

Sūrah 11: Hūd

Period of Revelation

If we consider its theme deeply we come to the conclusion that it was revealed during the same period as Sūrah Yūnus and most probably followed it immediately.

Subject

The Sūrah deals with the same subject as Sūrah Yūnus that is invitation to the Message admonition and warning with this difference that the warning is sterner. This is also supported by a hadith: Some time after its revelation Abu Bakr noted to the Prophet that he had been noticing that he was growing older and older. The Prophet replied, '*Sūrah Hūd and the like Sūrahs have made me old.*' This shows that it was a very hard time for the Prophet and these stern warnings added greatly to his anxieties that were caused by the persecution from the Quraysh who were doing their worst to crush down the Message of Islām. For it was obvious to the Prophet that the last limit of the respite given by God was approaching nearer and nearer and he was afraid lest the term of the respite should expire and his people be seized by the torment. The invitation is this: Obey the Messenger of God; discard Shirk (polytheism) and worship God and God alone: establish the entire system of your life on the belief that you shall be called to account in the Hereafter.

The admonition is this: Remember that those people who put their faith in the outward appearance of this worldly life and rejected the Message of the Prophets met with dire consequences. Therefore you should consider it seriously whether you should follow the same way that history has proved to be the path to ruin.

The warning is this: You should not be deluded by the delay in the coming of the punishment: it is because of the respite that God has granted you by His grace so that you might mend your ways: if you do not make use of this opportunity you shall be inflicted with an inevitable punishment that will destroy you all except the Believers.

Instead of addressing the people directly, the Qur'ān has used the stories of the people of Noah, Hud, Sālih, Lot, Shu'aib and Moses to achieve the above mentioned objects. What is most prominent in their stories is that when God passes His judgement on the people He does not spare anyone whatsoever even if he be the nearest relative of the Prophet of the time. Only that one is rescued who had believed in the Prophet and none else not even his own son or wife. More than that: the Faith demands from each and every Believer that he should totally forget his relationships when that judgement comes and remember only the relationship of the Faith. For it is against the spirit of Islām to show any regard whatsoever for the relationships of blood and race. And the Muslims demonstrated these teachings practically in the Battle of Badr four years after the revelation of this Sūrah.

Sūrah 11: Hūd⁵⁰⁰

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate,
the Most Merciful

1. Alif, Lām, Rā.⁵⁰¹ [This is] a Book whose verses are perfected and then presented in detail from [one who is] Wise and Acquainted
2. [Through a messenger, saying], “Do not worship except God. Indeed, I am to you from Him a warner and a bringer of good tidings,”
3. And [saying], “Seek forgiveness of your Lord and repent to Him, [and] He will let you enjoy a good provision for a specified term and give every doer of favor his favor [i.e., reward]. But if you turn away, then indeed, I fear for you the punishment of a great Day.
4. To God is your return, and He is over all things competent.”
5. Unquestionably, they [i.e., the disbelievers] turn away their breasts to hide themselves from Him. Unquestionably, [even] when they cover themselves in their clothing, He [i.e., God] knows what they conceal and what they declare. Indeed, He is Knowing of that within the breasts.
6. And there is no creature on earth but that upon God is its provision, and He knows its place of dwelling and place of storage.⁵⁰² All is in a clear register.
7. And it is He who created the heavens and the earth in six days - and His Throne had been upon water - that He might test you as to which of you is best in deed. But if you say, “Indeed, you are resurrected after death,” those who disbelieve will surely say, “This is not but obvious magic.”
8. And if We hold back from them the punishment for a limited time, they will surely say,⁵⁰³ “What detains it?” Unquestionably, on the Day it comes to them, it will not be averted from them, and they will be enveloped by what they used to ridicule.
9. And if We give man a taste of mercy from Us and then We withdraw it from him, indeed, he is despairing and ungrateful.
10. But if We give him a taste of favor after hardship has touched him, he will surely say, “Bad times have left me.” Indeed, he is exultant and boastful -
11. Except for those who are patient and do righteous deeds; those will have forgiveness and great reward.
12. Then would you possibly leave [out] some of what is revealed to you,⁵⁰⁴ or is your breast constrained by it because they say, “Why has there not been sent down to him a treasure or come with him an angel?” But you are only a warner. And God is Disposer of all things.
13. Or do they say, “He invented it”? Say, “Then bring ten sūrahs like it that have been invented and call upon [for assistance] whomever you can besides God, if you should be truthful.”

