

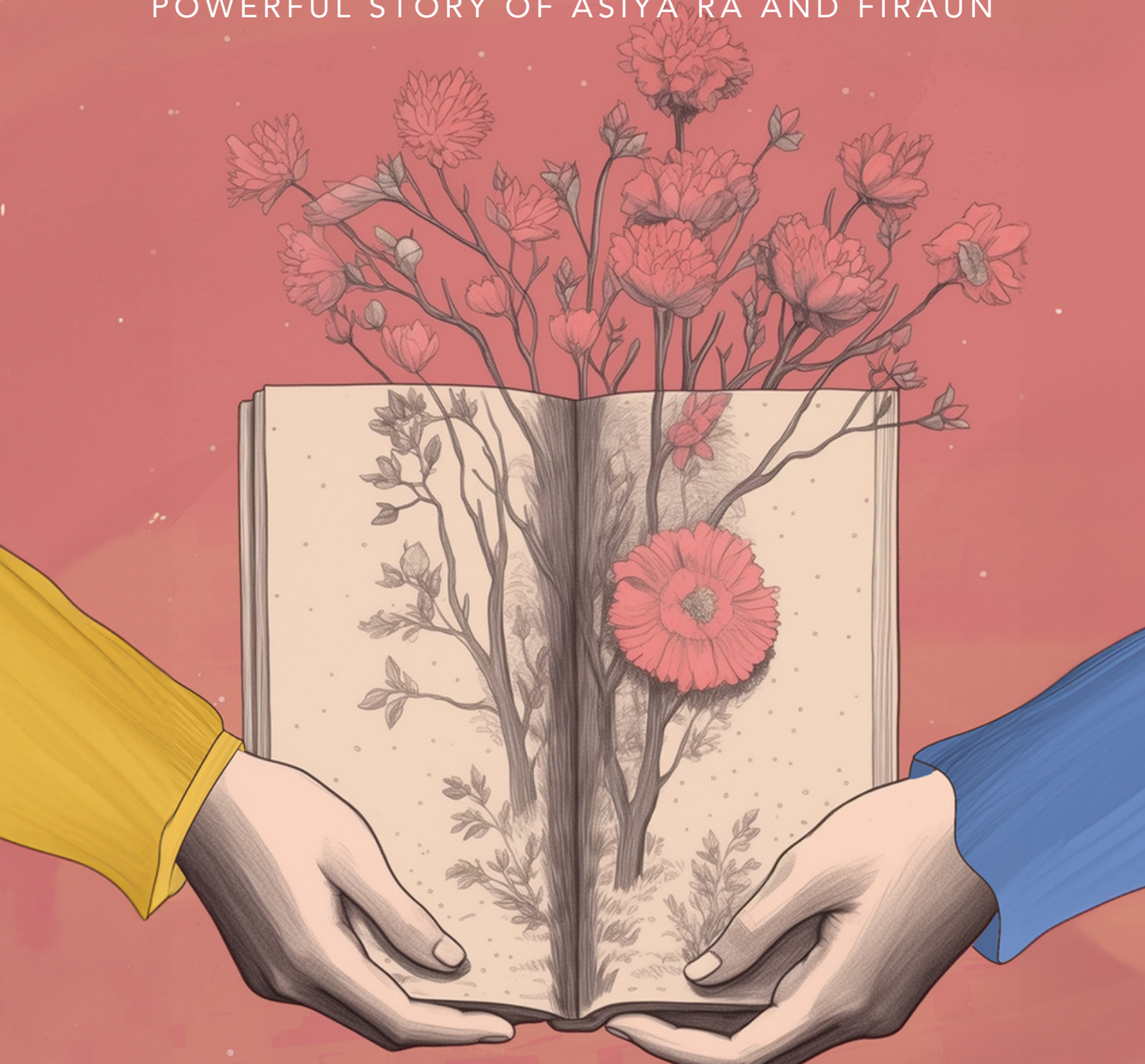
the knowledge
vault

aa⁺
plus

with Ustazah
Marhamah S.

