# LESSONS FROM STORY OF MOSES/MUSA (AS)

This wont be as long,I promise.I have two things infront of me.One, I really love this crazy thing about stories and my head is full of that.Second, I was supposed to talk about leadership but I just feel like telling you a story.(audience laughs)From the Quran.From the Quran.So everybody wants the story?Ok!

Begins:

The individual that fascinates my imagination in Quran is Moosa (AS).His narrative is mentioned at many places in Quran and every time it's mind boggling.This particular case that I want to share with you belongs to Surah Taha(Surah no.20).I've discussed the dialogue between Moosa AS and pharoah in some of my earlier lectures but that was from sura no 26.This , today is from surah no 20.

Moosa AS is on a journey.He is travelling with his family.Allah says "Hal atta ka hadeesu Moosa?" (Did the news of Moosa AS come to you?") (taha:9). Hadees in arabic means "something new".The story of Moosa AS had been mentioned earlier in the revelation, but now, Allah is going to tell us that part of the story which has not been mentioned before.So Allah says "Did THIS part of the story come to you?".Did you hear about this one? And already the curiosity is raised.Then Allah says "IIdh ra-“a naran faqala li-“ahli-hi “umkuthu” (When he saw a fire and said to his family, "Stay here)."(taha:10)

Understand this situation.He is travelling with his family in the middle of night, It's dark, they are out in the desert,no lights anywhere. And he sees a fire on the top of a mountain.Now, if it's dark and there's fire on the top of mountain, who should see it? Everybody! Everybody should see it.

But the language of the ayah is "Unkusoo.Inni anastoo naaran (You stay here, I see a fire)."(surah taha:ayah 10)

The grammar of the ayah suggests that nobody else could see it.It's only " 'I'can see that fire", and "inna" is used in arabic to convince someone of something .It's used when you are not sure.You say "FOR SURE",When your listener is not sure.So it's almost as though Allah is telling about a conversation between Moosa and his family without going into minor details.Moosa AS probably told his family ,”i see a fire”. And his wife says no no there's no fire so Moosa AS assures her , “no no FOR SURE i see a fire”

You know why?Because Allah made that fire such that only Moosa AS could see it.In the middle of the night if everybody sees a fire, they are all gonna show up, but nobody else is supposed to show up. this appointment is only for Moosa AS.So he says no no for sure , i see a fire.inni anastu naaran.

And then he says to his family “la-‘alli “ati-kum min-ha bi-qabasin “aw “ajidu ‘ala al-n-nari hudan." (perhaps I can bring you a torch or find at the fire some guidance.) (surah taha:ayah 10)

He says this because It's dark,it's late in the night and it's getting cold in the desert environment.So he is in a sense of urgency.The fathers here can relate to this.If you are getting something for your family and your family is left all by themselves.Even if they are at the hotel room or at the airport and you have to go get food.You are in a hurry.You've got to get back.You gotta rush.Moosa (AS) is climbing up the mountain,But what is he worried about?His family.Because they are by themselves in the dark.So he is hurrying his way up and he says "au ajidi alan nari al huda". When I get to the flame, I might be able to get some guidance, some directions, some way to get out of this mess. Now when he talks of guidance, what sort of guidance is he thinking of? Directions!

But what sort of guidance does he find? An different kind!Guidance for life. One which he would not have been able to get from anywhere else.So there's a workplay by Allah.Look what he thought he's gonna get and what he actually got.

So he climbs the mountain.He sees flames.He's never been there before.

"Falamma ataha" (And when he came to it:taha:11)

 Lamma in arabic is used to prolong something.It took him a while to reach the mountain.It took struggle.So now he is exhausted. He's up,approaching the top of the cliff.

"Noodia-A call was made (taha:10)".,"Moosa!".

You are up,by yourself,in the middle of the night and nobody even says hey!Who's there?Who are you?Nothing! He is called by his?--name!

It's already shocking that he heard a voice ,it's terrifying enough.But they know who he is.The voice knows who he is."Ya Moosa".Immediately, at this point you are in shock!right?

If somebody knows your name,you are already like, "ya?",(in shock.).What does Allah tell him immediately?

