

NABI MOOSA (AS*) PART 3

*(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
22

My Dear Children,

In the last 2 issues of Al Mujaddid we read of Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam). In the first issue we read of his birth, the dangers he faced, how he grew up in the comfort of the Pharaoh's palace and because he could not tolerate the injustices of the ruler he killed a soldier and had to flee from the palace and live a life of poverty and hardship. In the second issue we read of his life in the desert, how he got married, his appointment as a Nabi (messenger) with the nine ayat or signs from ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) and also given the mission to return to Egypt and to convince the Pharaoh to believe in the ONE GOD. We see that the Pharaoh did not accept his message and started to show Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam) that he was better than his GOD. One of the main messages he brought was to worship only One GOD and also the punishment and difficulties that one will experience if we stray from this path. Let us look at some of the tasks Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam) had with the Pharaoh when giving him the message. May ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) be pleased with him and open our hearts to follow his great lessons.

MESSAGE GIVEN TO THE PHARAOH

After the Pharaoh heard the beautiful way that Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam) described ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) he became more irritated, angry and he rejected the message to worship the ONE GOD mentioned by the Prophets. Nabi Moosa informed him of the many Ayat (signs) that he was given by the ONE LORD to prove his message. The Pharaoh was keen to see a sign (ayat) that would convince him that he was telling the truth. He drew out his hand and everyone present gasped in amazement and wonder when they saw a pure white hand shining with a brilliance that they had never seen before. Although they all witnessed this power the stubborn Pharaoh was not convinced of the message of Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam).

As magic was very popular and practised widely in Egypt in those days the Pharaoh immediately accused him of practising magic. The chiefs of the palace supported his claim by mentioning that he was an experienced magician (7:109) and had come along with a scheme to push the Pharaoh out of his kingdom and eventually out of Egypt. The Pharaoh was not convinced and refused to set the Israelites free to leave Egypt. It was only Nabi Moosa and Nabi Haroun (Alayhis Salaam) who knew that the ayat they were given was not magic but the power of ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) to try and convince them to the path of truth.

A CONTEST IS ARRANGED

The Pharaoh was advised by his chiefs that these two were ordinary magicians with limited power. The Pharaoh must gather all the best magicians in Egypt together and arrange a day when they will have a contest against the two messengers. The Pharaoh even promised these magicians lots of money and his personal friendship if they could beat the two (7:113,114). The Day of the Temple Festival was selected for this contest. This was the day when the temples and the streets were decorated and everyone was on holiday and in a gay mood to enjoy this celebration. He had informed the two to appear on the steps of the Palace on this day and he also sent out an invitation to all the people of Egypt to gather and see how these messengers would be defeated.

On the day of the Temple Festival the people started to gather early to watch the magicians at work. When Nabi Moosa and Nabi Haroun (Alayhis Salaam) walked towards the palace they

were insulted and jeered at by the people and called all sorts of ugly names. As soon as they appeared on the steps of the palace the famous magician who were going to be handsomely rewarded called out to Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam) to start the contest by throwing first (7:115). When Nabi Moosa invited them to throw first (7:116) the magicians removed their cords, strings and belts around their garments and threw them on the floor. "Ahaa! Hooo! Eeee" was the great fear of terror that went through the crowd when they witnessed that all these items were transformed into snakes of all thickness and size. This spectacle bewitched the people with the power of the magicians.

THE TRUTH PREVAILS

When this noise of amazement and bewilderment settled down, "Throw your rod," (7:117) was the commandment of ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) to Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam). His rod turned into a huge serpent bigger than any of the others thrown by the magicians. This huge serpent started moving to the other smaller snakes started to swallow the magicians' little snakes (or lies), one by one, which were crawling all around the place. This was a great Ayah (sign) from the Creator that the truth will always beat all the false, misleading, tricks and deception of man. When the magicians saw this power of the truth they fell to the ground and prostrated calling out loudly, "We believe in your LORD, the LORD of the worlds. The Lord of Moosa and Haroun" (7:111,112).

The Pharaoh became angry and very upset that he was beaten. He became a raving person when he saw the magicians prostrating and accepting the message of the Oneness of the Creator. He accused them of scheming with the two messengers and wanting to change the people's belief in him to the One GOD (7:123). He shouted, "I did not give you permission to believe in this One GOD (7:123). If you do not get up and stop prostrating I will cut off both your hands and feet and also crucify all of you" (7:124). This threat of the Pharaoh did not drive any fear into those who prostrated for they were convinced and the sign of ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) had finally reached them. They submitted completely to the will of the LORD as Muslims (7:126) for they replied, "If you kill us you will only send us back to our LORD where we came from" (7:125).