⁵⁰⁰ *Hūd*: (The prophet) Hūd.

⁵⁰¹ See footnote to 2:1.

⁵⁰² Before birth and after death.

⁵⁰³ In ridicule and disbelief.

⁵⁰⁴ Knowing of the Prophet’s difficulties, God urges him to patience, certain that he would not fail to convey the message in its entirety.

14. And if they do not respond to you - then know that it [i.e., the Qur'ān] was revealed with the knowledge of God⁵⁰⁵ and that there is no deity except Him. Then,⁵⁰⁶ would you [not] be Muslims?
15. Whoever desires the life of this world and its adornments - We fully repay them for their deeds therein,⁵⁰⁷ and they therein will not be deprived.
16. Those are the ones for whom there is not in the Hereafter but the Fire. And lost is what they did therein,⁵⁰⁸ and worthless is what they used to do.
17. So is one who [stands] upon a clear evidence from his Lord [like the aforementioned]? And a witness⁵⁰⁹ from Him follows it,⁵¹⁰ and before it was the Scripture of Moses to lead and as mercy. Those [believers in the former revelations] believe in it [i.e., the Qur'ān]. But whoever disbelieves in it from the [various] factions - the Fire is his promised destination. So be not in doubt about it. Indeed, it is the truth from your Lord, but most of the people do not believe.
18. And who is more unjust than he who invents a lie about God? Those will be presented before their Lord, and the witnesses will say, "These are the ones who lied against their Lord." Unquestionably, the curse of God is upon the wrongdoers
19. Who averted [people] from the way of God and sought to make it [seem] deviant while they, concerning the Hereafter, were disbelievers.
20. Those were not causing failure [to God] on earth, nor did they have besides God any protectors. For them the punishment will be multiplied. They were not able to hear, nor did they see.⁵¹¹
21. Those are the ones who will have lost themselves, and lost from them is what they used to invent.
22. Assuredly, it is they in the Hereafter who will be the greatest losers.
23. Indeed, they who have believed and done righteous deeds and humbled themselves to their Lord - those are the companions of Paradise; they will abide eternally therein.
24. The example of the two parties is like the blind and deaf, and the seeing and hearing. Are they equal in comparison? Then, will you not remember?
25. And We had certainly sent Noah to his people, [saying], "Indeed, I am to you a clear warner
26. That you not worship except God. Indeed, I fear for you the punishment of a painful day."
27. So the eminent among those who disbelieved from his people said, "We do not see you but as a man like ourselves, and we do not see you followed except by those who are the lowest of us [and]

⁵⁰⁵ i.e., that knowledge which no one possesses except Him.

⁵⁰⁶ After having been convinced by such evidence.

⁵⁰⁷ i.e., during worldly life.

⁵⁰⁸ i.e., during worldly life.

⁵⁰⁹ Referring to Prophet Muhammad or to the angel Gabriel.

⁵¹⁰ Testifying to its truth. Additionally, it can mean "recites it," i.e., the Qur'ān.

⁵¹¹ They refused to listen to the truth or to perceive it.

