

## 6. The Ethos Of Prophet Saleh

### Introduction

Prophet Saleh was son of Jaben son of Thamud, son of Amer, son of Eram, son of Sam, son of Nuh, who was born 2973 years after the fall of Adam. He was of high stature, broad-shouldered and eloquent, His hair was black and his cheeks rosy. He was bare-footed and preaching people most of the time. He was engaged in business when he was free preach. He was known as a pious man in youth.

When Saleh was appointed as Prophet, he started guiding people. After some time, a small group of people followed him and the rest called for a miracle saying: Bring out of mountain a pregnant camel which will deliver a young immediately. Saleh accepted and went to mountainside along with the people invoking God to show His sign. All of a sudden, the mountain moaned and from it a pregnant she-camel came out, giving birth to a young too. Nevertheless, they did not believe. Saleh said:

***"This is a she-camel; she shall have her portion of water, and you have your portion of water on an appointed time." (26: 155).***

هَذِهِ نَاقَةٌ لَهَا شِرْبٌ وَلَكُمْ شِرْبُ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ

Saheh's she-camel horrified other animals in each pasture she entered making them to stop eating hence becoming thin. A group of adversaries by resorting to tricks slew the she-camel and her young fled towards mountain. Some people came to Saleh seeking a solution. Saleh said: Bring the young camel here. By seeing Saleh, the young camel cried three times: O Saleh! Where is Mother? and disappeared.

***Saleh said: "Enjoy yourselves in your abode for three days, that is a promise not to be belied." (11:65)***

فَقَالَ تَمَتَّعُوا فِي دَارِكُمْ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ ذَلِكَ وَعْدٌ غَيْرُ مَكْذُوبٍ

**And eventually, the torment descended: "Then the earthquake overtook them, so they became motionless bodies in their abode." (7:77)**

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دَارِهِمْ جَائِمِينَ

Saleh lived for 280 years and was buried between Rukn and Maqam in the holy House of God. (Ka'ba)

## Propagating The Message Of God

**"And I do not ask you any reward for it; my reward is only with the lord of the worlds." (the 26: 145)**

وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

## The Best Argumentor

It has been reported on the authority of Imam Baqer that the holy Prophet(S) asked Gabriel: What was the reason behind the ruin of Saleh's people? Gabriel said: O Muhammad! Saleh was appointed at the age of 16 and was among people up to the age of 120 but no one responded him positively. They had seventy idols which they worshipped besides Allah.

Seeing this, Saleh said: I was appointed as Prophet to you at the age of 16 and I am now at the age of 120. I offer you two proposals. If you desire anything, ask me so that I will ask God to fulfill your desire. Or if you wish, I will ask your gods to fulfill a desire. If they fulfilled my desire, I will depart from among you. Then none of us will be offended. They said: O Saleh! You are fair. Be prepared for it.

عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَلِيِّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ سَأَلَ جِبْرَائِيلَ كَيْفَ كَانَ مَهْلِكُ قَوْمِ صَالِحٍ؟ فَقَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ إِنْ صَالِحًا بَعَثَ إِلَى قَوْمِهِ وَهُوَ ابْنُ سِتِّ عَشْرٍ سَنَةً، فَلَبِثَ فِيهِمْ حَتَّى بَلَغَ عَشْرِينَ وَمِئَةَ سَنَةٍ لَا يُجِيبُونَهُ إِلَى خَيْرٍ، قَالَ وَكَانَ لَهُمْ سَبْعُونَ صَنَمًا يَعْبُدُونَهَا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَلَمَّا رَأَى ذَلِكَ مِنْهُمْ قَالَ: يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي قَدْ بَعَثْتُ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنَا ابْنُ سِتِّ عَشْرٍ سَنَةً وَقَدْ بَلَغْتُ عَشْرِينَ وَمِئَةَ سَنَةٍ وَأَنَا أَعْرِضُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَمْرَيْنِ: إِنْ شِئْتُمْ فَاسْأَلُونِي حَتَّى أَسْأَلَ إِلَهِي فَيُجِيبَكُمْ فِيمَا تَسْأَلُونِي وَإِنْ شِئْتُمْ سَأَلْتُ إِلَهَتَكُمْ، فَإِنْ أَجَابَتْنِي بِالَّذِي أَسْأَلُهَا خَرَجْتُ عَنْكُمْ فَقَدْ شَانَتْكُمْ وَشَانَتْمُونِي. فَقَالُوا قَدْ أَنْصَفْتَ يَا صَالِحَ

They left the city with their idols on their backs. When they were free eating and drinking, they said: O Saleh! Ask whatever you wish. Saleh said: What is the name of the big idol? They said the name. Saleh called the idol by name but there was no answer. Saleh said: Why it does not answer? They said: call other idols besides it. Saleh called other idols by name but there was no answer. Saleh said: O people! Did you see that I called all the idols but they did not answer? Now you ask me something so that I will

ask God to answer right away and fulfill your desire. They came to their idols saying: Why don't you answer Saleh? They did not answer.