A Divine Match

EP 3: IMPORTANT LESSONS FOR A
HARMONIOUS MARRIAGE FROM THE
POWERFUL STORY OF ASIYA RA AND FIRAUN



CHAPTER MARKERS



01

The Story of Asiya and Firaun

02

Her Resolute Trust in Allah

03

Lessons from Asiya & Firaun



Chapter 1:

THE STORY OF ASIYA AND FIRAUN



Firaun in the Quran

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَأَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِي فَأَوْقِدْ لِي يَهْمُنْ عَلَى الطِّينِ فَأَجْعَلْ لِي صَرْحًا لَعَلِّي أَطَّلِعُ إِلَى إِلَهِ مُوسَى وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّهُ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ

Pharaoh declared, "O chiefs! I know of no other god for you but myself. So bake bricks out of clay for me, O Hamân, and build a high tower so I may look at the God of Moses, although I am sure he is a liar."

(Al-Qasas 28:38)

إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ فَاتَّبَعُوا أَمْرَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَا أَمْرُ فِرْعَوْنَ بِرَشِيدٍ

to Pharaoh and his chiefs, but they followed the command of Pharaoh, and Pharaoh's command was not well guided. (Hud 11:97)

إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضِعُّ طَائِفَةً مِنْهُمْ يَذِخُّ أبنَاءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

Indeed, Pharaoh 'arrogantly' elevated himself in the land and divided its people into 'subservient' groups, one of which he persecuted, slaughtering their sons and keeping their women. He was truly one of the corruptors. (Al-Qasas 28:4)



The Prophet ﷺ said,
"Many men reached
perfection but none among
the women reached
perfection except Mary,
the daughter of 'Imran, and
Asia, Pharoah's wife. And
the superiority of 'Aisha to
other women is like the
superiority of Tharid to
other kinds of food."

(Bukhari)



Perfect Woman In Piety

- This hadith points out that not many women had attained perfection in faith or piety as much as men.
- There are 2 understandings of the hadith:
- 1) Both Sayyidatina Maryam and Asiya RA had reached the level of piety of the Prophets and Messengers.
- 2) They have reached the highest degree, as perfect as they could be, in all the virtues belonging to women.
- Ultimately, it is important to note that **Asiya was singled out as one of the women who have attained perfection, despite being the wife of Firaun.**



A Little About Asiya

- Not much is known about Sayyidatina Asiya RA, except for her beauty and her generosity, and that she was married to Firaun through an arranged marriage.
- She was surrounded by everything worldly that a person could ever want, and she was born into royalty from birth. She was also in an environment of *kuffur* (tyranny and oppression).
- Sayyidatina Asiya RA had taken in Prophet Musa AS from the basket that had flowed in from the river into the palace grounds.
- **Note:** This happened in the year when Firaun had ordered all Israelite male babies to be slaughtered due to the prophecy that his downfall would occur at the hand of an Israeli man.



Musa AS Entered the Palace

- Sayyidatina Asiya could not have babies, so when she saw the infant Prophet Musa AS, she must have fallen in love with him.
- She convinced Firaun to keep Prophet Musa AS, as seen in the following verse:

وَقَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرْتُ عَيْنٍ لِّي وَلَكَ لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ عَسَىٰ
أَنْ يَنْفَعَنَا أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُ وَلَدًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

And the wife of Pharaoh said, "[He will be] a comfort of the eye [i.e., pleasure] for me and for you. Do not kill him; perhaps he may benefit us, or we may adopt him as a son." And they perceived not. (Al-Qasas 28:9)

- Firaun thought he was God, but he wasn't even aware of how Allah SWT was controlling every aspect of his life, including making him accept Prophet Musa AS into his palace.





Firaun was a
puppet -
he was just
going
according to
Allah's Plans.

(But little did he know!)

The Tyrant

- When Sayyidatina Asiya convinced Firaun to raise Prophet Musa AS as one of their own, they had no idea that he was the man prophesied to overthrow Firaun. Instead, they welcomed him into their home.
- When Prophet Musa AS started preaching the message of Allah, Asiya RA believed and practised in secret.

فَمَا آمَنَ لِمُوسَىٰ إِلَّا ذُرِّيَّةٌ مِّنْ قَوْمِهِ ۚ عَلَىٰ خَوْفٍ مِّنْ فِرْعَوْنَ
وَمَلَائِهِمْ أَن يَفْتِنَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ لَعَالٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِنَّهُ لَمِنَ
الْمُسْرِفِينَ

But no one believed in Moses except a few youths of his people, while fearing that Pharaoh and their own chiefs might persecute them. And certainly Pharaoh was a tyrant in the land, and he was truly a transgressor. (Yunus 10:83)

- People followed Firaun's orders not out of respect or admiration, but instead, out of fear for what he would do to them and their children.