- at first suggestion.⁵¹² And we do not see in you over us any merit; rather, we think you are liars.”
28. He said, “O my people, have you considered: if I should be upon clear evidence from my Lord while He has given me mercy from Himself but it has been made unapparent to you, should we force it upon you while you are averse to it?”
29. And O my people, I ask not of you for it any wealth. My reward is not but from God. And I am not one to drive away those who have believed. Indeed, they will meet their Lord, but I see that you are a people behaving ignorantly.
30. And O my people, who would protect me from God if I drove them away? Then will you not be reminded?”
31. And I do not tell you that I have the depositories [containing the provision] of God or that I know the unseen, nor do I tell you that I am an angel, nor do I say of those upon whom your eyes look down that God will never grant them any good. God is most knowing of what is within their souls. Indeed, I would then be among the wrongdoers [i.e., the unjust].”
32. They said, “O Noah, you have disputed [i.e., opposed] us and been frequent in dispute of us. So bring us what you threaten us, if you should be of the truthful.”
33. He said, “God will only bring it to you if He wills, and you will not cause [Him] failure.
34. And my advice will not benefit you - although I wished to advise you - If God should intend to put you in error. He is your Lord, and to Him you will be returned.”
35. Or do they say [about Prophet Muhammad], “He invented it”? Say, “If I have invented it, then upon me is [the consequence of] my crime; but I am innocent of what [crimes] you commit.”
36. And it was revealed to Noah that, “No one will believe from your people except those who have already believed, so do not be distressed by what they have been doing.
37. And construct the ship under Our observation and Our inspiration and do not address Me concerning those who have wronged; indeed, they are [to be] drowned.”
38. And he constructed the ship, and whenever an assembly of the eminent of his people passed by him, they ridiculed him. He said, “If you ridicule us, then we will ridicule you just as you ridicule.
39. And you are going to know who will get a punishment that will disgrace him [on earth] and upon whom will descend an enduring punishment [in the Hereafter].”
40. [So it was], until when Our command came and the oven overflowed,⁵¹³ We said, “Load upon it [i.e., the ship] of each [creature] two mates and your family, except those about whom the word [i.e., decree] has preceded, and

⁵¹² i.e., without any thought or hesitation.

⁵¹³ As a sign to Noah of the imminence of the flood. The *tannūr* is a large, rounded oven. The word can also mean the earth's lowlands.

- [include] whoever has believed.” But none had believed with him, except a few.
41. And [Noah] said, “Embark therein; in the name of God is its course and its anchorage. Indeed, my Lord is Forgiving and Merciful.”
42. And it sailed with them through waves like mountains, and Noah called to his son who was apart [from them], “O my son, come aboard with us and be not with the disbelievers.”
43. [But] he said, “I will take refuge on a mountain to protect me from the water.” [Noah] said, “There is no protector today from the decree of God, except for whom He gives mercy.” And the waves came between them, and he was among the drowned.
44. And it was said, “O earth, swallow your water, and O sky, withhold [your rain].” And the water subsided, and the matter was accomplished, and it [i.e., the ship] came to rest on the [mountain of] Jūdīyy. And it was said, “Away with the wrongdoing people.”
45. And Noah called to his Lord and said, “My Lord, indeed my son is of my family; and indeed, Your promise is true; and You are the most just of judges!”
46. He said, “O Noah, indeed he is not of your family; indeed, he is [one whose] work was other than righteous, so ask Me not for that about which you have no knowledge. Indeed, I advise you, lest you be among the ignorant.”
47. [Noah] said, “My Lord, I seek refuge in You from asking that of which I have no knowledge. And unless You forgive me and have mercy upon me, I will be among the losers.”
48. It was said, “O Noah, disembark in security from Us and blessings upon you and upon nations [descending] from those with you. But other nations [of them] We will grant enjoyment; then there will touch them from Us a painful punishment.”
49. That is from the news of the unseen which We reveal to you, [O Muhammad]. You knew it not, neither you nor your people, before this. So be patient; indeed, the [best] outcome is for the righteous.
50. And to ‘Aad [We sent] their brother Hūd. He said, “O my people, worship God; you have no deity other than Him. You are not but inventors [of falsehood].
51. O my people, I do not ask you for it [i.e., my advice] any reward. My reward is only from the one who created me. Then will you not reason?
52. And O my people, ask forgiveness of your Lord and then repent to Him. He will send [rain from] the sky upon you in showers and increase you in strength [added] to your strength. And do not turn away, [being] criminals.”
53. They said, “O Hūd, you have not brought us clear evidence, and we are not ones to leave our gods on your say-so. Nor are we believers in you.
54. We only say that some of our gods have possessed you with evil [i.e., insanity].” He said, “Indeed, I call God to witness, and witness [yourselves] that I am free from whatever you associate with God

