

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah,
most Kind, most Merciful



Surah Yusuf, 12:21

وَكَذَلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَلِنُعَلِّمَهُ مِنْ تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ

Thus We established Yusuf in the land and that
We might teach him the interpretation of dreams.

Learning Objectives

- To explain that some dreams contain important messages and can be interpreted
- To reflect on whether we should choose short term physical pleasure over long term spiritual gain or vice versa
- To recognise that patience in times of adversity eventually pays off

Key Words

رُؤْيَا Ru'ya
dream

سِجْن Sijn
prison

REFLECTION



Love is the most precious thing Allah has endowed in human's heart. However, sometimes we don't know where to use it or how to express it.

When Nabi Yusuf entered the prison the prison guard started to love him because of his impeccable character. Nabi Yusuf told him that all his sufferings were because of love. "My aunt loved me and for that reason she snatched me; My father loved me and for that reason my brothers threw me in the well; the Azaz's wife loved me and for that reason she put me in prison."

In the previous lesson, we studied the Qur'anic narrative about Nabi Yusuf and Zulaykha, and observed how Nabi Yusuf did not give in to Zulaykha's demands, even though she was wealthy and powerful. He chose to remain steadfast in faith, and was willing to face severe hardship in prison rather than give in to sin and indecency.

Nabi Yusuf was eventually thrown into prison, even though he was completely innocent, because he refused to succumb to Zulaykha's demands.

In prison, Nabi Yusuf met two other inmates. They had both seen dreams, and asked Nabi Yusuf if he could interpret their dreams; they had realised how pure and knowledgeable Nabi Yusuf was.

Surah Yusuf, 12:36



وَدَخَلَ مَعَهُ السِّجْنَ فَتَيَانِ قَالَ أَحَدُهُمَا
إِنِّي أَرَانِي أَعْصِرُ خَمْرًا وَقَالَ الْآخَرُ إِنِّي
أَرَانِي أَحْمِلُ فَوْقَ رَأْسِي خُبْرًا تَأْكُلُ الطَّيْرُ
مِنْهُ نَبَّئْنَا بِتَأْوِيلِهِ إِنَّا نَرَاكَ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

There entered the prison two youths along with him. One of them said, 'I dreamt that I am pressing grapes.' The other said, 'I dreamt that I am carrying bread on my head from which the birds are eating.' 'Inform us of its interpretation,' [they said], 'for indeed we see you to be a virtuous man.'



Nabi Yusuf replied, 'Before the meals you are served come to you I will inform you of its interpretation. That is among things my Lord has taught me. Indeed I renounce the creed of the people who have no faith in Allah and who disbelieve in the Hereafter.'

Through this response, Nabi Yusuf made it very clear that his interpretation of the dreams was based on knowledge taught to him by Allah, and not based on superstition or myth.

Nabi Yusuf interprets the prisoners' dreams

Whilst he was in prison, Nabi Yusuf took the opportunity to teach his prison mates about Allah, since they did not believe in one God and were *mushrikin*. After talking to them about *tawhid* and inviting them to worship Allah only, Nabi Yusuf gave his prison mates the interpretation of their dreams.

REFLECTION



When Nabi Yusuf was imprisoned, he temporarily lost his freedom and comfort, but he still had his faith, and Allah was with him. Had he chosen to give in to Zulaykha's demands, he would have enjoyed temporary pleasure, but would eventually have been caught by the chief, who would have imprisoned him or even killed him. And, he would have also suffered in the hereafter as a result of his actions. What does this teach us about choosing an option that has long term benefits rather than short term pleasure?





ACTIVITY...

If you were a king, what sort of people would you bring to your palace to become your courtiers and ministers? What qualities would you look for?

List any ten qualities you would look for in your courtiers

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____



Faith in Action

We must use every opportunity we get to demonstrate to others the beauty of our faith and belief in Allah. We should not only do this through words and friendly discussions, but more importantly through our behaviour.

Our ethics and morals should be impeccable, such that others come to know that true Islam guides its followers to become very good human beings.

The first prisoner had seen in his dream that he was pressing grapes (i.e. making wine from grapes). He used to be the king's bottler before his arrest. Nabi Yusuf explained to him that his dream meant that he was going to be freed from prison and would serve wine to the king again.

The second prisoner who used to bake bread for the palace, had seen a dream that there was bread on his head and birds were eating from it. Nabi Yusuf gave him the interpretation that he would be crucified and vultures would eat from his head.

Nabi Yusuf requested the first prisoner, who was going to be released from prison, to speak to the king about him, so that perhaps he too could be freed from prison. However, the prisoner forgot this request upon his release, and so Nabi Yusuf remained locked away in prison for a few more years.

Then, one night, the king saw a strange dream. He saw seven fat cows being eaten by seven lean cows. He also saw seven green ears of grain, and seven dry ones.



