

Islamic Academy of Coventry

Stories from the Qur'an

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

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Stories from the Qur'ān - Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ 1st Edition

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## Introduction

I begin in the name of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Lord of the Worlds, and sending Salutations on our beloved Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى sent down many Prophets to this world in order to guide mankind. He chose to mention some of them in the Holy Qur'ān so we can read, learn and take advice from their examples.

Alḥamdulillāh there have been many books written about the Prophets including 'Stories of the Prophets' by Hazrat Sayyed Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ which is an invaluable resource for all Students of the Qur'ān.

This Ramaḍān, due to the attendance of many younger children in our daily programmes after 'Aṣr Ṣalāh at Masjid Zakariya, I decided to narrate the story of Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. The verses from the Qur'ān would be read first and then the translation and an explanation of the verses.

As resources I used 'Stories of the Prophets' and the English Translation of the Qur'ān done by Mufti Taqī Usmani DB.

During the compilation, I thought it would be a good idea to serialize this story into various chapters, so it can be used by various people, like students who want to learn the meaning of

the verses. It can be used by teachers in Madāris who want to tell the story over the course of a few days. It can even be used by parents wanting to tell their children the story of Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام during bedtime.

Inshā'Allāh, I pray that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى increases our love and connection with the Holy Qur'ān and gives me the ability to produce more booklets in the same format for the other Prophets as well.

Ebrahim Noor

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## Chapter 1 – The Dream

Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has revealed many Sūrah's about many Prophets in the Holy Qur'ān. One such Prophet was Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. And this is his story.

Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
الرَّ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ ۝ إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا  
عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ۝ نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ  
الْقَصَصِ بِمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ  
لَمِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ<sup>1</sup>

*Alif Lām Rā. These are verses of the enlightening book. We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'ān, so that you may understand. By revealing this Qur'ān to you, we hereby narrate to you (Muḥammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) the best narrative, while before this you were among those unaware (of it).*

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<sup>1</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:1-3)

This is an amazing and fascinating story. It is the only story in the Qur'ān of a Prophet which is mentioned in a single Sūrah. The Stories of the other Prophets are mentioned in lots of different Sūrahs, like 'Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, Mūsa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and 'Īsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, but the actual story of Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ is only mentioned in this one Sūrah.

This Sūrah will tell us about lots of different things. It will tell us about the love of a son for his father, and the fathers love for his child. It will tell us about jealousy between brothers. It will tell us about the journey of one boy who was abandoned and then travelled to another country where he became the leader of the people. It will tell us how Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى gave him patience, bravery, intellect and the quality to forgive.

So let's start our story. Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was the son of Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ who was the son of Ishāq عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ who was the son of Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had 12 sons in total and the youngest 2 were Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and Binyāmīn.

Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى used to sometimes send true dreams to the Prophets. This Sūrah starts with a dream and ends with the interpretation of the dream. Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was still a boy when one night he had a dream.

In the Qur'an Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says.

إِذْ قَالَ يُوسُفُ لِأَبِيهِ يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي رَأَيْتُ  
أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ رَأَيْتُهُمْ لِي سَاجِدِينَ<sup>2</sup>

And when Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ said to his father, “Oh my father, indeed I have seen (in my dream) 11 stars and the sun and the moon, I saw them prostrating, doing Sajdah to me!”

When Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ told his father Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ what he had seen in his dream, Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ realised, that his son was destined for great things, but he gave him a warning because he knew his brothers were jealous of him.

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<sup>2</sup> Holy Qur'an (12:4)

قَالَ يَبْنَى لَا تَقْصُصْ رُءْيَاكَ عَلَى إِخْوَتِكَ فَيَكِيدُوا لَكَ كَيْدًا<sup>ط</sup>  
إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ<sup>3</sup>

He (Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said “Oh my son, do not tell your brothers about your dream, for they might plot against you, indeed Shayṭān to man is an open enemy.”

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ listened to his father's advice and didn't tell his brothers about the dream.

Now Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and his brother Binyāmīn both had the same mother, Rachel. And their father Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ loved them very much. He would not let them out of his sight and would not send them with their brothers in case something happened to them.

The brothers were jealous because their father loved those two more than them, so what did they do? They decided to plot against Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ.



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<sup>3</sup> Holy Qur'an (12:5)

The Qur'an tells us:

إِذْ قَالُوا لِيُوسُفُ وَأَخُوهُ أَحَبُّ  
إِلَىٰ آبِنَا مِنَّا وَنَحْنُ عُصْبَةٌ إِنَّ آبَانَا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ<sup>4</sup>

When they said “truly Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and his brother (Binyāmīn) are more beloved to our father than us, and we are a strong group. Indeed our father is in plain error.”

أَقْتُلُوا يُوسُفَ أَوْ اطْرَحُوهُ أَرْضًا يَخْلُ لَكُمْ وَجْهَ أَبِيكُمْ  
وَتَكُونُوا مِن بَعْدِهِ قَوْمًا صَالِحِينَ<sup>5</sup>

“Kill Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام or cast him out to another land, so the favour of your father will be given to you and after that you will become righteous people.”



<sup>4</sup> Holy Qur'an (12:8)

<sup>5</sup> Holy Qur'an (12:9)

قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ  
لَا تَقْتُلُوا يُوسُفَ وَأَقْرَبَهُ فِي غَيْبَتِ الْجُبِّ يَلْتَقِطُهُ بَعْضُ  
السَّيَّارَةِ إِن كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ<sup>6</sup>

One from among them said, “Don’t kill Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, throw him down to the bottom of a well, he will be picked up by some caravan, if you are to do something.”

So the brothers made a plan, we won’t kill Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, we will take him and throw him into the bottom of a well. Some caravan will then pass by and pick him up. They will take him away with them to some far away land so he will be away from our father. Once he has gone, our father will only love us and we won’t have to worry about him. After that we will become good again.

Now the plan was made, they needed to find a way to take Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ away from their father. In order to do this, they needed to come up with a good excuse and convince him to let him go.

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<sup>6</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:10)

## Chapter 2 – The Brothers Plot

The brothers had plotted and decided to throw Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ inside a well so that their father Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ would love them more instead of him.