"In-nii “ana rab-bu-ka fa-ikhla’ na‘lay-k"- "No doubt about it,I'm your Master , so take your shoes off".(taha:12)

He hasn't seen anything,he is what at this point?He has heard a powerful voice. and the powerful voice has given him a command to do what?Take his shoes off!.

There's an interesting thing here.When Allah delivered the message to Messenger SAW first, he introduced Himself there as a Master too.And He also commanded at that time.What was the command to Messenger SAW?Read!Here, Moosa (AS) is told, I'm your Master.What should you do?Take our shoes off.But there's a flip.In the case of Prophet Muhammad SAW,the command came first and then Master was mentioned.Here, Im your Master first, and then, as a result, take your shoes off.

“in-na-ka bi-al-wadi al-muqad-dasi tuwa (Indeed, you are in the sacred valley of Tuwa. Taha:12)

oh sorry i didnt know".And he takes his shoes off.Now at this point, when you are confused ,you are like there must be some confusion.I must be at the wrong place.This isnt happening. Allah makes sure he understands you are at the right place."wa ana ikhtartuka",(it is I who have selected you)(taha:13)

In arabic, if you say "ikhtartuka", it means "I've selected you".But Allah says "anna ikhtartuka".'I' is mentioned twice.And the purpose of mentioning a pronoun twice is to create exclusivity.It was I who have selected you.This meeting was selected not by you but by ME.You didnt come here because you wanted to get something, I brought you here.This is completely by plan.

Moosa As is a baby at some point in his life and he is put in a basket.Bdw, if some one's seen Kung fu panda, they steal from Moosa AS story. literally a basket ends up. There's a peacock villain and he has a premonition that a panda's gonna kill it.so he kills all the pandaz. And then kung fu panda comes in the end and kills him.

But Anyhow, away from that tangent, Moosa AS is a baby and he is in a basket and that basket has a tracking on it,it has a specific recipient it is supposed to end up in the hands of.Then it's supposed to be raised the way it's supposed to be raised .The one he who is going to be destroyed by this baby will raise him.

All part of the plan.Then he's gonna punch somebody and what's gonna happen to the guy?He's gonna die .And the you are gonna flee.Thats part of the plan too,

And then you have a scheduled 8 year work visa.You have got work to do in another part of the world.Then you've got to be travelling and youre gonna end up in the middle of the desert.Thats part of the plan too.

So you have arrived just on time.This appointment by the minute,by the second was scheduled.

"wa ana akhtartuka".Then there's the word "ikhtiar" .In arabic, you have 3 different words for choosing something.And Allah chose specifically.ikhtara yakhtaru ikhtiar.This word in arabic as opposed to ijtiba and istifa

means "choosing someone based on the good on them".Because it comes from the word "khair".You know the word khair? Khair and shar?Good and evil?

Why mention ikhtiar particulary?Ulema comment that Moosa AS had a riding guilt.He had killed an individual and the guilt was not letting him go.He is thinking that he's no good.So Allah now tells him that I have chosen you because I see the good in you.Good that Allah can see in him, not he himself.

"fastami lima\_ yu\_ha\_(Then listen carefully to what's being revealed)".(taha:13)

Now Allah tells him,I'v chosen you,you specifically,now you better listen carefully to what's being revealed.

In nani anal la\_hu la\_ ila\_ha il la\_ ana (It is no doubt that I am Allah.No one is to be worshiped and obeyed except myself).."faa'a bud nee (then enslave yourself to me):taha:14

First command was "take your shoes off".But you know, if you obey someone once, you might be a servant,an employee.But to be a slave, what do you do? You have to obey in every circumstance.So there is a transition from obedience of one command towards a lifetime of obedience.

Here,some background is important.All of you in your lives, would have had the chance to meet somebody famous.You got to shake hands with the principal of your school or you invited some scholar to your house and got a chance to talk to him.When people meet a celebrity, what do they usually do? They become obsessed about it.They take a picture and then tweet it, share it on facebook,hang it in the drawing room wall forever and they talk about it to friends and relatives.People go a little crazy when they meet somebody famous.It becomes a memory.If you are working in a company and the CEO walks in, put his hand on your shoulder and says "good work".You're never gonna forget it.The memory wont ever get out of your head.

