

## CLASS 7

## PROPHET YOUSUF عليه صلعم

## Yusuf's Childhood

The story begins with a dream and ends with its interpretation. Yusuf عليه صلعم had a dream, *"O my father! Verily, I saw (in a dream) eleven stars and the sun and the moon, I saw them prostrating themselves to me."* (Ch 12:4)

His father's face lit up. He foresaw that Yusuf would be one through whom the prophecy of his grandfather, Prophet Abraham عليه صلعم, would be fulfilled. However, the father was well aware of the jealousy of Yusuf's brothers, so he warned him against telling his dream to his brothers.

*"O my son! Relate not your vision to your brothers, lest they arrange a plot against you. Verily! Satan is to man an open enemy! Thus will your Lord choose you and teach you the interpretation of dreams (an other things) and perfect His Favor on you and on the offspring of Yaqub, as He perfected it on your fathers, Abraham, and Isaac aforetime! Verily! Your Lord is All-Knowing, All-Wise."* (Ch 12:5-6)

## The Evil Plot of Yusuf's Brothers

Yusuf's brothers plotted against him.

*"Truly, Yusuf and his brother (Benjamin) are loved more by our father than we, but we are Usbah (a strong group). Really our father is in a plain error. Kill Yusuf or cast him out to some other land, so that the favor of your father may be give to you alone, and after that you will be righteous folk (by intending repentance before committing the sin)."*

*One from among them said: "Kill not Yusuf, but if you must do something, throw him down to the bottom of a well, he will be picked up by some caravan of travelers."* (12:8-10)

## The Brothers Approach Yaqub

*They said: "O our father! Why do you not trust us with Yusuf, when we are indeed his well-wishers? Send him with us tomorrow to enjoy himself and play, and verily we will take care of him."*

*He (Yaqub) said: "Truly, it saddens me that you should take him away. I fear lest a wolf should devour him, while you are careless of him."*

*They said: "If a wolf devours him, while we are Usbah (a strong group) (to guard him), then surely we are the losers." (12:11-14)*

They took Yusuf to the well, took his shirt and cast him into the well. Then Allah revealed to Yusuf that he was safe and should not fear, for he would meet them again someday to remind them of what they had done. Then they killed a sheep and soaked Yusuf's shirt in its blood.

## The Brothers Lie to Yaqub

*And they came to their father in the early part of the night weeping." (12:16)*

*They said: "O our father! We went racing with one another, and left Yusuf by our belongings and a wolf devoured him; but you will never believe us even when we speak the truth. (12:17)*

Deep down in the heart Yaqub knew that his beloved son was still alive and that his other sons were lying. The brokenhearted father burst into tears:

*"Nay! But your own selves have made up a tale. So for me patience is more fitting. It is Allah Alone whose Help can be sought against that which you assert." (Ch 12:18)*

## Yusuf From the Well to Slavery

A caravan of merchants on their way to Egypt halted at this famous well for water. When they found Yusuf inside, they enslaved him and took him to Egypt for sale where Aziz, the chief minister of Egypt, bought him.

## Yusuf's Qualities

The days passed and Yusuf grew. He was given Prophethood. His master soon knew that Allah had graced him with Yusuf. He understood that Yusuf was the most honest, straightforward and noble person he had met in his life. Therefore, he put Yusuf in charge of his household, honored him, and treated him as a son.

## Zulaikha's Feelings for Yusuf

Allah the Almighty told us: *"And she, in whose house he was, sought to seduce him (to do an evil act), she closed the doors and said: "come on, O you." He said: "I seek refuge in Allah (or Allah forbid)! Truly he (your husband) is my master! He made my stay agreeable! (So I will never betray him). Verily, the Zalimun (wrong, evildoers) will never be successful." Indeed she did desire him and he would have inclined to her desire had he not seen the evidence of his Lord. Thus it was, that We might turn away from evil and illegal sexual intercourse. Surely, he was one of Our chosen, guided slaves. (12:23-24)*

## Zulaikha's False Accusation

Yusuf's refusal only heightened her passion. As he moved to the door to escape, she ran after him and caught hold of his shirt, like a drowning person clinging to the boat. In her tugging she tore his shirt and held the torn piece in her hand. They reached the door together. As he opened the door, he saw her husband standing in front of him. The sly woman immediately changed her tone to anger, and, showing the torn piece of the shirt in her hand, and accused Yusuf of molesting her, to give the impression that she was innocent and a victim of Yusuf's sexual desire. Though bewildered Yusuf denied it. The witness (her cousin) looked at it and found that it was torn at the back. The evidence showed that she was guilty.

