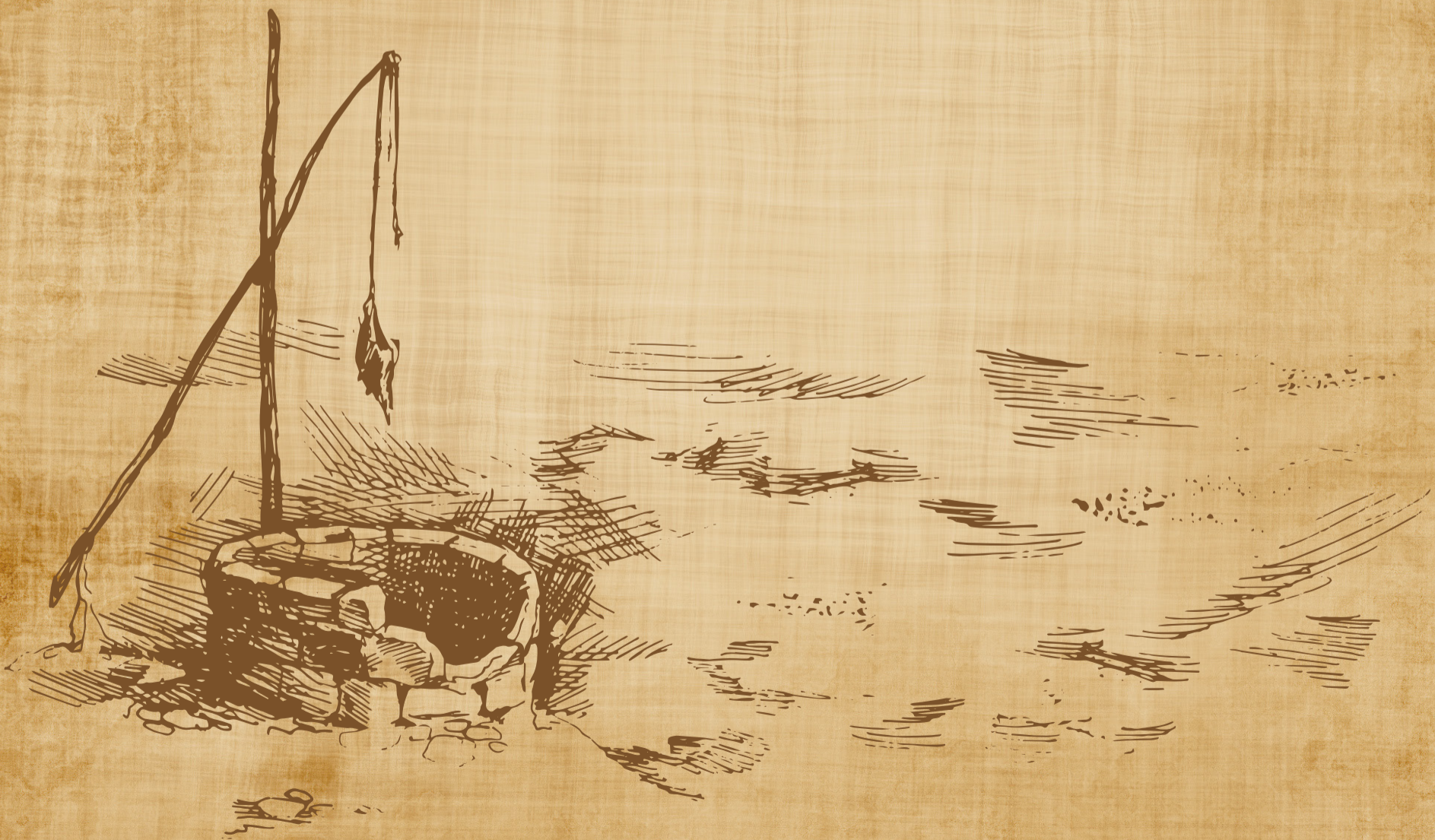




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# The Story of Joseph





Joseph is a Messenger of God and his story is mentioned in the Quran. He was the son of Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham. He came from a line of Messengers of God. He is considered the most noble of people due to his blessed lineage. God dedicates a chapter of the Quran to tell us the story of Joseph. Chapter #12, which is named after Joseph, details the struggles he went through, and the way he continued to trust in God throughout his life.



# Joseph's Dream

God mentions that Joseph saw a dream, “I dreamt of eleven stars and the sun and moon: I saw them all bow down before me.” [12:4] This dream comes true at the end of the story of Joseph. It was Satan who would cause rivalry and jealousy between Joseph and his brothers, but due to their sincerity and seeking God's grace and forgiveness, they would eventually be reconciled. In the end, Joseph's family would come before him and honour him, and Joseph would thank God for having saved his family from the influences of Satan.





