

## Sūrat al-Hud

### Verse 37

وَاصْنَعِ الْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيِنَا وَلَا تُخَاطِبْنِي فِي الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ۗ إِنَّهُمْ مُّعْرَفُونَ

11:37 - Build the ark before Our eyes and by Our revelation, and do not plead with Me for those who are wrongdoers: they shall indeed be drowned.

#### Questions for Reflection

1) How would Prophet Nuh (a) have felt about this command? What parts of this verse tell you that?

#### Commentary

The command is given to Prophet Nuh(a) to build the ark. It is a sign that the punishment of Allah will come down to the people in the form of a flood and only believers will be saved. The ark is a wasilah (means) of safety. The building of the ark is a process which will give time to those who may still consider the message and accept it. And it will also give hope and anticipation to the believers. The command to build the ark shows that hard work and effort is a good thing, even for Prophets. They did not shy away from such tasks.

Note that Allah carries out His will through natural and normal means. It is not always through a miracle. God could have saved the believers from the flood in any way He wished. But he chose to do it in a physical and earthly way, through an ark that would sail on the water coming down. Thus, the ark would be a cause of salvation for the believers.

The verse says the building will be done before God's eyes. This is to remind the Prophet that Allah is watching everything. He will see the work that takes place and the resulting difficulties. He will be aware of it just as He has been aware of all that has happened till now. Knowing that Allah is watching and present with us at all times is comforting and reassuring. It reminds us that we are never alone. There is no need to feel fearful or lonely. And it also instils a sense of responsibility. Allah is watching what we do and how we do it. This consciousness makes a person want to be on their best behavior.

The verse also says the building will be done according to revelation. Prophet Nuh (a) was told how to build the ark. He himself had no idea of how the flood was going to be, or what exactly would be needed to be safe from it. But Allah gives him instructions on what to do.

The verse then tells him not to plead or intercede for his people. The wrong doers from among them would be punished. This part of the verse shows that pleading for or interceding for others is allowed for Prophets, but for the right group of people. Not for those who have transgressed and rejected the word of God. Such people have souls that are already dead. The body is given to the soul while on earth to facilitate its perfection. But when the soul is dead the body becomes meaningless. These soulless bodies can spread their disease and infect others. It becomes fatal for

society. Prophet Nuh (a) also talk about this truth when he says; *If You leave them, they will lead astray Your servants, and will beget none except immoral, ungrateful ones (71:27).*

The ark of Prophet Nuh (a) has been likened to the Ahlul Bayt (a). A hadith from the Holy Prophet, in both Sunni and Shi'ite books is the famous hadith of Nuh's ark. Abu Dharr says that the Prophet said, *The example of my family is like that of Nuh's ark. Whoever embarks upon it will be saved and whoever separates from it will drown.*

### Lessons

- 1) The process of hard work to attain a goal is carried out even by Prophets.
- 2) Knowing that Allah is with us and watches all things brings comfort and strength.
- 3) The Ahlul Bayt (a) are like the ark of Prophet Nuh (a), they take us out of falsehood to the safety of truth.

### Cross reference verses

- 1) Lady Maryam told to shake the tree so dates would fall, a task to be carried out rather than have the dates fall miraculously – 19:25
- 2) Allah watches all things – 57:4, 4:1, 34:11

### Connecting topic

The Ahlul Bayt as the ark of Nuh (a)

[https://en.wikishia.net/view/Hadith\\_al-Safina](https://en.wikishia.net/view/Hadith_al-Safina)

<https://www.al-islam.org/leading-ummah-jafar-subhani/chapter-22-events-thaqalain-and-safinah>