Who is Moosa AS getting to meet?Allah !Do you think he's ever gonna forget it.This is a conversation that is of epic proportions in human history.A conversation between Allah and a human being and the conversation was initiated by Allah and the human was called by his name directly! .Moosa!

Yet after saying "No one is to worshiped except me, Enslave yourself to me", Allah says "Wa aqimi as salata li zikri (establish the prayer so you can remember me).taha:14

This part of the ayah just boggles my mind.The question in my mind is, He's never gonna forget the conversation he's just had. If there's one thing Moosa is never gonna forget , it's this!And Allah says, even you! if you really want to remember me, establish salah.Can you imagine the importance of salah now wrt to remembering Allah!Amazing.And this, remember Allah, was the primary purpose of salah,Next comes the secondary purpose."inna as saa'ata atiatun".Indeed, the Hour is coming:taha:15

The hour is coming.Judgement day is coming.On it's way.' Atiyatun', ism fa'il in arabic means it's running.Coming right now.Things are already in motion. "aka du ukh feeha .li tujza kullun nafsun bima tas'aa".I almost conceal it - so that every soul may be recompensed according to that for which it strives.taha:15

By saying 'almost', what has Allah told us?,there are Some signs I AM going to reveal.Some things i will let you see.i wont show you everything but there will be SOME indications.And our Prophet PBUH gave us those some indications.

"litujza kullun nafsun bima tas'aa"(so every person can be compensated for what they ran towards).

Sa'ii in arabic means running for something.Like we do sa'ii in umrah and hajj.Beautifull thing is,Moosa AS got here by means of sa'ii.He ran to this place with sincerity and Allah says, he gives everybody what they run towards.

Now here's another difference.Hopefully you are going to appreciate this,especially as a parent. When you are telling your kids not do something.You say their name first. "Emad!","Waleed","Abdullah".Just the name is enough,You dont even need to say"Stop".When you start a conversation with the name first, it is a form of harshness.But when you mention the name at the end, it is a form of love."How was your day emad"Its a form of softness,love,mercy.When the conversation began between Moosa AS and Allah az zawajal,the name was at the beginning.It was harsh."Moosa!take your shoes off". But now, "wa ma tilka bi ya meenika ya moosa (what's in your right hand O moosa"?)(taha:17)(brother NAK skipped one ayah on purpose)

So there is a transition.Allah just got soft.Allah is calming him down.Moosa AS, at this point must be really terrified.Allah just gave him a lecture (take your shoes off, im your master,your are a slave,establish the prayer the judgement day is on it's way.im almost keeping it hidden).

This one minute was probably the most shocking one minute of his life.Now Allah is calming him down."So what's in your right hand?" .Does Allah already know what in his right hand?".Ofcourse he does!.

Moosa AS realizes , he is about to talk to Allah.Not many people can say that.So when you get to talk to somebody important, do you want to go it longer or shorter? You want to keep it going!You would'nt want the connection to be lost. So Moosa AS says " hiya asaya"(this is my staff)”taha:18. Bdw in english, staff here doesnt mean the people you hire.It means a big stick.we dont use the word cane.Cane’s are signs of weakness but staffs are signs of strength.It takes a strong person to carry a staff.If somebody carries a cane, it means they are now weak.They need to now lean on it.They need it to climb.

What was the question?,”What is in your right hand?”.So what’s the answer “This is my staff”.Question complete,answer complete.But Moosa AS doesnt stop.He says, “atawaku' alaeha (I lean on it sometimes)”.taha:18 Did Allah ask what do you do with it?No,he only asked what is it?But Moosa AS goes on to tell that he leans on it.” wa ahushu biha\_ 'ala\_ ghanami \_(And i beat it on bushes so that my sheep can eat”.taha:18

But you know it’s a stick.How many things can you come up with?So he runs out of things to say but he wants the conversation to go on.Because he is getting to talk to Allah.So exhausting his imagination, he says,”waliya feeha ma'aribu ukhra.(And I have got some other things that I can do with it too)”.taha:18.What’s he trying to do?He is trying to keep it going.Shows his nervousness.

And,Allah says,very softly qaala” alqiha ya moosa(throw it O moosa).Taha:19.”What’s the harsh way of saying it ? “O Moosa!Throw it!”.But Allah uses the softer language.

Moosa throws it.”fa al qaha(so he throws it).”taha:20

When Moosa climbed the mountain, the language was, ”falamma ataha”.

