

Surah Yusuf – Verses 28 - 35

Learning Objectives:

- To provide an explanation of verses 28 – 35
- To continue with the memorisation of Surah Yusuf up to verse 35

ZULAIKHA'S NEXT PLOT

AYAHAH 28 -29

فَلَمَّا رَأَى قَمِيصَهُ قُدَّ مِنْ دُبُرٍ قَالَ إِنَّهُ مِنْ كَيْدِكُنَّ ۖ إِنَّ كَيْدَكُنَّ عَظِيمٌ

28. "So when he saw his shirt rent from behind, he said: Surely it is a guile of you women; surely your guile is great."

There was more at stake for the Aziz - not only the matter of the integrity of his wife but his own status and reputation as governor of Egypt.

If P. Yusuf (as) was guilty and was lying then that would be a betrayal to the Aziz, as he favoured him when he bought him as a slave and raised him to a position of honour. Therefore he should be punished as a result of that and that his act would also be regarded as a grave sin.

If Zulaikha was guilty then it would be shameful and damaging to the honour of the Aziz, that his wife was found to be seducing a young servant/slave. Another interesting point here is that when he is mentioning this, the term used is plural for women, meaning that he attributes this deviousness to women, in general, not only to Zulaikha.

Zulaikh's husband realises that his wife is lying and Yusuf is truthful. This shows us that when a person commits a sin, he/she will try to cover it up by lying about it. And sometimes, being in a superior position, they think they will get away with it. She was trying to use her station and rank to get away with it. Many a times in the world, people in position of power abuse their power by tyrannising those under them and get away with it.

Here Zulaikha's husband reprimands her in the verse and mentions that it was her plan all along.

يُوسُفُ أَعْرِضْ عَنْ هَذَا ۖ وَاسْتَغْفِرِي لِذَنبِكِ ۖ إِنَّكِ كُنْتِ مِنَ الْخَاطِئِينَ

29. "O Yusuf! Turn aside from this; and (O my wife)! Ask forgiveness for your faults, surely you are one of the wrong-doers."

Yusuf is asked by his master to ignore the matter and Zulaikha is asked to ask for forgiveness as she has committed a sin. They were trying to cover up their mistakes. Again, we see that people in a position of power try to sweep things under the carpet and can get away with it. This ayah uses the singular in contrast, wherein he told her to seek forgiveness for her own individual faults.

AYAH 30 -32

وَقَالَ نِسْوَةٌ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ امْرَأَتُ الْعَزِيزِ تُرَاوِدُ فَتَاهَا عَن نَّفْسِهِ ۖ قَدْ شَغَفَهَا
حُبًّا ۗ إِنَّا لَنَرَاهَا فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ

30. And women in the city said: The chief's wife seeks her slave to yield himself (to her), surely he has affected her deeply with (his) love; most surely we see her in manifest error."

فَلَمَّا سَمِعَتْ بِمَكْرِهِنَّ أَرْسَلَتْ إِلَيْهِنَّ وَأَعْتَدَتْ لَهُنَّ مُتَّكَأً وَآتَتْ كُلَّ وَاحِدَةٍ
مِّنْهُنَّ سِكِّينًا وَقَالَتِ اخْرُجْ عَلَيْهِنَّ ۗ فَلَمَّا رَأَيْنَهُ أَكْبَرْنَهُ وَقَطَّعْنَ أَيْدِيَهُنَّ
وَقُلْنَ حَاشَ لِلَّهِ مَا هَذَا بَشَرًا إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا مَلَكٌ كَرِيمٌ

31. She heard of their sly talk she sent for them and prepared for them a repast, and gave each of them a knife, and said (to Yusuf): come forth to them. So when they saw him, they deemed him great, and cut their hands (in amazement), and said: Remote is Allah (from imperfection); this is not a mortal; this is but a noble angel."

The talk went out that Zulaikha had tried to seduce Yusuf and people in the upper circles of society condemned her for falling for Yusuf who was her servant, therefore lowly in station compared to her social status.

Zulaikha made a plan to prove to the ladies that she was not in the wrong. She invited them all to her house and served them fruit. With it she gave each of the a knife to cut the fruit and asked Yusuf to come in. Most of them cut their hands instead of the fruit on seeing Yusuf beauty. Zulaikha said you were condemning me for it but you can now see yourself that if you were in my position, you would have done the same thing. He resisted me but if he continues to resist me, I will imprison him and he will be disgraced.

These words of Zulaikha proves that after the first incident, she had not repented nor had she given up on her plan and was continually trying to put it into action but Yusuf was resisting.

Zulaikha's passion blinded her so much that she lost sight of everything. This strong desire itself became a veil upon her reasoning. The women of the town realised that Zulaikha was in great error. But Zulaikha didn't think that she had made a mistake. One would think that she tested the other women so they would stop gossiping. On the contrary, Zulaikha was boldly proclaiming to the ladies that she loved Yusuf to the extent that she forgot her dignity, her status in society and her standing. She also threatens Yusuf with prison if he does not succumb himself to her.

