

Overview

The reasons for Prophet Ya‘qūb’s apprehension to send Prophet Yūsuf with his brothers.

The conspiracy of the brothers.

Prophet Yūsuf’s reliance only on God.

‘Ilhām’ (revelation through inner voice) received by Prophet Yūsuf in the well.

Sūrat Yūsuf

Verses 13-15

قَالَ إِنِّي لَيَحْزُنُنِي أَنْ تَذْهَبُوا بِهِ وَأَخَافُ أَنْ يَأْكُلَهُ الذِّئْبُ وَأَنْتُمْ عَنْهُ غَافِلُونَ

He said; Surely it saddens me that you should take him away, and I am afraid that the wolf may eat him while you are heedless of him.

قَالُوا لَئِنْ أَكَلَهُ الذِّئْبُ وَنَحْنُ عُصْبَةٌ إِنَّا إِذًا لَخَاسِرُونَ

They said; if the wolf eats him while we are a strong group, then surely we would be of the losers.

فَلَمَّا ذَهَبُوا بِهِ وَاجْتَمَعُوا أَنْ يُجْعَلُوهُ فِي غِيَابَتِ الْجُبِّ ؕ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ لَتُنَبِّئَنَّهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِمْ هَذَا وَهُمْ لَا

يَشْعُرُونَ

So when they went off with him they agreed that they should throw him into the bottom of the well. And we revealed to him, surely you will inform them of this deed of theirs while they do not know you.

Questions For Reflection:

- 1) What are the reasons for Prophet Ya‘qūb’s reluctance to send Yūsuf with his brothers?
- 2) How do the brothers convince Prophet Ya‘qūb to let Yūsuf go with them?
- 3) How does Allah help Prophet Yūsuf (a) in this situation?
(He may have been feeling very lonely and afraid but Allah consoles him by telling him about the future)

Commentary

Prophet Ya‘qūb replies to the suggestion that Yūsuf should go out to enjoy time with his brothers. He does not deny that that is necessary but he says he is sad to part with Yūsuf and is afraid of what the wolves might do to him. What if the brothers forget him for a while and are busy playing? The danger of wolves is a real threat. Prophet Ya‘qūb does not say anything about how he is suspicious of the affection they are displaying for Yūsuf. Earlier he had told Yūsuf not to tell his brothers about his dream. He was very aware of how the brothers felt about Yūsuf but here he does not

bring that up. He cannot accuse them of something they have not done. Everyone is innocent until proven guilty.

The brothers answer by saying they are strong and would be losers if anything happened to Yūsuf. The principle they were promoting, though wrongfully, is that when someone takes on a responsibility it is a serious undertaking. Everything must be done to fulfill that responsibility as best as possible, till the end.

The father then agrees that Yūsuf can go with his brothers the next day. The brothers pass the night in anticipation of what they will do tomorrow. They plot their evil plan against the brother and are just worried that their father should not change his mind. In the morning they prepare for their outing and take Yūsuf along with them. Their father reminds them of his concerns and they give false assurances of their promise to look after him and their concern for him.

It is narrated that Prophet Ya‘qūb walked with them till the end of the city. He then embraced Yūsuf and wept a little. As the group left, the father watched them until they were out of sight. The brothers were respectful and loving to Yūsuf as long as the father was watching. As soon as they knew he could not see them anymore they began to show their anger and hatred. The jealousy of so many years now came out and they treated him cruelly. Yūsuf asked them to have mercy on him but none of them would listen.

It is narrated that in the midst of his tears Prophet Yūsuf began to smile. The brothers wondered why he was smiling, did he think this was a joke? Yūsuf explained; I used to look at my brothers who were so big and strong and think that I was so safe. Nobody could hurt me if I had such brothers. But now I am being hurt by you and am seeking refuge, but you will not help me. God has taught me a lesson. I should not rely on anyone other than Him for help, not even my brothers.

The brothers then decide to throw him into the well. At that time Prophet Yūsuf receives Ilhām from God, a revelation through an inner voice, which tells him that one day he will have the upper hand over his brothers. They will not recognize him, but he will ask them about this deed of theirs. This gives hope to the heart of Yūsuf at a time when he felt alone and hopeless. He knew that God was with him and promised him that things would change and one day these same brothers would be humbled before Yūsuf.

Lessons

1) Do not accuse anyone before they have done something. Suspicion is not always correct and should not be acted upon.

2) Do not tell your fears to everyone, especially those who you do not trust. They may use it against you, like the brothers did. Prophet Ya‘qūb told them he was afraid of the wolf, and that is the excuse they used later.

3) Never forget that God is with you. That gives you a lot of strength and comfort, even when you are surrounded by hardships.

Practical Implementations

1. Verify information from reliable sources if you suspect that an individual or a group of people is trying to harm you.
2. Memorize phrases from the Quran that are filled with hope of God’s presence and remind yourself of them in times of need to strengthen/boost you.

Cross Reference Verses

Divine revelation through inner voice – 28:7

Believers Rely on God – 9:51

Connecting Topics

Taking Responsibility

Strength of Character

Reliance on God

Useful Links

<https://www.al-islam.org/characteristics-muslim/best-morals>

<https://zaahara.com/blogs/writers-corner/5-quotes-from-the-qur-an-to-keep-you-calm>

<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/taking-responsibility-for-your-actions>