

Sūrat al-Hud Verse 84

وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا ۚ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنِّ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ ۖ وَلَا تَنْقُصُوا الْمِكْيَالَ
وَالْمِيزَانَ ۚ إِنِّي أَرَأَاكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ وَإِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ مُّحِيطٍ

11:84 - And to Madyan We sent Shu'ayb, their brother. He said, 'O my people! Worship Allah. You have no other god besides Him. Do not decrease the measure or the balance. Indeed, I see that you are doing well, but I fear for you the punishment of an all-encompassing day.

Questions for Reflection

- 1) How does Prophet Shu'ayb show his concern for his people?
- 2) What two basic rights are mentioned in this verse? (Right of Allah and rights of people)
- 3) Why is the day of Judgment being referred to as an 'all-encompassing' day?

Commentary

The people of Madyan were from the progeny of Prophet Ibrahim, through his son Isma'il. They were idol worshippers and worked as traders, trading with the people of Lebanon, Egypt and Palestine. The people of Madyan attached a lot of importance to wealth and disregarded all just laws of transactions between people to achieve wealth. Every society has its own sources of corruption. For the people of Prophet Shu'ayb it was their love of wealth and their job as traders that led them to financial corruption.

The Islamic economic system is based on the idea that the human being is an agent of Allah and all wealth and property belongs to Him. Man is the steward of the wealth, to use for himself as necessary and for others. A believer is expected to be completely fair in business dealings. There are rules for giving a portion of personal wealth to others. Any type of unfair economic practices and fraud is prohibited. Within these boundaries, a believer can enjoy the fruits of hard labor and provide for themselves and others.

Almighty Allah sent the people of Madyan a Prophet to remind them about their duty to Him. This is the Sunnah of Allah, a practice that takes place for all societies - sending a Prophet who would correct the misguidance that occurs in that society and lead them towards Allah. Note that the verse calls Prophet Shu'ayb their 'brother'. This is not only because he was one of them, but also because he wished well for them and was concerned for them, as a brother would be.

Prophet Shu'ayb first called them to the worship of One God. This is the foundation of the mission of all Prophets. They remind people about Tawhid and the need to lead a life based on submission to Him only. The invitation to Tawhid is the basis of all individual and social reform. It breaks attachment to falsehood of all types. The understanding that there are no other gods is a prerequisite for Tawhid and the worship of One God. There must be a disassociation and rejection of all false deities before

accepting One God. The belief in Allah is purified through that disassociation. It is cleansing the heart of all falsehood and making room for Allah alone. Imam al-Sadiq (a) says: *The heart is the sanctuary of Allah, therefore, do not settle therein anything but Allah.* (Bihar-ul-Anwar, vol. 70, p. 25)

Then the Prophet talks about a major issue in the society of Madyan; their fraudulent transactions. They would cheat people when selling merchandise to them, giving them less in exchange for their payment. They undervalued the merchandise when buying it and overpriced it when selling it. This economic corruption stemmed from a lack of belief in God and the hereafter. Although there were other sins that the people were guilty of, this was the most common. It prevailed over their society. The corruption of the people of Madyan was rooted in worldly materialism. Greed led them to ignore the rights of others. They were wealthy, as the Prophet points out. They were doing well in their businesses but wanted more and were not concerned about getting it through corrupt means.

The words 'I see that you are doing well' is an acknowledgement of their prosperity. It shows an acceptance of their status and hard work. This acknowledgement could be to help the people react positively to his message. The people were greatly blessed by Allah. They had abundant rains, their crops grew well, and they were able to make a lot of profit from their sales. They did not need to cheat people to get wealth.

The Prophet reminds them that their selling must be based on righteousness, lest they face the wrath of Allah. Prophet Shu'ayb warns them about the day of Judgment. Belief in Tawhid and Ma'ad (Resurrection) go together. If a person believes in the Creator, he has to accept responsibility while in the world and accountability in the hereafter. Otherwise there is no purpose behind creation.

The day of Judgment is referred to as being 'all-encompassing'. It could mean that there will be no escape that day. There is also no doubt about it. It will encompass all the deeds of the human being and no excuse will be accepted.

Lessons

- 1) A caller towards Allah is concerned about the people.
- 2) Belief in Allah is the foundation of religion and necessitates the rejection of all false gods.
- 3) Corruption in society must be addressed through belief in Allah and gratitude to Him.

Cross reference verses

- 1) All Prophets had the same mission of preaching Tawhid and Ma'ad. 11:26, 11:50, 11:61
- 2) All wealth belongs to Allah - . . . *give them out of the wealth of Allah which He has given you* (24:33).
- 3) Fraud is condemned. 83:1-4

Rislatul Huquq

Right of Allah- The greatest right of Allah on you is that you worship Him without associating anything with Him. When you do that with sincerity (*ikhlas*), He has made it binding upon Himself to give you sufficiency in the affairs of this world and the next.

Connecting topic

Islamic Economic System - <https://www.shiavault.com/books/khums-an-islamic-tax/chapters/2-an-introduction-to-the-islamic-economic-system/>