

## Circumstances of Hud and his people

Ibn Babawayh and al-Qutb al-Rawandi have mentioned that Hud was the son of ‘Abdullah son of ‘ad Rubah. He was the son of Haloos, son of ‘ad, son of A’oz son of Aram son of Sam son of Nuh. Some other historians have mentioned that the actual name of Hud was A’abir the son of Salih, son of Azmekhshad, son of Sam, son of Nuh. According to Ibn Babawayh the reason he is given the name of Hud is because he was the ‘guided one’ among his people.

Authentic chains of narrators have conveyed a tradition from Imam Ja‘far as-Sadiq, wherein he says, “When the time of death approached for Nuh he summoned his people and followers and told them, ‘Keep in mind, after me will be occultation of the proof of Allah. During this period, you shall be subjugated and oppressed by illegitimate leaders and tyrannical kings. And the Almighty will relieve you of these difficulties through ‘al-Qa’im’ (one who rises) – whose name is Hud. He shall be of good appearance, pleasing manners, calm and dignified. He shall resemble me in appearance. When he appears the Almighty will destroy your enemies through wind.”

Thus, the majority of the believers began to anticipate the arrival of Hud but a long time passed and gradually the people strayed from the path. The Almighty sent Hud at a time when they had lost all hopes and were involved in extreme difficulties.

Then Almighty Allah destroyed their enemies through “Baad al-Aqem” as alluded to in the Holy Qur’an. Once again Hud went into occultation and the unjust got the upper hand. This continued until the advent of Salih.

Ibn Babawayh and al-Qutb al-Rawandi relate from Wahab that when Hud was forty, the Almighty Allah revealed to him to invite his people towards His worship and Oneness (Tawhid). “If they accept, I shall increase their strength and wealth.” The people had gathered at a place when Hud approached them and said, “Worship Allah, the One who has created you. There is no deity except Him.” They said “O Hud! You were upright, reliable and trustworthy in our eyes.”

“I have been sent by Allah towards you,” replied Hud, “Give up idol-worship,”

When the people heard this, they became angry and leapt at his neck to strangle him. He was on the verge of death, when they finally released him. Hud was unconscious for one full night and a day. When he finally regained consciousness he said, “My Lord, I have carried out your commands. You have also seen how the people dealt with me. At this moment, Archangel Gabriel descended and said, “The Almighty says that you have become sorrowful and disheartened and given to sloth in the matter of guiding your people, when He has promised to instill their hearts with your fear. After this they shall never be able to supersede your authority.”

After this revelation, Hud returned to his people and said, “You have resorted to mischief and sinfulness.” The people told him to abstain from such discourse and warned him that if he did not desist they will again punish him with such intensity that he would forget his previous suffering. Hud told them to forgo disobedience and repent to the Almighty. Gradually the hearts of the people were instilled by the awe and majesty of Hud. They thought that now they would never be able to exceed the power of Hud and hence resolved to collectively subject him to different kinds of torture. Hud raised a slogan with such an intensity that the people ran away in terror. He said, “You people are stubborn in disbelief like the people of Nuh. You also deserve a curse like Nuh invoked the wrath of Allah for his people.”

The people said, “The gods of the people of Nuh were weak and powerless whereas our gods are strong and mighty. You are also aware of our strength.” The height of those people was 120 spans according to present standards, and their bodies were 60 spans wide. Whenever, one of them desired, he could easily uproot a small hillock and toss it aside. Thus for 760 years Hud continued to invite them towards Allah. When Allah decided to destroy them, He created hillocks of sand and stone. Hud told them, “I fear that these hillocks may be a punishment for you from Allah.”

Thus, Hud became very distraught due to the obstinacy of his people regarding sinfulness. The hillocks called out him to be happy that one day the people of ‘ad shall be punished through them. When Hud heard this he renewed his exhortations to the people and said, “Fear Allah and worship Him. If you do not testify to the belief in Allah, these very hillocks and dunes will be the punishment and divine wrath for you.”

