



﴿ فِي أُمَّمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ ﴾

(فصلت: 45)

Question

I have two questions regarding the *aayah*:

﴿...وَحَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ فِي أُمَّمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ﴾

1. Here the verb **خَلَتْ** is feminine. Is it because the *faa'il* **الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ** are coming in place of **أُمَّةٌ**, or because of some other reason?
2. Is **أُمَّمٌ** an *ism jins jam'iyy* similar to **تَفَّاحَةٌ - تَفَّاح**?

Reply from Admin (checked by our Shaykh):

أُمَّمٌ is a **جَمْعُ تَكْسِيرٍ** (broken plural).

أُمَّم is the plural of an عاقل noun, but it is treated as feminine singular in the above *aayah*, due to its being a جمع تكسير.

These nouns can take a masculine or feminine verb in classical Arabic and literary writings.

Here are two more *aayaat* that show this:

﴿ وَإِذَا الرُّسُلُ أُقْتَتِ ﴾ (المرسلات: 11)

﴿ قَالَ ادْخُلُوا فِي أُمَّمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مِنَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ فِي النَّارِ ﴾ (الأعراف: 38)

In the following two *aayaat*, the فاعل - which is رُسُلٌ - is a جمع تكسير.

Although it is the plural of an "aaqil noun, its verb too, is feminine singular:

﴿ قَالَتْ لَهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ أَلِي اللَّهِ شَكُّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ﴾ (إبراهيم: 10)

﴿ ذَلِكَ بَأَنَّهُ كَانَتْ تَأْتِيهِمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ﴾ (التغابن: 6)

Please note: The فاعل of خَلَتْ is a:

أُمَّمٍ which refers to ضَمِيرٌ مُسْتَتِرٌ، تَقْدِيرُهُ: هِيَ.

Useful Notes:

a) A جمع تكسير - when treated as feminine singular - can take a feminine singular pronoun, instead of a plural "aaqil pronoun, as in the *aayah*:

يا أيها الذين آمنوا اذكروا نعمة الله عليكم إذ جاءتكم جنود فأرسلنا عليهم ريحاً
وجنوداً لم تروها ﴿الأحزاب: 9﴾

(and not لم تروهم).

جنود is the plural of an "aaqil noun and is a جمع تكسير.

It has also taken a feminine singular verb:

جاءتكم جنود

And in the *Hadiith* line:

كما تداعى الأكلة على قصعتها ...

Just as *diners* (الأكلة) flock together around their (ها) bowl...

(It is not: قصعتهم).

الأكلة is the plural of an "aaqil noun and is a جمع تكسير.

(Ref: On line *Hadith* lesson 5)

b) A جمع تكسير can use a feminine اسم إشارة instead of a masculine one as in:

﴿تلك الرسل﴾ (البقرة: 253)

A final note: The above usage is particular to the Qur'aan, and literary writings, and should not be used in non-literary writing (day-to-day

usage). This is because day-to-day usage does not use this style, so someone who lacks knowledge of the correctness of such usage, may misunderstand the meaning.