It took him a while to climb the mountain.But when Allah commanded him to throw the staff,did it take him any time?No,it didn't! It was Yess boss immediately. So here, it’s “fa-alqaha”.He throws it immediately.

”fa izza hiya hae a tun tas’aa”(then immediately it turns into a python running around).taha:20

Now imagine, Moosa AS just got calm.Allah got soft with him.He tells him to throw it.And the moment he throws it, it immediately becomes a gigantic python running around.Would he be calm anymore?No! He must really be terrified.its a normal human reaction to be terrified.Snake's have a horrific experience.On the top of it, the thing is running around and it has came from where?.It was his staff!

Allah then says."Qala Khuz ha"(Says Grab it),"wa la takhaf (and dont be afraid).taha:21

In a human scenario, If I would have to say this to my child, I would say "don't be afraid! grab it".But Allah says "grab it, dont be afraid". Allah is expecting obedience first and courage later.

So obedience is in the first part of the ayah and courage in the second part. Then there's a third part of the ayah.

"Sa noo eedua seerat ul oola". We will return it back to it's original state.taha:21

Three parts in one ayah.This is where I'll end this story, even though it's much longer and so beautiful.Allah tells the narrative in an amazing way.You must read it on your own.Every little detail takes you in a different world.

You know when Sh Yasir was describing "qassa yaqussu"( to follow behind).Literally Allah takes us to the scene.You and I are at the mountain at the point.When we are listening to this story

Now just grabbing the snake and not being afraid was one thing and then Allah says it will return to it's original state.Imagine a snake is running around and you are told to grab it.You have to do it immediately.There should'nt be a time lapse between the command coming and you obeying. And you are told ,the moment you will grab it, it will become a stick again.You need to be courageous, know for sure, that it's not going turn back and bite you.Its going turn back into a stick.This takes an amazing amount of trust on Allah.Allah is teaching at this point obedience (grab it), courage(moving snake) and then trust (snake turning back staff) to Moosa AS.The three things that Moosa AS will need when he goes to talk to pharoah.Need to obey Allah and go back to Egypt .The closer he gets, the scarier it becomes. The authorities are looking for him in Egypt, it's not that easy and when he finally reaches there ,he's convinced he is going to be killed.

In surah shu'ra ,he says "”inni akhafu yaqtuloon” (“Im afraid they are gonna kill me")(26:14).A very legitimate fear but Allah says dont worry about, trust me.Those three lessons of obedience, courage and trust, the entire tarbiyyah program at the top of the mountain is what one thing? The command of “Grab it!” .Allah teaches such amazing lessons in one statement.And now Moosa AS is ready, if he can pull that out, he can pull anything out.

This is how stories are told in the Quran.Narratives in Quran just grab you and dont let you go.

In the full conversation , you know,Allah even lets him know this is not the first time I'm actively involved in your life. When your mother puts you in the water and your sister is walking besides you.Allah is telling him about times of his life even he doesnt remember.

Allah is reminding Moosa AS things cant remember.When you meet somebody for the first time, you assume that he doesnt know about you.Why would somebody so important know about me.There's an assumption that if somebody is a little more significant than yourself, he would'nt remember you.What is Allah compared to a creation?Allah honours Moosa AS by telling him about his childhood.He is telling Moosa AS "you punched the guy then you left". Subhan Allah.What an amazing conversation between Master and Slave.

Now i'll tell you about the concept of stories in the Quran.Sh Yasir made 4 significant points and he said there are many more.I'd like to add one more for now.Stories in the Quran are repeated and they are not at the same place.You will find one piece of the story in one surah, another in another surah and so on.(except the story of yusuf AS which is bunched together all in surah yusuf)

Stories of Bani Israel, Moosa AS,Ibrahim AS ,Adam AS are all scattered and repeated.Now from the literature point of view there are two issues here.This question arises to the western critics and to someone who's reading the Quran in translation.What's the point of this repetition. What's the point of not putting it all together in one surah?