When the people heard this, they began to uproot the hillocks and remove them from their place. However, more they endeavored hillocks reappeared in larger number. Hud addressed Allah thus, “O my Lord! The more I persist in conveying your message the more these people persist in disbelief.” The Almighty revealed to him that He would prevent rain. Hud told his people that the Almighty has assured him that He will destroy the people. This warning of Hud reached every nook and corner of the earth and the wild animals, birds and other creatures heard it too. They all rushed to Hud and pleaded. “Surely, you don’t intend to destroy as with the disobedient people?” Hud heard their plaintive cry and prayed for them to the Almighty. The Almighty revealed to him that He would not destroy those who have not disobeyed him.

‘Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated that ‘Ad was a tribe of the people of Hud inhabiting a village that stretched

from Shugooq to Akhzar. They had four-storeyed cities, a flourishing agriculture, and numerous date palms. They had long life spans and towering buildings but they were idol worshippers. Hud was sent by Allah to invite them towards Islam and restrain them from idolatry. The people refused to accept this and instead began to torture Hud in various ways. The Almighty prevented rain for seven years causing a terrible famine. Hud himself practiced agriculture and irrigated his fields. One day a group of people came to the door of Hud. The door was opened by a woman, grey-haired and one-eyed. "Who are you?" She asked them.

"We have come from a certain town, and are afflicted with draught. We have come to request Hud to pray for rain."

The old woman told them that if the prayers of Hud were effective for this purpose he himself would have prayed. For his own crops have withered away due to lack of rain. The people asked for the whereabouts of Hud. She told them. The people came to him and said, "O Prophet of Allah! Our towns have dried up. There is no rain. Please pray to the Almighty to send rain for us and bestow us with excess of bounties." Hud listened to them and prepared for prayers. After the prayers he told the people to return and that the Almighty will send rain and bounties for them. The people said, "O Messenger of Allah! We have beheld an astonishing sight."

"What?" asked Hud

They told him of the old, grey-haired and one-eyed woman at his house who had spoken to them. Hud said, "She is my wife, and I pray to the Almighty to grant her a long life."

When the people asked him why he prayed thus, he said, "Allah has not created any believer but that he has an enemy too; who continues to torture him. And my enemy is that woman. I am the master of my foe. It is better that my enemy is not *my* master."

Thus Hud remained among the people and continued to invite them towards Allah and restrained them from idol-worship. He used to exhort them to give up idolatry, and worship the One and only Allah; so that Allah may bestow them with rain and increase the population of their cities.

Yet the people refused to believe. Consequently the Almighty sent a chilly and biting wind. It continued to blow for seven days.

It is related through authentic chains of narrators that Imam al-Baqir said, "Indeed the realm of the Almighty has the breeze of mercy and the breeze of wrath also. Whenever the Almighty desires, He transforms the breeze of wrath into a breeze of mercy. However He never transforms the breeze of wrath into the breeze of mercy. Because Allah is never wrathful to the people who obey Him. He is enraged when they begin to go astray. Then Imam states that the Almighty dealt with the people Yunus in this very fashion. He had already decreed punishment for them. They were about to be seized by divine punishment. But the people accepted belief and pleaded for mercy; and the punishment was

suspended. And “Bad al–Aqem” is the wind of punishment. There is mercy in it. Not a blade of grass sprouts in its presence. It emanates from the seventh layer beneath the earth. This particular wind never appeared except for the people of ‘ad. Even at that time it was allowed only as much as the sizes of a finger ring. But it was so infuriated at the people of Hud that it came out in great magnitude. The controllers complained, “O Allah! This wind has leashed such a fury upon us that we fear that even the righteous ones of us will perish with the wrong–doers.”

Almighty Allah sent Archangel Gabriel to curtail the wind with his breeze and bring a part of it back, leaving only the quantity desired by Allah. Thus only part of it that Allah desired remained and rest receded, and it was enough to destroy the people of ‘ad and their associates.