55. Other than Him. So plot against me all together; then do not give me respite.
56. Indeed, I have relied upon God, my Lord and your Lord. There is no creature but that He holds its forelock [i.e., controls it]. Indeed, my Lord is on a path [that is] straight.”
57. But if they turn away, [say], “I have already conveyed that with which I was sent to you. My Lord will give succession to a people other than you, and you will not harm Him at all. Indeed my Lord is, over all things, Guardian.”
58. And when Our command came, We saved Hūd and those who believed with him, by mercy from Us; and We saved them from a harsh punishment.
59. And that was ‘Aad, who rejected the signs of their Lord and disobeyed His messengers and followed the order of every obstinate tyrant.
60. And they were [therefore] followed in this world with a curse and [as well] on the Day of Resurrection. Unquestionably, ‘Aad denied their Lord; then away with ‘Aad, the people of Hūd.
61. And to Thamūd [We sent] their brother Sālih. He said, “O my people, worship God; you have no deity other than Him. He has produced you from the earth and settled you in it, so ask forgiveness of Him and then repent to Him. Indeed, my Lord is near and responsive.”
62. They said, “O Sālih, you were among us a man of promise before this. Do you forbid us to worship what our fathers worshipped? And indeed we are, about that to which you invite us, in disquieting doubt.”
63. He said, “O my people, have you considered: if I should be upon clear evidence from my Lord and He has given me mercy from Himself, who would protect me from God if I disobeyed Him? So you would not increase me except in loss.
64. And O my people, this is the she-camel of God - [she is] to you a sign. So let her feed upon God’s earth and do not touch her with harm, or you will be taken by an impending punishment.”
65. But they hamstrung her, so he said, “Enjoy yourselves in your homes for three days. That is a promise not to be denied [i.e., unfailing].”
66. So when Our command came, We saved Sālih and those who believed with him, by mercy from Us, and [saved them] from the disgrace of that day.⁵¹⁴ Indeed, it is your Lord who is the Powerful, the Exalted in Might.
67. And the shriek⁵¹⁵ seized those who had wronged, and they became within their homes [corpses] fallen prone
68. As if they had never prospered therein. Unquestionably, Thamūd denied their Lord; then, away with Thamūd.
69. And certainly did Our messengers [i.e., angels] come to Abraham with good tidings; they said, “Peace.” He said, “Peace,” and did not delay in bringing [them] a roasted calf.
70. But when he saw their hands not reaching for it, he distrusted them and felt

⁵¹⁴ The day of Thamūd’s destruction.

⁵¹⁵ A piercing cry or blast from the sky.

