

Sura 12 - Joseph, Peace be on Him

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SURA XII (12)- JOSEPH, PEACE BE ON HIM (MECCA 111 VERSES) (LXXVII p. 230)

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

An Arabic Koran have we sent it down, that ye might understand it.

In revealing to thee this Koran, one of the most beautiful of narratives will be narrate to thee, of which thou hast hitherto been regardless.

When Joseph said to his Father, "O my Father! verily I beheld eleven stars and the sun and moon - beheld them make obeisance to me!"

He said, "O my son! tell not thy vision to thy brethren, lest they plot a plot against thee: for Satan is the manifest foe of man.

It is thus that thy Lord shall choose thee and will teach thee the interpretation of dark sayings, and will perfect his favours on thee and on the family of Jacob, as of old he perfected it on thy fathers Abraham and Isaac; verily thy Lord is Knowing, Wise!"

Now in Joseph and his brethren are signs for the enquirers;

When they said, "Surely better loved by our Father, than we, who are more in number, is Joseph and his brother; verily, our father hath clearly erred.

Slay ye Joseph! or drive him to some other land, and on you along shall your father's face be set! and after this, ye shall live as upright persons."

12:10 One of them said, "Slay not Joseph, but cast him down to the bottom of the well: if ye do so, some wayfarers will take him up."

They said, "O our Father! why dost thou not entrust us with Joseph? indeed we mean him well.

Send him with us to-morrow that he may enjoy himself and sport: we will surely keep him safely.:

He said, "Verily, your taking him away will grieve me; and I fear lest while ye are heedless of him the wolf devour him."

They said, "Surely if the wolf devour him, and we so many, we must in that case be weak indeed."

And when they went away with him they agreed to place him at the bottom of the well. And We revealed to him, "Thou wilt yet tell them of this their deed, when they shall not know thee."

And they came at nightfall to their father weeping.

They said, "O our Father! of a truth, we went to run races, and we left Joseph with our clothes, and the wolf devoured him: but thou wilt not believe

us even though we speak the truth."

And they brought his shirt with false blood upon it. He said, "Nay, but yourselves have managed this affair. But patience is seemly: and the help of God is to be implored that I may bear what you tell me."

And wayfarers came and sent their drawer of water, and he let down his bucket. "Good news!" said he, "This is a youth!: And they kept his case secret, to make merchandise of him. But God knew what they did.

12:20 And they sold him for a paltry price - for some dirhems counted down, and at no high rate did they value him.

And he who bought him - an Egyptian - said to his wife, "Treat him hospitable; haply he may be useful to us, or we may adopt him as a son." Thus did we settle Joseph in the land, and we instructed him in the interpretation of dark sayings, for God is equal to his purpose; but most men know it not.

And when he had reached his age of strength we bestowed on him judgment and knowledge; for thus do we recompense the well doers.

And she in whose house he was conceived a passion for him, and she shut the doors and said, "Come hither." He said, "God keep me! Verily, my lord hath given me a good home: and the injurious shall not prosper."

But she longed for him; and he had longed for her had he not seen a token from his lord. Thus we averted evil and defilement from him, for he was one of our sincere servants.

And they both made for the door, and she rent his shirt behind; and at the door they met her lord. "What," said she, "shall be the recompense of him who would do evil to thy family, but a prison or a sore punishment?"

He said, "She solicited me to evil." And a witness out of her own family witnessed: "If his shirt be rent in front she speaketh truth, and he is a liar:

But if his shirt be rent behind, she lieth and he is true."

And when his lord saw his shirt torn behind, he said, "This is one of your devices! verily your devices are great!

Joseph! leave this affair. And thou, O wife, ask pardon for thy crime, for thou hast sinned."

12:30 And in the city, the women said, "The wife of the Prince hath solicited her servant: he hath fired her with his love: but we clearly see her manifest error."

And when she heard of their cabal, she sent to them and got ready a banquet for them, and gave each one of them a knife, and said, "Joseph shew thyself to them." And when they saw him they were amazed at him, and cut their hands, and said, "God keep us! This is no man! This is no other than a noble

angel!"

She said, "This is he about whom ye blamed me. I wished him to yield to my desires, but he stood firm. But if he obey not my command, he shall surely be cast into prison, and become one of the despised."

He said, "O my Lord! I prefer the prison to compliance with their bidding: but unless thou turn away their snares from me, I shall play the youth with them, and become one of the unwise."

And his Lord heard him and turned aside their snares from him: for he is the Hearer, the Knower.

Yet resolved they, even after they had seen the signs of his innocence, to imprison him for a time.

And there came into the prison with him two youths. Said one of them, "Methought in my dream that I was pressing grapes." And the other said, "I dreamed that I was carrying bread on my head, of which the birds did eat. Declare to us the interpretation of this, for we see thou art a virtuous person."

