

NABI MOOSA (AS*) PART 1

*(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
20

My Dear Children,

In the last issue of Al Mujaddid we related the wonderful example of the life of Nabi Shu'aib (Alayhis Salaam). Reading his lessons in life gave us a reminder to follow the path that ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) has given us in the Glorious Qur'an. Some of the messages he brought to us were: Not to cheat people when dealing with them; to remain firm in belief even if people threaten to throw you out of the city; when people become attached to their worldly possessions they become deaf to the commandments of the Creator; and you must set the example before you preach to others. May ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) be pleased with him and open our hearts to follow his lessons for us.

In this issue we are going to tell you about Nabi Moosa (Moses -Alayhis Salaam). Moses was not only a Prophet sent to the Hebrew speaking people (Israelites) but also one of the great Messengers sent to all mankind. We Muslims also believe in his message. His name has been mentioned 50 times in the Glorious Qur'an so that we, too, can follow the beautiful way of life of this Messenger. We have indicated the various references to the Qur'an in brackets of the events of this story for you to refer to. A number of Muslims read these lessons regularly and even students use them as text in the madressa when they learn to read Arabic. It has now become very important for us not only to read the Arabic but to understand these examples in order to live by them and make them part of our life here on earth. It is rather a long and beautiful experience of Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam) and we will have to break it up into three series. Here is the first one.

NABI MOOSA (alayhis salaam) IS BORN

Moosa was born in Egypt some 450 years after Nabi Yusuf (Alayhis Salaam- remembering the history of this Prophet will provide us some background to this incident). When he was born, Ramses II, a Pharaoh, was ruling Egypt. Ramses II who was a pagan and did not believe in One God, feared that one day the Hebrew people would become so strong and powerful and rule Egypt. It was for this reason that he ill-treated the Hebrew people who were living there. He was unkind and very cruel to them. He kept them in camps and enslaved them to do all the hard work. He even ordered the midwives to kill all the baby boys born to the Hebrew women. As some of the women had their babies without the help of a midwife he discovered that this method was not working. Ramses II then ordered his soldiers to get hold of all the baby boys born to the Hebrew women and drown them in the Nile River, which was flowing through Egypt.

BABY MOOSA IS IN DANGER

When Moosa was born his mother became very concerned about his safety. She had this great fear that the soldiers will come one day and take Moosa away from her and toss him in the Nile River. After 3 months of carefully hiding him his mother realised that he will soon be discovered and the soldiers will be knocking on her door soon. She started praying for his safety and asked ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) to help her save her son. One night she received an inspiration from the Creator (Qur'an 20:38) to weave a basket from the reeds which would be big enough to hold him.

After hurriedly completing the basket the grieving and heartbroken mother placed Moosa in the basket and left him to float down the river with full confidence that he will be under the protection of the Creator (20:39). She asked her daughter, Mariam, to secretly follow the basket from a distance while it was floating downstream. This basket floated down this huge river and eventually entered the stream leading to the garden of the Pharaoh. The Pharaoh's servants spotted this basket and they dragged it out of the water. When they discovered that it had a very handsome and cute baby boy in it they immediately took it to the wife of the Pharaoh. When she saw the baby she immediately loved the baby and begged her husband to keep the baby and adopt it as her own son.

BABY MOOSA IS SAFE

When Ramses II agreed to his wife's request she started making arrangements to look after this lovely boy. The first need was to look for a suitable wet nurse to feed him. When Mariam heard this she appeared on the scene with the news that she knew the right woman who would look after this boy. When the Pharaoh's wife agreed she rushed home and relayed this news to her mother. The mother of Moosa, accompanied by Mariam, immediately left their home and made their way to the Pharaoh's palace. When she arrived there she started feeding the baby without giving them her true identity or what she did to save her baby who was a Hebrew. When the Pharaoh's wife saw how happy the baby was feeding from this woman she engaged her to look after Moosa. In her heart she thanked ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) for accepting her dua where she can still be with her baby and at the same time be safe from the cruel soldiers. Moosa was not only safe and grew up in the lap of his real mother, but was also well looked after, given the best treatment and also allowed to grow up in a very loving environment. True knowledge and wisdom was imparted to Moosa by ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) as a reward for those who are involved in good deeds (28:14).

GROWN MOOSA GETS INTO TROUBLE

He grew up to be a healthy and strong man and was free to go anywhere. One day Moosa slipped into the colony where the Hebrews were kept in camps as slaves. He was shocked to see the conditions that they were living in. Their living conditions were terrible. They did not have proper homes and lacked the basic human facilities of water, cleanliness and a place to eat and sleep. He became sad and very upset at the suffering of these men, women and children who were kept prisoners in this camp for a crime of suspecting them of overthrowing Ramses II. While he was wandering through this camp and learning more and more of the inhuman manner that the soldiers were treating these people he saw an Egyptian soldier mercilessly beating a Hebrew. When Moosa saw this his anger exploded in him and he rushed over to the soldier and punched him with all his might. The force of the blow floored the soldier. He died instantly as he fell over and struck his head on a stone (28:15).

Moosa now realised that the Pharaoh will know that he is a sympathiser of the Hebrews or may even be one of them. It had now become impossible and dangerous for Moosa to stay in the palace or even in Egypt. He was informed by his friends that the chiefs of the palace had a meeting to decide how to deal with him (28:20). He was advised to leave his comfortable house and flee from this country as his life was in danger as. He knew that he did the right thing by taking the part of the weak and defenceless person against an aggressor who was a slave master. He prayed to his Merciful Creator for forgiveness and made a promise to help the powerless against those who were doing wrong (28:17) and also asked for protection from people who are doing wrong (28:21).

The soldiers had their instruction to look for Moosa and hunt him down. They started looking from door to door and going into the homes to search for him. They came to the home of his wet nurse (mother) and knocked on the door. When there was no immediate reply they started banging the door on the verge of breaking it down.

Mariam ran to open the door as she realised that the soldiers will soon break down the door. The soldiers came in and searched the house thoroughly for Moosa. They went into every room and even looked under the beds. As they did not find Moosa they left this home.

MOOSA LEAVES EGYPT

Moosa left Egypt asking for guidance of the Creator for a smooth and straight path. He walked eastwards past the Gulf of Suez. As the Egyptian soldiers will be looking for him he had to get out of the Egyptian territory and also avoid the main route from Egypt to Syria and Palestine. He walked for many days until he eventually reached the homeland of the Madyan Arab people in the Sinai Desert. He could now take it easy as he was out of immediate danger of being caught by the Egyptian soldiers.

He arrived at an oasis and rested in the shade of a palm tree. He watched the shepherds watering their flock. He immediately noticed that while the men were watering their animals, there were two women keeping back their flock for a long time waiting for a turn to water their flock. Moosa walked up to the two women and asked, "What is the matter? Why are you not giving your flock some water? The bashful women answered, "We cannot water our animals until the other shepherds move their flock away from the well.

We do not have the courage and force to tell them to move their animals. And our father is too old to come along and help us” (28:23). Moosa then drew water from the well and watered the flock of the girls. When their flock had enough to drink the women herded their flock towards home. With smiles on their faces and hearts filled with gratitude they thanked him and left (28:24).

When they left, Moosa went back to the shade of the palm tree very happy that he could help someone in need and made dua that ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) must provide him with some comforts of a home and a family that he once had (28:24).

to be continued in the next issue of al mujaddid