- from them apprehension.⁵¹⁶ They said, “Fear not. We have been sent to the people of Lot.”
71. And his wife was standing, and she smiled.⁵¹⁷ Then We gave her good tidings of Isaac and after Isaac, Jacob.
72. She said, “Woe to me!⁵¹⁸ Shall I give birth while I am an old woman and this, my husband, is an old man? Indeed, this is an amazing thing!”
73. They said, “Are you amazed at the decree of God? May the mercy of God and His blessings be upon you, people of the house. Indeed, He is Praiseworthy and Honourable.”
74. And when the fright had left Abraham and the good tidings had reached him, he began to argue [i.e., plead] with Us⁵¹⁹ concerning the people of Lot.
75. Indeed, Abraham was forbearing, grieving⁵²⁰ and [frequently] returning [to God].
76. [The angels said], “O Abraham, give up this [plea]. Indeed, the command of your Lord has come, and indeed, there will reach them a punishment that cannot be repelled.”
77. And when Our messengers, [the angels], came to Lot, he was anguished for them and felt for them great dis-
- comfort⁵²¹ and said, “This is a trying day.”
78. And his people came hastening to him, and before [this] they had been doing evil deeds.⁵²² He said, “O my people, these are my daughters;⁵²³ they are purer for you. So fear God and do not disgrace me concerning my guests. Is there not among you a man of reason?”
79. They said, “You have already known that we have not concerning your daughters [i.e., women] any claim [i.e., desire], and indeed, you know what we want.”
80. He said, “If only I had against you some power or could take refuge in a strong support.”
81. They [the angels] said, “O Lot, indeed we are messengers of your Lord; [therefore], they will never reach you. So set out with your family during a portion of the night⁵²⁴ and let not any among you look back - except your wife; indeed, she will be struck by that which strikes them. Indeed, their appointment is [for] the morning. Is not the morning near?”
82. So when Our command came, We made the highest part [of the city] its lowest and rained upon them stones of layered hard clay, [which were]
83. Marked from your Lord. And it [i.e., God’s punishment] is not from the wrongdoers [very] far.

⁵¹⁶ Traditionally, if a guest refused to eat, it meant that he harboured ill will toward the host or intended him harm.

⁵¹⁷ In pleasure at the news of the forthcoming punishment of the evil people who denied Prophet Lot.

⁵¹⁸ An expression of surprise and amazement.

⁵¹⁹ i.e., with Our angels.

⁵²⁰ i.e., sighing or moaning during supplication out of grief for people and fear of God.

⁵²¹ Prophet Lot feared for the safety and honour of his guests.

⁵²² Referring to their practice of sodomy and homosexual rape of males.

⁵²³ i.e., the woman of his community who were available for marriage.

⁵²⁴ i.e., sometime before dawn.

84. And to Madyan [We sent] their brother Shu'ayb. He said, "O my people, worship God; you have no deity other than Him. And do not decrease from the measure and the scale. Indeed, I see you in prosperity, but indeed, I fear for you the punishment of an all-encompassing Day.
85. And O my people, give full measure and weight in justice and do not deprive the people of their due and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption.
86. What remains [lawful] from God is best for you, if you would be believers. But I am not a guardian over you."
87. They said, "O Shu'ayb, does your prayer [i.e., religion] command you that we should leave what our fathers worship or not do with our wealth what we please? Indeed, you are the forbearing, the discerning!"⁵²⁵
88. He said, "O my people, have you considered: if I am upon clear evidence from my Lord and He has provided me with a good provision from Him...?⁵²⁶ And I do not intend to differ from you in that which I have forbidden you; I only intend reform as much as I am able. And my success is not but through God. Upon Him I have relied, and to Him I return."⁵²⁷
89. And O my people, let not [your] dissension from me cause you to be struck by that similar to what struck the people of Noah or the people of Hūd or the people of Sālih. And the people of Lot are not from you far away.
90. And ask forgiveness of your Lord and then repent to Him. Indeed, my Lord is Merciful and Affectionate."
91. They said, "O Shu'ayb, we do not understand much of what you say, and indeed, we consider you among us as weak. And if not for your family, we would have stoned you [to death]; and you are not to us one respected."
92. He said, "O my people, is my family more respected for power by you than God? But you put Him behind your backs [in neglect]. Indeed, my Lord is encompassing of what you do.
93. And O my people, work according to your position; indeed, I am working. You are going to know to whom will come a punishment that will disgrace him and who is a liar. So watch; indeed, I am with you a watcher, [awaiting the outcome]."
94. And when Our command came, We saved Shu'ayb and those who believed with him, by mercy from Us. And the shriek seized those who had wronged, and they became within their homes [corpses] fallen prone
95. As if they had never prospered therein. Then, away with Madyan as Thamūd was taken away.
96. And We did certainly send Moses with Our signs and a clear authority
97. To Pharaoh and his establishment, but they followed the command of Pharaoh, and the command of Pharaoh was not [at all] discerning.

