

DAY 5

ANSWER: Aḥqāf

SŪRAH AL-AḤQĀF, VERSES 21-28

And remember the brother of (the nation of) 'Ad, when he warned his people at the long, curved sand-dunes- while many warners have passed before him and after him (with the same message)- saying, "Do not worship anyone except Allah. Surely I fear for you the punishment of a terrible day. [21]

They said, "Have you come to make us deviate from our gods. So bring us that with which you are threatening us, if you are truthful." [22]

He said, "The knowledge is with Allah alone, and I am conveying to you what I am sent with, but I see that you are a people who behave ignorantly." [23]

So, when they saw it, in the form of a cloud proceeding towards their valleys, they said, "This is a cloud that will bring us rain." No, it is what you asked to come soon- a wind in which there is a painful punishment, [24]

that will destroy every thing with the command of its Lord! So they became such that nothing remained to be seen except their dwelling places. This is how We punish the guilty people. [25]

And indeed We had established them in a powerful position in which We did not establish you, and had given to them ears and eyes and hearts, but neither their ears availed them in the least, nor their eyes, nor their hearts, as they used to reject used to ridicule. [26]

And We have (also) destroyed (other) towns around you* while We had given to them a variety of signs, so that they might return (from disbelief). [27]

So, why were they not helped by those whom they had taken as gods, instead of Allah, to achieve closeness (to Him)? Instead, they vanished from them. And (in fact) it was their lie and something they used to forge. [28]

*** The reference here is to the towns of Thamūd and the people of Sayyidnā Lūt ‘alayhis salām that were in the way of the people of Arabia while they travelled to Syria. The people of 'Ād were in Yemen, towards South from Makkah, while the towns of Thamūd and those Sayyidnā Lūt ‘alayhis salām were towards the North, hence the words, “around you”**

DAY 5

COMMENTARY

These verses are to remind the infidels of the severe punishments faced by earlier people who rejected the messengers sent to them. Special reference is made to 'Ād, the people of Sayyidnā Hūd 'alayhis salām who has been described as their 'brother', firstly because he belonged to their tribe, and secondly because he was their well-wisher as a brother. Since this nation lived in valleys surrounded by long, curved sand dunes, called in Arabic '*Aḥqāf*', special reference is made to these dunes, so that one could find out their places, if he so wishes when traveling to their localities. It is mentioned in **verse 22** that they themselves demanded Allah's punishment to be brought upon them. Then **verse 24** states that the punishment was sent to them in the form of a cloud that appeared to be benign, and therefore they were happy to see it in the hope that it would bring rain to them, but in fact it contained the divine punishment in the form of a violent wind that destroyed every thing, leaving nothing except their empty homes that remained as a sign for those who might learn a lesson. The detailed account of the story of 'Ād and Thamūd has already been given in **Sūrah Hud (11:50)** for which volume 4, page 643 of this book may be consulted. Mention of these events in these verses is in the form of a brief reference, and in **verse 26** the infidels of Makkah are reminded that those nations were much more powerful and well-established than the people of Makkah. Still, their power and strength was of no use to them against Allah's punishment. Moreover, **verse 28** points out that the false gods believed by them to be their patrons could not save them from the torment they faced, because they were coined only by their false imagination, having no real existence at all.

SŪRAH HUD: VERSES 50-60

And to 'Ād (We sent) their brother Hud. He said, "O my people, worship Allah. You have no god other than Him. You are nothing but fabricators. [50]

O my people, I ask you no reward for it. My reward is only on the One who created me. Have you, then, no sense? [51]

And O my people, seek forgiveness from your Lord, then turn to Him in repentance, so that He may release the heavens pouring upon you and may increase you in strength beside your strength, and do not turn away like sinners." [52]

They said, "O Hud, you did not bring to us any proof, and we are not to leave our gods on your statement, and we are not to believe in you. [53]

We do not say except that some of our gods have subjected you to some evil." He said, "I make Allah my witness, and you be witness that I have nothing to do with what you take as gods besides Him. [54]

So, try your plans against me, all of you together, then give me no respite. [55]

DAY 5

I place my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord. There is no creature but He takes it by the forelock. Surely, my Lord is on a straight path, [56]

Now, if you turn away, I have already conveyed to you what I was sent to you with. And my Lord will replace you with some other people, and you cannot do Him any harm. Surely, my Lord is guardian over every thing!' [57]

And when came Our command, We saved Hud and those who believed along with him, out of mercy from Us, and We did save them from a heavy punishment. [58]

That was the tribe of 'Ad who rejected the signs of their Lord, disobeyed their Messengers and followed the dictates of every obstinate tyrant! [59]

And a curse was made to pursue them in this world and on the Day of Doom. Lo! The people of 'Ad disbelieved their Lord. Lo! Curse be upon 'Ad, the people of Hud. [60]

COMMENTARY

Allah Ta'ālā had sent Sayyidnā Hud alayhis salām as a prophet to the people of 'Ād. They were known for their physical build, strength and bravery. Sayyidnā Hud alayhis salām was also one of them - as indicated in: **(their brother, Hud - 50)**. How regrettable that a people so strong and brave had lost their reason to the extent that they had taken to worshipping gods they had carved out of stones with their own hands.