He said, "There shall not come to you in a dream any food wherewith ye shall be fed, but I will acquaint you with its interpretation ere it come to pass to you. This is a part of that which my Lord hath taught me: for I have abandoned the religion of those who believe not in God and who deny the life to come;

And I follow the religion of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. We may not associate aught with God. This is of God's bounty towards us and towards mankind: but the greater part of mankind are not thankful.

O my two fellow prisoners! are sundry lords best, or God, the One, the Mighty?

12:40 Ye worship beside him mere names which ye have named, ye and your fathers, for which God hath not sent down any warranty. Judgment belongeth to God alone. He hath bidden you worship none but Him. This is the right faith: but most men know it not.

O my two fellow prisoners! as to one of you, he will serve wine unto his Lord: but as to the other, he will be crucified and the birds shall eat from off his head. The matter is decreed concerning which ye enquire."

And he said unto him who he judged would be set at large, "Remember me with thy lord." But Satan caused him to forget the remembrance of his Lord, so he remained some years in prison.

And the King said, "Verily, I saw in a dream seven fat kine which seven lean devoured; and seven green ears and other withered. O nobles, teach me my vision, if a vision ye are able to expound."

They said, "They are confused dreams, nor know we aught of the

unravelling of dreams."

And he of the twain who had been set at large, said, "I will tell you the interpretation; let me go for it."

"Joseph, man of truth! teach us of the seven fat kine which have lean devoured, and of the seven green ears, and other withered, that I may return to the men, and that they may be informed."

He said, "Ye shall sow seven years as is your wont, and the corn which ye reap leave ye in its ear, except a little of which ye shall eat.

Then after that shall come seven grievous years which shall eat what ye have stored for them, except a little which ye shall have kept.

Then shall come after this a year, in which men shall have rain, and in which they shall press the grape."

12:50 And the King said, "Bring him to me," And when the messenger came to Joseph he said, "Go back to thy lord, and ask him what meant the women who cut their hands, for my lord well knoweth the snare they laid."

Then said the Prince to the women, "What was your purpose when ye solicited Joseph?" They said, "God keep us! we know not any ill of him." The wife of the Prince said, "Now doth the truth appear. It was I who would have led him into unlawful love, and he is one of the truthful."

"By this" (said Joseph) "may my lord know that I did not in his absence play him false, and that God guideth not the machinations of deceivers.

Yet I hold not myself clear, for the heart is prone to evil, save theirs on whom my Lord hath mercy; for gracious is my Lord, the Merciful."

And the King said, "Bring him to me: I will take him for my special service." And when he had spoken with him he said, "From this day shalt thou be with us, invested with place and trust."

He said, "Set me over the granaries of the land, I will be their prudent keeper!:

Thus did we stablish Joseph in the land that he might house himself therein at pleasure. We bestow our favours on whom we will, and suffer not the reward of the righteous to perish.

And truly the recompense of the life to come is better, for those who have believed and feared God.

And Joseph's brethren came and went in to him and he knew them, but they recognised him not.

And when he had provided them with their provision, he said, "Bring me your brother from your father. See ye not that I fill the measure, and am the best of hosts?"

12:60 But if ye bring him not to me, then no measure of corn shall there be for you from me, nor shall ye come near me."

They said to his servants, "Put their money into their camel-packs, that they may perceive it when they have returned to their family: haply they will come back to us."

And when they returned to their father, they said, "O, our father! corn is withholden from us: send, therefore, our brother with us and we shall have our measure; and all care of him will we take."

He said, "Shall I entrust you with him otherwise than as I before entrusted you with his brother? But God is the best guardian, and of those who shew compassion He is the most compassionate."

And when they opened their goods they found their money had been returned to them. They said, "O, our father, what more can we desire? Here is our money returned to us; we will provide corn for our families, and will take care of our brother, and shall receive a camel's burden more of corn. This is an easy quantity."

He said, "I will not send him with you but on your oath before God that ye will, indeed, bring him back to me, unless hindrances encompass you." And when they had given him their pledge, he said, "God is witness of what we say."

And he said, "O, my sons! Enter not by one gate, but enter by different gates. Yet can I not help you against aught decreed by God: judgment belongeth to God alone. In Him put I my trust, and in Him let the trusting trust."

And when they entered as their father had bidden them, it did not avert from them anything decreed of God; but it only served to satisfy a desire in the soul of Jacob which he had charged them to perform; for he was possessed of knowledge which we had taught him; but most men have not that knowledge.

And when they came in to Joseph, he took his brother to him. He said, "Verily, I am thy brother. Be not thou grieved for what they did."

12:70 And when he had provided them with their provisions, he placed his drinking cup in his brother's camel-pack. Then a crier cried after them, "O travellers! ye are surely thieves."

They turned back to them and said, "What is that ye miss?"

"We miss," said they, "the prince's cup. For him who shall restore it, a camel's load of corn! I pledge myself for it."

They said, "By God! ye know certainly that we came not to do wrong in the land and we have not been thieves."

"What," said the Egyptians, "shall be the recompense of him who hath stolen it, if ye be found liars?"

