

Surah 18. Al-Kahf

Asad: "As for that boat, it belonged to some needy people who toiled upon the sea - and I desired to damage it⁷⁷ because [I knew that] behind them was a king who is wont to seize every boat by brute force.

Malik: As for the boat, it belonged to some poor fishermen who toiled on the river. I intended to damage it because in their rear there was a king who was seizing every boat by force.

Pickthall: As for the ship, it belonged to poor people working on the river, and I wished to mar it, for there was a king behind them who is taking every ship by force.

Yusuf Ali: As for the boat it belonged to certain men in dire want: they plied on the water: I but wished to render it unserviceable for there was after them a certain king who seized on every boat by force. ²⁴²²

Transliteration: Amma alssafeenatu fakānat limasakeena yaAAamaloona fee albahri faaradtu an aAAeebahā wakāna warāahum malikun yakhuthu kulla safeenatin ghasban

Khatab:

"As for the ship, it belonged to some poor people, working at sea. So I intended to damage it, for there was a ?tyrant? king ahead of them who seizes every ?good? ship by force.

Author Comments

77 - Lit., "to cause a fault in it" - i.e., to make it temporarily unserviceable.

2422 - They went on the boat, which was plying for hire. Its owners were not even ordinary men who plied for trade. They had been reduced to great poverty, perhaps from affluent circumstances, and deserved great commiseration, the more so as they preferred an honest calling to begging for charity. They did not know, but Khidhr did, that that boat, perhaps a new one, had been marked down to be commandeered by an unjust king who seized on every boat he could get-it may have been, for warlike purposes. If this boat had been taken away from these self-respecting men, they would have been reduced to beggary, with no resources left them. By a simple act of making it unseaworthy, the boat was saved from seizure. The owners could repair it as soon as the danger was past. Khidhr probably paid liberally in fares, and what seemed an unaccountably cruel act was the greatest act of kindness he could do in the circumstances.

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