So they now went to their father:

قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا مَا لَكَ لَا تَأْمَنَّا عَلَى  
يُوسُفَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَنَصِِحُونَ « أَرْسَلَهُ مَعَنَا غَدًا يَرْتَعُ وَيَلْعَبُ  
وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ<sup>7</sup>

*They said “Oh our father, why do you not trust us with Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and indeed we are his well-wishers. Send him with us tomorrow to enjoy himself and play and we will take care of him.”*



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<sup>7</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:11-12)

Their father replied:

قَالَ إِنِّي لَيَحْزُنُنِي أَنْ تَذْهَبُوا بِهِ، وَأَخَافُ  
أَنْ يَأْكُلَهُ الذِّئْبُ وَأَنْتُمْ عَنْهُ غَافِلُونَ<sup>8</sup>

*He said, “Indeed it saddens me that you take him away and I fear that a wolf may eat him while you are unaware (careless).”*

The brothers replied:

قَالُوا لَئِنْ أَكَلَهُ الذِّئْبُ وَنَحْنُ عُصْبَةٌ إِنَّا إِذًا لَخَسِرُونَ<sup>9</sup>

*They said, “If a wolf eats him, while we are a strong group then surely we are the losers.”*



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<sup>8</sup> Holy Qur'an (12:13)

<sup>9</sup> Holy Qur'an (12:14)

So the brothers asked their father Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ if they could take Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ with them and he expressed reservation. He was worried something might happen to Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, maybe the desert wolves might eat him. His other sons convinced him that how can a wolf eat him when there are so many of us, we are a strong group. We will look after him and make sure nothing happens to him. In this way the brothers convinced their father and the next day they would take Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ with them and carry out their plan.

The following day, the brothers took Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ into the Wilderness.

فَلَمَّا ذَهَبُوا بِهِ ۖ وَأَجْمَعُوا أَن يَجْعَلُوهُ فِي غَيْبَتِ الْجُبِّ<sup>10</sup>

*So when they went away with him and were determined to put him in the bottom of the pit.*

They took him to a well and threw him inside. They showed no mercy to their younger brother and left him there. Imagine how sad and lonely Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ must have felt all alone in that deep, dark well and the fact that it was none other than his own brothers who had done this horrible deed.

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<sup>10</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:15)

Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى then told Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ:

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ لَتُنَبِّئَنَّهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِمْ هَذَا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ<sup>11</sup>

*And we revealed to him (Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ), you will one day remind them of this deed of theirs and they will not recognize you.*

So Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى told him not to worry, he will be safe and one day he will see them all again and remind them of what they did.

So now Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ is in the well, the brothers need to come up with an excuse to explain Yūsuf's absence, what will they tell their father?

They decided that they will tell their father that a wolf had eaten him. Their father had already expressed fear that this might happen to him. So how could they prove that Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had been eaten by a wolf?



<sup>11</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:15)

The brothers had to prove Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام had been attacked, so they took his shirt and decided they needed to cover it in blood. The brothers went a caught a ram and killed it. Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام shirt was then dipped in the ram's blood. Their father will recognize his shirt and see it covered in blood and believe in their story.

وَجَاءُوا آبَاءَهُمْ عِشَاءَ يَبْكُونَ<sup>12</sup>

*And they came to their father at night time weeping.*

The brothers then returned home pretending to be upset because they had to show that their younger brother had just been killed.

قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا إِنَّا ذَهَبْنَا نَسْتَبِقُ  
وَتَرَكْنَا يُوسُفَ عِنْدَ مَتَعِنَا فَأَكَلَهُ الذِّئْبُ وَمَا أَنْتَ  
بِمُؤْمِنٍ لَّنَا وَلَوْ كُنَّا صَادِقِينَ<sup>13</sup>

*They said, "Oh our Father, we went racing with one another and we left Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام with our belongings and the wolf ate him. You will never believe us, howsoever truthful we may be."*

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<sup>12</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:16)

<sup>13</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:17)

وَجَاءُوا عَلَىٰ قَمِيصِهِ بِدَمٍ كَذِبٍ<sup>14</sup>

*And they came with fake blood on his shirt.*

Now when Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ saw the shirt, he knew something wasn't right. Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was a Prophet, he was a wise man. If a wolf had eaten up Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ then his shirt would be all torn up, but this shirt wasn't ripped, it had only been dipped in blood.

قَالَ بَلْ سَوَّلَتْ لَكُمْ أَنفُسُكُمْ أَمْرًا فَصَبِرُوا جَمِيلٌ  
وَاللَّهُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَىٰ مَا تَصِفُونَ<sup>15</sup>

*He (Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said, "Rather your inner desires have tempted you to do something. So patience is best. It is Allāh whose help is sought against what you describe."*

So the brothers' left Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ in a well, they came to their father with his shirt dipped in false blood and their father knew something was not right, but he remained patient.



<sup>14</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:18)

<sup>15</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:18)

## Chapter 3 – From the Well to the Palace

The brothers had returned home in the evening crying and lied to their father. They said we were racing and left Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ with our belongings when a wolf came and ate him. They showed him Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ shirt covered in blood but their father knew something was not quite right.

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was now in the well all alone, it was deep, dark, and lonely. His father Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ must have also been wondering what has happened to his son that he loved so much. Imagine how we feel when someone we love gets lost even for a little while. Let's see what happened next.



A group of people were travelling through the desert and were thirsty. They saw the well and sent a person to go and get some water.

وَجَاءَتْ سَيَّارَةٌ فَأَرْسَلُوا وَارِدَهُمْ فَأَدْلَى دَلْوَهُ<sup>16</sup>

*And some wayfarers came (meaning some travelers) and they sent their water-drawer (the person who gets water for them), so he let down his bucket.*

He puts his bucket in the well and what does he find?

قَالَ يَبْشَرِي هَذَا غُلَامٌ وَأَسْرُوهُ بَضْعَةً<sup>17</sup> وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ

*He said “What a good news, here is a boy”, and they kept him hidden in their merchandise while Allāh was aware of what they were doing.*



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<sup>16</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:19)

<sup>17</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:19)

So this group found this boy and hid him so they could sell him later on. They travelled all the way from the land of Can‘ān where Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ used to live, to the land of Egypt.

They took Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to the market and put him up for sale!

وَشَرَوْهُ بِثَمَنٍ بَخْسٍ دَرَاهِمَ مَعْدُودَةٍ وَكَانُوا فِيهِ مِنَ الزَّاهِدِينَ<sup>18</sup>

*And they sold him for a paltry price, for a few silver coins, and they had not much interest in him.*

So Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was sold and his master was a leader, he was an ‘Azīz which is a title given to mighty person like a king.



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<sup>18</sup> Holy Qur‘ān (12:20)

The ‘Azīz took Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ home to his palace and said

وَقَالَ

الَّذِي اشْتَرَاهُ مِنْ مِصْرَ لِمَرْأَتِهِ

أَكْرِمِي مَثْوَاهُ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَنْفَعَنَا أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُ وَلَدًا<sup>19</sup>

*And the one who brought him from Egypt said to his wife, “Make his stay graceful, he may be useful for us, or we may adopt him as a son.”*

So Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ went to live in the palace with the person who purchased him. He had gone from being inside a well in one country all the way to a palace in a faraway land. But the problems of Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ did not end there.