According to a good tradition a well was being dug in the vicinity of Bataniyah by the order of Muta’sim. However even after 300 units of depth, there was not a single drop of water. Muta’sim gave up and did not order for a second well. When Mutawakkil succeeded him, he ordered that digging should continue until water is struck. The digging began. After every hundred units a platform was constructed. At last they reached a stone. When they broke it, a whiff of cool breeze emerged, killing all those who were around. They never reached Mutawakkil. He and his scholars could not think of a logical explanation. Finally they wrote a letter to Imam ‘Ali an–Naqi. Imam replied that they were killed like the people of Ahqaf, that is, like the people of ‘ad. They were destroyed by the Almighty by a swift and cold breeze. The Prophet of that community was Hud They had populous and flourishing cities. Imam explained the disobedience of people and the shortage of rain. He said that when chastisement arrived the people decried a cloud approaching. They became happy, thinking that it would now rain. Hud told them it was not so. It was the punishment they had themselves invited.

The Messenger of Allah is reported to have said, “Not a breeze blows, but in specified intensity and quantity. But the breeze that blew in the time of ‘ad against the control of treasurers with great intensity and it was like the eye of the needle. It destroyed the people of ‘ad.

It is narrated from Amir al–Mu’minin ‘Ali that he said, “Winds are of five types. One of them is *Aqem* and we seek refuge of the Almighty from its peril.”

Ibn Babawayh relates from Wahab that the breeze of Aqem is from the earth that we inhabit. It is tied up with seventy thousand chains, and 70000 angels guard each of the chains. When the Almighty decided to unleash it upon the people of ‘ad, its controllers were permitted only to the extent equal to the breathe that comes out of a cow’s nostril. If Allah had permitted, it would not have left anything standing on this earth. However, He ordered the angels to release it only equal to the size of a finger ring. The people of ‘ad perished due to this wind. The Almighty will employ the same breeze to demolish the mountains, hillocks, cities and fortifications, and flatter the in the initial stages of the Resurrection Day. It is called *Aqem* because it perpetrates chastisement and is absolutely bereft of mercy. When it descended upon the people of ‘ad, it destroyed their palaces, buildings and cities and reduced them to sand, as mentioned by the Holy Qur’an,

***“It did not leave aught on which it blew, but it made it like ashes.” (51:42)***

Due to this their cities were so full of sand as they had been pounded upon by the vicious wind. It continued to blow for seven nights and eight days. It used to lift up men and women and throw them headlong to the earth. It uprooted the mountains in the same way as it destroyed and powdered the houses. That is why there are no mountains in sandy regions and it is for this very fact that the Almighty has termed them “Dhat al-‘Imad” because the people of ‘ad used to carve pillars from mountains as high as the mountains themselves and fix them to the earth.

Moreover, Wahab says, “The fate of the people of ‘ad was so terrible that all places that have sandy landscapes were once inhabited by the people of ‘ad. Prior to this there was only limited sand in cities. It has assumed gigantic proportion in the last period of time. They were originally the strong forts, fortresses, cities, houses and the gardens of the people of ‘ad. Their cities were the most populous among the Arabs. They had more gardens and streams than any other city. When these people took the path of disobedience, and began idol-worship, the Almighty became angry and sent the breeze of *Aqeem*. It pulverized into sand, their forts, cities, fortresses, houses and buildings. They consisted of thirteen tribes.

Hud was the most noble and respected among them. He was very prosperous and to a great extent resembled Adam. He was wheat-complexioned. He had a hairy body and was quite handsome. No one resembled Adam more than him, except Yusuf. Hud remained among his people for a long time. He used to invite the people towards Allah and prohibit them from ascribing partners to Him, and from oppressing the people. He also warned them of divine chastisement. But the people did not forgo sinfulness and illegitimate ways. They used to inhabit an area called Ahqaf. No community surpassed them in numerical strength, power and might. When they felt the approaching breeze they told Hud, “Do you frighten us with this breeze?” Then they took their children, their weak ones and belongings and entered a shelter. They themselves remained at the entrance to shield their women and children from the wind. But when the breeze reached their feet, it lifted them high in the air and hurled them into the seas.

