

نبي الله يوسف (ع)

PROPHET Yūsuf [A.S]

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 1

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Discuss the story of Prophet Yūsuf (as)
- Understand that jealousy is an evil thing
- Understand the negative effects of jealousy
- Discuss the importance of love and strong relationships among family members
- Discuss the importance of forgiving family members

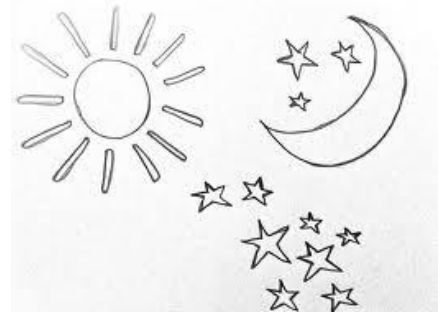
Lesson 1: Prophet Yūsuf

Prophet Yūsuf (as) was the son of Prophet Ya'qūb. He had 11 siblings, most of whom were older than him. His brothers were often jealous of him because they felt their father loved Prophet Yūsuf (as) more than the rest of them.

YŪSUF'S DREAM

When Prophet Yūsuf (as) was about 8 years old; he had a dream that eleven stars and the moon and the sun were prostrating in front of him. After Prophet Yūsuf (as) had this dream, he went to his father Ya'qūb and narrated the dream to him. Prophet Ya'qūb (as) told his dear son not to relate this dream to his brothers as they may become even more jealous of him. The Holy Qur'an describes this conversation:

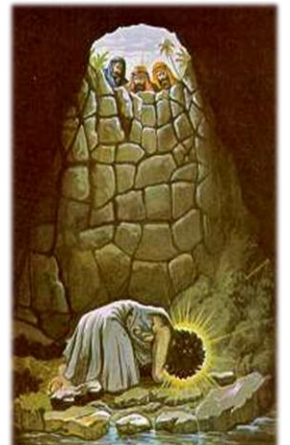
After this incident, the brothers could not take it anymore! Their father was showing a lot more love and compassion to their younger brother Yūsuf and they were starting to become very jealous of this.



They thought to themselves “we are older than Yūsuf and have helped dad so much with his work so we deserve this love more than Yūsuf. Why then does he show so much love towards Yūsuf and not us?”

These bad thoughts became so strong and affected them so much that the brothers got together and started plotting against Yūsuf. They all discussed the best way to get rid of Prophet Yūsuf (as). Some brothers suggested that they kill him; but others decided against it. Instead, they all agreed on throwing Prophet Yūsuf (as) into a deep well.

The next day, Prophet Ya'qūb reluctantly allowed the brothers to take Yūsuf with them to play. Yūsuf's brothers threw him into the well and left him there. He, a young boy who was only eight years old, was left alone at the bottom of the well with no help in sight. We will find out later in the story of exactly how Yūsuf dealt with this situation, what happened to him and what the brothers told the father.



JEALOUSY AND ITS EVILS

Sometimes we see that another person has something good, such as a new toy, new shoes, or a special skill. Jealousy is when we wish that that person did not have that thing. We may not necessarily want it for ourselves, but we wish that the other person loses it. This feeling of jealousy was what the brothers of Prophet Yūsuf (as) had. His brothers wanted their father to stop showing love and affection towards Yūsuf (as)!

Jealousy starts off as just a thought. However, if it is not stopped and a person keeps having jealous thoughts, or acting on them, it make a person do really terrible things.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THOSE WHO ARE JEALOUS?

- *A jealous person will never enjoy this world or the Hereafter; unless he repents.*

The brothers of Yūsuf did not enjoy having this feeling of jealousy so they thought if they got rid of Yūsuf they would stop being jealous. However, we must remember that we must stop the thoughts of jealousy before it leads to the action! Imam 'Ali (as) has said:

“The fruit of jealousy is the misery of this world and the hereafter”

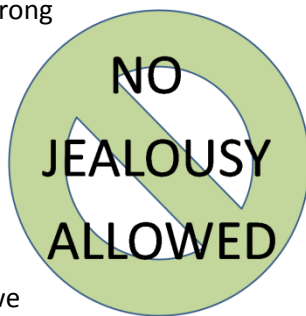
- *Jealousy eats away all your good deeds*

The morals of this story?

So far in this lesson we have learnt that jealousy begins with one bad thought and can lead to terrible actions – just like Yūsuf’s brothers throwing him into a well.

Remember, it is *not* wrong to want something good that a person may have. The wrong thing is to wish for that other person to lose it.

The other main lesson we learnt is that if we do act on our jealous thoughts, we will not be any happier, and we will not end up getting what we actually wanted.