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was a very handsome young man. The wife of the ‘Azīz was attracted to him. But Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ would not go near her.



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<sup>19</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:21)

One day she made a plan. She was in the house with Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ when she locked the doors and told him to come to her.

قَالَ مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ رَبِّي أَحْسَنَ مَثْوَايَ  
إِنَّهُ لَا يَفْلِحُ الظَّالِمُونَ<sup>20</sup>

*He said, “I seek refuge with Allāh, Indeed he is my master (meaning her husband) He has given me a good place to stay, indeed the wrong doers do not prosper.”*

وَأَسْتَبَقَا الْبَابَ وَقَدَّتْ قَمِيصَهُ مِنْ دُبُرٍ وَأَلْفَيَا سَيِّدَهَا لَدَا الْبَابِ  
قَالَتْ مَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ أَرَادَ بِأَهْلِكَ سُوءًا إِلَّا أَنْ يُسْجَنَ أَوْ عَذَابٌ  
أَلِيمٌ<sup>21</sup>

*They raced towards the door and she ripped his shirt from behind and they found her master by the door. She said, “What could be the punishment of him who intended to do evil with your wife except that he be imprisoned or given a painful chastisement.”*

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<sup>20</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:23)

<sup>21</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:25)

So the Master's wife lied to her husband and said that Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had bad intentions with her when in actual fact it was the other way around. Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ now tried to prove his innocence.

قَالَ هِيَ رَوَدَّتْنِي عَنْ نَفْسِي<sup>22</sup>

*He said, she had tried to attract me*

Now how are they going to prove who is telling the truth? Was Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ saying the truth or was it his Master's wife?

وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْ

أَهْلِهَا إِنْ كَانَ قَمِيصُهُ قُدَّ مِنْ قُبُلٍ فَصَدَقَتْ وَهُوَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ<sup>23</sup>

*A Witness from her family said that if his shirt has been ripped from the front side, then she is saying the truth and he is a liar.*

وَإِنْ كَانَ قَمِيصُهُ قُدَّ مِنْ دُبُرٍ فَكَذَبَتْ وَهُوَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ<sup>24</sup>

*And if his shirt is ripped from the back then she is lying and he is from among the truthful.*

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<sup>22</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:26)

<sup>23</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:26)

<sup>24</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:27)

So this was the test, if he had tried to do something to her then she would have ripped his shirt from the front as he would be facing her. But if he was running away and she was trying to do something to him, then his shirt would be ripped from behind.

فَلَمَّا رَأَى قَمِيصَهُ وَقُدَّ مِنْ دُبُرٍ قَالَ إِنَّهُ وَمِنْ كَيْدِكُنَّ إِنَّ كَيْدَكُنَّ  
عَظِيمٌ<sup>25</sup>

So when her husband saw his shirt was ripped from behind, he said “This is certainly your trickery (to his wife) Great is the trickery of you women indeed.”



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<sup>25</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:28)

So the Master knew Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was innocent. However Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ kept on getting tested and his Master's wife said.

وَلَيْنَ لَمْ يَفْعَلْ مَا ءَامَرُهُو لِيُسْجَنَنَّ وَلَيَكُونَا مِّنَ الصَّغِيرِينَ<sup>26</sup>

*And should he not follow my command, he shall be imprisoned and will be from the disgraced.*

قَالَ رَبِّ السِّجْنُ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا يَدْعُونَنِي<sup>27</sup>

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ said, “My Lord, the prison is dearer to me than what these women invite me to do.”

ثُمَّ بَدَأْ لَهُم مِّن بَعْدِ مَا رَأَوْا الْآيَاتِ لَيْسَجُنُّهُ وَحَتَّىٰ حِينٍ<sup>28</sup>

*Later on, even after having seen the clear signs (that Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was innocent) they deemed it proper to imprison him for some time.*

So now Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ is being tested again by Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ. He was left in a well, then brought all the way to Egypt. He was then sold for a few silver coins. His Master was good to him but his Master's wife fell in love with him and tried to call him towards

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<sup>26</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:32)

<sup>27</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:33)

<sup>28</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:35)

her. When her husband came, she lied and said that it was Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ who had tried to come towards her.

Her husband saw his shirt and because it was ripped from behind, he knew it was his wife who was not telling the truth. After a while Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was put into prison. So what happened next?



## Chapter 4 – The Prisoners Dreams

So Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was now put into a prison. Even though he was innocent, he was imprisoned. The people in the prison knew that Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was a noble man with great knowledge. So one day two men came to him. Both of them had a dream and wanted to know what their dreams meant.

وَدَخَلَ مَعَهُ السِّجْنَ فَتَيَانٍ قَالَ أَحَدُهُمَا إِنِّي  
أَرِنِي أَعْصِرُ خَمْرًا وَقَالَ الْآخَرُ إِنِّي أَرِنِي أَحْمِلُ فَوْقَ رَأْسِي  
خُبْزًا تَأْكُلُ الطَّيْرُ مِنْهُ نَبِّئْنَا بِتَأْوِيلِهِ إِنَّا نَرْنَكَ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ<sup>29</sup>

And two men entered the prison with him, one of them said, “I have seen myself pressing wine”. And the other said “I saw myself carrying bread on my head and the birds were eating from it”. Let us know its interpretation, we see you are a man of good deeds.



<sup>29</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:36)

Now Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was a great Messenger of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى had given him the ability to interpret dreams.

قَالَ لَا يَأْتِيكُمَا طَعَامٌ تُرْزَقَانِهِ إِلَّا نَبَّأْتُكُمَا بِتَأْوِيلِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ  
يَأْتِيَكُمَا<sup>30</sup>

*He said, "No food provided for you shall come to you, but I can give you its description before it comes to you."*

ذَلِكَ مَا عَلَّمَنِي رَبِّي إِنِّي تَرَكْتُ مِلَّةَ قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَهُمْ  
بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ كَافِرُونَ<sup>31</sup>

*"This is the knowledge my Lord has given to me. I have abandoned the way of those who do not believe in Allāh and who are deniers of the hereafter."*

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ did not answer them right away but gave them some advice as they would listen because a person in need hears and obeys.

Now after a while Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ told them what they wanted to hear, he interpreted both dreams.