Previously, the Almighty had sent ants for their chastisement. They were unable to save themselves from these ants. The ants entered their ears, nose and mouth. At last they fled the cities leaving behind all their wealth and property. The Almighty Allah allowed them to take refuge in the mountains and they made it their home. Allah also bestowed them with such strength and hard work that He had not bestowed anyone, neither before them or afterwards. The majority of them inhabited Dahina, Berin and Aalij. The area was bordered by Yemen on one side and Hadaramaut on the other. After the descent of punishment on ‘ad, Hud came with his followers to Makkah and settled there until he departed from this world. Salih also performed the same ritual. 7000 Prophets went to the valley of Rauha near Makkah. With the intention of performing hajj. All of them had dresses of spun hair. Even the reins of their camels were spun with hair. They announced various kinds of talbiya (e.g. Allahumma Labbaik!). These

Prophets included, Hud, Salih, and Ibrahim, Musa, Shu‘ayb and Yunus. Hud was a trader.

According to authentic narrations it is related from ‘Ali ibn Yaqtin that Mansur (the `Abbasid caliph) ordered him to dig a well in the palace of a pious man. Yaqtin began to dig the well and continued for a considerable period of time. In the due course, Mansur died. But there was still no water in this well. When al-Mahdi learnt of this he said that he would continue digging until water is struck. Even if the public treasury is exhausted in this venture.

Hence Yaqtin appointed his brother Abu Musa for this well. He continued the digging to such an extent that a hole appeared at the bottom of this well. A whiff of breeze came through the hole. The diggers were terrified and they came and informed Abu Musa. He came to the well and asked to be lowered into the well. The well was forty hands wide. The people lowered Abu Musa in a canopy tied with ropes. When he reached the bottom he sensed a great peril from this hole. He heard the rumbling of wind below it. Then he ordered the widening of this hole and lowered two people to investigate the matter. The two of them remained inside for a long time and at last tugged their ropes to pulled back. When they were pulled to the surface they related astounding things. “We saw men who have turned to stones. All their belongings and houses etc have turned into stones. There men and women are wearing clothes. Some of them are sitting and some lying on their sides. Some of them are resting on pillows. When we touched their clothes they turned to dust and flew away in the breeze. Their houses retain their original structure.

Abu Musa wrote to al-Mahdi about it and all the court scholars were astonished. But no one could think of a rational explanation. At last al-Mahdi, the ‘Abbasid wrote a letter to Madinah and requested Imam Musa al-Ka’im to come and explain the enigma. Imam traveled to Iraq. al-Mahdi related the incident to Imam. Imam wept profusely and said that those were the remains of the people of ‘ad. The Almighty sent His wrath upon them and they sunk below the earth along with their houses. And they were the people of Ahqaf. “What is Ahqaf?” asked al-Mahdi.

“Sand,” replied Imam.

Imam Ja‘far as-Sadiq is reported in authentic traditions to have said that when Hud announced his Prophethood, the descendants of Sam believed in him because they were having prior knowledge of his special characteristics. But the other people perished through the breeze of *Aqeem*. Hud made a bequest to them regarding Salih and gave them the glad tidings of his advent.

Authentic chains of narrators relate that Imam as-Sadiq said, “The age of the people of Hud was 400 years. First the Almighty prevented rain for them for three years. Yet they did not give up their disbelief. When the intensity of drought increased they sent a group of people towards the mountains of Makkah. They were not familiar with the location of Ka‘bah, that they might have prayed there for rain. When they reached the mountains they prayed for rain and three types of clouds rose up in the sky. They neither selected the first nor the second. They selected the third cloud that was the cloud of punishment. When

the gust of wind came towards them a rich man named Khalqaan said to Hud “The approaching cloud has some creatures who are riding on camels and carrying maces.”

Hud said, “They are the angels of Allah.”

“If we believe in your God, would He give us power over these angels so that we can take revenge?” asked Khalqaan.

“Allah does not give power to the sinners to subdue those who obey Him,” replied Hud.

“What happens after our people are destroyed?” asked Khalqaan.

