

Sura Taha, verses 85 -86

قَالَ فَإِنَّا قَدْ فَتَنَّا قَوْمَكَ مِنْ بَعْدِكَ وَأَضَلَّهُمُ السَّامِرِيُّ

He said: So surely We have tried your people after you and Samiri has led them astray.

فَرَجَعَ مُوسَىٰ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ غَضْبَانَ أَسِفًا

So Musa returned to his people angry, sorrowful.

Reflections

- How did Nabi Musa first find out about what his people had done?
- How were the people tested?
- What are the emotions Nabi Musa felt at that time?

Tafsir

When Nabi Musa's went to Mount Sinai for the meeting with God his stay extended from thirty days to forty days. Nabi Musa also had a group of the elders of his community with him and thus there was an absence of the leader as well as many of the wise and experienced elders. People became restless and discontented. Samiri had been waiting for an opportunity to lead people astray and he now thought it was the right time to carry out his evil plans. He built a golden calf and persuaded people to worship it (details of this will come later in the passage).

The desire to worship idols was still present within the people of Nabi Musa despite his teachings on the worship of One God. When they crossed the sea they came across a people who were worshipping an idol and the people requested Nabi Musa for a similar idol. The hypocrites spread rumours of the death of Nabi Musa when he did not return after thirty days. The people were also plagued with ignorance and stubbornness. All these factors made it easier for the evil plan of Samiri to take effect. The shift to idol worship was a huge move for the society. Such an event does not take place without certain conditions being in place. Anytime a society shifts towards something, it usually has preceding conditions and states some of which are apparent and some hidden.

Nabi Musa was still at the meeting with God when this took place. Almighty Allah Himself informs him that He tested the people to see if they remained firm in their belief in Him. But they were not successful in the test and Samiri was able to lead them astray.

Nabi Musa was intensely disturbed at hearing this news. He had spent so many years teaching his people about the falseness of idol worshipping. He had talked to them about the uniqueness of the Creator who was only One. He found it hard to understand how they could have slipped back into idol worshipping. He had only been away for a period of time. Why had they not held on to their faith?

Nabi Musa returned to his people feeling angry and sad. Note the following points about the two emotions he felt:

- feeling angry and sad at a people who have gone astray is from the quality of Prophets. They are not indifferent to wrong.
- anger is accompanied by sadness in the heart of Nabi Musa. This shows concern for the people. It is not only anger at what they had done, but also feeling bad for them and their future.
- anger and sadness are not always negative emotions. When they are used in the way of God and channelled in the right way they bring about positive results.

Relevant Verses

- 7:142 - Nabi Musa goes for thirty days for the meeting with God and it is extended to forty days.
3:133-134 - Allah loves those who control their anger

Hadith

He is not strong and powerful who throws people down but he is strong who controls his anger.
Holy Prophet (s)
(Tuhaf al-Uqul an al-Rasul, p.33, 5th Edition)

Anger spoils faith in the same way as vinegar destroys honey.
Holy Prophet (s)
Usul al Kafi, Vol.3

Important Lessons

- 1) Believers are being tested all the time. Unless hidden elements of disbelief and doubt are dealt with they will come to the surface and lead them astray.
- 2) It is easy for a hypocrite or ill-wisher to lead people astray when they themselves are not firm in their beliefs.

- 3) When wrong occurs, a believer especially a leader (of a community, group, family . . .) feels strongly about it and cannot be silent.
- 4) Anger for the right cause is good. But it should not be for personal or petty reasons and has to be controlled.

Practical Implementation

- What events would make you angry and/or sad? Would it be for personal reasons or for God?
- How would you react when you are angry?

Story

The Holy Prophet (s) controls his anger

Anas bin Malik narrates - One day I was out walking with the Holy Prophet (s). It was a nice day and the Prophet had worn a robe that had a thick fringe all around it. Suddenly a man came running and stopped right beside the Prophet. He pulled the robe hard and the thick fringe tightened around the Prophet's neck. I could see the red marks of the fringe on the neck of the Prophet.

The Prophet turned towards him. The man said loudly, 'O Muhammad, give me from what you have of God's wealth with you'. The Prophet smiled at him. There was no trace of anger on his face. Not at the pulling of the robe, nor at the disrespectful address. 'Give him some from what we have' he instructed.

Moral - The Prophet would not get angry for personal reasons. His anger and sorrow were for the sake of God.

Also Check:

<http://www.moralstories.org/controlling-temper/>

<https://moralsandethics.wordpress.com/2008/01/02/control-your-anger/>

Possible Ideas for activities

- 1) Draw the scene at the mountain with the announcement telling Nabi Musa about what his people had done. What would go on in his mind? Draw thought bubbles to show some possible images in his mind.
- 2) Explore the emotions of anger and sadness. Link them to disappointment - in oneself and /or in others. You could; a) Discuss scenarios that evoke these emotions or b) Draw word webs to

describe these emotions c) Play a game so children can empathize with those who feel these emotions. d) Let children act out scenarios that show these emotions

3) Check:

<https://stressfreekids.com/10667/anger-management/>

<http://www.kimscounselingcorner.com/anger-management-2/50-activities-and-games-dealing-with-anger>

Sources:

Āytaullāh Nāsir Makārim Shirāzī (ed), *Tafsīr-e Namūneh*;

Aghae Muhsin Qaraati, *Tafsire Nur*

Shaykh Rizwan Arastu, *God's Emissaries: From Adam to Jesus*