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<sup>30</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:37)

<sup>31</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:37)

يَصْحَبِي السِّجْنِ أَمَّا أَحَدُكُمَا فَيَسْقِي رَبَّهُ وَخَمْرًا وَأَمَّا الْآخَرُ  
 فَيُصَلَّبُ فَتَأْكُلُ الطَّيْرُ مِنْ رَأْسِهِ قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ الَّذِي فِيهِ  
 تَسْتَفْتِيَانِ<sup>32</sup>

“Oh my fellow prisoners, one of you will serve wine to his Master, while the other will be crucified and birds will eat from his head. Destined is the matter you are asking about.”

So now Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had told both of them the meaning of their dreams. He added one more thing.

وَقَالَ لِلَّذِي ظَنَّ أَنَّهُ نَاجٍ مِّنْهُمَا اذْكُرْنِي عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ فَأَنَسَهُ  
 الشَّيْطَانُ ذِكْرَ رَبِّهِ فَلَبِثَ فِي السِّجْنِ بِضْعَ سِنِينَ<sup>33</sup>

And Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ said to the one whom he believed likely to be released out of the two, “Tell you’re Master about me”. Then Satan made him forget to tell his Master, so he (Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) remained in prison for a few years.

<sup>32</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:41)

<sup>33</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:42)



So Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ spoke to one of the prisoners. He knew one will become a wine-bearer and the other will be crucified. He told the wine-bearer that when you are released, mention me in front of your Lord. When his Lord hears about Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and finds out about how he had been falsely accused and imprisoned, maybe he will be freed.

The two men now left the prison. As Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had foretold, one of them became a wine-bearer for the King. The other man was crucified.

The wine-bearer forgot to tell the king about Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ so now he had to stay in prison for a few more years. Did Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ manage to prove his innocence and get released from prison?



## Chapter 5 – The Kings Dream

Two prisoners had come to Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ so he could give them the interpretation of their dreams. One of them had a dream that he was pressing wine and the other said he was carrying bread on his head and the birds were eating from it.

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ told them that one would become a wine-bearer and the other would become crucified and the birds would eat from his head. He had told the wine-bearer that make sure you tell your Master about me. The wine-bearer had forgotten to tell the king because Shayṭān had made him forget. And this resulted in Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ spending some more years in Jail.

It just so happened that the King of Egypt started to see strange dreams. What did he see?

وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ إِنِّي أَرَى سَبْعَ بَقَرَاتٍ سِمَانٍ يَأْكُلُهُنَّ  
سَبْعٌ عِجَافٌ وَسَبْعَ سُنبُلَاتٍ خُضْرٍ وَأُخَرَ يَابِسَاتٍ يَا أَيُّهَا  
الْمَلَأُ أَفْتُونِي فِي رُؤْيَايَ إِن كُنْتُمْ لِلرُّؤْيَا تَعْبُرُونَ<sup>34</sup>

*And the King said (to the people in his court) “I saw (in my dream) seven fat cows being eaten by seven lean (skinny) cows. And seven ears of grain*

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<sup>34</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:43)

which are green and (seven) others which are dry. Oh people, tell me about my dream, if you can interpret dreams.”

So now all the people heard about the dream. They told the king don't worry about it. When a person sleeps they see lots of things in their dreams so don't concern yourself.

قَالُوا أَضْغَتْ أَحْلَامٌ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِتَأْوِيلِ الْأَحْلَامِ بِعَالِمِينَ<sup>35</sup>

They said “(It seems to be) a mish mash of dreams and we do not know the interpretation of dreams.”

There was one person however present in the court who would be able to find out what the Kings dream really meant. And this was the wine-bearer.



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<sup>35</sup> Holy Qur'an (12:44)

وَقَالَ الَّذِي نَجَا مِنْهُمَا وَادَّكَرَ بَعْدَ أُمَّةٍ أَنَا أُنَبِّئُكُمْ  
بِتَأْوِيلِهِ فَأَرْسِلُونِ<sup>36</sup>

And said the one who was released (from the prison, meaning the wine-bearer) out of the two, and recalled (meaning remembered Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) after a long time. “I shall tell you it’s interpretation, just send me (to Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ).”

So now the wine-bearer goes back to the prison to look for Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ so he can ask him the interpretation of the dream. He sees Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and says:

يُوسُفُ أَيُّهَا الصِّدِّيقُ أَفْتِنَا فِي سَبْعِ بَقَرَاتٍ  
سِمَانٍ يَأْكُلُهُنَّ سَبْعٌ عِجَافٌ وَسَبْعِ سُنبُلَاتٍ خُضْرٍ  
وَأُخْرَى يَابِسَاتٍ لَعَلِّي أَرْجِعُ إِلَى النَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ<sup>37</sup>

“Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, Oh the truthful one, tell us about seven fat cows eaten by seven lean ones (skinny ones) and seven ears of grain which are green and others (seven) which are dry, so that I may go back to the people and they may know (the meaning of the dream).”

<sup>36</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:45)

<sup>37</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:46)

Now Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام not only told him the meaning of the dream but also explained what they needed to do. The meaning of the dream was that for 7 years, they will have a good harvest, lots of food and crops. But then after this, there will follow 7 years of drought where there will be no food and crops. So what advice did he give?

قَالَ تَزْرَعُونَ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ دَأَبًا فَمَا حَصَدْتُمْ فَذَرُوهُ فِي سُنْبُلِهِ إِلَّا  
قَلِيلًا مِّمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ<sup>38</sup>

He (Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) said, “You will grow crops for seven years continuously, so what you have harvested, leave it in its ear, except a little which you eat.”



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<sup>38</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:47)

ثُمَّ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ سَبْعُ شِدَادٍ يَأْكُلْنَ  
مَا قَدَّمْتُمْ لَهُنَّ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِمَّا تَحْصِنُونَ<sup>39</sup>

*Then seven hard years shall come after that, which shall eat up what you have stored for them, except a little which you preserve (to sow).*

So for seven years they will save lots of food, and when the seven hard years come they will eat what they had saved over those years, except the seeds which they need to plant again so more crops can grow.



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<sup>39</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:48)

ثُمَّ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ عَامٌ فِيهِ يُغَاثُ النَّاسُ وَفِيهِ  
يَعَصِرُونَ<sup>40</sup>

*Then there shall come after that a year in which people will have rains  
and in which they will extract juices.*

So in this year, the crops will grow again people have lots of food  
again.



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<sup>40</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:49)

The wine-bearer now went back to the king to tell him the meaning of his dream. When the king heard, he became very happy and relieved. He asked the wine-bearer who told you about this, he said it as Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. So the king told the wine-bearer to go and bring Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to him.

وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ أَتُتُونِي بِهِ ۖ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُ الرَّسُولُ قَالَ أَرْجِعْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ  
فَسَلَّهُ مَا بَالَ النِّسْوَةِ الَّتِي قَطَّعْنَ أَيْدِيَهُنَّ إِنَّ رَبِّي بِكَيْدِهِنَّ  
عَلِيمٌ<sup>41</sup>

*So the king told the wine bearer to go and bring Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to him. So when the Messenger came to Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, he said go back to your Lord and ask him, what is the case of the women who cut their hands? Surely my Lord knows well their guile.*

So Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ wanted the king to investigate his case. If he came out just like that then people would say that this is the same person who was unfaithful to his master. So before he came out he wanted his innocence to be known.

The king then asked the women and his masters wife admitted that she was the one who had tried to do bad things with him

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<sup>41</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:50)

rather than Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. Once she had admitted that she was in the wrong.

ذَلِكَ لِيَعْلَمَ أَنِّي لَمْ أَخُنْهُ بِالْغَيْبِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي كَيْدَ  
الْخَائِنِينَ<sup>42</sup>

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ then said “That was because he (his master) may know that I did not betray him in his absence, and that Allāh does not lead the guile of the betrayers to success.”

So Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was finally free after years of false imprisonment. His innocence had been proven and now he had to help the king and the country to make sure they survive the seven years of drought which are about to come.



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<sup>42</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:52)

## Chapter 6 – The Storehouses

Now Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had been declared free from prison as his innocence had been proven. He was also able to interpret dreams and interpreted the Kings dream which was worrying him greatly. There would be 7 years of good harvest followed by 7 years of famine.

Egypt was a very fertile land and there were many storehouses for grain, yet they were empty. The reason was that the people who ran them were not trustworthy, they would not fear Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Now it was very important that these storehouses were looked after properly so the grain could be kept safe in them until the time would come when they needed it. If they didn't look after the grain properly then after 7 years when the famine would come, they would have no food.

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ knew about these problems, what did he do?

قَالَ أَجْعَلْنِي عَلَى خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ ۗ إِنِّي حَفِيظٌ عَلِيمٌ<sup>43</sup>

*He (Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said “Appoint me to supervise the treasures of the land, I am indeed a knowledgeable keeper.”*

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<sup>43</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:55)

The King accepted Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام request and now he became in charge of all of the storehouses in the whole of Egypt!

Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

وَكَذَلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَتَّبِعُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَاءُ<sup>44</sup>

And thus we gave Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام power in the land. He could settle in it wherever he wished.



<sup>44</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:56)

Now just as Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had foretold from interpreting the Kings dream, they had 7 good years of plenty and now the famine started. Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had managed to store enough grain so everyone would be able eat and not stay hungry in this testing time.

This famine just didn't affect Egypt but also Can'an where his family used to live. They were also struggling. They had heard that there was a merciful man in Egypt who looked after the Storehouses. People could go to him and he would give them some food. Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ sent his ten sons with some money to go and buy some food.



Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ other brother, Binyāmīn, was not sent with them as his father wanted to keep him close. He had already lost Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and did not want to lose another son as well. So the brothers left Can‘ān and made their way to Egypt.

Little did they know that the man they wanted to go and meet was none other than their own flesh and blood, their own brother, Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. It had been years since they had left him inside the well that day so they thought he had passed away long ago.

So what happened next?

وَجَاءَ إِخْوَةُ يُوسُفَ فَدَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَعَرَفَهُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُ مُنْكَرُونَ<sup>45</sup>

*And came the brothers of Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and appeared before him. He recognized them, while they did not recognize him.*

Now at that moment in time Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ could have exposed them, he could have turned them away, he could have had them imprisoned for trying to kill him. But such was the mercy of Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ that he did not disgrace them.

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ talked to them for a while and asked them where they were from. He knew too well where they were from but he still asked.

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<sup>45</sup> Holy Qur‘ān (12:58)

They replied we are from Can‘ān. He then asked them who their father was. They replied that their father was Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ the son of Ishāq عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, the son of Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. What an amazing lineage.

He then asked them, do you have another brother. They replied that they have another brother whose name is Binyāmīn.

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ then asked them, why didn’t he come with you? They replied that their father would not let him go because he didn’t like to be far away from him.

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ then asked, why does he not let him go, is he a very young child? They replied, no, we once had a brother called Yūsuf. He once went with us and we went to run races and left him with our belongings. A wolf then came and ate him.

يعقوب

When he heard this, Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ laughed to himself but he didn't say anything. He longed to see his brother Binyāmīn and wanted to find a way to try and get him to Egypt.

وَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُمْ بِجَهَّازِهِمْ قَالَ أَئْتُونِي بِأَخٍ لَّكُمْ مِّنْ أَبِيكُمْ أَلَا تَرَوْنَ أَنِّي أُوْفِي الْكَيْلَ وَأَنَا خَيْرُ الْمُنْزِلِينَ<sup>46</sup>

When he (Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) equipped them with their provisions, he said “Bring to me your other brother from your father's side. Do you not see that I give full measure, and I extend the best hospitality?”

فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَأْتُونِي بِهِ فَلَا كَيْلَ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي وَلَا تَقْرَبُونِ<sup>47</sup>

“Still if you do not bring him to me then you deserve no (further) measure from me, nor shall you approach me anymore ”



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<sup>46</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:59)

<sup>47</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:60)

So Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ told his brothers, if they don't bring Binyāmīn, then you will get no more food from me and don't bother coming here again. If they can't get more food from here then where else could they go because there was a famine?

قَالُوا سُرْرُودٌ عَنَّا أَبَاهُ وَإِنَّا لَفَاعِلُونَ<sup>48</sup>

*They said “We shall persuade his father about him and we will certainly do it.”*

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ also had another plan.

وَقَالَ لِفِتْيَانِهِ اجْعَلُوا بِضَعَتَهُمْ فِي رِحَالِهِمْ  
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَعْرِفُونَهَا إِذَا أُنْقَلَبُوا إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ<sup>49</sup>

*And he (Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said to his boys “Put their goods in their camel-packs. Perhaps they will recognize it when they go back to their family, perhaps they will come again.”*

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<sup>48</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:61)

<sup>49</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:62)

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام told his people to put the brothers' money (which they had used to pay for the food) back into their camel-packs. When they get home and realize they still have the money, this should further persuade them to come back to Egypt.



## Chapter 7 – The Brothers Return Home

The brothers went back to their father Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. They had not recognized Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ when they went to Egypt. They thought he had passed away long ago in the well. They now had to find a way to convince their father to send their other younger brother Binyāmīn with them to Egypt. Long ago, they had convinced him to send Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ with them and their father hadn’t seen him since, will he send Binyāmīn?

