

Surah 38. Sad

Asad: To the truth gave the lie aforetime¹⁶ Noah's people, and [the tribe of] Ad, and Pharaoh of the [many] tent-poles,¹⁷

Malik: Before them the people of Nuh, `Ad and Fir'on, the man of spikes, denied their Rasools,

Mustafa Khattab:

Before them, the people of Noah denied the truth?, as did `Ad, Pharaoh of the mighty structures,1

Pickthall: The folk of Noah before them denied (their messenger) and (so did the tribe of) Aad, and Pharaoh firmly planted,

Yusuf Ali: Before them (were many who) rejected apostles the People of Noah and `Ad and Pharaoh the Lord of Stakes. ^{4159 4160}

Author Comments

16 - Lit., "before them", i.e., before the people who opposed or oppose Muhammad's message.

17 - In classical Arabic, this ancient bedouin term is used idiomatically as a metonym for "mighty dominion" or "firmness of power" (Zamakhshari). The number of poles supporting a bedouin tent is determined by its size, and the latter has always depended on the status and power of its owner: thus, a mighty chieftain is often alluded to as "he of many tent-poles".

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i.e., pyramids and obelisks.

4159 - In their day, Noah's contemporaries, or the 'Ad and the Thamud, so frequently mentioned, or Pharaoh the mighty king of Egypt, or the people to whom Lot was sent (cf. xxxvii. 75-82; vii. 65-73; vii. 103-137; vii. 80-84) were examples of arrogance and rebellion against Allah: they rejected the divine Message brought by their messengers, and they all came to an evil end. Will not their posterity learn their lesson?

4160 - The title of Pharaoh, "Lord of the Stakes", denotes power and arrogance, in all or any of the following ways: (1) the stake makes a tent firm and stable, and is a symbol of firmness and stability; (2) many stakes mean a large camp and a numerous army to fight; (3) impaling with stakes was a cruel punishment resorted to by the Pharaohs in arrogant pride of power.

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