

## Surah Yusuf, Chapter 12

(Surah Yusuf (Joseph  
(No. 12 (Revealed in Mecca  
verses in 12 Sections 111

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In The Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful*

### The Magnitude and Glory of the Qur'an

The Qur'an, which is a reflection of the magnificence and glory of Allah and is an eternal and everlasting miracle in itself, presents clear evidence and accurately foretells events. As a witness to these events, it .presents true historical facts backed by strong logic and penetrating insight

It is the repository of a superior kind of grace and is a boundless ocean of merits. It offers strategies, it encourages while at the same time gives warnings, and it gives accounts of man's past while also .predicting the future

It is unique in that it is as accessible to the common people as well as to the elite among the scholars. It contains material from the invisible world as well as from the physical world. It illustrates the causes for .the enhancement one's honour and the factors which bring about one's wretchedness

It enlightens one's thinking, reasoning, and way of meditation and logic while we are alive and at the same time it provides companionship during our solitary confinement in the grave and on the Day of .Resurrection

The Qur'an is a repository of all knowledge and every science, and is the only celestial Book which has .not been distorted. The more science develops the more its secrets unveil

Its parables, metaphors and its similes are never wearisome and its repetitions often convey a wide variety of meanings. The Qur'an can be used as a criterion for verifying the words of the men of Allah. We have been told that whenever we hear words attributed to those holy men we should compare them to the Qur'an and if they do not conform to it, then we should reject them.

The Qur'an is considered as the "*Greater Weighty Thing*" and the Ahl-ul-Bayt (as) are considered by the believers as "*The Lesser Weighty Thing*". In this regard, the Prophet (S) reiterated several times

*I have left two great gifts amongst you (Muslims) which will never be separated until the Day of Resurrection when they will join me at the Pool of Kauthar*

Even now the Ahl-ul-Bayt, in the person of Hadrat Mahdi, (may Allah hasten his advent) is still coupled with the Book of Allah, and any commentary written on the Qur'an which ignores well documented narrations that originate from them are invalid and misleading, for the holy Prophet (S) said

*"If you take recourse to these two; the Book and my Ahl-ul-Bayt, you will never lose your way"*  
*.Certainly, taking recourse to the one and neglecting the other will lead to misguidance*

## **The Content of the Surah**

Before beginning our discussion of the verses of this Surah, it is necessary to point out a number of points

All of the verses of this Surah, except a few, concern the beautiful, instructive biography of Hadrat – 1 Yusuf (as) and this is the reason why this Surah is called "Yusuf"

And, it is also for this reason that out of the 27 times that the name of Yusuf has been mentioned in the Qur'an, 25 of them are found in this Surah. The other two suras in which his name has been mentioned are in verse 34 of Surah Al-Ghafir, and in verse 84 of Surah Al-'An'am

The content of this Surah is well integrated in one reading and it presents different highlights of a single story expressed in ten sections through an extraordinarily fluent, concise, interesting, and attractive manner

Ignorant story tellers or those who have questionable objectives in mind, have sought to present this story as an exciting love story for the whimsical, they try to change everything around sexuality and present it as if it was a Hollywood romance, providing a distorted picture of the true Yusuf and his real biography

The Qur'an, whose everything is paradigm, narrates the story revealing sublime lessons in chastity, abstemiousness, virtue, faith, and domination over individual selfishness. This has been so carefully

arranged that if someone was to read it several times, he would still be involuntarily drawn by its  
.powerful attraction

It is for this reason that the Qur'an has called it the Best of Stories /ahsanul qasas/ and the Surah has  
.presented instructive lessons for contemplation

Focusing our attention on the verses of this Surah reveals the fact that the holy Qur'an is a miracle in – 2  
all its dimensions, and the champions it presents in its stories are real, not imaginary and unique in their  
.class

There is Abraham, the iconoclastic champion who, with his sublime and unconquerable spirit stood alone  
.opposing powerful despots

.There is Moses, the hero who taught an obstinate people to go against a recalcitrant oppressor

And then there is Yusuf (Joseph) (as), the champion who embodied righteousness, purity and virtue  
.versus a passionate, beautiful and conniving woman

On reading this Surah we cannot help but be struck with wonderment at the revelation of the Qur'an and  
.its ability to relate a story of such subtlety and profundity

Among the many subjects covered by this Surah, the story of Yusuf also deals with the sensitive issue of  
love, the Qur'an does not overlook or bypass these issues, indeed, it speaks of them in great detail but  
.in such a way that no undesirable or negative effect would be left on the reader

It delves deeply into every issue and proposition but one would find that powerful rays of virtue may  
.dominate the discussion at all times

**The story of Yusuf before and after Islam:** Undoubtedly, the story of Yusuf had been known – 3  
before Islam. This story has been extensively mentioned in 14 chapters (37 to 50) in the Book of  
Genesis. A careful reading of these 14 chapters shows that what is found in the Torah is quite different  
.from what is in the Qur'an

A comparison of the two accounts reveals the extent to which the Qur'anic version is void of all the  
.superstitions found in the Torah

And the fact that the Qur'an says to the Prophet: "**Before this, thou too was among those who knew  
it not**", is a reference made to the Prophet's lack of prior awareness of the story and the sheer truth of  
.this instructive biography. Indeed, whatever the prophets possess is God-given

After the dawn of Islam, historians also wrote accounts and interpretations of the story. In Persian poetry  
.and literature, the first story told about Yusuf and Zulaykha is ascribed to Ferdowsi

Then the poems composed by Shahabuddin 'Am'aq and Mas'udi Ghomi, and later, we find the famous

poetry entitled 'Yusuf and Zulaykha' composed by 'Abdurahman Jami, the famous poet of the 9th century A.H

Why is the story of Yusuf, unlike that of the other prophets, expounded in one place? One of the –4 characteristics of this story is that, unlike the story of the other prophets, it is discussed as a whole in one format

This is different from that of the stories of the other prophet which have been recounted in separate sections in various suras of the Qur'an. The reason for this is that separation of the climaxes of this story destroys its integrity and in order to arrive at the proper and necessary conclusions, it must be offered as an integrated whole

Another specification of this holy Surah is that whereas the stories of the other prophets recounted in the Qur'an, usually deal with the issue of their struggles and campaigns against unruly and rebellious peoples, but the story of Yusuf makes no mention of such matters

On the contrary, it revolves around the life of Yusuf himself and his passage through difficult stages of life which eventually culminates with him becoming a powerful man in the Egyptian government

**The virtues of Surah Yusuf:** The Islamic narrations cite numerous virtues for reciting this Surah, –5 :among which one can find a tradition by Imam Sadiq (as) saying

*Whoever recites this Surah every day or every night, Allah will enable him to be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection having a beauty equal to that of the beauty of Yusuf, he will have no difficulties on that Day and he will be among the righteous subjects of Allah*

We have already pointed out repeatedly that the narrations that have come down to us concerning the virtues of reading the suras of the Qur'an do not mean a superficial reading of the text without meditating and acting upon them. On the contrary, it means a careful reading that would encourage one to think and in turn lead to a practical application of the text

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