

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَمَا هُوَ أَهْلُهُ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْوُلْدِ أَدْمَرَ كَمَا يُحِبُّ وَيَرْضَى بِأَنْ يُصَلَّى عَلَيْهِ

In The Name Of Allah The Most Compassionate Very Merciful
All Praise Due To Allah And Peace And Blessings Be Upon His Beloved Messenger

Five Consecutive Punishments on Pharaoh and his subjects – A Quranic Story

When Hazrat Moosa's – peace be upon him – stick transformed into a giant python and swallowed the snakes of the magicians, they had fallen into Sajdah and embraced Imaan but Pharaoh and his followers had not yet embraced Imaan. The kufr of Pharaoh and his mischief only increased and he tried his level best to trouble the believers of Bani Israel and Hazrat Moosa and offended them both physically and emotionally. Exhausted of Pharaoh's injustice Hazrat Moosa – peace be upon him – prayed to Allah Almighty in these words:

“O my Lord! Pharaoh has become very nasty on earth and his nation has broken the promise. Capture them in torments they deserve, and may it be a means of counsel for my nation and people after them.”

(Roohul Bayaan Vol. 3, p. 220)

After the Du'a of Hazrat Moosa – peace be upon him – Allah Almighty had descended upon them the following five consecutive torments:

I. Flood:

All of a sudden, thick clouds came and it was dark all over, and then there was very heavy rain which brought flood and water was filled in their houses so much so that as they remained stood the water reached up to their necks and the ones that could not get out of it drowned and died. Neither they could move nor do anything to save their lives or rescue anyone. Their crops and gardens were ruined by the strong flow of the flood. It rained continuously for seven days; Saturday to Saturday and they were captured in this punishment. Although the houses of Bani Israel were attached to the houses of Pharaoh's followers but the water of the flood did not enter their houses, and they remained peaceful in their houses. When they were broke and could not cope with the difficult situation they requested Hazrat Moosa – peace be upon him – to pray for them so that the calamity may be removed from them, and then they will embrace Imaan and will send Bani Israel by him.

Hence, when Hazrat Moosa – peace be upon him – made Du'a the calamity of the flood had subsided, the earth was full of greenery and vegetation like never seen before. There was an abundance of crops and fruits.

Looking at this, Pharaoh and his followers began to say that the water of flood was actually a means of great bounties for them, and then they turned their back on what they had promised. They did not embrace Imaan and again busied themselves creating an oppressing and unjust atmosphere for the believers.

2. Locust Swarm:

Pharaoh and his followers were in peace for a month, and when their kufr, injustice, extremism and oppression began to hike once again Allah Almighty sent His punishment in the form of locust swarm and they flocked in their farms and gardens in large groups and ate them up. They even ate the woods of their houses and it became difficult for them to even breathe in suffocation but on the other hand, the houses and the farms of Bani Israel remained completely unharmed and safe from their attack. Seeing this Pharaoh and his followers came to realize it. They came to Hazrat Moosa – peace be upon him – once again and made a promise that they will definitely embrace Imaan and will not oppress Bani Israel in any way if he makes Du'a for the removal of this calamity.

Hence, this calamity was also removed and they remained in peace for a month, and then again, they broke the promise and did not embrace Imaan. Their kufr and oppression only increased. They began to trouble Hazrat Moosa – peace be upon him – and the believers, and said, "The remainder crops and fruits of our farms and orchards will suffice us, therefore we will not forsake our old religion and embrace Imaan."

3. Lice

The punishment of weevils befell them after a month. Some Mufasssireen mentioned that it was lice that affected their crops and fruits and ate them all up while the other group of Mufasssireen said that they were small insects that ate up their crops and entered their garments and began to bite their skin and made them dance. It even entered into their hair, moustache, beard and eyebrows and ate them up, and scarred their faces and they looked like as if they were afflicted by chickenpox. These insects entered their foods and drinks, so they could neither eat nor drink anything, and they could not even sleep in peace.

It continued for a week and they squealed and requested Hazrat Moosa – peace be upon him – to make Du'a for the removal of the calamity. He felt sorry for them looking at their situation. When he made Du'a, this punishment was also removed but then again, they broke their promise and their oppression and injustice hiked up more than before, and just a month later, another calamity descended on them.

4. Frogs

Suddenly a lot of frogs entered their houses and made their life a misery. They could not eat, drink or sleep. The frogs entered their pots and utensils and when they sat to eat, before the morsel of food could reach their mouth the frogs would jump and enter their mouth, so they would not eat or drink anything. Hundreds of frogs climbed their bodies and destroyed their peaceful sleep, and would not leave them even when they sat, stood or walked. They cried vigorously, took oaths and begged Hazrat Moosa – peace be upon him – to made Du'a to remove this calamity from them.

Hence, after a week the calamity was removed but this time too, they broke their promise and advanced in their evil ways. When they did not stop and continued their oppression on Hazrat Moosa – peace be upon him – and the believers Allah Almighty captured them in the torment of blood.