Review Questions

Q1. Prophet Yūsuf was the son of:

- a. Prophet Mūsā

- b. Prophet Muḥammad
- c. Prophet Ya'qūb

Q2. Jealousy means to:

- a. not desire anything good
- b. desiring a blessing that someone else has
- c. not wanting someone else to have a blessing

Lesson 2: Life after the Well

We left the story of Prophet Yūsuf (as) with him having been thrown in the well and left alone by his brothers. The brothers went back and told the father that a wolf had attacked their little brother.



Soon though, a caravan of people passing by the well stopped to draw some water. They were surprised to see Prophet Yūsuf (as) come up holding the bucket. They took him with them as a slave back to Egypt, and there they sold him for a cheap price.

PROPHET YŪSUF (AS) IN EGYPT

Prophet Yūsuf (as) arrived in Egypt at the slave market. The buyers were all attracted by him, because he was a very handsome young man. News of this amazing young man swept through the city. The 'Aziz (Governor of Egypt), offered a price that none could match. He brought Prophet Yūsuf (as) home and had him work at home for him.

IN PRISON

Sometimes it happens in life that a person is unfairly accused of a crime they did not commit. This is what happened to Prophet Yūsuf (as) when he grew up to be a young man. He was put into prison, even though he had not done anything wrong.

RELEASE FROM PRISON

The Holy Qur'an says:

“The king dreamt that seven lean cows were eating seven fat ones and that there were seven green ears of corn and seven dry ones. He asked the nobles to tell him the meaning of his dream if they were able to. They replied,

"It is a confused dream and we do not know the meaning of such dreams." (12:43-44)

The king was very concerned about the meaning of his dream and even though his wise men thought over it seriously, they could not make sense of it. The king's dream became the way in which Prophet Yūsuf (as) was released from prison. There was a person working in the court of the king who had previously been in prison with Prophet Yūsuf (as). He remembered that Yūsuf (as) had the ability to interpret dreams, and he recommended to the king to call on Prophet Yūsuf (as) and ask him.

Yūsuf (as) interpreted the dream by the power given to him by Allah. He said: 'For seven years the crops will produce abundant food-grain for the people of Egypt. After that there will be a famine for seven years during which all the food-grain lying in the storehouses will be finished and people will starve. Therefore, the people should try to grow as much extra grain as possible so that they would have enough during the time of famine'. On hearing this very reasonable and sensible interpretation of his dream, the king was delighted. He ordered that Prophet Yūsuf (as) be brought before him so he could make good use of his wisdom in solving his problems.

IN THE ROYAL COURT

When the king met Prophet Yūsuf (as), he found him to be a very smart man. The king made him in charge of all the money and food and ordered everyone to obey him. During the first seven years, Prophet Yūsuf (as) supplied grain to the people according to their needs and stored the rest. However, due to his foresight and planning, when the seven years were over and the famine struck, the country did not face a shortage of food.

The famine had also extended to the lands of Palestine and Kan'an, where Prophet Ya'qūb (as) lived with his sons. One day he called them and ordered to go to Egypt and ask for supplies. Of course, they did not know what had happened to Prophet Yūsuf (as) since they threw him in the well.

THE MEETING WITH THE BROTHERS

When his brothers arrived in Egypt, Prophet Yūsuf (as) was very pleased to see them. They did not recognise him at all because they did not expect that he was alive.

Prophet Yūsuf (as) worked out a secret plan in order to keep one of his brothers Benjamin with him for a while, before finally revealing his identity to the rest of his brothers.

The brothers were shocked, but soon they realised their mistakes, and how Allah (SWT) had favoured their pious brother over them. In turn, Prophet Yūsuf (as) immediately forgave them.

"They said: "By Allah! Indeed Allah has preferred you above us, and we certainly have been sinners." He (Prophet Yūsuf as) said: "No reproach on you this day, may Allah forgive you, and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy! Go with this shirt of mine, and cast it over the face of my father, he will become clear-sighted, and bring to me all your family." (12:91-93)



After getting his eyesight back and hearing the good news of his son, Prophet Ya'qūb (as) decided to proceed to Egypt immediately. Prophet Yūsuf (as) was delighted to meet his whole family and embraced his father and mother.

FAMILY RELATIONS

In our families we love, serve, teach, and learn from each other. We share our joys and our sorrows. Family ties may bring us difficult challenges, but they also give us strength and some of our greatest happiness.



While we cannot choose which family we are born into, we can choose each day to make our families stronger and happier.

- Family is a safety net
- Family brings about a sense of belonging and happiness
- Family nurtures and guides you in life