فَأْتَعِدُوا الْيَوْمَ يَخْرُجُونَ فِيهِ، قَالَ فَخَرَجُوا بِأَصْنَامِهِمْ إِلَى ظَهْرِهِمْ ثُمَّ قَرَّبُوا طَعَامَهُمْ وَشَرَابَهُمْ فَأَكَلُوا وَشَرَبُوا، فَلَمَّا أَنْ فَرَعُوا دَعْوَهُ فَقَالُوا؟ يَا صَالِحُ سَلْ، فَدَعَا صَالِحٌ كَبِيرَ أَصْنَامِهِمْ فَقَالَ: مَا اسْمُ هَذَا؟ فَأَخْبَرُوهُ بِاسْمِهِ، فَنَادَاهُ بِاسْمِهِ فَلَمْ يُجِبْ فَقَالَ صَالِحٌ: مَالَهُ لَا يُجِيبُ؟ فَقَالُوا لَهُ ادْعُ غَيْرَهُ، فَدَعَاهَا كُلَّهَا بِأَسْمَائِهَا فَلَمْ يُجِيبْهُ وَاحِدٌ مِنْهُمْ

Then they said: O Saleh! Take a distance from us so that we will call our idols. They threw away the carpets and vessels they had with them wallowing in the dust. They said: O idols! If you do not answer Saleh, we will be disgraced. Then, they asked Saleh to ask idols again but there was no answer. They said: Saleh wishes you to answer him and speak.

فَقَالَ يَا قَوْمِ تَرَوْنَ قَدْ دَعَوْتُ أَصْنَامَكُمْ فَلَمْ يُجِيبْنِي وَاحِدٌ مِنْهُمْ فَاسْأَلُونِي حَتَّى ادْعُوا إِلَهِي فَيُجِيبَكُمْ السَّاعَةَ

فَأَقْبَلُوا عَلَى أَصْنَامِهِمْ فَقَالُوا لَهَا: مَا بِالْكَفِّ لَا تُجِيبَن صَالِحًا؟ فَلَمْ تُجِبْ، فَقَالُوا: يَا صَالِحُ تَنَحَّ عَنَّا وَدَعْنَا وَأَصْنَامَنَا قَلِيلًا، قَالَ: فَرَمُوا بِتِلْكَ الْبَسِطِ الَّتِي بَسَطُوهَا، وَبِتِلْكَ الْإِنْبِيَةِ وَتَمَرَّعُوا فِي التُّرَابِ وَقَالُوا لَهَا: لَنْ لَمْ تُجِيبَن صَالِحًا الْيَوْمَ لَنَفْضَحَنَّ، ثُمَّ دَعَوْهُ فَقَالُوا: يَا صَالِحُ تَعَالَ فَسَلْهَا، فَعَادَ فَسَأَلَهَا فَلَمْ تُجِيبْهُ، فَقَالُوا: إِنَّمَا أَرَادَ صَالِحٌ أَنْ تُجِيبَهُ وَتُكَلِّمَهُ بِالْجَوَابِ

Saleh said: O people! the day is over but your gods do not answer. Now you ask me so that I will call my God and He will answer you right away. Seventy of their chiefs asked idols to speak but there was no answer. Eventually, they said: O Saleh! We ask you something and if your Lord answers, we will follow you and all the people in the village will follow you too.

قَالَ: فَقَالَ: يَا قَوْمِ هُوَ ذَا، تَرَوْنَ قَدْ ذَهَبَ النَّهَارُ وَلَا أَرَى إِلَهَتِكُمْ تُجِيبَنِي فَاسْأَلُونِي حَتَّى ادْعُوا إِلَهِي فَيُجِيبَكُمْ السَّاعَةَ. قَالَ فَاذْتَدَبَ لَهُ سَبْعُونَ رَجُلًا مِنْ كِبَرَائِهِمْ وَعُظْمَائِهِمْ وَالْمَنْظُورِ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْهُمْ فَقَالُوا: يَا صَالِحُ نَحْنُ نَسْأَلُكَ، قَالَ: فَكُلُّ هَؤُلَاءِ يَرْضَوْنَ بِكُمْ؟ قَالُوا نَعَمْ فَإِنْ أَجَابَكَ هَؤُلَاءِ أَجَبْنَاكَ