Point here to be noted is that love in its extreme form is destructive to one's self as you lose sight of right and wrong and everything else. Only love for Allah helps us to remove these veils and as humans we are susceptible to our desires and by loving Allah and following him, we can keep our base desires in check.

Allah naturally gifts us with haya (modesty) but when a woman or man loses his haya, he /she can be worse than an animal because he just follows his base desires without thought to consequences as was the case with zulaikha. The Qur'an states:

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالإِنسِ ۗ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَهُمْ
 أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَهُمْ آذَانٌ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا ۗ أُولَئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ
 أَضَلُّ ۗ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ

And certainly We have created for hell many of the jinn and mankind; they have hearts with which they do not understand, and they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear; they are as cattle, nay, they are in worse errors; these are the heedless ones. [7:179]

This kind of love puts a veil on one's heart and mind and you lose sight of everything except what you want.

The H Prophet (s) says : "There are seven groups of people that Allah will place them at the shadow of His throne in a day in which there is no shadow:

1. A just leader
2. A youth grown in God's service
3. He whose heart is connected with God's mosque and centres of worship
4. Those who collectively work for the cause of God
5. He who, when, hears the name of God, tears flow down his eyes
6. The man who is invited by a beautiful lady and he refuses saying; I fear my Lord
7. And finally he who helps the poor and needy and keeps his help strictly confidential"

AYAH 32-33

قَالَتْ فَذَلِكُنَّ الَّذِي لُمْتُنَنِي فِيهِ ۗ وَلَقَدْ رَاودتُّهُ عَن نَّفْسِهِ فَاسْتَعْصَمَ ۗ وَلَئِن
 لَّمْ يَفْعَلْ مَا أَمَرُهُ لَيَسْجَنَنَّ وَيَكُونًا مِّنَ الصَّاغِرِينَ

32. "She said: This is he with respect to whom you blamed me, and certainly I sought his yielding himself (to me), but he abstained, and if he does not do what I bid him, he shall certainly be imprisoned, and he shall certainly be of those who are in a state of ignominy."

قَالَ رَبِّ السِّجْنُ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا يَدْعُونَنِي إِلَيْهِ ۗ وَإِلَّا تَصْرِفْ عَنِّي كَيْدَهُنَّ
 أَصْبُ إِلَيْهِنَّ وَأَكُن مِّنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ

33. "He said: My Lord! The prison house is dearer to me than that to which they invite me; and if Thou turn not their device from me, I will yearn towards them and become (one) of the ignorant."

Yusuf prayed to Allah for deliverance from his situation. He did not want to give into their machinations (they - here means that even the women of the town were involved in it). He says that "if I get inclined toward them, I will be amongst the ignorant ones."

In tafseer, his prayer is known as a prayer of fear. Yusuf feared that he would go astray and that is why he says I don't want to be amongst the ignorant ones. If a person despite getting the awareness and knowledge of God commits a sin, then he is worse off, as he is ignorant despite having the knowledge. This is why Yusuf preferred prison to sin.

Moral: How many of us would resist temptation or a situation when we knew the consequences might be worse for us??

AYAH 34-35

فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ فَصَرَفَ عَنْهُ كَيْدَهُنَّ ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

34. "Thereupon his Lord accepted his prayer and turned away their guile from him; surely He is the Hearing, the Knowing."

ثُمَّ بَدَأَ لَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا رَأَوُا الْآيَاتِ لَيْسَ جُنْدَهُ حَتَّىٰ حِينٍ

35. "Then it occurred to them after they had seen the signs that they should imprison him till a time."

They imprisoned Yusuf although even the townspeople knew he was innocent. They thought by hiding him away, the effects of his beauty would reduce on their women and the scandal would be forgotten. That is why the verse says "they should imprison him till a time." It was meant to be a temporary measure to bring the situation under control. This suggests that it was not the Aziz alone who made this decision to imprison Yusuf (as).

Allah (swt) answered Yusuf's prayer and helped him to resist them. Allah says *innahu sameeun aalim*. He is the Hearing and all-Knowing. Allah always tells us that "My servant only has to ask Me and I will answer." Whenever we are in a situation, the only person we should turn to, who can solve all our problems is Allah (swt). He has the knowledge of past, present and future and he will guide you, if you ask for it. Throughout this story, we have seen how Yusuf always turns to Allah and Allah provides solutions to his problems. The solutions Allah provides might not be to our liking but it will always be in our best interests as he is *Rabb* and loves us unconditionally – more than we could ever love ourselves!

We will always have challenges in life where we will have to choose the right over wrong and sometimes; it is going to be very difficult. If we ask for Allah's help at all times, we will be able to make the right choice, however difficult it may be. Shaitan is always our enemy and will always try to sway us by convincing us that it is a minor compromise and that is how our downfall starts. We just have to be strong and trust in God.

IMPORTANT LESSONS

1. Do not cover up or justify your mistakes
2. Do not wrongly accuse others

3. Shaitan is an open enemy, do not give in to your desires and let Shaitan lead you astray
4. If you are on the right and are God-conscious then Allah will help you, so turn to Him

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