine revelation (inspiration) granted to bees clearly demonstrate the elevated status of this creature.

In folk oral traditions and exegetical narratives, the origin of bees is often associated with the Prophet Ayyub (peace be upon him), who symbolizes patience. This article analyzes the elevation of bees to a sacred status and examines the religious foundations of their healing properties.

Methodology

This study was conducted based on a historical-ethnological and religious-comparative approach. During the research process, the following methods were applied:

- Textual analysis – analysis of Qur’anic verses and exegetical (tafsir) sources;
- Comparative method – comparison of religious narratives and perspectives found in folk oral traditions;
- Ethnological approach – interpretation of beliefs and symbolic representations related to bees within a cultural context.

These methods enabled a comprehensive analysis of the role of bees in religious thought.

Results

Various narratives about the origin of bees exist among beekeepers. One of the most prominent of these is associated with the Prophet Ayyub (Job), whose name is mentioned in the Qur’an. This narrative highlights the elevation of bees and honey to a sacred status and reveals the religious and spiritual foundations of beekeeping practices.

According to the narrative, Allah sent Ayyub (peace be upon him) as a prophet to the Children of Israel. He possessed great wealth and a large family. One day, Satan challenged Allah, claiming that if all of Ayyub’s wealth and children were taken away, he would abandon his devotion and fail to remain patient¹. As a result, Allah subjected Ayyub to severe trials: his possessions and children were taken, and he was afflicted with a debilitating illness. His body became severely weakened, and people distanced themselves from him. Only his faithful wife remained by his side, supporting him through all hardships.

Despite these trials, Ayyub (peace be upon him) demonstrated exceptional patience and unwavering faith in Allah. The Qur’an describes his recovery in the following verse: “Strike the ground with your foot. Here is cool water for washing and drinking” (Surah Sad, 42)². When

¹ Abu Ishaq Sa‘labi. *Qisas al-Anbiya (Stories of the Prophets)*, p. 128.

² Shaykh Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf. *Tafsiri Hilol*. Vol. 4. Tashkent, 2017, p. 456.

Ayyub struck the ground, water emerged. By washing and drinking from it, he was healed of his illness.

According to folk and exegetical interpretations, the worms that fell from his body transformed into bees. Another interpretation suggests that Allah commanded Ayyub to rest under a tree, where bees built a hive. The honey produced there was given to him as both nourishment and medicine, ultimately restoring his health³.

In these narratives, bees are portrayed as a divinely sent source of healing. This belief has contributed to the formation of deep respect and reverence toward bees among the people. The well-known expression “honey is healing, and patience is salvation” is believed to originate from this narrative. The patience of Ayyub and his complete trust in Allah are reflected symbolically in the bee, which embodies values such as honesty, purity, diligence, and abundance within society⁴.

Thus, in religious belief, the bee is understood not merely as a biological organism, but as a miraculous creation endowed with divine inspiration and regarded as a source of blessing and healing for humanity⁵.

Discussion

The obtained results indicate that the religious interpretation of bees is not limited to a purely biological understanding but embodies symbolic and spiritual meanings. Through the narrative of Prophet Ayyub (peace be upon him), honey and bees are associated with patience, healing, and divine mercy.

From an anthropological perspective, this phenomenon represents a clear example of the sacralization of natural phenomena and their integration into human life. The interpretation of bees as “miraculously created beings” reflects the synthesis of animistic and religious elements of thought. Furthermore, honey possesses a dual character, functioning both as a material resource and as a source of spiritual healing⁶.

In addition, the bee has become firmly established in social consciousness as a symbol of diligence and purity. Through narratives and oral traditions, it has contributed to the formation of professional ethical norms such as honesty, patience, and moral integrity. These aspects elevate beekeeping beyond a simple economic activity, transforming it into an ethno-cultural and religious phenomenon.

³ Field notes. Sirdarya region, Oqoltin district, 2025.

⁴ Field notes. Jizzakh region, Mirzachol district, 2025.

⁵ Field notes. Sirdarya region, Oqoltin district, 2025.

⁶ Jo'rayev, M. *Uzbek Mythology and Folklore*. Tashkent, 2005, p. 235.

Conclusion

In conclusion, narratives concerning the origin of bees convey an important philosophical message for humanity: every hardship and trial is ultimately followed by a reward. The story of Prophet Ayyub (peace be upon him) symbolically connects patience with divine reward, where the emergence of bees and the healing power of honey reflect the harmony between suffering, endurance, and restoration.

From a broader perspective, these narratives demonstrate that bees are not perceived merely as biological creatures, but as symbols of diligence, purity, and divine wisdom. The association of honey with healing and blessing further strengthens its dual significance as both a material and spiritual resource.

Moreover, the integration of religious belief, folklore, and practical beekeeping traditions illustrates how natural phenomena are interpreted through a cultural and spiritual lens. The reverence toward bees in traditional societies has contributed to the formation of ethical values such as honesty, patience, and respect for nature.

Even in contemporary times, beekeeping is regarded not only as a source of economic benefit but also as a morally grounded and spiritually meaningful profession. This perception is deeply rooted in longstanding religious and cultural traditions, which continue to shape attitudes toward nature, labor, and ethical conduct.

References

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