

## Surah 7. Al-A'raf

Asad: And do not lie in ambush by every road [that leads to the truth<sup>69</sup>], threatening and trying to turn away from God's path all who believe in Him, and trying to make it appear crooked. And remember [the time] when you were few, and [how] He made you many: and behold what happened in the end to the spreaders of corruption!

Malik: Do not sit in ambush on every road to threaten people and hinder from the Way of Allah those who believe in Him, seeking to make His Way crooked. Remember how He multiplied you when you were a few in number and see what was the end of the mischief-makers of prior nations.

Pickthall: Lurk not on every road to threaten (wayfarers), and to turn away from Allah's path him who believeth in Him, and to seek to make it crooked. And remember, when ye were but few, how He did multiply you. And see the nature of the consequence for the corrupters!

Yusuf Ali: "And squat not on every road breathing threats hindering from the path of Allah those who believe in Him and seeking in it something crooked; but remember how ye were little and He gave you increase. And hold in your mind's eye what was the end of those who did mischief. <sup>1055</sup>

Transliteration: Wala taqAAudoo bikulli siratin tooAAidoona watasuddoona AAan sabeeli Allahi man a mana bihi watabghoonaha AAiwajan waothkuroo ith kuntum qaleelan fakaththarakum waonthuroo kayfa kana AAaqibatu almufsideena

Khatab:

And do not lie in ambush on every road—threatening and hindering those who believe in Allah from His Path and striving to make it ?appear? crooked. Remember when you were few, then He increased you in number. And consider the fate of the corruptors!

### Author Comments

69 - Thus Zamakhshari and Razi, stressing the metaphorical meaning of the above phrase. Cf. a similar expression, attributed to Satan, in verse {16} of this surah.

1055 - The Midianites were in the path of a commercial highway of Asia, viz., that between two such opulent and highly organised nations as Egypt and the Mesopotamian group comprising Assyria and Babylonia. Their besetting sins are thus characterised here: (1) giving short measure or weight, whereas the strictest commercial probity is necessary for success, (2) a more general form of such fraud, depriving people of rightful dues, (3) producing mishchief and disorder, whereas peace and order had been established (again in a literal as well as a metaphorical sense); (4) not content with upsetting settled life, taking to highway robbery, literally as well as (5) metaphorically, in two ways, viz., cutting off people from access to the worship of Allah, and abusing religion and piety for crooked purposes, i.e., exploiting religion itself for their crooked ends, as when a man builds houses of prayer out of unlawful gains or ostentatiously gives charity out of money which he has obtained by force or fraud, etc. After setting out this catalogue of

besetting sins Shu'aib makes two appeals to the past: (1) You began as an insignificant tribe, and by Allah's favour you increased and multiplied in numbers and resources: do you not then owe a duty to Allah to fulfil His Law? (2) What was the result in the case of those who fell into sin? Will you not take warning by their example? So Shu'aib began his argument with faith in Allah as the source of all virtue, and ended it with destruction as the result of all sin. In the next verse he pleads with them to end their controversies and come to Allah.

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