

The Narrative of Saba

First Khutbah

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ , نَحْمَدُهُ , وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ , وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا , مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ , وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ , وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

Verily, all praise is for Allah. We praise Him, we seek His assistance and we ask for His forgiveness. And we seek refuge in Him from the evils of our selves. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide. Whoever He misguides, none can guide. And I bear witness that there is no deity other than Allah and I bear witness that Mohammad is His servant and messenger.

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ) [آل

عمران:102]

Al Imran(3) 102 : O you who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam.

Oh People:

Allah narrated to us from the news of the previous communities for us to take heed, learn and reflect. From among these is the narrative of Saba. And a Surah was named after them for what it contains of great lessons, admonishment and knowledge.

Saba were a community who basked in comprehensive bounties and adversities were pushed away from them. They had plentiful food and drink which are the basis for life. They had abundant provisions and their land was green and lush. And their skies rained abundantly. And their fruits

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were bountiful and their animals were healthy. Their dwellings were surrounded by trees and fruits. Their community was sprawling and wherever they went they did not find but greenery. And they did not eat except the best foods and fruits. They drank the sweetest water and they breathed the freshest air.

And their Lord Most Glorified only requested gratitude in return for these continual blessings by establishing His religion and singling Him out alone for worship without any partners:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لِسَبَإٍ فِي مَسْكَنِهِمْ آيَةٌ جَنَّتَانِ عَنْ يَمِينٍ وَشِمَالٍ كُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِ رَبِّكُمْ
وَاشْكُرُوا لَهُ بَلَدَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ وَرَبٌّ غَفُورٌ - سبأ: 15

Saba (34) 15: There was for [the tribe of] Saba' in their dwelling place a sign: two [fields of] gardens on the right and on the left. [They were told], "Eat from the provisions of your Lord and be grateful to Him. A good land [have you], and a forgiving Lord."

Allah Almighty described it as a good land. For everything in it was good. But they met the call of Allah - the Most High – to them with arrogance and turning away. And turning away is the worst type of disbelief. So they deserved the torment and destruction:

فَأَعْرَضُوا فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَيْلَ الْعَرِمِ وَبَدَّلْنَاهُمْ بِجَنَّتَيْهِمْ جَنَّتَيْنِ ذَوَاتِي أُكُلٍ خَمْطٍ وَأَثَلٍ
وَشَيْءٍ مِنْ سِدْرٍ قَلِيلٍ - سبأ: 16

Saba (34) 16: But they turned away [refusing], so We sent upon them the flood of the dam, and We replaced their two [fields of] gardens with gardens of bitter fruit, tamarisks and something of sparse lote trees.

So Allah Almighty opened their dam upon them drowning their land, perishing their crops and livestock and destroying their trees and fruits. Then their land became dusty after having been green. And barrenness after lushness. And discomfort after comfort. And their blessings went away in a flash of an eye. They became destitute not having anything.

How great is the power of Allah Almighty and how fast the blessings vanish! And that is through what their hands earned. For Allah Almighty said:

لَا يَظْلِمُ النَّاسَ شَيْئًا وَلَكِنَّ النَّاسَ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ - يونس: 44

Yunus (10) 44: **Indeed, Allah does not wrong the people at all, but it is the people who are wronging themselves.**

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ - الرعد: 11

Ar Rad (13) 11: **Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves.**

The blessings of Saba changed because they turned away from the religion of Allah Almighty and they were not grateful for His blessings. In this regard, Allah explained the reason for the removal of their blessings and said:

ذَلِكَ جَزَيْنَاهُمْ بِمَا كَفَرُوا وَهَلْ نُجَازِي إِلَّا الْكَفُورَ - سبأ: 17

Saba (34) 17: **[By] that We repaid them because they disbelieved. And do We [thus] repay except the ungrateful?**

From the greatest of Allah's blessings upon them is that they did not need to take provisions for travel and travel was made easy. And there were no highway bandits and the hardships of travel were lifted from them. So they were safe and relaxed in their journeys. And a reason for that is that there

was a continuous series of villages between them and the blessed land. So they used to travel between Yemen and the Levant in safety and tranquility. And they did not carry supplies for their travels due to their availability on their route. And they made no prior preparations. Rather they traveled as they pleased. And they would rest in the villages that were on their route that were continuous and not cutoff. Allah said:

وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ الْقُرَى الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا قُرَى ظَاهِرَةً وَقَدَّرْنَا فِيهَا السَّيْرَ سِيرُوا فِيهَا لَيَالِي وَأَيَّامًا آمِنِينَ -سبأ: 18

Saba (34) 18: And We placed between them and the cities which We had blessed [many] visible cities. And We determined between them the [distances of] journey, [saying], "Travel between them by night or by day in safety."