فَلَمَّا رَجَعُوا إِلَىٰ أَبِيهِمْ قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا مُنِعَ مِنَّا الْكَيْلُ  
فَأَرْسِلْ مَعَنَا أَخَانَا نَكْتَلُ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ<sup>50</sup>

*So when they returned to their father, they said “Father, the required measure of grain has been withheld from us, therefore send our brother with us, so that we may receive full measure.”*



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<sup>50</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:63)

قَالَ هَلْ ءَامَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا كَمَا ءَامَنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَخِيهِ مِنْ  
قَبْلُ ۖ قَالَ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ حَافِظًا ۖ وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّحِيمِينَ<sup>51</sup>

He (Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said, “Shall I trust you about him as I trusted you earlier about his brother? Well Allāh is the best guardian and he is the Most-Merciful of all the Merciful.

Now Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had put the brothers’ money back into their camel packs unbeknown to them and they found their money. They told Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ what else should we want. He has given our money back to us. We can go back again, protect our brother Binyāmīn and add the measure of another camel as well.

This time Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ wanted them to make a firm pledge that they will not let anything happen to their brother.

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<sup>51</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:64)

قَالَ لَنْ أُرْسِلَهُ مَعَكُمْ حَتَّى تُؤْتُونِ مَوْثِقًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ لَتَأْتِنِي  
 بِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يُحَاطَ بِكُمْ فَلَمَّا آتَوْهُ مَوْثِقَهُمْ قَالَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا نَقُولُ  
 وَكِيلٌ<sup>52</sup>

He (Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said “I shall never send him with you until you give me a pledge in the name of Allāh that you will definitely bring him back to me, unless you are overpowered (by circumstances)”. So when they gave him their pledge, he said “Allāh is watchful over what we say.”

He then gave them some advice.

وَقَالَ يَبْنَى لَّا تَدْخُلُوا مِن بَابٍ وَاحِدٍ وَأَدْخُلُوا مِن أَبْوَابٍ مُّتَفَرِّقَةٍ<sup>53</sup>

And he (Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said “Oh my sons, do not enter (the city) all of you from the same gate, rather enter from different gates.”

<sup>52</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:66)

<sup>53</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:67)

So the brothers did what their father had told them to do and entered from different gates. Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ finally saw his brother Binyāmīn after many years, imagine his happiness.

وَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَى يُوسُفَ ءَاوَىٰ إِلَىٰٓ إِلَيْهِ أَخَاهُ  
قَالَ إِنِّي أَنَا أَخُوكَ فَلَا تَبْتَئِسْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ<sup>54</sup>

*And when they came to Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, he lodged his brother with himself. He said “Look I am your brother! So do not grieve for what they have been doing.”*

Binyāmīn was very happy to see his brother who he thought had passed away long ago. Now Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ wanted his brother to stay with him, he didn't want to send him back so he could talk to him every day. He needed to come up with a plan as he just couldn't say that he is not allowed to go back. He also can't tell them he is their brother. So what did he do?

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<sup>54</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:69)

فَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُمْ بِجَهَّازِهِمْ جَعَلَ السَّقَايَةَ فِي رَحْلِ أَخِيهِ  
ثُمَّ أَذَّنَ مُؤَذِّنٌ أَيُّهَا الْعَيْرِ إِنَّكُمْ لَسَرِقُونَ<sup>55</sup>

*Later, when he equipped them with their provision, he placed the bowl in the camel-pack of his brother. Then an announcer shouted out “Oh people of the caravan, you are thieves.”*

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ got a precious drinking cup and placed it in Binyāmīn’s camel-pack. He then sent his people after his brothers and accused them of being thieves.

قَالُوا وَأَقْبَلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ مَاذَا تَفْقِدُونَ<sup>56</sup>

*Turning towards them, they (the brothers) said (to Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ people) “What are you missing?”*



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<sup>55</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:70)

<sup>56</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:71)

قَالُوا نَفَقِدُ صُوعَ الْمَلِكِ وَلِمَنْ جَاءَ بِهِ حِمْلُ بَعِيرٍ وَأَنَا بِهِ  
زَعِيمٌ<sup>57</sup>

*They said “We are missing the measuring bowl of the king, and whoever brings it back shall deserve a camel-load, and I stand a surety for it.”*

قَالُوا تَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَا جِئْنَا لِنُفْسِدَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا كُنَّا  
سَارِقِينَ<sup>58</sup>

*They said, “We swear by Allāh, you know, we did not come to make mischief in the land, nor have we ever been thieves.”*

قَالُوا فَمَا جَزَاؤُهُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ كَاذِبِينَ<sup>59</sup>

*They said “What is the punishment if you are liars?”*

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<sup>57</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:72)

<sup>58</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:73)

<sup>59</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:74)

قَالُوا جَزَاؤُهُ مَن وُجِدَ فِي رَحْلِهِ ۖ فَهُوَ جَزَاؤُهُ ۚ كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي  
الظَّالِمِينَ<sup>60</sup>

*They said “Its punishment? The one in whose saddlebag it is found shall himself be the punishment. This is how we punish the wrong doers.”*

فَبَدَأَ بِأَوْعِيَّتِهِمْ قَبْلَ وِعَاءِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ اسْتَخْرَجَهَا مِنْ وِعَاءِ أَخِيهِ<sup>61</sup>

*So he started with their bags before (searching) the bag of their brother, then recovered it from the bag of their brother.*

So the cup was found in Binyāmīn’s camel-pack. What happened next?



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<sup>60</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:75)

<sup>61</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:76)

## Chapter 8 - Back to Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had been visited by his brothers and he had finally been reunited with Binyāmīn after many years. Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ did not want to send him back with them and wanted him to stay with him so he thought of a plan. A precious drinking cup was put in Binyāmīn’s camel pack and Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ sent his men after them to see where it was.

The cup had been found in Binyāmīn’s camel-pack just as Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had planned. So what did the brothers say when this happened?

قَالُوا إِن يَسْرِقَ فَقَدْ سَرَقَ أَخٌ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَأَسْرَهَا يُوسُفُ فِي نَفْسِهِ  
وَلَمْ يُبْدِهَا لَهُمْ قَالَ أَنْتُمْ شَرُّ مَكَانًا وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَصِفُونَ<sup>62</sup>

They said, “If he commits theft (there is nothing surprising because) his other brother had committed theft earlier”. Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ kept it (his reaction) to himself and did not reveal it to them. He said (In his heart) you are even worse in position. Allāh knows best of what you allege.

Imagine that, his brothers were not even ashamed in lying, but Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ stayed patient and didn’t say anything. Now the brothers were worried, how would they go home without

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<sup>62</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:77)

Binyāmīn? How would they face their father? They had to think of something to convince Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام to send him back.

قَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الْعَزِيزُ إِنَّ لَهُ أَبًا شَيْخًا كَبِيرًا  
فَخُذْ أَحَدَنَا مَكَانَهُ ۗ إِنَّا نَرَاكَ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ<sup>63</sup>

They said, “Oh ‘Azīz, he has a father, an old man. So take one of us in his place. We see you are a generous man.”

قَالَ مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ أَنْ نَأْخُذَ إِلَّا مَنْ وَجَدْنَا مَتَّعْنَا عِنْدَهُ ۗ إِنَّا إِذَا  
لَنظَلِمُونَ<sup>64</sup>

He (Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) said “We seek Allāh’s refuge from keeping anyone other than him with whom we have found our thing, otherwise we shall be unjust.”



<sup>63</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:78)

<sup>64</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:79)

So now the brothers had to leave Binyāmīn behind, what are they going to do? They had to think of an excuse before they go back to their father Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. They had already lost one brother and now the other one as well!

فَلَمَّا اسْتَيْسُوا مِنْهُ خَلَصُوا نَجِيًّا  
قَالَ كَبِيرُهُمْ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ أَبَاكُمْ قَدْ أَخَذَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
مَوْثِقًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَمِن قَبْلُ مَا فَرَّطْتُمْ فِي يُوسُفَ فَلَنْ أَبْرَحَ  
الْأَرْضَ حَتَّى يَأْذَنَ لِي أَبِي أَوْ يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ لِي وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحَاكِمِينَ<sup>65</sup>

So when they lost hope in him, they went aside for consultation. The oldest of them said “Do you not know that your father has taken a pledge from you in the name of Allāh, while you had defaulted earlier in the case of Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. I shall never leave this land until my father permits me or Allāh decides about me. He is the best of all Judges.”

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<sup>65</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:80)

أَرْجِعُوا إِلَىٰ آبَائِكُمْ فَقُولُوا يَا بَنَانَا إِنَّ ابْنَكَ سَرَقَ  
وَمَا شَهِدْنَا إِلَّا بِمَا عَلِمْنَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِلْغَيْبِ حَافِظِينَ<sup>66</sup>

“Go back to your father and say, our father, your son has committed theft, and we do not testify except what we know and we could not guard against the unseen.”

So the brothers went back to Can‘ān to their father Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and told him what had happened. When Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ heard what had happened he knew that Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ was testing him.

قَالَ بَلْ سَوَّلَتْ لَكُمْ أَنفُسُكُمْ أَمْرًا<sup>ط</sup>  
فَصَبِّرْ<sup>و</sup> جَمِيلٌ عَسَىٰ اللَّهُ أَن يَأْتِيَنِي بِهِمْ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَلِيمُ  
الْحَكِيمُ<sup>67</sup>

He (Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said “Rather, your inner desires have seduced you to something. So patience is best. Hopefully Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ may bring them all together. Surely, He is the All-knowing, All-Wise.”

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<sup>66</sup> Holy Qur‘ān (12:81)

<sup>67</sup> Holy Qur‘ān (12:83)

وَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَا سَفَى عَلَى يُونُسَ وَأَبْيَضَّتْ عَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْحُزَنِ  
فَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ<sup>68</sup>

He (Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) turned away from them and said, "How sad I am about Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ" and his eyes turned white with sorrow and he was suppressing (his anger and grief).

قَالُوا تَاللَّهِ تَفْتُوا تَذَكُرُ يُونُسَ حَتَّى تَكُونَ حَرَضًا أَوْ تَكُونَ مِنَ  
الْهَالِكِينَ<sup>69</sup>

They said "By God, you will not stop remembering Yūsuf until you collapse or perish."

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَشْكُوا بَنِي وَحُزْنِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَأَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ<sup>70</sup>

He (Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said "I do not complain of my anguish and sorrow to anyone but Allāh, and I know from Allāh what you do not know."

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<sup>68</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:84)

<sup>69</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:85)

<sup>70</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:86)

Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام now addressed his sons and said:

يَبْنِي أَذْهَبُوا فَتَحَسَّسُوا مِنْ يُوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ وَلَا تَأْيَسُوا  
مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يَأْيَسُ مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ<sup>71</sup>

“Oh my sons, go and search for Yūsuf and his brother, and do not lose hope in the mercy of Allāh. In fact, only the infidels (dis-believers) lose hope in Allāh’s mercy.”

So Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام now sent his sons a third time to Egypt. The first time they had gone to get food, the second time they had returned with their brother Binyāmīn and now they were going a third time to try and find their brothers. Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام told them not to lose hope in Allāh’s مَرْحَمَةً وَتَعَالَى mercy and this is a lesson for us as well.



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<sup>71</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:87)

## Chapter 9 – The Secret is Uncovered

Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had told his sons to go to Egypt to look for their brothers and not to lose hope in Allāh سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى mercy. They now entered Egypt for a third time.

فَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ قَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الْعَزِيزُ  
مَسَّنَا وَأَهْلَنَا الضُّرُّ وَجِئْنَا بِبِضْعَةٍ مُزَجَّلَةٍ فَأَوْفِ لَنَا  
الْكَيْلَ وَتَصَدَّقْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَجْزِي الْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ<sup>72</sup>

So, when they came to him (Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ), they said, “‘Azīz, we and our family are struck by distress, and we have brought some goods of very little worth. So, give us the full measure (of grain) and be charitable to us. Surely, Allāh rewards the charitable.”

Now Yūsuf was listening to his brother complaining, these were the sons of a Prophets, Subḥānallāh. He thought to himself how long can I keep hiding the truth from them that I am their brother. He longed to see his father as well, who he hadn’t seen for many years.

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<sup>72</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:88)

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ addressed his brothers:

قَالَ هَلْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ بِيُوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ جَاهِلُونَ<sup>73</sup>

*He said, "Do you know what you did to Yūsuf and his brother when you were ignorant?"*

Now only the brothers knew what they had done to Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, no one else knew. Who could this person be who is asking them about their little brother, it can only mean one thing. Who is this person, the one who is the 'Azīz of Egypt, the one who is in control of all of the storehouses, the one who has given us food? They knew then who this was.

يُوسُفُ

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<sup>73</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:89)

قَالُوا أَيْنَكَ لِأَنْتَ يُوسُفُ<sup>74</sup>

They said, “Is it that you are in fact, Yūsuf?”

قَالَ أَنَا يُوسُفُ

وَهَذَا أَخِي<sup>ط</sup> قَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّهُ مَن يَتَّقِ وَيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا  
يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ<sup>75</sup>

He (Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said “I am Yūsuf, and this is my brother. Allāh has been very kind to us. Surely, whoever fears Allāh and observes patience, Allāh does not let the reward of such good people to go to waste.”