# Joseph's Brothers

God tells us that Joseph had 11 brothers. Joseph was the most beloved of Jacob's sons to him. This made Joseph's brothers jealous of him. They decided they would have to get rid of him in one way or another. They first decide to kill him, but eventually settle on throwing him down a deep well and leaving him there. God says, "One of the brothers said: Do not kill Joseph, rather throw him into a well and some passers-by may find him and take him, this is a lesser evil if you really want to get rid of him." [12:10]

Joseph's brothers convinced Jacob to allow him to come and play with them. Jacob was not inclined to do this, as he recognized the sibling jealousy and rivalry that existed. Jacob eventually succumbs to his sons' request and agrees.

Joseph's brothers threw him down a well, but before doing so, took off his shirt and covered it with blood. They then returned with this intact shirt covered in blood to their father, claiming that Joseph had been devoured by a wolf. Jacob recognized the lie being told, but remained steadfast and patient, entrusting his affairs and Joseph's to God.





# Joseph & Slavery

Joseph is found by a caravan of travellers and is taken to Egypt, where he is sold into slavery. He becomes the slave of the second most powerful man in the country, essentially the top minister of the government. These challenges of being abandoned by his own brothers and then sold into slavery were overcome through Joseph's faith and love for God.

God says, "When Joseph reached the height of his spiritual and physical strength, I gave him understanding and knowledge. With a reward similar to what I gave him, I reward those who do good by following Me." [12:22] Joseph was blessed by God with amazing beauty as well as knowledge. The wife of the minister became besotted with Joseph. She tried to seduce him, but found that Joseph was a man of integrity and good character.





On one occasion, as she was trying to seduce him, Joseph turned away from her. She grabbed his shirt and tore it from the back. Just then, her husband entered. Immediately, the wife of the minister began to accuse Joseph of trying to assault her.

However, someone pointed out to the minister that the shirt torn from the back was proof that Joseph was trying to move away from her.

The Egyptian nobility heard the rumors of how the wife of the minister was overcome with lust for Joseph. To defend herself, she plotted and invited the noble women of Egypt to her home.

She commanded Joseph to present himself before them so they could see him first hand and be directly exposed to his beauty. Upon seeing him, the women exclaimed, “This is not a human! The beauty he possesses is not found in humans. He can only be one of the noble angels.” [12:32] Upon seeing what was happening, Joseph prayed to God, “O my Lord, prison, which they threaten me with, is preferable to me than the shameful act they call me towards. If You do not remove their scheme from me, I may incline to them and I will become one of the ignorant ones – if I give in to them and do what they want me to do.” [12:33]



# Joseph the Prisoner

Joseph was imprisoned unjustly. Yet he chose prison over disobedience to God. In prison, two inmates come to him, each with a dream they had seen and asked Joseph if he can interpret their dreams. One saw that he was pressing grapes to make wine and the other saw that birds were eating bread on his head.

Before interpreting their dreams, Joseph teaches them about God and how He should be worshipped alone. He informs them that they should shun all other false gods. “Joseph said that he followed the path of his fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: the path of worshipping God alone. He said it was not right for them to associate anything with God, Who is alone in His Oneness. Enabling them to worship God alone and have the faith which he and his fathers had was from the grace of God upon them. It was also from the grace of God upon all people, since He sent His messengers to them with that message; yet most people are not thankful to God for His blessings, and instead ungratefully disbelieve in Him.” [12:38]

Joseph informed the inmate who saw birds eating from his head that he would be crucified for his crimes. As for the one who was pressing grapes, he would leave prison and end up serving the king as a cupbearer. Joseph asked the latter to mention his case to the king and how he was imprisoned unjustly. However, upon leaving prison, the man forgot about Joseph, and so, Joseph remained in prison for nearly a decade.



# The King's Dream

The king of Egypt saw a dream, “One day the king said that he had seen a dream in which seven fat cows were being eaten by seven thin ones, and seven green ears of corn and seven dry ears of corn. He asked the notables and nobles to tell him the interpretation of his dream, if they knew how to interpret dreams.” [12:43] He asked his advisors to interpret this dream. Upon hearing this, Joseph's former inmate remembered Joseph. He asked the king to allow him to go and visit Joseph and find the interpretation of this dream.

Joseph informed him that the dream signified a time of famine and drought. However, before then, they would have seven years in which if they planned for the famine, they would survive, despite hardship. The famine would then last for seven years, after which it would end. Upon hearing Joseph's story, the king ordered his release. However, Joseph refused until the women who falsely accused him confessed and confirmed his innocence. After they agreed to do this, Joseph left prison. The king honored him and made him his top minister in order to lead the country through the upcoming difficult times.



# Joseph and His Brothers Meet Again

In the years of famine, the brothers of Joseph came to his court asking for help. They did not recognize Joseph, but he recognized them. The brothers had left behind their youngest sibling Benjamin. Joseph asked why they had not all come, and that they could not receive their full rations until all members of the family came. The brothers convinced their father Jacob to allow Benjamin to travel with them.

When they returned, Joseph discreetly revealed his true identity to Benjamin and told him to go along with the plan he had set about. Joseph placed the king's measuring bowl in Benjamin's bag. The brothers were then accused of theft. When the bowl is discovered in Benjamin's bag, he is held back and the other brothers must now return to Jacob and tell him how he had now lost a second son.