They said, "That he in whose camel-pack it shall be found be given up to

you in satisfaction for it. Thus recompense we the unjust.:

And Joseph began with their sacks, before the sack of his brother, and then from the sack of his brother he drew it out. This stratagem did we suggest to Joseph. By the King's law he had no power to seize his brother, had not God pleased. We uplift into grades of wisdom whom we will. And there is one knowing above every one else endued with knowledge.

They said, "If he steal, a brother of his hath stolen heretofore." But Joseph kept his secret, and did not discover it to them. Said he, aside, "Ye are in the worse condition. And God well knoweth what ye state."

They said, "O Prince! Verily he hath a very aged father; in his stead, therefore, take one of us, for we see that thou art a generous person."

He said, "God forbid that we shall take but him with whom our property was found, for then should we act unjustly."

12:80 And when they despaired of Benjamin, they went apart for counsel. The eldest of them said, "Know ye not how that your father hath taken a pledge from you before God, and how formerly ye failed in duty with regard to Joseph? I will not quit the land till my father give me leave, or God decide for me; for of those who decide is He the best.

Return ye to your father and say, 'O our father! Verily, thy son hath stolen: we bear witness only of what we know: we could not guard against the unforeseen.

Enquire for thyself ion the city where we have been, and of the caravan with which we have arrived; and we are surely speakers of the truth.'

He said, "nay, ye have arranged all this among yourselves: But patience is seemly: God, may be, will bring them back to me together; for he is the Knowing, the Wise."

And he turned away from them and said, "Oh! how I am grieved for Joseph!" and his eyes became white with grief, for he bore a silent sorrow.

They said, "By God thou wilt only cease to think of Joseph when thou art at the point of death, or dead."

He said, "I only plead my grief and my sorrow to God: but I know from God what ye know not:

Go, my sons, and seek tidings of Joseph and his brother, and despair not of God's mercy, for none but the unbelieving despair of the mercy of God."

And when they came in to Joseph, they said, "O Prince, distress hath reached us and our family, and little is the money that we have brought. But give us full measure, and bestow it as alms, for God will recompense the almsgivers."

He said, "Know ye what ye did to Joseph and his brother in your ignorance?"

12:90 They said, "Canst thou indeed be Joseph?" He said, "I am Joseph, and this is my brother. Now hath God been gracious to us. For whoso feareth God and endureth. . . . God verily will not suffer the reward of the righteous to perish!"

They said, "By God! now hath God chosen thee above us, and we have indeed been sinners!"

He said, "No blame be on you this day. God will forgive you, for He is the most merciful of those who shew mercy.

Go ye with this my shirt and throw it on my father's face, and he shall recover his sight: and bring me all your family."

And when the caravan was departed, their father said, 'I surely perceive the smell of Joseph: think ye that I dote?"

They said, "By God, it is thy old mistake."

And when the bearer of good tidings came, he cast it on his face, and Jacob's eyesight returned.

Then he said, "Did I not tell you that I knew from God what ye knew not?"

They said, "Our father, ask pardon for our crimes for us, for we have indeed been sinners."

He said, "I will ask pardon of my Lord, for he is Gracious, Merciful."

12:100 And when they came into Joseph he took his parents to him, and said, "Enter ye Egypt, if God will, secure."

And he raised his parents to the seat of state, and they fell down bowing themselves unto him. Then said he, "O my father, this is the meaning of my dream of old. My Lord hath now made it true, and he hath surely been gracious to me, since he took me forth from the prison, and hath brought you up out of the desert, after that Satan had stirred up strife between me and my brethren; for my Lord is gracious to whom He will; for He is the Knowing, the Wise.

O my Lord, thou hast given me dominion, and hast taught me to expound dark sayings. Maker of the Heavens and of the Earth! My guardian art thou in this world and in the next! Cause thou me to die a Muslim, and join me with the just."

This is one of the secret histories which we reveal unto thee. Thou wast not present with Joseph's brethren when they conceived their design and laid their plot: but the greater part of men, though thou long for it, will not believe.

Thou shalt not ask of them any recompense for this message. It is simply an instruction for all mankind.

And many as are the signs in the Heavens and on the Earth, yet they will past them by, and turn aside from them:

And most of them believe not in God, without also joining other deities with Him.

What! Are they sure that the overwhelming chastisement of God shall not come upon them, or that the Hour shall not come upon them suddenly, while they are unaware?

Say: This is my way: resting on a clear proof, I call you to God, I and whoso followeth me: And glory be to God! I am not one of those who add other deities to Him.

Never before thee have we sent any but men, chosen out of the people of the cities, to whom we made revelations. Will they not journey through the land, and see what hath been the end of those who were before them? But the mansions of the next life shall be better for those who fear God. Will they not then comprehend?

12:110 When at last the Apostles lost all hope, and deemed that they were reckoned as liars, our aid reached them, and we delivered whom we would; but our vengeance was not averted from the wicked.

Certainly in their histories is an example for men of understanding.

This is no new tale of fiction, but a confirmation of previous scriptures, and an explanation of all things, and guidance and mercy to those who believe.