

NABIE SHU'AIB AS*

*(We must always say Alayhis Salaam when we mention the name of a Prophet. It means, "May ALLAH - Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala's blessing and mercy be on him")

Story Number
19

My Dear Children,

In the 18th issue of Al Mujaddid we read the wonderful story of Nabie Aiyub (Job-Alayhis Salaam). He set a very good example for us in Iman (Faith, Belief) in ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala). When he lost all his worldly possessions (cattle, sheep, camels), suffered a terrible disease and even lost all his friends he still believed firmly in ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) and was very sincere and always accepted the Creator as the Most Merciful ONE. It is through his strong Iman, patience and the bounty of the Creator that he regained all his wealth and even became richer than before. He never stopped saying, "Alhamdoelillah" (praises to ALLAH- Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala).

Today we are going to give you another great lesson for all of us to read and practice in our lives. These stories are from the Glorious Qur'an and they set a very good example for us to follow so that we can become better Muslims in this world and also achieve our closeness to HIM in the Aakhirah –Inshallah (Hereafter – if ALLAH -Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala- wills).

NABI SHU'AIB (ALAYHIS SALAAM)

Nabi Shu'aib (Alayhis Salaam) was the descendent of Nabi Ebrahim (Alayhis Salaam). He also lived during the time of Nabi Yusuf (Alayhis Salaam). His people were known as the Midianites and they were nomads wondering from place to place. The area they were in was north-east of the Dead Sea. After a number of years some of the Midianites started getting tired of moving from place to place. They decided to settle down in a stony desert place called Madyan, west of the Dead Sea. The city of Madyan started becoming a busy commercial place as it was situated on the highway between Egypt, Assyria (northern portion of Iraq) and Babylon. It became a very flourishing city and the Midianites became rich and well to do people. Many of them owned more than one property and lived very lavishly.

THE EVIL WAYS OF THE PEOPLE

Everyone in the city had enough to eat and they lived in luxury and soon got into the habit of wanting more and more. This greed grew greater and they wanted to have more than their neighbours. They became corrupt in their ways and did not know what was good and bad anymore. Some of them became dishonest people and started cheating whenever they had the opportunity. They always tried to give their customers less in weight and less in measures. All kinds of fraud were committed and cheating became a practice in their daily lives. Others became robbers who would stop the travelers on the roads and forcefully take all their valuables. Cheating, lying, fighting, dishonesty and all sorts of unfair practices became part of the living of the Midianites as they wanted to become rich quickly. They soon started disrespecting their religion of believing in ONE GOD when they used money that they obtained illegally for the purposes of their places of worship. It was not long when they reached a stage where they stopped the weak and pious ones from praying and worshipping the ONE GOD.

ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) became very disappointed with these people and through his mercy HE appointed Shu'aib as a Prophet to the Midianites to save them from the punishments of the Hereafter. Although Shu'aib was one of the Midianites, he was honest, truthful and always helped the poor and the weak. He was also very pious and followed in his forefather's footsteps by praying to the ONE and ONLY GOD.

PROPHET, NABI SHU'AIB (ALAYHIS SALAAM) IS APPOINTED AS PROPHET

As soon as he was appointed as a Prophet, Nabi Shu'aib (Alayhis Salaam) gathered his people and said to them: "O my people! Worship non other than the ONE GOD. It has come to me in clear signs from our LORD that all of you must give correct measures and weights, not to take what belongs to the people and not to make any mischief on this earth. O my people listen to this message and take heed, as it is the best

for the believers. Do not sit and wait on every road threatening the travelers and taking their belongings. And also do not stop the people from following the path of ALLAH.” (refer to Qur’an 7:85, 86). The people heard him but did not concern themselves with this message he brought from the LORD. Some of them walked away while others got irritated and angry at Nabi Shu’aib for trying to interfere with their good life and all the extravagant comforts that they were enjoying.