5. Blood

The water of their wells, rivers suddenly turned into blood, and when they complained to Pharaoh about it he said that it is due to Hazrat Moosa's – peace be upon him – magic and illusion that our pots and utensils are full of blood, while on the other hand, it did not affect the believers. Pharaoh commanded that his followers must take the water from the pots of the believers but Allah's blessing was such that when the believers took out water with their pots it would be clean and sweet but when they used the same pots to take out water only blood came out. After trying this trick and terribly failing in their quest for clean water

and they were forced by extreme thirst, they came to the believers and said they wanted to drink their leftover from which they drink, but this time too, the wisdom of Allah Almighty was such that when the believers drank from it, only clean and pure water went down their throats but when they drank they could only get a gulp of blood down their throat. Being helpless, they tried chewing on the leaves and grass and suck the juices but then too, the juices would turn into blood.

Ultimately, they once again cried in front of Hazrat Moosa – peace be upon him – and begged him to make Du'a, and when he prayed, the punishment was taken away from them on the seventh day.

In short, five consecutive calamities had befallen them and each would last for seven days and each of them befell at the interval of a month but since the hearts of Pharaoh and his followers were bore the seal of misfortune and they did not embrace Imaan until one day they found themselves badly trapped in the punishment of Allah Almighty and Pharaoh and his followers were drowned in the river Nile and perished in a manner that no trace of their corpse was to be found on the earth.

(Tafseer Saawi Vol. 2, p. 803)

The Holy Quran describes the incident in the following verses:

فَارْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الطُّوفَانَ وَالْجَرَادَ وَالْقُمَّلَ وَالضَّفَادِعَ وَالدَّمَ آيَاتٍ

مُفَصَّلَاتٍ ۖ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

Then We sent upon them the flood, and the locusts and the lice, and the frogs and the blood -distinct signs, then they waxed proud and they were a sinful people.

وَلَمَّا وَقَعَ عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّجْزُ قَالُوا يُمُوسَىٰ اذْعُنَا رَبَّكَ بِمَا عَهِدَ عِنْدَكَ ۚ

لَئِنْ كَشَفْتَ عَنَّا الرِّجْزَ لَنُؤْمِنَنَّ لَكَ وَلَنُرْسِلَنَّ مَعَكَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

And whenever the torment fell upon them, they used to say, 'O Musa, pray for us to your Lord because of that covenant of His which is with you. No

doubt, if you would remove from us the torment, we would certainly believe in you and will send with you the children of Israel.

فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمْ الرِّجْزَ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ هُمْ بِالْغُوءِ إِذَا هُمْ يَنْكُثُونَ ﴿١٣٥﴾

But whenever We removed the torment from them for a term to which they were to reach, they retracted.

فَانْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَكَانُوا عَنْهَا

غَافِلِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

We then took vengeance on them, therefore We drowned them in the river, because they belied Our Signs and were unaware of them.

(Al-A'raaf 7, Verse 133-136)

Lesson:



We learn from these incidents that it is such heinous and grave sin to break the promise and to falsify and insult Allah's Prophets due to which Pharaoh and his followers were captured in various punishments one after the other and ultimately, they were drowned in the river and perished. Therefore, every Muslim must abstain from breaking promises, rebellion and sins lest should they be captured in the traps of their own sins and invoke Allah's wrath upon themselves.



The patience and the kindness of Hazrat Moosa's – peace be upon him – heart was at its peak, as a result of which he kept on forgiving his enemies on their cries and pleas and made Du'a for the elimination of their punishments. It denotes that the qualities of patience, tolerance, avoidance and forgiving are of extreme importance for the leader of a community, so that he may not have the revengeful thoughts for his enemies but rather pardon the ones that wronged him with patience and tolerance, for it is the blessed Sunnah of Hazrat Moosa – peace be upon him – as well as it was a very significant attribute of our beloved Prophet – may Allah send peace and blessings upon him – that he never took revenge from enemies for the sake of himself but he always forgave them, and the following words are one of his great teachings:

صِلْ مَنْ قَطَعَكَ وَاعْفُ عَنَّنْ ظَلَمَكَ وَأَحْسِنْ إِلَىٰ أَسَاءَ إِلَيْكَ

Strengthen the bond with the one who cuts ties and forgive the one who oppressed you, and treat the one who wronged you with goodness.

Hazrat Shaikh Sa'di – may Allah be pleased with him – says in his poetry whilst translating the same Hadeeth as follows:

بدی را بدی سهل باشد جزا

اگر مردی احسنِ اِلی مَنْ اَسَا

Badi Ra Badi Sahl Baashad Jaza

Agar Mardi Ahsin Ila Man Asa

It is very easy to return the evil with evil as it fits

But if you are a man, treat the one who wronged you with goodness

(Ajaibul Quran p. 97-103)