## Zulaikha is Ridiculed by the People

The story spread. Women began to see her behavior as scandalous. They remarked: *"The wife of Al-Aziz is seeking to seduce her (slave) young man, indeed she loves him violently; verily, we see her in plain error."* (12:30)

Almighty Allah says: *"So when she heard of their accusation, she sent for them and prepared a banquet for them; she gave each one of them a knife (to cut the foodstuff with), and she said (to Yusuf): "Come out before them." Then, when they saw him, they exalted him (at his beauty) and (in their astonishment) cut their hands. They said: "how perfect is Allah (or Allah forbid)! No man is this! This is none other than a noble angel!"*

*She said: "This is he (the young man) about whom you did blame me (for his love) and I did seek to seduce him, but he refused. And now if he refuses to obey my order, he shall certainly be cast into prison, and will be one of those who are disgraced."*

*He said: "O my Lord! Prison is more to my liking than that to which they invite me. Unless You turn away their plot from me, I will feel inclined towards them and be one of those who commit sin and deserve blame or those who do deeds of the ignorants."*

*So his Lord answered his invocation and turned away from him their plot. Verily he is the All Hearer, the All Knower."* (12:31-34)

## Yusuf's Time in Prison

Prison was Yusuf's third test. During this period Allah blessed him with an extraordinary gift; the ability to interpret dreams. At about the same time two other men landed in the prison. One was the cupbearer of the king; the other was the king's cook. The two men sensed that Yusuf was not a common criminal, for an aura of piety glowed on his face. Both men had vivid dreams, and they were anxious to have them explained. The king's cook dreamed that he stood in a place with bread on his head, and two birds were eating the bread. The cupbearer dreamed that he was serving the king wine. The two went to Yusuf and told him their dreams, asking him to give them their meaning.

First, Yusuf called them to Allah. Then he said that the cook would be crucified until he died and that the cupbearer would return to the service of the king. Yusuf told the cupbearer to remember him to the king and to say that there was a wronged soul called Yusuf in prison. What Yusuf predicted did happen; the cook was crucified and the cupbearer returned to the palace. After the cupbearer returned to service, Satan made him forget to mention Yusuf's name to the king. Therefore, Yusuf remained in prison for a few years, but he made patience his own, praying to Allah.

## The King's Dream

The king dreamt that he is on the banks of the Nile River. The water is receding before him, becoming mere mud. The fish begin to skip and jump in the mud. Seven fat cows come out of the river followed by seven lean cows. The seven lean ones devour the seven fat ones. The king is terrified. The seven ears of green grain grow on the riverbanks and disappear in the mud. One the same spot grow seven dray ears of grain. The king called for interpretation of his dream but no one was able to help him.

The news reached the cupbearer. He ran to the king to tell him about Yusuf, who was the only one capable to interpreting the dream. The cupbearer said: "He had asked me to remember him to you, but I forgot." The king sent the cupbearer to ask Yusuf about the dream.

## Yusuf's Interpretation of the Dream

Yusuf interpreted it to him: "There will be seven years of abundance. If the land is properly cultivated, there will be an excess of good harvest, more than the people will need. This should be stored. Thereafter, seven years of famine will follow, during which time the excess grain could be used."

He also advised that during the famine they should save some grain to be used for seed for the next harvest. Yusuf then added; "After seven years of drought, there will be a year during which water will be plentiful. If the water is properly used, grapevines and olive trees will grow in abundance, providing plenty of grapes and olive oil."

The king was greatly astonished. He commanded that Yusuf be set free from prison and presented to him at once, but Yusuf refused to leave the prison unless his innocence was proven. The king summoned Zulaikha and found out she was guilty.

### Yusuf's High Position

Yusuf advised the king to start planning for years of famine ahead. He informed him that the famine would affect not only Egypt but the neighbouring countries as well. The king offered him a high position. Yusuf asked to be made controller of the granaries, so that he could guard the nation's harvest and thereby safeguard it during the anticipated drought.

### Yusuf Meets His Brothers

When famine struck, Yaqub sent ten of his sons, all except Benjamin, to Egypt to purchase provisions. When they called on him to purchase their needs, Yusuf immediately recognized his brothers, but they did not know him.

Yusuf received them warmly. After supplying them with provisions, he asked where they had come from. They explained: *"We are eleven brothers, the children of a noble prophet. The youngest is at home tending to the needs of our aging father."*

On hearing this, Yusuf said, *"If what you say is true then bring your brother as proof and I will reward you with double rations. But if you do not bring him to me, it would be better if you do not return,"* Yusuf warned them. As an inducement to return with their brother, Yusuf ordered his servant to secretly place the purse, with the money they had paid, into one of their grain sacks.