⁵²⁵ This is a sarcastic description implying the opposite.

⁵²⁶ The conclusion of the sentence is estimated as "...would it not be my duty to warn you against corruption and disobedience?"

⁵²⁷ i.e., I turn to God frequently in supplication and repentance.

98. He will precede his people on the Day of Resurrection and lead them into the Fire; and wretched is the place to which they are led.
99. And they were followed in this [world] with a curse and on the Day of Resurrection. And wretched is the gift⁵²⁸ which is given.
100. That is from the news of the cities, which We relate to you; of them, some are [still] standing and some are [as] a harvest [mowed down].⁵²⁹
101. And We did not wrong them, but they wronged themselves. And they were not availed at all by their gods which they invoked other than God when there came the command of your Lord. And they did not increase them in other than ruin.
102. And thus is the seizure of your Lord when He seizes the cities while they are committing wrong. Indeed, His seizure is painful and severe.
103. Indeed in that is a sign for those who fear the punishment of the Hereafter. That is a Day for which the people will be collected, and that is a Day [which will be] witnessed.
104. And We do not delay it except for a limited term.
105. The Day it comes no soul will speak except by His permission. And among them will be the wretched and the prosperous.
106. As for those who were [destined to be] wretched, they will be in the Fire. For them therein is [violent] exhaling and inhaling.⁵³⁰
107. [They will be] abiding therein as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except what your Lord should will. Indeed, your Lord is an effecter of what He intends.
108. And as for those who were [destined to be] prosperous, they will be in Paradise, abiding therein as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except what your Lord should will - a bestowal uninterrupted.
109. So do not be in doubt, [O Muhammad], as to what these [polytheists] are worshipping. They worship not except as their fathers worshipped before. And indeed, We will give them their share undiminished.
110. And We had certainly given Moses the Scripture, but it came under disagreement. And if not for a word⁵³¹ that preceded from your Lord, it would have been judged between them. And indeed they are, concerning it [i.e., the Qur'ān], in disquieting doubt.
111. And indeed, each [of the believers and disbelievers] - your Lord will fully compensate them for their deeds. Indeed, He is Acquainted with what they do.
112. So remain on a right course as you have been commanded, [you] and those who have turned back with you [to God],

⁵²⁸ i.e., the curse which follows them in both worlds.

⁵²⁹ Their structures have been completely destroyed.

⁵³⁰ i.e., their sighs and sobs, resembling the bray of a donkey.

⁵³¹ See footnote to 10:19.

- and do not transgress. Indeed, He is Seeing of what you do.
113. And do not incline toward those who do wrong, lest you be touched by the Fire, and you would not have other than God any protectors; then you would not be helped.
114. And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds. That is a reminder for those who remember.
115. And be patient, for indeed, God does not allow to be lost the reward of those who do good.
116. So why were there not⁵³² among the generations before you those of enduring discrimination forbidding corruption on earth - except a few of those We saved from among them? But those who wronged pursued what luxury they were given therein, and they were criminals.
117. And your Lord would not have destroyed the cities unjustly while their people were reformers.
118. And if your Lord had willed, He could have made mankind one community; but they will not cease to differ,
119. Except whom your Lord has given mercy, and for that He created them. But the word of your Lord is to be fulfilled that, "I will surely fill Hell with jinn and men all together."
120. And each [story] We relate to you from the news of the messengers is that by which We make firm your heart. And
- there has come to you, in this, the truth and an instruction and a reminder for the believers.
121. And say to those who do not believe, "Work according to your position; indeed, we are working.
122. And wait, indeed, we are waiting."
123. And to God belong the unseen [aspects] of the heavens and the earth and to Him will be returned the matter, all of it, so worship Him and rely upon Him. And your Lord is not unaware of that which you do.

⁵³² Meaning "if only there had been..."