The next morning, he narrated his dream to the official dream interpreters of the court and asked them to interpret it. None of them could interpret it. They said it was a confusing nightmare, and they didn't know the interpretation of nightmares. In other words they said your dream has no interpretation.

At this moment the king's bottler, remembered Nabi Yusuf in prison, He remembered how Nabi Yusuf had correctly interpreted the two dreams in prison. He asked the king to excuse him from court, so that he could go to Nabi Yusuf in prison and ask him to interpret the dream.

He went to the prison and narrated the king's dream to Nabi Yusuf. He said, 'Yusuf, O truthful one, give us your opinion concerning seven fat cows who are eaten by seven lean ones, and seven green ears and seven others dry'.

Nabi Yusuf explained the interpretation of the king's dream as follows. He said that they would sow grain and get a bumper harvest for seven years. In these seven years they should only eat some of the grain, and store the rest for the future. After the seven good years, there would come seven hard years, when there would be famine and no harvest. In these seven years, they would consume all the stored grain from the first seven years. However, they should save a bit of the grain so that they could plant it when the famine was over.

The king's servant took this interpretation back to the palace. When the king heard this explanation, he was amazed and told his servant to bring Nabi Yusuf to the palace. However, Nabi Yusuf refused to leave the prison until his name and reputation had been cleared, as he had been falsely imprisoned whilst he was completely innocent. He told the servant to go back to the king and ask him to investigate Nabi Yusuf's case first.

The king called the chief and his wife Zulaykha to court to ask them about Nabi Yusuf. Zulaykha now admitted that she was the one who had approached him, and he was completely innocent.

The king was now truly impressed with Nabi Yusuf's character and knowledge. He said to his courtiers, 'Bring Yusuf to me, I will make him my favourite.' Then, when he had spoken with Nabi Yusuf, he said, 'Indeed today onwards you will be honoured and trustworthy with us.' Nabi Yusuf then requested the king to make him in charge of the country's granaries (grain stores).

Nabi Yusuf's story is an amazing account of someone who had complete trust in Allah. He was willing to undergo any hardship but would never disobey Allah or do something *haram*. Allah therefore favoured him by making him successful both in this world as well as the hereafter.

REFLECTION



Why was it so important to Nabi Yusuf that his name should be cleared first before he was released from prison? Read verse 12:52 to find out!

Surah Yusuf, 12:56-57



وَكَذَلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِي
الْأَرْضِ يَتَّبِعُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَاءُ
نُصِيبُ بِرَحْمَتِنَا مَنْ نَشَاءُ
وَلَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ
وَلَأَجْرُ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِلَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ

That is how We established Yusuf in the land that he may settle in it wherever he wished. We confer Our mercy on whomever We wish, and We do not waste the reward of the virtuous. And the reward of the Hereafter is surely better for those who have faith and are God-conscious.

HIGHER LEVEL



Whilst he was in prison, Nabi Yusuf took the opportunity to teach his prison mates about Allah, since they did not believe in one God and were *mushrikin*. He said to them,

'I follow the creed of my fathers, Ibrahim, Ishaq and Ya'qub. It is not for us to ascribe any partner to Allah. That is by virtue of Allah's grace upon us and upon all mankind, but most people do not give thanks. O my prison mates! Are different masters better, or Allah, the One, the Supreme? You do not worship besides Him but mere names that you and your fathers have coined, for which Allah has not sent down any authority. Sovereignty belongs only to Allah. He has commanded you to worship none except Him. That is the upright religion, but most people do not know.'

(*Surah Yusuf*, 12:38-40)

This was an excellent lesson in *Tawhid*.

Summarise this explanation of Nabi Yusuf into five main points regarding our belief in Allah:

1

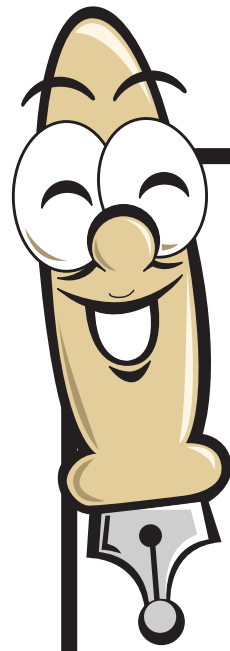
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3

4

5





KEYPOINTS

- 1 Allah gave Nabi Yusuf the special knowledge with which he could interpret dreams.
- 2 He was wrongly accused of indecency with the chief's wife, and imprisoned.
- 3 Whilst he was in prison, he used the opportunity to invite other prisoners to the belief in one God and to worship Allah alone.
- 4 He also interpreted the dreams of two prisoners, one of whom was later released and became a servant in the king's palace.
- 5 One night, the king saw a perplexing dream. No one could interpret it except Nabi Yusuf.
- 6 Nabi Yusuf was thus released from prison and became a minister in charge of the granaries.



NOTES