

## **Al-'Ankabut (The Spider) [29:38]**

وَعَادًا وَثَمُودًا وَقَدْ تَبَيَّنَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ مَّسْكِنِهِمْ<sup>ط</sup> وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ  
أَعْمَالَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَكَانُوا مُسْتَبْصِرِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

(Remember also) the 'Ad and the Thamud (people): clearly will appear to you from (the traces) of their buildings (their fate): the Evil One made their deeds alluring to them, and kept them back from the Path, though they were gifted with intelligence and skill.

### **MUHAMMAD HUSAIN TABA TABAI (AR)**

*And We destroyed the people of Aad and Thamud, and indeed it has been made manifest to you from their dwellings (now in ruins). Satan rendered their deeds fair seeming to them; so he kept them away from the right path, though they were endowed with sight.*

The verse has begun as they have begun regarding Qarun, Pharaoh and Haman while the stories of other people had begun with the mention of the Prophets concerned. The words, “ rendered their deeds fair seeming to them” means that Satan adorned all wrongful and sinful deeds and closes the way to the path of guidance, the way of the Lord for them.

These people are regarded intelligent because earlier they were on the path of God and nature.

In Surah Baqarah verse 213 the Book says, “Mankind were one community and God sent his apostles to them with glad tidings and warning.....And only those to whom the scriptures were given differed concerning it after clear proof had come them, through hatred one to another.”

We have already explained this verse earlier - that wrong nature of the people existed even before Hazrat Nuh and the Aad and Thamud lived after him. They were on the right path before they deviated.

### **MIR AHMED ALI (AR)**

Refer to the commentary of Araf: 65 to 72 for the people of Ad; and Araf: 73 to 79 for the people of Thamud.

Araf: 65 to 72

Prophet Hud, in the progeny of Nuh through Sam, was sent to preach the message of Allah to the people of Ad, who were physically very strong and lived in Arabian peninsula. They were zealous idolaters. In vain Hud tried to bring them to true faith. On account of their ever increasing corruption a three years' famine visited them, but they took no warning and challenged Hud to bring on them what he threatened them with.

At last dark clouds appeared on the sky. Thinking that it was going to rain they all assembled under the clouds. A terrible blast of wind destroyed them and their land. It continued for eight days. Under the command of Allah Hud along with his virtuous companions had left the scene of calamity before it fell on the people of Ad. The people mentioned here are known as the tribe of first Ad.

Araf: 73 to 79

Akhakum (their brother) does not mean "real brother" but "one of them".

Thamud has often been mentioned along with Ad in the Holy Quran. The people of Thamud are known as the tribe of second Ad who lived in Ahqaf, from Umman to Hadhramawt (Ahqaf: 21). Their prophet and warner was Salih. Their territory included both rocky country and fertile valley of Qura, and the crisis in their history is connected with a wonderful she-camel.

They were also, like the tribe of Ad, godless and idol worshippers. They used to worship a part of a mountain and offer sacrifices on it. There was scarcity of water and the arrogant privileged classes tried to prevent the access of the poor or their cattle to the springs, while Salih used to intervene on their behalf (Shu-ara: 155 and Qamar: 28), also they tried to monopolise the pasture, a free gift of Allah as per verse 73 of this surah.

This particular she-camel was made a test case (Qamar: 27) to see if the arrogant people would see light and come to reason. On their demand Salih, with the permission of Allah, made a she-camel come out from the mountain with a baby camel. It was decided that one day the she-camel would drink water from the spring and on the next day the people would take it. The she-camel, after drinking the water, gave as much milk as the whole town could drink, but in spite of Salih's warning that the she-camel was a sign of Allah and if they let her come to any harm, they would be seized with a grievous punishment, they hamstrung her, and insolently defied the order of their Lord. Consequently they were destroyed by a dreadful earthquake, which threw them on the ground and buried them with their houses and their buildings. Salih was saved by Allah's mercy. There was no survivor. His speech is a warning as well as a reference to the sin and folly of the people who belie the signs of Allah in any time.

Thalabi writes in his Tafsir that the Holy Prophet said to Ali:

The worst of men in the days gone by were those who killed the she camel of Salih. The worst men among the present generation are those who will slay you.

Thalabi says that the name of the killer of the she camel was Qaddar and his mother's name was Quttama. So also Qaddar was the name of Ibn Muljim and Quttama was his mother's name .

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

In verse 74 it is said that the people of Thamud had hewed the mountains to make houses, which shows that they were a nation of architects, well versed in the art of masonry. They also built palaces in the plains as their abodes but used the houses in the mountains after nightfall to protect themselves, and also kept there those among them who were about to die.

Professor Nicholson says that according to the monuments found in Madayan al Salih in the mountain-houses the people of Thamud buried their dead. It does not disprove the Qur'an. Obviously when the sick died they must have been buried there.