KILLING OF ALL MALE BABIES

The Chiefs of the palace also became angry on the defeat they suffered in this contest as well as their power was taken away from them by two ordinary people who were not rich, famous and had no powerful kingdoms. They asked the Pharaoh if he was going to leave Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam) and his followers to cause greater mischief in the land by showing disrespect to him and his gods (7:127). The Pharaoh was more determined to take revenge by enforcing the law of killing all the male babies born to the Israelites and save all their females for the entertainment of the people of the Pharaoh. These disbelievers increased their prosecution of the Israelites and made it unbearable to live in Egypt. Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam) assured his people of the right decision that they have made and asked all of them to pray only to the One GOD for help and protection (7:128).

PUNISHMENT RECEIVED

As the Pharaoh did not listen to the message brought to them ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) started to punish all the disbelievers and the Pharaoh living in Egypt with the other signs given to Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam). HE introduced one hardship after another. "We punished the people of the Pharaoh with years of drought and destroyed their crops (7:130). We also sent on them wide spread death, stunted crops, lice, locust, frogs and even turned the water into blood (7:133). When these calamities and plagues from ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) fell on them and they could not bear it any longer, they appealed to Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam), "O Moosa! On our behalf call on your LORD to remove this punishment from us. We shall truly believe in

you and also send the children of Israel to leave with you” (7:134). But when the plague stopped and the people were relieved of this punishment they broke their promise and went back to their old ways. This happened in the time of Pharaoh and it is still happening today. When we are under pressure and experience difficulties we turn to our Creator with all sorts of promises of living a life of goodness. But as soon as we become more comfortable and start enjoying the luxuries of this world we go back to our old ways of becoming disobedient to the commandments of ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala).

Instead of taking heed of the signs of the Creator the Pharaoh started working against Nabi Moosa and Nabi Haroon (Alayhis Salaam) by gathering the people of Egypt and inciting them to be unpleasant to the two. The Pharaoh mentioned that they were the troublemakers who came to Egypt to create disunity amongst the people and take over this land from them. He went on to say that these two were experienced wizards who wanted to change the ways of the people and their claim of being Prophets and Messengers from God is untrue and lies. If they were Prophets they would not have been from the poor. They would be decorated with lots of gold and they would have also had angels with them to protect them and help them in their message. The people soon believed the Pharaoh and his lies and started to make it very uncomfortable for them as well as all those who believed in the message. The believers were soon insulted, jeered at, persecuted and even assaulted.

THEY LEAVE EGYPT FOR A SAFER PLACE

This became unbearable and some of the believers started leaving Egypt in the darkness of the night to seek refuge in other areas, which were safer. The people started complaining to Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam) of the harsh and unbearable treatment that they were receiving. He reminded the people to follow him as he would lead them to the path of the Truth. He called on them and told them that the life of the present is nothing but enjoyment, it the hereafter that is the home that will last for ever (40:38,39). The belief in the ONE GOD will enable them to enter the Garden where they will find great abundance without any measure (40:40)

Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam) received the commandment from ALLAH (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) to leave Egypt with all the believers. One night they left on foot with all their belongings. Some took their cattle, sheep, blankets, cooking utensils and whatever they could carry with them. Nabi Moosa (Alayhis Salaam) also took the bones of Nabi Yusuf (Alayhis Salaam) who died in Egypt, with him. He warned his people that they should leave as quickly as possible under the cover of darkness as the Pharaoh will surely pursue them when he discovers that they had left Egypt without his permission.

PHARAOH GATHERS AN ARMY

In the morning when the Pharaoh was told that the Israelites had left during the night he displayed his anger by gathering 600 of his best chariots and strongest horses and started in the direction of the Israelites. While the Israelites were resting and camping near the Red Sea they saw a cloud of dust on the horizon. They soon realised that the horse drawn chariots of the Pharaoh who were in hot pursuit of them formed this cloud of dust. They gathered all their belongings and headed towards the water. Their fear grew greater as their chariots came closer and closer. The women huddled their children closer together for protection from the severe punishment that the Pharaoh was going to inflict on them. As the noise of the galloping horses grew louder and louder and the war cries of the soldiers could now be heard some of the Israelites started calling out to Nabi Moosa to do something or they will all perish here in the desert far away from their homes in Egypt.

(to be continued in the next issue)