Allah's favor upon them was completed for them in their residences and then during their travels. However, their rejection of their Lord's blessings upon them in their travels reached to the point that they said:

فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا بَاعِدْ بَيْنَ أَسْفَارِنَا وَظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ -سبأ: 19

Saba (34) 19: But [insolently] they said, "Our Lord, lengthen the distance between our journeys," and they wronged themselves

They were insolent and ungrateful for this great blessing and they supplicated for hardship and lengthening the distance.

The people of Saba wronged themselves by transgressing in supplication accompanied by defiance and turning away. So Allah Almighty's punishment of them was impoverishment after wealth. And He displaced them after stability. And He separated them after solidarity. And He scattered them in far off regions. And He made their news something that

people spoke about in their gatherings. They spoke about what happened to them. The Arabs made an example of their division and dispersion saying "The Separation of the Hands of Saba". Moreover, their separation became an example to describe every great separation. Allah said:

فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَحَادِيثَ وَمَزَّقْنَاهُمْ كُلَّ مُمَزَّقٍ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ -سبأ:

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Saba (34) 19: We made them narrations and dispersed them in total dispersion. Indeed in that are signs for everyone patient and grateful.

Indeed in their narrative are signs for everyone patient and grateful. They were not grateful for their Lord's blessings upon them. And they were not patient when their wealth vanished and their lands became barren. For if they were patient and repented Allah Almighty would have restored the blessings upon them just as He took it away from them because of their denial. But they were a people who were deprived of patience as they were deprived of gratitude. So they were dispersed in total dispersion and scattered randomly.

أَقُولُ مَا تَسْمَعُونَ وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

I say what you have heard and I seek forgiveness from Allah for me and you from every sin. So seek forgives from Him, Verily He is Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Second Khutbah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ، وَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

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All praise is to Allah, and peace and blessings upon the Messenger of Allah, and I bear witness that there is no deity other than Allah and I bear witness that Mohammad is His slave and messenger.

Oh people:

Allah concluded the news of Saba that there are numerous signs in their narrative and not just one sign:

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ

Saba (34) 19: Indeed in that are signs for everyone patient and grateful.

From among the signs of the narrative of Saba is that the state of their residences and prosperity is a sign of Allah's power, mercy and grace. And in sending the torrent upon them is another sign of the severity of His retribution and the speed of His torment. And in the transformation of their condition from blessing to torment is a sign that Allah - Glory be to Him - is the Sovereign, Controller, and Administrator of His servants as He wills. So He honors and humbles. And He raises and lowers. And He gives and He withholds. And He forgives and torments. And He has absolute wisdom in His actions.

And in the reversal of their condition from luxury to poverty is a sign of the fluctuation of conditions and the changing world. And a sign of Allah Almighty's attributes of creation, provision and administration. And giving and taking life. And people benefit from this by not being deceived by the permanence of good and benefits. And they do not despair from misfortune because they realize that Allah changes conditions from state to state.

And in the buildup of their territory, the breadth of their villages and their continuous connection to the Levant is a sign of the extent of the construction and great authority. And that the bestowal of Allah Almighty has no limits. For He is the Most Generous and has power over all things.

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Just as in it is a sign that security is the foundation of building. Therefore, mankind must secure the means for this security and consolidate and anchor its foundations. For there is no life without security. And at the head of that is Tawhid of Allah (singling out Allah alone for worship) and obeying Him. And refraining from His prohibitions.

And their wishing for the removal of the blessing that they were in by supplicating against themselves is a sign of what the human minds can reach of foolishness and degeneration. And harming oneself and the community. And being a cause for their deterioration and extinction. For this reason, it is prohibited to supplicate against oneself, children and wealth. Allah said:

وَيَدْعُ الْإِنْسَانُ بِالشَّرِّ دُعَاءَهُ بِالْخَيْرِ وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ عَجُولًا ﴿١١﴾ [الإسراء: 11]

Al Isra (17) 11: **And man supplicates for evil [when angry] as he supplicates for good, and man is ever hasty.**

And in the Hadith narrated by Um Salama (may Allah be pleased with her) that the Prophet ﷺ said:

لا تَدْعُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا بِخَيْرٍ؛ فَإِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ يُؤْمِنُونَ عَلَى مَا تَقُولُونَ - رواه مسلم.

Do not supplicate for yourselves anything but good, for the angels say Amen to what you say. [Muslim 902a]

Also, in this great narrative there is evidence of the ability of the Lord - the Almighty - to transform blessings into a calamity. And turning a bestowal into an adversity. Water is a great blessing and there is no life on earth without it. And that is why people contain it with dams which is among the greatest and most beneficial structures that mankind were guided to

building. However, Allah transformed this great blessing to a great calamity upon the people of Saba when He unleashed the torrents of their dam upon them and turned their homes and gardens into ruins.