Her Communication Style

- Wives have to be delicate in convincing their husbands to be on their sides. This is especially true when they see a lot of good in something.
- For Sayyidatina Asiya to be able to do this with Firaun, who we knew was not the most understanding husband in the world, was amazing Ma Sha Allah.
- This method of communication used by Sayyidatina Asiya truly needs to be studied, because she was not convincing her tyrannical husband for her to have something simple and material like a dress, but a whole child! How did she do it?
- This also showed that **there must have been a level of trust and understanding between them**. In their private lives, he took counsel from his wife.



Chapter 2:

HER RESOLUTE TRUST IN ALLAH



Betrayal from all sides

- Can we imagine Firaun's reaction when he learns that his wife had believed in Prophet Musa? It must have been a great betrayal for him, considering both his wife and adopted son had gone against him. **It was a betrayal from all sides!**
- When the hairdresser of Firaun's daughter, who is a believer, was combing her hair, the comb fell to the ground, and she subconsciously picked up the comb saying, "bismi Allah" (in the name of Allah).
- Firaun's daughter then asked, "Do you mean my father?" to which the hairdresser replied, "No! Allah the God of your father, and yourself, and me."
- Firaun's daughter reported this to his father, who obviously didn't take the news too well.



The Hairdresser's Faith

- Firaun liked to make an example of everything; his gestures were always over-the-top. He was extremely committed to his acts of torture and made sure everyone saw it.
- To punish the believing hairdresser, Firaun ordered her and her children to be thrown into a pit of burning melted copper, one by one.
- We should admire and ask Allah SWT for her level of faith because she was firm even when threatened with the death of her children right in front of her.
- She did hesitate when it came to her last child - a newborn. Some narrations stated that the baby then spoke and urged and reassured the mother to continue.
- **Ultimately, Allah reassured her and gave her the push that she needed to jump into the fire.**

Increased in Faith

- This incident was not merely a story to Sayyidatina Asiya RA; **she witnessed it in real life!** This encouraged her to finally reveal her belief to her husband.

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ
فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

Those to whom people [i.e., hypocrites] said, "Indeed, the people have gathered against you, so fear them." But it [merely] increased them in faith, and they said, "Sufficient for us is Allāh, and [He is] the best Disposer of affairs." (Ali 'Imran 3:173)

- When we are confronted with a situation that is so scary, we know that only Allah SWT can save us and strengthen us. This increases our faith because we are dependent on Allah. In these moments, we realise our mortality and powerlessness.



Allah as a Protector

- We see this quality in the stories of Companions going to war, too. These stories teach us that when our hearts are trembling in fear, it is only Allah SWT Who can strengthen us and will be there with us.
- Similarly, we see this faith in women going through labour as well as in the people of Palestine undergoing oppression. They firmly believe in "*Hasbunallah Wa Ni Mal Wakeel*" (Sufficient for us is Allah, and [He is] the best Disposer of affairs.) as only Allah will bring us through our tests as He brings us to it.
- When his wife revealed to him that she was a believer, he didn't care that he had been sharing the bed with her or had been taking counsel from her; all he cared about was his ego and sending a message to everyone who went against him.
- He tortured his wife badly - she was dragged to the desert and was starved and stripped.



Our Tailored Tests Make us Winners

- The torture that she had to go through couldn't break her because she knew what her priorities were. **She knew that it was her fight to reach Allah SWT.** Her faith was unshakeable because she believed it was true and right.
- Everybody in their way, in their journey of faith, is battling their own fight and jihad. All of our strivings and tests in life are tailored for us to ensure that we will win in this life and in the Hereafter. Ma Sha Allah.
- **Allah does not test us beyond our limits, and He tests us so that we can thrive. But this does not mean our tests will be easy, because He will test us to our very limit!**



A House in Paradise

ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا امْرَأَتَ نُوحٍ وَامْرَأَتَ لُوطٍ كَانَتَا تَحْتَ عَبْدَيْنِ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا صَالِحَيْنِ فَخَانَتَاهُمَا فَلَمْ يُغْنِيَا عَنْهُمَا مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَقِيلَ ادْخُلَا النَّارَ مَعَ الدَّٰخِلِينَ