“Allah will bring other people in your place, they shall be better than you,” informed Hud.

“Life is not worth living after them,” so saying Khalqaan joined his people and perished with them.

According to an authentic tradition after the fatal blow Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali made a bequest to Imam Al-Hasan and said,

“Take me to Najaf and bury me between my two brothers Hud and Salih.” In another tradition Imam Al-Hasan says that Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali told him, “Bury me in the grave of my brother, Hud.” Therefore, whatever is mentioned in the previous tradition can be reconciled by saying that it probably refers to the original burial site of Hud. And that later Hud was transferred to Najaf like Adam. [1](#)

A reliable chain of narrators quote Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq as saying that whenever there is wind carrying white, black or yellow dust – it is the pulverized bones and powdered houses of the people of 'ad.

In other reliable tradition the tafsir of the verse,

***“Surely, We sent on them a tornado in a day of bitter ill-luck.” (54: 19)***

Says that the ill luck mentioned is everlasting punishment for the people of 'ad. According to authentic traditions the day refers to the last Wednesday of the month.

It is related from Imam al-Baqir that the Almighty Allah has confined this tornado in a house – the door of which is locked and bolted. If it were to be released it will destroy all that exists between the earth and the heavens. It was sent to the people of 'ad only equal to the circumference of a finger ring. The mother tongue of Hud, Salih, Shu'ayb, Isma'il and Muhammad, Peace be upon them all, was Arabic.

In another tradition from the same Imam it is narrated that the people of Hud were of towering heights, like the date palms. They used to break chunks of mountains with their bare hands.

Wahab narrates that the eight days when they were hit by the wind are known as Bardul Ajooz in Arabic. These days that there is a windy weather in most of the countries. There is also extreme cold. It is

associated with Ajooz because an old woman of 'ad entered the earth and due to the punishment this wind, blew and destroyed the people on the 8th day.

The Almighty has related the incident of 'ad in a number of Qur'anic Ayats. At one place He says,

***And to 'ad (We sent) their brother Hud. He said, O my people! Serve Allah, you have no god other than Him; will you not then guard (against evil)? The chiefs of those who disbelieved from among his people said, Most surely we see you in folly, and most surely we think you to be of the liars. He said, O my people! There is no folly in me, but I am an apostle of the Lord of the worlds. I deliver to you the messages of my Lord and I am a faithful adviser to you: What! Do you wonder that a reminder has come to you from your Lord through a man from among you that he might warn you? And remember when He made you successors after Nuh's people and increased you in excellence in respect of make; therefore remember the benefits of Allah, that you may be successful. They said, "Have you come to us that we may serve Allah alone and give up what our fathers used to serve?" Then bring to us what you threaten us with, if you are of the truthful ones. He said, Indeed uncleanness and wrath from your Lord have lighted upon you; what! Do you dispute with me about names, which you and your fathers have given? Allah has not sent any authority for them; wait then, I too with you will be of those who wait. So We delivered him and those with him by mercy from Us, and We cut off the last of those who rejected Our communications and were not believers. (7:65-72)***

In another place Allah says,

***And to 'ad (We sent) their brother Hud. He said, O my people! Serve Allah, you have no god other than He; you are nothing but forgers (of lies). O my people! I do not ask of you any reward for it; my reward is only with Him Who created me; do you not then understand? And, O my people! Ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him; He will send on you clouds pouring down abundance of rain and add strength to your strength, and do not turn back guilty. They said, O Hud! You have not brought to us any clear argument and we are not going to desert our gods for your word, and we are not believers in you: We cannot say aught but that some of our gods have smitten you with evil. He said, Surely I call Allah to witness, and do you bear witness too, that I am clear of what you associate (with Allah). Besides Him, therefore scheme against me all together; then give me no respite: Surely I rely on Allah, my Lord and your Lord; there is no living creature but He holds it by its forelock; surely my Lord is on the right path. But if you turn back, then indeed I have delivered to you the message with which I have been sent to you, and my Lord will bring another people in your place, and you cannot do Him any harm; surely my Lord is the Preserver of all things. And when Our decree came to pass, We delivered Hud and those who believed with him with mercy from Us, and We delivered them from a hard chastisement. (11:50-58)***