How are surahs placed in the Quran.Think of it like this.Every surah is a collection of lessons and they are all tied together.So a surah is like a thesis, a course.A lot of times when we study Quran, we read one ayah from here, another form there.When we study a surah we dont stick to that surah as a whole unit. With every other book you dont do that.When you are studying one chapter, you read that chapter thoroughly and finish it.But a lot of dedicated students of Quran dont read one surah at a time.But a surah is a unified whole.It has a purpose, a unique purpose.A lot of lessons but they all converge together towards one larger concept.

Have you heard the concept of supporting evidence? Stories in the Quran are not being told for the purpose of telling a story, rather they are being told for the purpose of conveying a lesson particular to that specific surah.So only that part of the story will be told which helps you understand the lesson at hand.No other part will be mentioned.Quran is not concerned with dates, figures.Even in the most elaborate story in Quran of Yusuf AS, names of his brothers are not mentioned, name of yusuf's mother ,name of the minister's wife , not a single one is mentioned.Only the name of yusuf and yaqub is mentioned.The rest of the details are not mentioned because they are not the purpose.Anything that's irrelevant to the larger purpose (the lesson being taught) is compromised.

The bible doesnt do this.Atleast the version of bible that we have today, you will find, names , dates, names of places all sorts of minor details. Quran doesnt concern itself with all this because it's not the purpose.Even the story of yusuf is not told for the purpose of just telling a story, rather, the point is the seerah of the Prophet SAW.

There is an amazing parallel between the story of Yusuf AS and the Seerah of Prophet Muhammad SAW.It's The year of grief when the surah is revealed and the surah is about the grief of yusuf AS and the grief of his father.Yusuf's (AS )brothers persecuted him.Prophet Muhammad's SAW brothers(quraish) persecuted him. Yusuf AS was put in a dark place(well) and then he eventually comes back and establishes the legacy of his father Yaqub AS. Prophet PBUH is ends up in a cave(dark place) and he also eventually comes back and establishes the legacy of His father, Ibrahim AS.Yusuf AS says to his brother "la tafreeba alaekum ul yaoum"("no harm will come to you today") and Rasool Allah SAW does the same thing after fateh Makkah.Amazing parallels.

Sh Yasir mentioned this one thing about the beginning and the end of these surahs.You remember "oolul albab" and at the end also, "ibrah". Allah says in the beginning of the surah, "inna anzalna quranan arabiyan la"alla kum ta'aqiloon". (We reveal the Quran in arabic so that you can understand.)(yusuf:2)

At the end of Surah, Allah says "afala ta'aqilun?"(Why dont you understand)(yusuf:109)

It's like the whole thing comes together.

In Surah Baqarah, so many subjects come up and towards the end of the surah, the story of taloot and jaloot is mentioned.The biblical name of that story is David and golaith.

Summary of that story is that Daud AS , a young man, ends up killing jaloot who is a military commander, known for armies of giants.Fully covered in armour except their eyes.A horrifying scene of an army, But still, he is defeated by the sling shot of Daud AS.Now this surah has many lessons and this story occurs towards the end of the surah and right before it , Allah is preparing muslims for the battle of badar.

Allah talks about fighting in the path of Allah (that is approaching ).Then immediately switches over to the story of Bani israel and the story of taloot and jaloot.

One of the many lessons of that story is "kam min fi a'tin qaleelatin ghalabat fi'atin kaseeratin bi izn Allah" (How many times has a large group been overtaken by a small group.By the permission of Allah)(2:249)

Isnt that about to happen in Badar?Allah is giving us pre-game prep talk.Before you get into the battle , you are being fired up.You are not the first ones to go.This has happened before.You are part of a legacy.Let me tell you about a Badar that happened a long time ago and this is how it turned out to be.And this is what you have to do to make it work this time too.They are being prepared.It's not just a story.For the sahaba it's not just a story.They are'nt reading the history of Bani Israel.They are reading preparation for what they are about to do.

"Afrigh alaena sabran wa sabbit aqdamana wansurna ala' al qaum il kafireen"(Pour patience onto us, makle our feet firm and aid us against the disbelieving nation).(2:250)These were Words of followers of taloot AS.Now they will become words of the sahaba.(razi Allah hu taa'la hu ajmaeen).Firm our feet.make us patient.aid us against the disbelieving nation.

Not just a story.Not just placed there for any trivial reason.It's situated there for a very specific reason.

Jazak'Allah khairun for listening attentively.Assalam o alaikum wr wb.