The People of Saturday

Have you heard about the *Ashaab As-Sabt* - the people of Saturday? They were from the Bani Israel (children of Israel) and had asked Allah (swt) to give them a day when they would leave their worldly affairs and devote themselves to worshipping their Creator. So Allah (swt) assigned them the Sabbath - Saturday.

Do you know how Allah (swt) tested them? Since they were fishermen, all week long they would go fishing but were barely able to catch any fish. However, on Saturdays, when they were required to put aside their activities, the fish would come in abundance!

[And ask them (O Muhammad (pbuh)) about the town that was by the sea; when they transgressed in the matter of the Sabbath (i.e. Saturday): when their fish came to them openly on the Sabbath day, and did not come to them on the day they had no Sabbath. Thus We made a trial of them for they used to rebel against Allah's Command (disobey Allah)]
(Suarh Al A'raf 7: Verse163)

The result was that the people divided into three groups:

One group devised a scheme to bypass Allah (swt)'s commandment. They would put out their fishing nets on Friday, and then on Sunday they would come and pick the nets up. Now all of Saturday fish would be caught. The rest of the townsfolk divided into 2 groups when they saw the grave evil and sin this group was doing.

The second group tried to advise the wrong doers and warn them of horrific consequences of their action. Thus, commanding the good and forbidding the evil.

The third group, however, felt they had no responsibility for what was taking place, so they went about minding their own business, believing that Allah (swt) would eventually destroy the sinners. They would say to the group which tried to warn the first group,
"Why do you preach to a people whom Allâh is about to destroy or to punish with a severe torment?"
Do you know what the preachers said? "(The preachers) said:

"In order to be free from guilt before your Lord (Allâh), and perhaps they may fear Allâh."] 7/164

Thus, we see that they had 2 reasons:

One - that we would be pardoned before Allah because we tried to stop them from doing wrong.

Two - that perhaps they may hear the reminder and turn back to Allah.

And when Allah's punishment came on this city, do you know who survived?
Yes, it was the group that neither broke Allah's commands, and also told others not to.
What was the punishment? The two groups were turned into monkeys and pigs!

[So when they forgot the reminders that had been given to them, We rescued those who forbade evil, but We seized those who did wrong with a severe torment because they used to rebel against Allah's Command(disobey Allâh).So when they exceeded the limits of what they were prohibited, We said to them: "Be you monkeys, despised and rejected."] 7/165- 166