### The Brothers Return to Canaan

When they opened their grain sacks, they were surprised to find the money purse returned intact. They rushed to their father; "Look, father! The noble official has returned our money; this is surely proof that he would not harm our brother and it can only benefit us." But Yaqub refused to send Benjamin with them. After some time, when they had no more grain, Yaqub asked them to travel to Egypt for more and took a pledge from them that they will not harm Benjamin.

### Yusuf and Benjamin Meet

Yusuf welcomed them heartily. He prepared a feast for them and seated them in pairs. That night, when Yusuf and Benjamin were alone in a room, Yusuf said; "My loving brother, I am the brother who was lost. This is Allah's favor. But let it be a secret between us for the time being."

## A Thief Among the Brothers

The next day, while their bags were being filled with grains to load onto the camels, Yusuf ordered one of his attendants to place the king's gold into Benjamin's saddlebag. When the brothers were ready to set out, the gates were locked, and the court crier shouted: "O you travelers, you are thieves!" The accusation was most unusual, and the people gathered around Yusuf's brothers.

"What have you lost?" his brothers inquired. A soldier said: "The king's golden cup. Whoever can trace it we will give a beast load of grain." Yusuf's brothers said with all innocence: "We have not come here to corrupt the land and steal."

Yusuf's officers said (as he had instructed them): "What punishment should you choose for the thief?" The brothers answered: "According to our law, whoever steals becomes a slave to the owner of the property."

The soldiers found the cup in Benjamin's bag. They began to beg Yusuf for mercy. "Yusuf, O minister! Take one of us instead. He is the son of a good man, and we can see you are a good man." Yusuf refused.

## The Brothers Confront Yaqub

When they arrived home, they entered upon their father calling: "O our father! Your son has stolen!" He was overwhelmed with sorrow and his eyes wept tears. "Patience be with me; perhaps Allah will return all of them to me. He is Most Knowing, Most Wise.

## Yusuf Reveals Himself

The brothers went to Egypt and begged for the release of Benjamin. Yusuf then spoke, *"Do you know what you did with Yusuf and his brother when you were ignorant?" They said: "Are you indeed Yusuf?" He said: "I am Yusuf, and his is my brother (Benjamin). Allah has indeed been Gracious to us. Verily, he who fears Allah with obedience to Him (by abstaining from sins and evil deeds, and by performing righteous good deeds), and is patient, then surely, Allah makes not the reward of the good doers to be lost." They said: "By Allah! Indeed Allah has preferred you above us, and we certainly have been sinners."* (12:89-91)

## Yaqub Learns About Yusuf

Yusuf then told his brothers to take his shirt and put it over the face of their father and he will regain his eyesight.

*And when the caravan departed, their father said: "I do indeed feel the smell of Yusuf, if only you think me not a dotard (a person who has weakness of mind because of old age)."*

*They said: "By Allah! Certainly, you are in your old error."*

*Then, when the bearer of the glad tidings arrived, he cast the shirt over his face, and he became clear sighted. He said: "Did I not say to you, I know from Allah that which you know not." They said: "O our father! Ask Forgiveness from Allah for our sins, indeed we have been sinners." (12:94-97)*

## Yaqub and Yusuf عليه صلعم Meet

Almighty Allah narrated: *Then, when they entered unto Yusuf, he betook his parents to himself and said: "Enter Egypt, if Allah will, in security." And he raised his parents to the throne and they fell down before him prostrate. And he said: "O my father! This is the interpretation of my dream of old! My Lord has made it come true! He was indeed good to me, when He took me out of prison, and brought you all here out of the Bedouin life, after Satan had sown enmity between me and my brothers. Certainly, my Lord is the Most Courteous and Kind unto whom He will. Truly He! Only He is the All Knowing, the All-Wise." (12:98-100)*

## LESSONS

- The Shaytan did not spare even the sons of a Prophet. He can create mischief by creating jealousy and envy between siblings. So always seek protection from the Shaytaan and not show off our bounties from Allah or proudly announcing them to the world
- Allah blesses some people more than the others so we should be content with what Allah has given us and not try to take away from what he has blessed others with
- Allah works in mysterious ways to bring His blessings to those who stayed truthful to their faith in times of hardship like he took out Yusuf from the well and rose him to a high position.
- Allah teaches us the Ultimate method of eliminating sin from our lives, and that is by avoiding the opportunity to commit sin itself. Yusuf asked to be sent to prison, instead of being in a position where he may be inclined to sin.
- Yusuf asked for help from others instead of Allah so Allah made him stay in the prison for a few more years. Always ask for help from Allah alone!
- The best way to deal with sorrow is to cry to Allah alone and be patient.

Lecture: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NmZz8tviAts&list=PL2B6955D353274642&index=9>