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Shu'ayb

The name **Shu'ayb** appears in the Qur'ān as an Arab prophet together with the tribulations afflicting his people that led to their destruction. Shu'ayb is also the name attributed to the father-in-law of Moses, alluded to in the Qur'ān and so named in exegetical and later sources.

1. SHU'AYB IN THE QUR'ĀN

Shu'ayb is mentioned eleven times in the Qur'ān, where his story is dealt with in several passages (Q 7:85–93, 11:84–95, 26:176–91, 29:36–7) in which the tribulations of his people are described. Shu'ayb was sent to Madyan (biblical Midian) (Q 7:85, 11:84, 29:36), where he exhorted the people to worship God. A sign (Q 7:85, 11:88) was sent to them to believe in God, and he urged them not to cheat people by altering weights and measures (Q 7:85, 11:84–5, 26:181–2), not to engage in corrupt behaviour, and not to threaten people (Q 7:86). The Qur'ān tells of the confrontation between Shu'ayb and his people, who had grown too proud. The people, and the council of elders in particular (Q 7:88), refused his message in the name

of the religion of their fathers and challenged him and his followers to renounce their faith or be expelled (Q 7:88). In another verse, the people state that they refrain from stoning the prophet only out of respect for his family (Q 11:91). Shu'ayb invoked God to judge them and make clear who was on the right path (Q 7:89): the judgement went in his favour, whilst those who opposed him were punished by an earthquake (Q 7:91, 29:37), by some sort of scream (Q 11:94), or by a black cloud (Q 26:189) which came down upon the unbelievers in their houses. Shu'ayb and those who believed with him were kept safe (Q 11:94).

The chronological position of Shu'ayb's mission is made possible by a verse in which he warns his people not to follow the fate of the peoples of Noah, Hūd, and Šāliḥ, adding that “the people of Lot [who suffered the same fate] dwell near you (i.e., his people)” (Q 11:89). The Qur'ān contains no significant details beyond the names Madyan and al-Ayka. Al-Ayka is mentioned at the beginning of a passage on Shu'ayb (Q 26:176), identifying with this name the people to whom he was sent. The “people of al-Ayka”