STORIES FROM THE QURAN

The companions of the garden

Activities Included

Ummi

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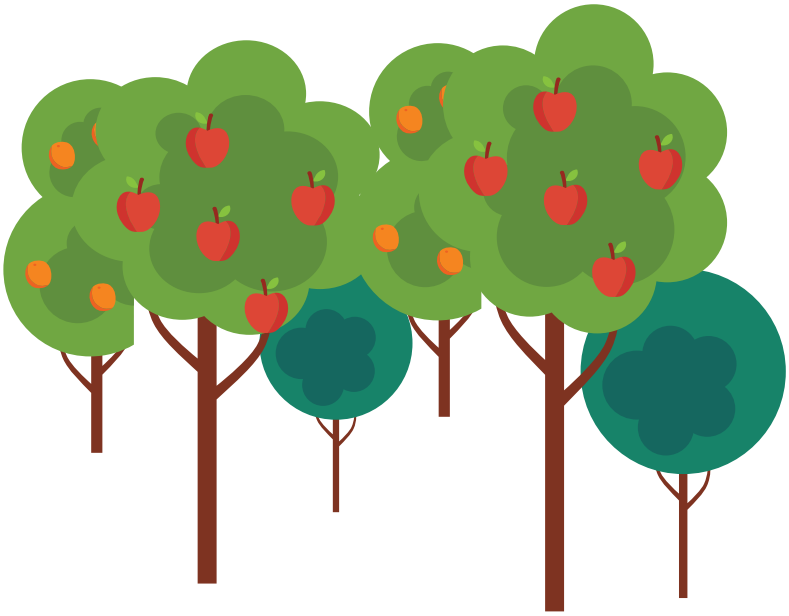
“Indeed, We have tried them as We tried the companions of the garden, when they swore to cut its fruit in the [early] morning. Without saying: Insha′ Allah (If Allah wills). So there came upon the garden an affliction from your Lord while they were asleep.”
(Al-Qalam : 68, 17-19)

The companions or people of the garden were partners who owned a garden (of fruits). When their garden bore its fruits and its trees blossomed, and the time for harvest came, they thought that they were in control of their garden and therefore nothing could prevent them from harvesting the fruits. So, they vowed and swore one night that they would surely harvest it in the morning. But, they did not invoke Allah's will by saying "insha-Allah" (if Allah wills).



While they were asleep that night and were completely unaware a punishment from Allah visited their garden, destroying and devastating it.

Their garden became like a pitch dark night by the morning. Its trees and fruits were ruined. In the morning, they called on one another saying, "Go to your farmland (garden) if you want to pluck the fruits!"

And it is He Who produces gardens trellised and untrellised, and datepalms, and crops of different shape and taste (its fruits and its seeds) and olives, and pomegranates, similar (in kind) and different (in taste). Eat of their fruit when they ripen, but pay the due thereof (its Zakat, according to Allah's Orders) on the day of its harvest, and waste not by extravagance. Verily, He likes not Al-Musrifun (those who waste by extravagance),
(Al-An'am, 6:141)

Allah has made it obligatory to give charity to poor people on the day of its harvest. However, people of the garden wanted to prevent the poor from this right of theirs. So, they departed from their houses to harvest very early in the morning before other people were awake. On their way to the garden they spoke among themselves in secret low tones so that the poor would not hear them. They went to their garden with a hardness in their heart and lack of mercy for the poor. They thought that they had the power to do what they planned.

When they reached their garden and saw it as pitch dark they thought that they had lost their way and entered another garden. They couldn't believe that it was their own garden. However, they then realised that it was their very own garden and that Allah had deprived them from its fruits as a punishment!

Allah commands us to say "insha-Allah" only when we plan to do something that which is allowed or permissible in Islam or when we plan to do something good. Saying "insha-Allah" when planning to sin is not permissible and is an evil thing to do. So, the people of the garden should have said "insha-Allah" for harvesting the fruits not for depriving the poor from the fruits. However, they did not say it when planning to harvest the fruits and they also planned to prevent the poor from the fruits.

The people of the garden soon regretted their actions and asked for Allah's forgiveness and favor.

They said, "Glory be to our Lord! Indeed, we were wrongdoers." Then they approached one another, blaming each other. They said, "O woe to us; indeed we were transgressors. We hope that our Lord will give us in exchange a better (garden) than this. Truly, we turn to our Lord (wishing for good that He may forgive our sins, and reward us in the Hereafter)."
(Al-Qalam, 68: 29-32)

However, the punishment of Allah had already befallen them. But if they were sincere in their repentance then Allah must have surely given them what they asked for and will protect them from the punishment of the Hereafter which is severe than the punishment in this world. The garden that people of garden asked from Allah in exchange could be the garden in this worldly life or they meant the garden of Paradise in the Hereafter. Allah knows best what they meant and will give them what they desired if their repentance was sincere as He is the Acceptor of Repentance, The Most Merciful and Most Appreciative of His slaves.

Comprehension questions

★ What did Allah make obligatory on the owners of garden on the day of harvest?

_____

★ Why did companions of the garden plan to go very early in the morning and speak in low tones?