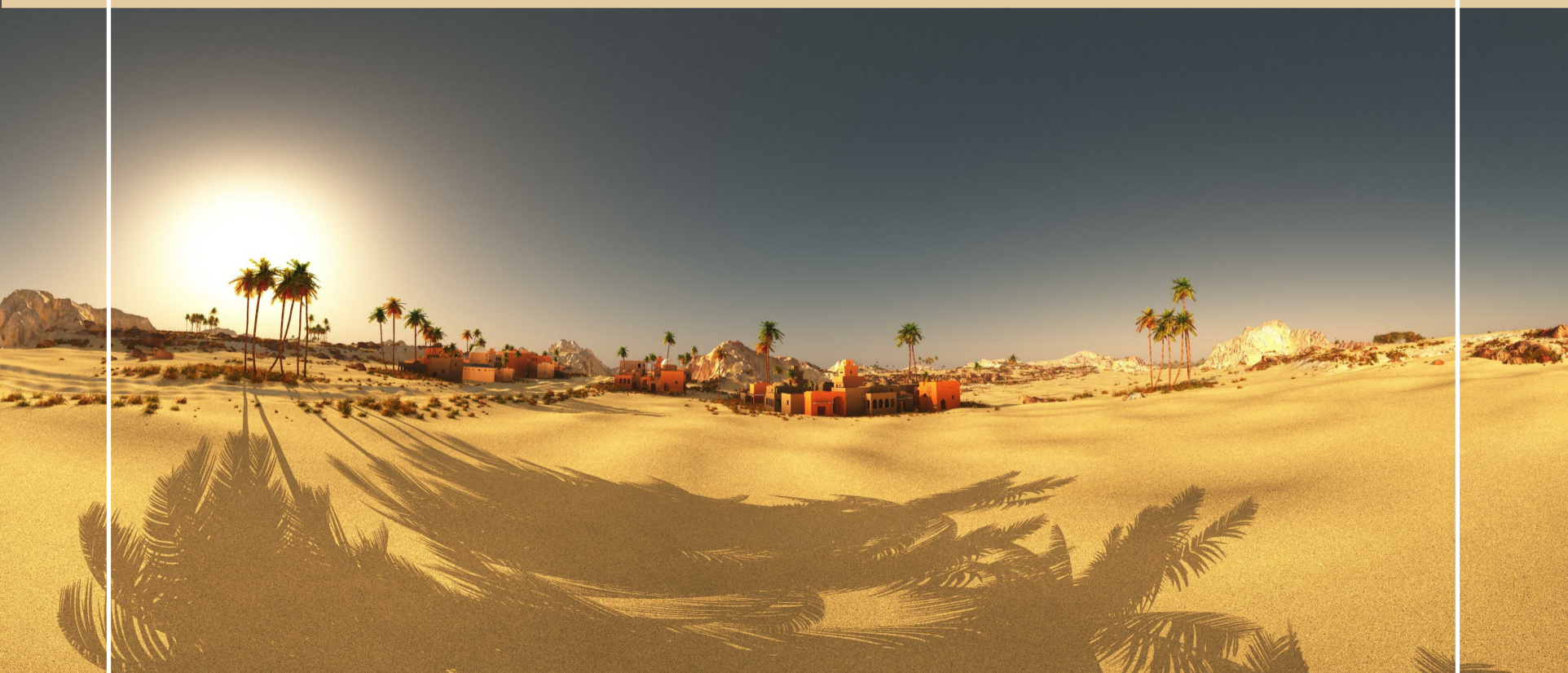




# Joseph and His Brothers Meet Again

Upon hearing this, Jacob turns to God, and instructs his sons to go back to Egypt and enquire about both his lost sons. When the sons enter upon Joseph, he reveals his true identity to them. The brothers realize the wrong they did and how God honored Joseph. They seek his forgiveness. “Joseph accepted their apology, saying that there would be no blame on them requiring a punishment, nor any criticism, from that day. He asked that Allah forgive them, and He is the most Merciful of the merciful.” [12:92]

Joseph asks his brothers to bring their parents to Egypt, and thus the family is reunited. Throughout the events and challenges of his life, Joseph remained strong in faith and in his trust in God. God mentions Joseph’s words when he is reunited with his family, “Joseph said his Lord had been kind to him by bringing him out of prison, and bringing them all to him from the desert after Satan had ruined things between him and his brothers; and that His Lord was subtle in planning what He wills to occur, Knowing the situations of His servants, Wise in His planning.” [12:100]





## **A Beautiful Prayer for a Good Ending**

Joseph concludes his life with a beautiful prayer that is quoted in the Quran. “My Lord, You have given me power and authority in the land and taught me the interpretation of dreams. You are the Creator of the heavens and the earth, originating them when there was nothing like them. You are the Protector of all my affairs in the life of this world and the Protector of my affairs in the Afterlife. Take my soul while being in a state of submission to You as a Muslim. Join me with the righteous Messengers from my fathers and others in the highest level of Paradise.”  
[12:101]





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