Three basic principles of the call of faith Sayyidna Hud alayhis salaam presented before his people have been mentioned in the first three verses (50-52). One: Belief in Tauḥīd (Oneness of Allah) and that taking someone or something else worthy of worship other than Allah is nothing but a lie and fabrication. Two: He was a Messenger of Allah. He had come with the call of Tauḥīd for them. This was the mission of his life. He was working hard against heavy odds to convey the message to them. Why would he do that? If they thought about it, they would see that he was not asking them to pay for his services, nor did he receive any material benefits from them. If he did not honestly believe it to be the will and command of Allah, and right and true, why would he go to all that trouble of inviting them to believe and live a better life?

Payment for Da'wah work

The Holy Qur'ān reports almost all prophets saying that they do not ask for any payment against the duty of Da'wah they do. This shows that, in case payment is accepted (as pre-arranged or as implied by custom) against Da'wah and Tablīgh, the call remains ineffective. Experience bears it out that those who take wages for their religious sermons, addresses and good counsels leave the hearts of their audience unchanged at the end of the exercise.

DAY 5

Three: Forgiveness and Repentance: He exhorted them to seek forgiveness from Allah Ta'ālā for their disbelief and for sins they had committed in their past life. Then, for future, let them be ashamed of what they had done, repent and promise to themselves making a firm resolve and commitment that they would never go even near them. If they sincerely went through this process of seeking forgiveness from Allah and showing repentance before Him, the result will be that they shall, no doubt, be blessed with everlasting prosperity in the Hereafter, but in the mortal world too, they will themselves notice its many benefits coming to them. Firstly, the act of Istighfār and Taubah will remove the distress of famine from them. Heavy rains will come when due making their provisions sumptuous. Secondly, it would increase their strength and power.

The word: (*quwwah*) has been used here in a general sense which includes physical strength and power as well as the strength that comes from increases in wealth and children.

This tells that Taubah and Istighfār have a special property of their own - that their practitioner is blessed with extended means of sustenance and satisfying increase in wealth and children, even in this mortal world.

Captives of their ignorant ways, the people of Sayyidnā Hud alayhis salām brushed his call aside by saying, in effect, *'a miracle would have been something, which you did not show to us. You are simply saying what you have to say. Now, just because what you are saying, we are not going to leave our gods we worship and, in you, we are not going to believe. In fact, we believe that you have lost your mind as a result of maligning our gods, otherwise you would not be saying all that.'*

Demonstrating his prophetic courage, Sayyidnā Hud alayhis salām, said in response, *'If you would not listen to me, then, hear this - I make Allah my witness and you too bear witness that I am disgusted with all your gods other than Allah. Now, do, you and your gods, whatever you all can do against me and do not even give me the least respite.'*

And he said, *'this I am telling you seriously for I have placed my trust in Allah who is my Lord and your Lord as well. He holds every creature that walks on the earth by the forelock. There is no one around who can dare cause harm or loss to anyone even to the measure of a tiny particle without His will and permission. Surely, my Lord is on the straight path, that is, one who takes the straight path finds Him and is helped by Him.'*

Here was one man against a whole people making a claim so strong and loud and putting them to shame and no one from a people so strong and brave dared budge before him! This was a standing miracle of Sayyidnā Hud alayhis salām - which also provides an answer to their complaint that he did not show them

DAY 5

a miracle. And it also provides yet another answer to their audacious comment that their gods had made him mentally deranged for, had their gods been exercising this kind of power, they would have never left him alive after what he had said against them.

After that, he said, 'If you continue to be so insanely opposed to truth, then, you must understand that I have already conveyed to you the message with which I have been sent. Now, its logical outcome could be no other but that the wrath and punishment of Allah falls on you and you are destroyed to the last man and my Lord brings another people to settle on this land. As for what you are doing against this matter of truth, you are simply hurting yourself, not Allah. Surely, my Lord oversees everything and He is aware of all your deeds and thoughts.'

They were the kind of people who would not listen to anything. They chose to stick to their contumacy. Then, the punishment of Allah descended upon them in the form of a stormy wind that uprooted their homes and trees. Living entities, human and animal, would be blown up high into the air and ricochet back on to the ground faces down. Human cries could be heard coming from the sky - until this whole set of people, unique in their size and strength, were annihilated to the last man.

When came the command to send Divine punishment on these people, Allah Ta'ālā, in accordance with His customary practice, saved His prophet and his companions from this severe punishment as they were ordered to leave that area before the punishment came.

After having mentioned the event relating to the people of 'Ād and the punishment that came upon them, an exhortation was necessary so that others could learn their lesson from it. So, it was said: That was the tribe of 'Ad! They rejected the signs of their Lord, disobeyed their Messengers yet kept following the dictates of those who were tyrannical and obstinate.

The outcome was that curse, that is, the state of being away from the mercy of Allah, kept pursuing them in the mortal world and will keep pursuing them similarly on the day of Qiyāmah as well.

COMMENTARY – TAFSĪR IBN KATHĪR SŪRAH AL-ḤĀQQAH, VERSE 6

(And as for `Ad, they were destroyed by a wind **Ṣarṣar**) meaning, a cold wind.

Qatādah, As-Suddī, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and Ath-Thawrī all said about, (**ʿAtiyah**) *"This means severe blowing of the wind."* Qatādah said, *"It blew fiercely upon them until it pierced their hearts."*

Ad-Dahhak said, (**Ṣarṣar**), *"This means cold, and (ʿAtiyah) means, it blew fiercely upon them without any*

DAY 5

mercy or blessing." `Alī and others said, "*It blew fiercely upon their stored harvest until it was brought out worthless.*"

This concludes the commentary for Day 5.