_____

_____

★ What does insha-Allah mean?

_____

★ When should we invoke Allah's will?

_____

_____

★ Why is it important to say InshaAllah?

_____

★ How did Allah punish the owners of the garden?

_____

★ What were the sins of the owners of the garden?

_____

_____

★ What would have saved them from Allah's punishment?

_____

_____

Activity

Are the folowing statements true or false?

1. We become poor when we give charity from our possessions. _____

2. We should say insha-Allah when planning to do something good. _____

3. Human beings are in control of everything. _____

4. Allah blesses a thing when we share it. _____

5. Allah punishes the arrogant people by sometimes taking away the blessings they are arrogant about. _____

6. Allah is unaware of the plans we make secretly. _____

7. Allah forgives His slaves when they sincerely repent to Him. _____

8. The punishment of the Hereafter is less severe than the punishment of this world. _____

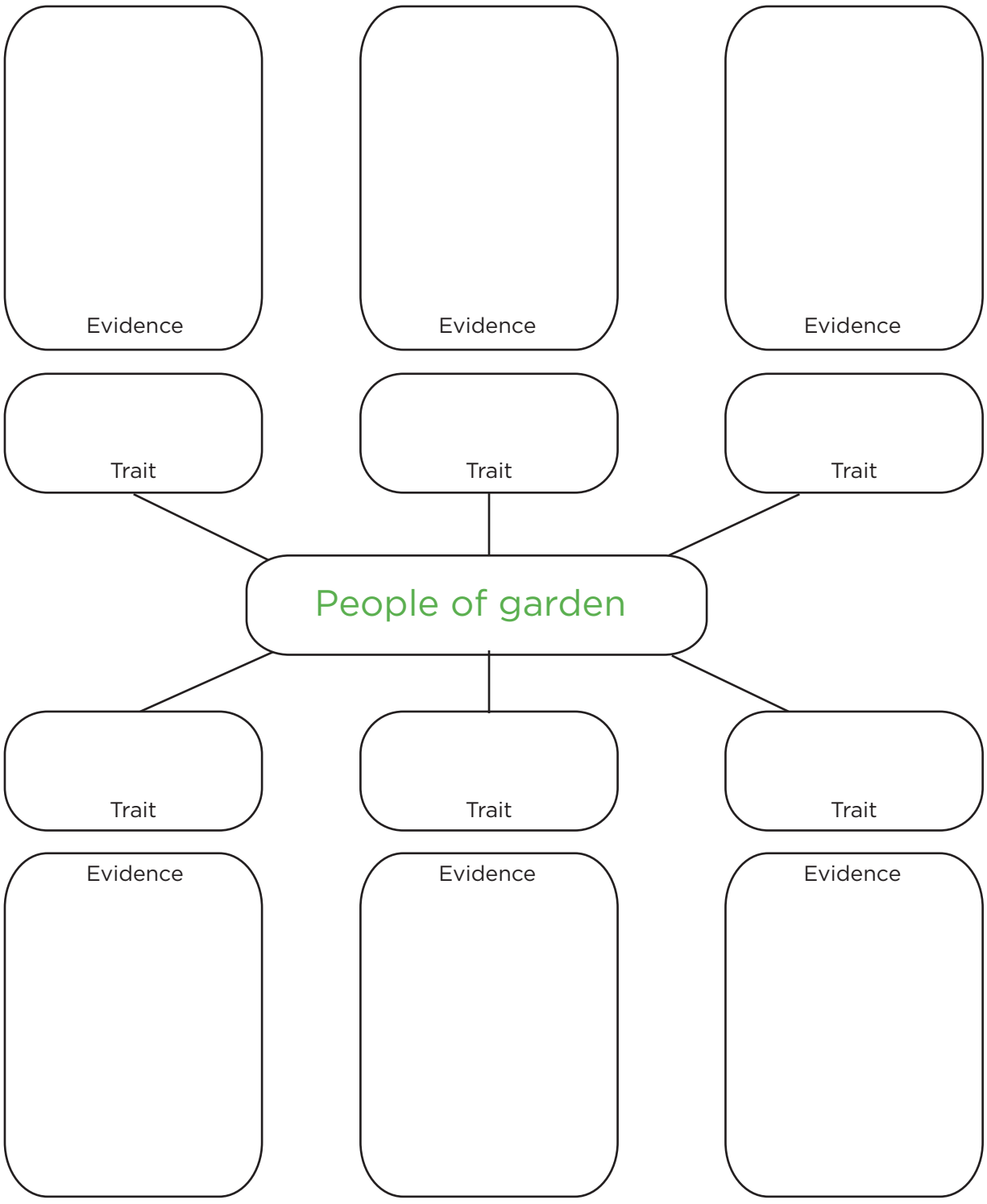
9. It is enough for us to plan things to make it happen. _____

10. We can stop Allah's punishment from reaching us. _____

Activity

Make a mind map of the traits of the people of garden.

List the traits they showed before the punishment as well as after the punishment, good and bad. Traits are adjectives that describe a person such as patient, jealous, honesty, etc.. Make sure to give evidence from the text for each trait you mention.



Acknowledgement

All praise and thanks are for Allah Alone

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