

THE STORY OF MOSES (PART 2 OF 12): TRUST IN GOD

Rating: 5.0

Description: Moses' mother demonstrates that there is none more trustworthy than God Alone.

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Published on: 01 Feb 2010

Last modified on: 23 Mar 2010

There are lessons for humankind throughout the story of Moses, which are not only learnt after his prophethood; rather, they are found even when he was a newborn. His righteous mother's behavior gives us numerous lessons that are relevant even today. Put your trust in God!

Moses was born in a year in which the sons of the Children of Israel were put to death the moment they were born. Imagine the sense of fear that permeated every aspect of life under such conditions. Pregnancy was not an event to be celebrated and cherished but a source of fear and insecurity.

Security guards roamed the streets and invaded homes searching for pregnant women, therefore Moses' mother concealed her pregnancy. Imagine the conditions under which she gave birth: fearful, silent, possibly shrouded in darkness. Was she surrounded by women or alone? Did her husband hold her hand praying that she did not cry out revealing herself to the neighbours or guards?

Whatever the conditions, Moses was born. A boy. His parents' heart must have constricted with joy and fear simultaneously. What were they to do now, how would they conceal a newborn baby? Moses' mother was a righteous woman, pious and God fearing, therefore in her hour of need she turned to God and He inspired her next actions.

“And We inspired the mother of Moses saying, suckle him, but when you fear for him, then cast him into the river and fear not, nor grieve. Verily! We shall bring him back to you, and shall make him one of (Our) Messengers.” (Quran 28:2-7).

Moses' mother has just spent the last months concealing her pregnancy for fear that her child would be put to death, now as she holds him to her breast God inspires her to cast him into the river. Not a gentle stream but the Nile River, a huge powerful river with a strong current. Her initial reaction must have been that such an action would be condemning him to certain death.

Moses' mother put her trust in God. **"Do not fear and do not grieve, for We will bring him back to you."** She made a waterproof basket, placed her tiny son inside, and cast him into the river. Ibn Kathir narrates that as the basket touched the water the raging current became calm and gentle, sweeping the basket silently downstream.

Moses' sister was instructed by her mother to slip silently through the reeds and follow the basket on its journey.

The basket with its precious cargo courses down the Nile River, passing houses, boats, and people, unnoticed until it stops at Pharaoh's palace. Moses' sister watches in fear, as someone from Pharaoh's household removes the basket from the river. Moses was cast into the river to escape certain death and now his resting place is the palace of Pharaoh. This is surely too much for a mother to bear, however events about to unfold will demonstrate that the promise of God is true.

"...And whosoever fears God and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty). And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine. And whosoever puts his trust in God, then He will suffice him. Verily, God will accomplish his purpose. Indeed God has set a measure for all things." (Quran 65:2-3)

Baby Moses was taken to Asiya, the wife of Pharaoh. Asiya, in contrast to her arrogant, proud husband was a righteous, merciful woman. God opened her heart and Asiya looked down upon the tiny baby and felt overcome by her love for him. The royal couple were unable to conceive a child and this tiny baby awakened her maternal instincts. Asiya clutched him to her chest and asked her husband to accept the child into family.

Possibly, against his better judgement Pharaoh accepted the child, who was part of God's plan to bring down the royal house. Far from abandoning him, God set Moses up as a royal son of Egypt, he provided him with the strongest human support in the land.

Asiya and Pharaoh now had a son, who was now protected by the very person who had sought to kill him.

"Then the household of Pharaoh picked him up, that he might become for them an enemy and a cause of grief. Verily! Pharaoh, Haman, and their hosts were sinners. And the wife of Pharaoh said; 'A comfort of the eye for me and for you. Kill him not, perhaps he maybe of a benefit to us, or we may adopt him as a son.' And they perceived not (the result of that)." (Quran 28:8-9)

Asiya summoned wet nurses to the palace, but the tiny child refused to suckle. This was a cause of great distress; in those days there were no baby formulas or supplements to offer the child. At this stage the royal palace was in turmoil, the women of the household were fussing over Asiya and her new baby therefore no one noticed the presence of Moses' sister amongst the servants. She summoned all her courage and stepped forward offering a solution. She said she knew of a woman who would suckle the child affectionately. Why would the royal household take the advice of an unknown

child, if not to fulfil God's plan. Moses' sister was ordered to rush and fetch the woman.

“And We had already forbidden (other) foster suckling mothers for him, until she (his sister came up and) said: "Shall I direct you to a household who will rear him for you, and sincerely they will look after him in a good manner?" (Quran 28:12)

Moses' mother was in her home. Was she pacing, or weeping silently? We do not know, but God tells us that her heart was empty and that she was about to reveal herself. Was she considering dashing down to the river and searching frantically through the reeds? God relieved her of her torment when her daughter rushed into the house breathlessly relating the story of what had happened to Moses.

Mother and daughter lost no time returning to the palace. When Moses was handed to his real mother, he settled immediately and began to suckle. According to Ibn Kathir, the household, including Pharaoh himself, was astonished. Pharaoh asked the woman who she was and she replied, "I am a woman of sweet milk and sweet smell, and no child refuses me." Pharaoh accepted this answer, and thus Moses was returned to the arms of his mother and raised in the palace as a prince of Egypt.

“So did We restore him to his mother, that she might be delighted, and that she might not grieve, and that she might know that the Promise of God is true. But most of them know not.” (Quran 28:13)

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