**Allah presents an example of those who disbelieved: the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot. They were under two of Our righteous servants but betrayed them, so they [i.e., those prophets] did not avail them from Allah at all, and it was said, "Enter the Fire with those who enter."
(At-Tahrim 66:10)**

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا امْرَأَتَ فِرْعَوْنَ إِذْ قَالَتْ رَبِّ ابْنِ لِي عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَعَمَلِهِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

**And Allah presents an example of those who believed: the wife of Pharaoh, when she said, "My Lord, build for me near You a house in Paradise and save me from Pharaoh and his deeds and save me from the wrongdoing people."
(At-Tahrim 66:11)**



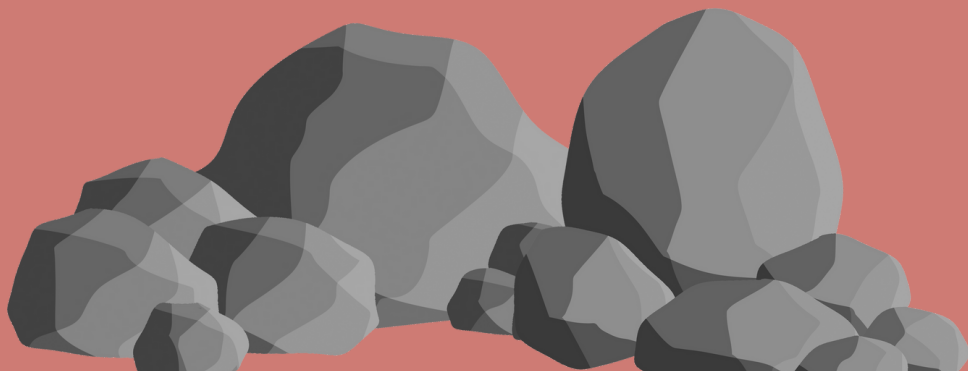
Allah Took Her for Himself

- Sayyidatina Asiya RA made this Du'a when a boulder was ordered to be pushed off a cliff onto her. This was the extent of Firaun's cruelty - it knew no bounds! In those moments, she could only obtain her strength from Allah.
- She lived her life having an easy life but in her last moments, she sacrificed this easy worldly life for her faith and her house where it mattered - Paradise.
- It's important to note the order of the Du'a because **Sayyidatina Asiya had asked to be near Allah first before she asked for a house in Paradise!** Ultimately, Allah showed her her house in Paradise in the skies and took her soul even before the boulder landed on her.

Ask yourself:

Is there a
falling 'boulder'
in your life that
is pushing your
reliance on
Allah?

(It could come in the form of sins, a
test, a loved one etc.)





STUDY BREAK





Chapter 3:

LESSONS FROM ASIYA & FIRAUN

Choosing your Spouse

الْخَبِيثَاتُ لِلْخَبِيثِينَ وَالْخَبِيثُونَ لِلْخَبِيثَاتِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ
لِلطَّيِّبِينَ وَالطَّيِّبُونَ لِلطَّيِّبَاتِ أُولَئِكَ مُبَرَّءُونَ مِمَّا يَقُولُونَ
لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ

Wicked women are for wicked men, and wicked men are for wicked women. And virtuous women are for virtuous men, and virtuous men are for virtuous women. The virtuous are innocent of what the wicked say. They will have forgiveness and an honourable provision. (An-Nur 24:26)

- Just like how Surah Al-Fatihah was sent as a guide to us to nurture and maintain our relationship with Allah, the above verse is a guide in looking for a spouse. But this does not mean it is true all the time.
- As we can see in the story of Firaun and Sayyidatina Asiya, a wicked husband was married to a virtuous wife.

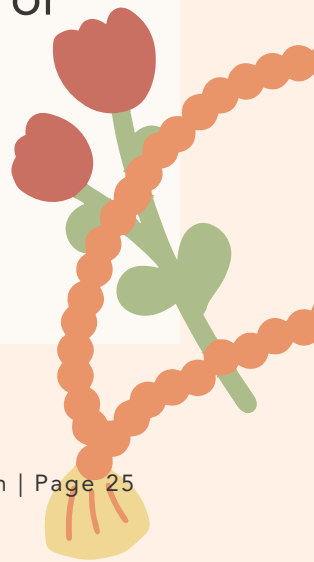


Hadiths on Choosing Spouses

- The verse points out that a wicked spouse deserves a wicked spouse while a virtuous spouse deserves a virtuous spouse. It is merely a guide in choosing a spouse.
- ***The Prophet ﷺ said, "A woman is married for four things, i.e., her wealth, her family status, her beauty and her religion. So you should marry the religious woman (otherwise) you will be a losers. (Bukhari)***
- ***"When someone with whose religion and character you are satisfied asks your daughter in marriage, accede to his request. If you do not do so there will be temptation in the earth and extensive corruption." (Tirmidhi)***