Again the Lord says,

***Ad gave the lie to the apostles. When their brother Hud said to them: Will you not guard (against evil)? Surely I am a faithful apostle to you; Therefore guard against (the punishment of) Allah and obey me: And I do not ask you any reward for it; surely my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds. Do you build on every height a monument? Vain is it that you do: And you make strong fortresses that perhaps you may. And when you lay hands (on men) you lay hands (like) tyrants; so guard against (the punishment of) Allah and obey me. And be careful of (your duty to) Him. Who has given you abundance of what you know. He has given you abundance of cattle and children. And gardens and fountains; Surely I fear for you the chastisement of a grievous day. They said, It is the same to us whether you admonish or are not one of the admonishers. This is naught but a custom of the ancients; and we are not going to be punished. So they gave him the lie, then We destroyed them. Most surely there is a sign in this, but most of them do not believe. (26: 123–139)***

In yet another place the Almighty tells his Prophet to inform those who are obstinate in disbelief,

***Then as to Ad, they were unjustly proud in the land, and they said, Who is mightier in strength than we? Did they not see that Allah Who created them was mightier than they in strength, and they denied Our communications? (41: 15–16)***

Furthermore Allah says,

***And mention the brother of Ad; when he warned his people in the sandy plains, — and indeed warners came before him and after him — saying Serve none but Allah; surely I fear for you the punishment of a grievous day. They said, Have you come to us to turn us away from our gods; then bring us what you threaten us with, if you are of the truthful ones. He said, The knowledge is only with Allah, and I deliver to you the message with which I am sent, but I see you are a people who are ignorant. So when they saw it as a cloud appearing in the sky advancing towards their valleys, they said, This is a cloud, which will give us rain. Nay! It is what you sought to hasten on, a blast of wind in which is a painful punishment, destroying everything by the command of its Lord, so they became such that naught could be seen except their dwellings. Thus do We reward the guilty people. (46:21–25)***

Commentators of the Holy Qur'an say that Hud had constructed a boundary and took refuge in it with those who believed in him. The wind was able to reach them only to the extent that pleased them. However the people of 'ad were lifted by the gale so high that they seemed like locusts. They were tossed headlong on the mountains and their bones were pulverized. They had constructed strong buildings and walls to protect themselves from its fury. When these people entered their houses, the gale followed them inside, plucked them out and carried them away.

## Shadeed, Shaddad and the city of Iram

Ibn Babawayh, Shaykh Tabarsi and others have written that there was a person named ‘Abdullah bin Qalaba who went in search for his lost camel. He was wandering in search of his camel in the wilderness of ‘ad. In that wilderness he saw a city surrounded by a moat. There were many palaces and numerous standards (flags). He came towards it thinking it would be inhabited and he would seek information regarding his camel. But he did not see anyone entering the city. He came to the gate, alighted from his she-camel and tied it on one side.

Then he extracted his sword from the scabbard and entered the city. He saw two more gates, more lofty than anyone has seen in the world. They were made of incense wood and inlaid with yellow and red rubies that brightened up the surrounding houses with their glow. Seeing this, the man was mesmerized. He opened a door and entered. He saw another city within, as resplendent and as beautiful. He saw palaces in it; they were constructed on pillars of emeralds and rubies. All the palaces had windows, and above each window was another window. All made up of gold, silver, pearls, rubies and emeralds. The gates of these palaces were like the gates of the city. Of incense wood inlaid with rubies. The floor of the palaces was plastered with pearls, musk and saffron. When the visitor beheld the sight and did not find any human, he was terrified. The palaces were surrounded by orchards of different kind of fruit-bearing trees. Streams flowed underneath the trees. He thought that it was the same Paradise that Almighty has promised for the righteous.