قَالُوا تَأَلَّهَ لَقَدْ عَآثَرَكَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَإِن كُنَّا لَخَاطِئِينَ<sup>76</sup>

They said, “We swear by Allāh, indeed Allāh has given to you preference over us, and we were guilty in fact.”

Even after all they had done to Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, he did not blame them or seek revenge.

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<sup>74</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:90)

<sup>75</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:90)

<sup>76</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:91)

قَالَ لَا تَثْرِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَيُّومَ يَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّحِيمِينَ<sup>77</sup>

He (Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) said, "No reproach upon you today! May Allāh forgive you, and He is the Most-Merciful of all the Merciful."

Now Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام had been reunited with his brothers, the only thing left was his parents. He had wanted to see his father for a very long time. His father Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام loved him dearly and he also longed to see his son. He never lost faith in Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and he never lost hope.

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام had found out that his father had lost his sight, he had gone blind because he had been crying greatly and had been very upset due to losing his son.



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<sup>77</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:92)

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ said:

أَذْهَبُوا بِقَمِيصِي هَذَا فَأَلْقُوهُ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِ أَبِي يَأْتِ بَصِيرًا وَأْتُونِي  
بِأَهْلِكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ<sup>78</sup>

*“Go with this shirt of mine, and put it over the face of my father, and he will turn into a sighted man. And bring me all your family.”*

So now a Messenger sets out from Egypt with the shirt of Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to put over the blessed face of his father Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. The brothers also now set off to bring their father back to Egypt to be reunited with his sons.



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<sup>78</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:93)

## Chapter 10 – A Beautiful Ending

Yusūf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had sent a Messenger with his shirt to put over the face of his father Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. The Messenger was ahead of the brothers and as he approached Can‘ān, Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ could sense something.

وَلَمَّا فَصَلَتِ الْعِيرُ قَالَ أَبُوهُمْ إِنِّي لَأَجِدُ رِيحَ يُوسُفَ لَوْلَا أَن  
تُفَيِّدُونِ<sup>79</sup>

And when the caravan set out (from Egypt), their father (Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said in (Can‘ān) “I can sense the fragrance of Yūsuf, if you do not take me to be senile.”



<sup>79</sup> Holy Qur‘ān (12:94)

When he said this, the people replied:

قَالُوا تَأَلَّهَ إِنَّكَ لَفِي ضَلَالِكَ الْقَدِيمِ<sup>80</sup>

*They said “By God, you are still in your old fallacy.”*

Little did they know, Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was saying the truth!

فَلَمَّا أَنْ جَاءَ الْبَشِيرُ أَلْقَاهُ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ فَارْتَدَّ بَصِيرًا قَالَ  
أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ<sup>81</sup>

*So when the man came with good news, he put it (the shirt) on his (Ya‘qub عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) face, and he turned into a sighted man. He (Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said “Did I not tell you that I know from Allāh, what you do not know?”*

Now Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ could see once again and his sons also returned to Can‘ān. They saw their father while they were full of remorse and regret for the actions which they had committed.

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<sup>80</sup> Holy Qur‘ān (12:95)

<sup>81</sup> Holy Qur‘ān (12:96)

قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا خَاطِئِينَ<sup>82</sup>

They said “Our father, pray to Allāh to forgive us our sins. Surely, we have been guilty.”

قَالَ سَوْفَ أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ<sup>83</sup>

He (Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said “I shall pray to my Lord to forgive you. Surely, he is the Most Forgiving, Very-Merciful.”

Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ then travelled to Egypt with his sons and was reunited with his son Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ who he had not seen for many years. Imagine the immense joy and happiness when they saw each other. Imagine how Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ felt when he saw his beloved son was now the ‘Azīz of Egypt!

فَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَى يُوسُفَ ءَاوَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَبِيهِ وَقَالَ أَدْخُلُوا مِصْرَ إِن شَاءَ  
اللَّهُ ءَامِنِينَ<sup>84</sup>

Later when they came to Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, he placed his parents near himself and said, “Enter Egypt, God willing in peace.”

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<sup>82</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:97)

<sup>83</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:98)

<sup>84</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:99)

This was a very memorable and happy day in Egypt when the family of Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ came. So what did Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ do?

وَرَفَعَ أَبَوَيْهِ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَخَرُّوا لَهُ وَسُجَّدًا<sup>85</sup>

And he (Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) raised his parents up on the throne and they all fell before him in Prostration.

وَقَالَ يَا بَتِ هَذَا تَأْوِيلُ رُءْيَايَ مِنْ قَبْلُ قَدْ جَعَلَهَا  
رَبِّي حَقًّا وَقَدْ أَحْسَنَ بِي إِذْ أَخْرَجَنِي مِنَ السِّجْنِ وَجَاءَ بِكُمْ  
مِنَ الْبَدْوِ مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ نَزَغَ الشَّيْطَانُ بَيْنَ إِخْوَتِي إِنَّ  
رَبِّي لَطِيفٌ لِمَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ<sup>86</sup>

And he (Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) said “My Father, here is the fulfilment of my early dream. My Lord has made it come true. He favoured me when he released me from prison, and brought you from the countryside after Satan had caused a rift between me and my brothers. Surely, my Lord does what He will in a subtle way. Surely, He is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.”

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<sup>85</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:100)

<sup>86</sup> Holy Qur’ān (12:100)

So the dream where Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had seen 11 stars and the sun and the moon bowing down to him in actual fact represented, his father, his mother and brothers all bowing down to him. And so the dream was fulfilled after many many years.

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ stayed in Egypt and with his brother and parents. The Banī Isrā'īl flourished in the land until much later on when the Egyptians started to view them as outsiders and the Banī Isrā'īl had lost their way. This was when Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى decided to send another Messenger Mūsa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to liberate them.

Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ <sup>فَل</sup>  
مَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُفْتَرَى وَلَكِن تَصْدِيقَ الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ  
وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ <sup>87</sup>

*Surely in the narratives of these, there is a lesson for the people of understanding. It is not an invented story, rather a confirmation of what has been before it, and an elaboration of everything, and guidance and mercy for a people who believe.*



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<sup>87</sup> Holy Qur'ān (12:111)

There were lots of lessons in this story for us, never to lose hope, and to always have faith in Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. How jealousy can cause people to do horrible things and how forgiveness can heal all the wounds. May Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى give us all the ability to forgive, live happily with our families, and give us the same type of love for our parents as Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had for his parents and the same type of love for our children as Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had for Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ.