- From the first hadith, we understand that men are always looking for these four criteria - wealth, family status, beauty and religion - in a wife, but what they should always look out for is their religious commitment.
- From the two hadith, we may see the different requirements for men and women when seeking a spouse for marriage. However, they are both saying the same thing - to look for a spouse with religious commitment and good character.
- **When we prioritise someone's Taqwa, we will be matched accordingly.**
- It is difficult to measure someone's faith or Taqwa, but we can know them through their character and how they treat the people around them.





If our faith is
right and true,
and we are
guided by our
faith, it will
show through
our character.

Do Not Tolerate Abuse

- Asiya's perseverance is no excuse for abuse toleration. Sometimes, we see comments urging those going through abuse in marriage to remain patient like Asiya.

وَمِنْ ءَايَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا
وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ
يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought.

(Ar-Rum 30:21)

- Allah uses a non-gender-specific term in this verse - أَزْوَاجًا - to teach us that **finding tranquility, affection and mercy is the responsibility of both wife and husband in the marriage.**



No Good Can Justify Abuse

- Firaun was King of Egypt; he was feared and had major influence. He was powerful and had eyes and ears everywhere. Everyone knows what was to come if they went against him.
- Another thing to note: the whole community of Bani Israel was not able to escape from Firaun's oppression without Allah's Help.
- Anything that goes against the basis of marriage, should be addressed and not tolerated.
- No amount of good should justify abuse in marriage. People evolve and change. **Just because they have done many good things should not excuse the one abuse.** Despite having a good relationship in the beginning, Firaun abused his wife in the end.
- There is a difference between day-to-day patience and abuse - we should seek help if we are in an abusive marriage.

Our Faith is Our Responsibility

- We tend to romanticise the idea of having a perfect Imam, who can lead us to Paradise.
- Our spouses can guide and nudge us in the right direction, but they can't force us to do things. Our spouses are also not answerable to our misdeeds.
- Sayyidatina Asiya RA's heart, mind, soul and belief were independent from Firaun's. While Firaun was a tyrant, Sayyidatina Asiya RA was a generous Queen.
- **It doesn't matter if we are married to a prophet or a tyrant, it is our actions that will determine where our end will be.**
- Our connections, our lineage and our spouses don't matter. As long as we know our priorities, our faith is our own struggle.



Guidance belongs to Allah

- We should always strive to pull each other up, but we should not allow our spouse to bring us down. We should not drown together.
- Our spouse is their own person. As much as we want to see them progress spiritually, we have to understand that they are on their own journey with Allah, at their own pace. Allah has His Plans for him.
- We have to be patient when doing Da'wah with our spouses. We also have to accept that sometimes we may not be the best person to guide them. But Allah SWT will always send the best person who is equipped to do that role to them.
- **But we should never stop making Du'a for them to be guided, and leave the Guidance to Allah!**



Make Du'a for
our spouses
to be guided
and leave the
Guidance to
Allah!

- Remember how Sayyidatina Asiya RA got Firaun to agree to adopt Prophet Musa?
How do we talk to someone to get the result / end that we want?
- Nagging others to pray has not been proven helpful; instead, we need to observe what is hindering them from praying.
- There are different ways to talk with people. Some may be inclined towards logic, while others may be inclined to emotions. Some prefer not to be praised, and others prefer not to be told to do something.
- If we are concerned about our loved ones' faith, we must remember that Allah loves our loved ones more than we could ever love them, and He has a Plan for them.

HEART WORK

ACTION:

Think about your loved ones and how you can communicate with each of them better moving forward.

REFLECTION:

How have you been treating your spouse or loved ones lately? Are they devoid of your tranquillity, love and mercy? How can you work towards a harmonious relationship?

CONTRIBUTION:

Share with your spouse or someone you love your preferred communication method or love language and ask them about theirs!