He thanked Allah for letting him enter the Paradise in his worldly life. Then he began pluck as many pearls, musk and as much saffron as he can. But he was not able to pull out a single ruby or emerald. Then he came out, mounted the she-camel and returned the way he had come, to Yemen. He showed the pearls, musk and saffron balls he was having and related the whole incident. He even sold the pearls he had obtained, though they had yellowed due to their age. The information gained popularity and reached the ears of Muawiyah. He sent a messenger to the governor of Sana’a requesting him to send this person to him. Thus he came to Muawiyah. Muawiyah took him aside and he related the incident. He summoned Ka’b bin Ahbaar and asked him, “Have heard or read in some book about a city of gold and silver with palaces on pillars of rubies and emeralds, and windows and floors of pearls and orchards of fruit-trees beneath which streams flow?” “Yes”, replied Ka’b, “This city was constructed by Shaddad the son of ‘ad. It is the same Iram that is mentioned by Allah in the Qur’an and praised in the words, “No city has been constructed like it.” Muawiyah told him to relate the details.

Ka’b said, “Apart from the people of ‘ad there was a person, ‘ad the first. He had two sons, Shadeed and Shaddad. After the death of ‘ad they succeeded him and gained such power that the east and the west paid obeisance to them. Shadeed died first and Shaddad became the foremost ruler of the world. He was an avid reader of books. When he came across the description of Paradise, the inlaid rubies and pearls and other bounties, he wanted to construct a Paradise at par with the Paradise of Allah. Thus he appointed one hundred people for building the ‘Paradise’. And under each one of them he deputed a

thousand workers. Then he ordered them to look for a vast tract of land in the wilderness and construct a city of gold, silver, rubies, emeralds and pearls. To construct pillars of emeralds. To construct palaces and fix windows to them and windows upon these windows. Below the palaces, they should plant fruit orchards and make streams flow underneath. "I want a similar Paradise on the earth," said Shaddad, "Just as I have seen the description of Paradise in books." The people asked, "How can we obtain such huge quantities of gold, silver and gems to construct such a city?"

"You know that I am the master of the whole world."

"We know that," they replied.

Shaddad told them to, "Appoint a group of people for each of the mines, that they may collect as much quantity as required by you. Apart from this collect all the gold and silver owned by the people."

Thus, letters were dispatched to the rulers of the east and west and for full ten years, valuables were accumulated. Then for three hundred years continued the construction of the palatial city. The total age of Shaddad was 900 years. The people informed him that they had completed the task of building the 'Paradise' for him. Shaddad told them to construct a moat around the city and build a thousand castles on the outskirts each flying thousands of flags. "Each of these places will house one of my ministers," said Shaddad. The architects completed the additional task as ordered by Shaddad.

Shaddad issued orders to the people that they should move towards Dhat al-'Imad. The people prepared for the journey for full ten years. Shaddad finally set on his journey with his army and people. When he was near his destination and only a days' journey remained, the Almighty sent a voice from the heavens that killed all of them. Neither Shaddad was able to enter Aram nor his people. (O Muawiyah!) A man from your people, from among the Muslims, red faced, red-haired and short stature, clean eye-brow and neck, will enter this city in search of his lost camel.

The person was present with Muawiyah. When Ka'b saw him, he said, "This is the same man, by Allah!" Then in the last period of time, the followers of the true path will enter that 'Paradise'.

Ibn Babawayh says, "We have seen the book *Al-Mu'amerun* that Husham bin Sa'd has quoted, 'I saw a stone in Alexandria with the Inscription:

I am Shaddad the son of 'ad, who built the city of Dhat al-'Imad. No city has ever been constructed like it. I mobilized a large army and conquered lands with my might. And constructed the palaces of Iran, at the time when there was no old age or death. And the stones were as soft as flowers. And I have sunk twelve stories deep and no one shall be able to salvage it. But the Ummah of Muhammad will bring it out.

<sup>1</sup>. Historians and commentators of Qur'an differ as to the site of the grave of Hud. Some say it is in Hadaramaut, in a cave and historians narrate from Amir al-Mu'minin that the grave is on a red hillock in Hadaramaut. Some say that Hud is buried in the Hijr Isma'il at Ka'bah.

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