

Home > Hayat Al-Qulub, Vol. 1, Stories of the Prophets > An account of the People of Saba And People of Tharthaar

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## An account of the People of Saba And People of Tharthaar

Allah says:

***Certainly there was a sign for Saba in their abode; two gardens on the right and the left; eat of the sustenance of your Lord and give thanks to Him: a good land and a Forgiving Lord! But they turned aside, so We sent upon them a torrent of which the rush could not be withstood, and in place of their two gardens We gave to them two gardens yielding bitter fruit and (growing) tamarisk and a few lote-trees.***

***This We requited them with because they disbelieved; and We do not punish any but the ungrateful.***

***And We made between them and the towns which We had blessed (other) towns to be easily seen, and We apportioned the journey therein: Travel through them nights and days, secure.***

***And they said: O our Lord! make spaces to be longer between our journeys; and they were unjust to themselves so We made them stories and scattered them with an utter scattering; most surely there are signs in this for every patient, grateful one. (34: 15-19)***

Imam as-Sadiq says regarding the exegesis of the above ayats, that the nation of Sabah inhabited towns close to each other so that they could interact among themselves. They were very prosperous and had flourishing agriculture. Streams irrigated their townships and there was an economic upsurge. But these people denied Allah's bounty and invited a change to occur in their fortunes. The Almighty sent a flood on them and it destroyed their towns, submerged their houses and ravaged their properties. In place of their orchards Allah caused to grow the plantations that He has mentioned.

'Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated that Sulayman commanded his army to construct a gulf from the fresh water sea to India and they built a dam of stone and lime through which canals supplied water to the Kingdom of Sabah. This dam had ducts at regular intervals and by opening and closing the ducts water supply was regulated to any given town of the Sabah Kingdom. On both sides of the city were flourishing

orchards comprising of an area of ten days' travel. The orchards were thick with trees laden with fruits and decked with flowers. If one traveled from one side to the other he would not be able to see the sun for ten days at a stretch. When the inhabitants of this flourishing kingdom began to transgress, disobey the commands of their Lord, not heed the advice of righteous people and did not desist from their evil deeds the Almighty sent giant rats that began to dig at the dam and remove huge stones from it, tossing them aside, though each stone was so heavy that even a strong and healthy man could not lift it. Witnessing such a scenario many people fled the city leaving behind their belongings and properties. The rats continued to dig at the dam until it leveled and a flooded the country. The flood destroyed the city, uprooted the trees carrying them away as mentioned by Allah in the description of Sabah.

In an authentic tradition Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq said, "After every meal I lick my fingers so much that my servant thinks it is because of greed, though it is for respecting Allah's bounty.

Know that! There was a nation bestowed with divine bounties. They owned a stream called Tharthaar. They had such excessive wealth that they used pure wheat bread for cleansing the genitals of their children after they dirtied passed stool. Instead of washing them with water they wiped them with bread and discarded it. This went on for such a long time and a mountain of this dirty bread built up. One day a righteous person passed by and saw a woman cleaning her child with bread. He told her, "Fear Allah! Do not be haughty and deny His divine bounties due to their excessiveness." The lady replied, "Do not terrify me with hunger. We need never worry for food as long as the stream flows." Allah was infuriated at this and cut off the stream from them. He stopped the rain and cultivation of crops. The people of Sabah became impoverished and deprived. Now they weighed and distributed among themselves the same bread for consumption." Know that! There was a nation bestowed with divine bounties. They owned a stream called Tharthaar. They had such excessive wealth that they used pure wheat bread for cleansing the genitals of their children after they dirtied passed stool. Instead of washing them with water they wiped them with bread and discarded it. This went on for such a long time and a mountain of this dirty bread built up. One day a righteous person passed by and saw a woman cleaning her child with bread. He told her, "Fear Allah! Do not be haughty and deny His divine bounties due to their excessiveness." The lady replied, "Do not terrify me with hunger. We need never worry for food as long as the stream flows." Allah was infuriated at this and cut off the stream from them. He stopped the rain and cultivation of crops. The people of Sabah became impoverished and deprived. Now they weighed and distributed among themselves the same bread for consumption."

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