

## Yusuf (Joseph) - Joseph From the Well to Slavery

The next scene shows the wide desert. At the horizon is a long line of camels, horses, and men: a caravan on its way to Egypt. The caravan of merchants halted at this famous well for water. A man lowered in his bucket. Joseph was startled by the bucket hurtling down and grabbed hold of it before it could land in the water. As the man began to haul he felt the load unusually heavy, so he peeped into the well. What he saw shocked him: a man was clinging to the rope! He held the rope tightly and shouted to his friends: "Better give me a hand fellows! Looks like I found real treasure in the well!"

His companions rushed to the well and helped him to pull out the stranger holding onto the rope. Standing before them was a healthy, handsome youth, beaming with an angelic smile. They saw in him a handsome prize, for money was all that mattered to them. Immediately, they clapped iron shackles on his feet and took him along to Egypt, far away from his beloved homeland of Canaan.

All over the Egyptian city the news spread that an unusually handsome, robust young slave was on sale. People gathered by the hundreds at the slave market. Some were spectators, others were bidders the elite and the rich, each one craning his neck to view the handsome specimen. The auctioneer had a field day as the bidding went wild, each buyer trying to outbid the other. Eventually, the Aziz, the chief minister of Egypt, outbid all the others and took Joseph to his mansion.

The Qur'an describes this scene as follows: And there came a caravan of travelers; they sent their water-drawer, and he let down his bucket (into the well). He said: "What a good news! Here is a boy." So they hid him as merchandise (a slave). And Allah was the All-Knower of what they did.

And they sold him for a low price, - for a few Dirhams (i.e. for a few silver coins). And they were of those who regarded him insignificant.

And he (the man) from Egypt who bought him, said to his wife: 'Make his stay comfortable, may be he will profit us or we shall adopt him as a son.' Thus did We establish Joseph in the land, that We might teach him the interpretation of events. Surah 12: 19-21

See how Allah the Almighty reveals the substance of this long story from its beginning: And Allah has full power and control over His Affairs, but most of men know not. Surah 12: 21

The chains of slavery have closed on Joseph. He was cast into the well, deprived of his father, picked from the well, made a slave, sold at the market, and made the property of this man, the Aziz, the chief minister. The hazards followed in quick succession, leaving Joseph helpless.

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