قَالُوا: يَا صَالِحُ نَحْنُ نَسْأَلُكَ فَإِنْ أَجَابَكَ رَبُّكَ اتَّبَعْنَاكَ وَأَجَبْنَاكَ وَتَابَعَكَ جَمِيعُ أَهْلِ قَرْيَتِنَا

Saleh said: Ask me whatever you wish. They said: Let us go to the nearby mountain so that we will ask you what we wish there. When they reached the mountain, they said: O Saleh! Ask your Lord to bring out from this mountain a red, pure and pregnant she-camel right now. Saleh said: You have asked me something too hard for me yet so easy for my Lord. Then, he asked God what they had demanded. At this moment, the mountain cleaved and people were about to go mad when a horrible sound was heard.

فَقَالَ لَهُمْ صَالِحٌ سَلُونِي مَا شِئْتُمْ، فَقَالُوا: انْطَلِقْ بِنَا إِلَى هَذَا الْجَبَلِ - وَجِبَلٌ قَرِيبٌ مِنْهُ - حَتَّى نَسْأَلَكَ عِنْدَهُ، قَالَ: فَانْطَلِقْ وَانْطَلِقُوا مَعَهُ فَلَمَّا انْتَهَوْا إِلَى الْجَبَلِ قَالُوا: يَا صَالِحُ اسْأَلْ رَبَّكَ أَنْ يُخْرِجَ لَنَا السَّاعَةَ مِنْ هَذَا الْجَبَلِ نَاقَةً حَمْرَاءَ شَفْرَاءَ وَبِرَاءَ عَشْرَاءَ - .... قَالَ قَدْ سَأَلْتُمُونِي شَيْئًا يَعْظُمُ عَلَيَّ وَيُهَوِّنُ عَلَيَّ رَبِّي فَسَأَلَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ فَانْصَدَعَ الْجَبَلُ صَدْعًا كَادَتْ تَطِيرُ مِنْهُ الْعُقُولُ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا صَوْتَهُ

Like a woman in travail, the mountain became upset and abruptly the head of the she-camel and then other parts came out of the mountain standing on its four legs. Seeing this, the people said: How quickly your Lord answered our prayer! Therefore ask Him to give us its young too. Saleh asked God again and a young camel with new hair dropped from the she-camel. Saleh said: O people! Do you wish anything else? They said: No! Let us go to our people so as to inform them of what we have seen.

قَالَ: وَاضْطَرَبَ الْجَبَلُ كَمَا تَضْطَرِبُ الْمَرْأَةُ عِنْدَ الْمَخَاضِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَفْجَأْهُمْ إِلَّا وَرَأْسُهَا قَدْ طَلَعَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ ذَلِكَ الصَّدْعِ، فَلَمَّا اسْتَتَمَّتْ رَقَبَتَهَا حَتَّى اجْتَرَّتْ ثُمَّ خَرَجَ سَائِرُ جَسَدِهَا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَتْ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ قَائِمَةً، فَلَمَّا رَأَوْا ذَلِكَ قَالُوا: يَا صَالِحُ مَا أَسْرَعُ مَا أَجَابَكَ رَبُّكَ فَسَلْهَا أَنْ يُخْرِجَ لَنَا فَصِيلَهَا، قَالَ: فَسَأَلَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى ذَلِكَ فَرَمَتْ بِهِ قَدْبًا حَوْلَهَا

فَقَالَ: يَا قَوْمِ أَبْقِي شَيْءًا؟ قَالُوا: لَا انْطَلِقْ بِنَا إِلَى قَوْمِنَا نُخْبِرُهُمْ مَا رَأَيْنَا وَيُؤْمِنُوا بِكَ

When the chiefs returned, their argument heated. Out of seventy only six of them did not change their mind saying what they have seen and what Saleh has brought was true. Sixty-four denied (covered) the truth saying it was no more than enchant. And one of the six chiefs who believed first changed his mind and was one of those who hamstrung the she-camel.

قَالَ: فَارْجِعُوا فَلَمْ يَبْلُغِ السَّبْعُونَ الرَّجُلَ إِلَيْهِمْ حَتَّى ارْتَدَّ مِنْهُمْ أَرْبَعَةٌ وَسِتُونَ رَجُلًا وَقَالُوا: سِحْرٌ وَتَبَنَّتِ السِّتَّةُ وَقَالُوا: الْحَقُّ مَا رَأَيْنَا قَالَ: فَكَثَرَ كَلَامُ الْقَوْمِ وَارْجَعُوا مُكْذِبِينَ ثُمَّ ارْتَابَ مِنَ السِّتَّةِ وَاحِدٌ فَكَانَ فِيمَنْ عَقَرَهَا

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