And this narrative is evidence that from the way of Allah is that that He recompenses the grateful with increase and growth. And that He recompenses the deniers and ungrateful with disappointment and torment.

ذَلِكَ جَزَيْنَاهُمْ بِمَا كَفَرُوا وَهَلْ نُجَازِي إِلَّا الْكَفُورَ - سبأ: 17

Saba (34) 17: **[By] that We repaid them because they disbelieved. And do We [thus] repay except the ungrateful?**

So whoever understands this Divine Way and acts according to it, will have security and bliss in this world and the hereafter. And whoever deviates from it and turns away from Allah Almighty's reminder of it, is among the doomed.

And whoever sees our condition knows that the blessing of Allah is comprehensive upon us just as it was for Saba. For the provisions of Allah are continually upon us and we are surrounded by His blessings. And we enjoy security in our lands and travels are facilitated. And He provided us with all types of goodness. So let us beware of becoming like the people of Saba and let us be like the family of Dawood who were grateful for the blessings:

اعْمَلُوا آلَ دَاوُدَ شُكْرًا وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّاكِرِينَ - سبأ: 13

Saba (34) 13: **[We said], "Work, O family of David, in gratitude." And few of My servants are grateful.**

Oh Allah make us among Your believing grateful servants. And grant us gratitude for your countless blessings upon us. Indeed Allah is All Hearing, Responsive.

هَذَا وَصَلُّوا وَسَلِّمُوا عَلَى نَبِيِّكُمْ كَمَا أَمَرَكَ بِذَلِكَ رَبُّكُمْ , فَقَالَ

I conclude with this and send prayers of blessings and peace upon your Prophet as your Lord commanded:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

Al Ahzaab (33) 56: Indeed, Allah confers blessing upon the Prophet, and His angels [ask Him to do so]. O you who have believed, ask [Allah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace.

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنَا فِيمَنْ هَدَيْتَ وَعَافِنَا فِيمَنْ عَافَيْتَ وَتَوَلَّنَا فِيمَنْ تَوَلَّيْتَ وَبَارِكْ لَنَا فِيمَا
أَعْطَيْتَ وَقِنَا شَرَّ مَا قَضَيْتَ إِنَّكَ تَقْضِي وَلَا يُقْضَى عَلَيْكَ وَإِنَّهُ لَا يَذُلُّ مَنْ وَالَيْتَ
تَبَارَكْتَ رَبَّنَا وَتَعَالَيْتَ

O Allah, guide us with those whom You have guided, grant us well-being among those You have granted well-being, be an ally to us along with those whom You are an ally to, and bless what You have bestowed upon us, and save us from the evil of what You have decreed. For verily You decree and none can decree over You. He whom You support can never be humiliated. Glory is to You, our Lord, You are Blessed and Exalted.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ كُلِّهِ عَاجِلِهِ وَآجِلِهِ مَا عَلِمْنَا مِنْهُ وَمَا لَمْ نَعْلَمْ وَنَعُودُ بِكَ
مِنَ الشَّرِّ كُلِّهِ عَاجِلِهِ وَآجِلِهِ مَا عَلِمْنَا مِنْهُ وَمَا لَمْ نَعْلَمْ اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ خَيْرِ مَا

سَأَلَكْ عَبْدُكَ وَنَبِيُّكَ وَنَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا عَاذَ بِهِ عَبْدُكَ وَنَبِيُّكَ اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ
الْجَنَّةَ وَمَا قَرَّبَ إِلَيْهَا مِنْ قَوْلٍ أَوْ عَمَلٍ وَنَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَا قَرَّبَ إِلَيْهَا مِنْ قَوْلٍ أَوْ
عَمَلٍ وَنَسْأَلُكَ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ كُلَّ قَضَاءٍ قَضَيْتَهُ لَنَا خَيْرًا

O Allah, We ask You for all that is good, in this world and in the Hereafter, what we know and what we do not know. O Allah, we seek refuge with You from all evil, in this world and in the Hereafter, what we know and what we do not know. O Allah, we ask You for the good that Your servant and Prophet has asked You for, and we seek refuge with You from the evil from which Your servant and Prophet sought refuge. O Allah, we ask You for Paradise and for that which brings one closer to it, in word and deed, and we seek refuge in You from Hell and from that which brings one closer to it, in word and deed. And we ask You to make every decree that You decree concerning us good.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَيَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ
وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ، يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

Servants of Allah. Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded.

أذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ يَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لَهُ يَزِدْكُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا لَهُ يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاتَّقُواهُ يَجْعَلَ
لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مَخْرَجًا ، وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ

Remember Allah, the Great - He will remember you. Thank Him for His favors - He will increase you therein. And seek forgiveness from Him - He will

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forgive you. And be conscious of Him - He will provide you a way out of difficult matters. And, establish the prayer.