PEOPLE REFUSED TO LISTEN TO HIS MESSAGE

On another occasion when Nabi Shu’aib addressed his people he again delivered the same message. He went on to remind them; “O my people remember what happened to the all the evil people of Nabi Loot (Alayhis Salaam) not so long ago and not so far from here. Then there were the tribes of AD and Thumud who were also wiped out by the LORD for not following the path of ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta’ala) and who were engaged in all the evil practices of the disbelievers.”

Again the people did not accept his message and the arrogant leaders showed their anger and pointing a stern finger at Nabi Shu’aib they shouted abuses at him and said: “O Shu’aib we shall certainly drive you out of our city. We will also drive out all those people who follow you. We will not take this action if you stop talking about your madness and return to the religion of our fathers.” (Qur’an 7:88)

When Nabi Shu’aib heard these threatening words he informed them: “I will never return to your religion and I will never turn my face away from ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta’ala) WHO is Al-‘Alim (the All-Knower) of everything.” (Qur’an 7:89)

THE BELIEVERS WERE TORTURED

The crooked leaders then turned to the people and informed them: “O people do not follow Shu’aib and his insane message. If you follow him you will lose everything that you own and be ruined. Listen to us we are powerful as we have money, own a lot of properties and have all that we require to live well.” (Qur’an 7:90) They went on to say: “O Shu’aib don’t you see that we have all the power and influence and you are only a poor teacher. It is only because of your family we are stopped from stoning you to death or throwing you in prison. You must thank us for our kindness and not come here and tell us how to live our lives and spoil everything for us.”

When Nabi Shu’aib heard what the conceited and proud people had to say he informed them once more of the message of the LORD and left them with these words: “O people of Madyan! I did indeed convey to you the message sent to me by my LORD. I gave you good advice and I will not feel sorry for you who refuse to believe in the ONE GOD.” (Qur’an 7:93)

With these words he and the few believers walked away from the city of Madyan as they did not want to be part of the evil ways of the people.

THE EARTHQUAKE

That night without any warning a severe earthquake suddenly struck this city and before the people realised what was happening or even had an idea to gather all their wealth and belongings, their luxurious houses collapsed on them and were buried under them. The earth opened up and swallowed the people, their money, their beautiful houses and all their treasures. In the morning there was no sign of the city of Madyan as everything was flattened to the ground and leveled out. They were completely wiped out as if the city of Madyan never existed.

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LESSONS FOR US

The lessons of Nabi Shu'aib (AS) to his people still applies in our lives today. We need to follow all the commandments from ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala). Here are some reminders for us:

- Nabi Shu'aib indicated that he would not feel sorry or lament for his people as they were given the message from the Lord but did not follow it. When people become attached to their worldly possessions (money, property) they become deaf to the commandments of the Glorious Qur'an, they cannot see as their eyes are concealed behind a screen and they cannot feel as their hearts are wrapped in heavy veils
- Once Nabi Shu'aib received the truth from the LORD he followed the message regardless of the threats of bodily harm or expulsion from the city. It would have been easier for him to go back to the religion of his community as he would have been safe and the people would not trouble him or make his life miserable.
- We must not cheat in our dealings with people. We must not give short in our weights and measures. Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "When you receive what you buy by measure let it be the exact full measure. If you are the seller, you have to measure and if you are the buyer then let the seller measure for you." (Al-Bukhari Vol 3:336)
- When two people enter into a business agreement they have to speak the truth and make everything clear for this transaction to be blessed and successful.
- When you deliver the commandment of ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) you need to follow it yourself for the Glorious Qur'an says: "Do you request the right conduct on the people and forget (to practice it) yourselves. And yet you study the Qur'an? Will you not understand? (Qur'an 2:44) The Hadeeth further emphasises this aspect: "A man will be brought and put in hell and he will circumambulate in hell like a donkey going round a grinding mill, and all the people of hell will gather around him and will say to him: 'O so and so! Didn't you order others to do good and forbid evil?' That man will say: "I used to order others to do good but I never used to do it, and I used to forbid others from evil while I use to do evil." (Al-Bukhari Vol 9:218)