

Yusuf (Joseph) - Zulaikha's False Accusation

Joseph's refusal only heightened her passion. As he moved to the door to escape, she ran after him and caught hold of his shirt, like a drowning person clinging to the boat. In her tugging she tore his shirt and held the torn piece in her hand. They reached the door together. It opened suddenly; there stood her husband and a relative of hers. Almighty Allah said: So they raced with one another to the door, and she tore his shirt from the back. They both found her lord (i.e. her husband) at the door. Surah 12: 25

As he opened the door, he saw her husband standing in front of him. The sly woman immediately changed her tone to anger and, showing the torn piece of the shirt in her hand, asked her husband: "What is the recompense (punishment) for him who intended an evil design against your wife, except that he be put in prison or a painful torment?" Surah 12: 25

She was now accusing Joseph of molesting her, to give the impression that she was innocent and a victim of Joseph's sexual desire. Though bewildered Joseph denied it: "It was she that sought to seduce me.

After the husband had questioned his wife and Joseph, he consulted Zulaikha's cousin. He was an honest, wise man who listened to both accounts and gave his opinion. He said the proof was in the shirt. If it was torn at the front it meant that he had tried to seduce her, as the torn shirt would then be a proof of self-defense. The husband asked: "And if the shirt is torn at the back?" The relative said: "Then it would mean that she was the one who tempted him." Surah 12: 26

The shirt was passed from hand to hand, while she watched. The witness (her cousin) looked at it and found that it was torn at the back. The evidence clearly showed that she was guilty. The disappointed husband remarked to his wife: "Surely, it is a plot of you women! Certainly mighty is your plot!" Surah 12: 28

The wise and just Aziz apologized to Joseph for his wife's indecency. He also instructed her to beg Joseph's forgiveness for accusing him falsely. Allah the Almighty narrated this incident thus: He (Joseph) said: "It was she that sought to seduce me," - and a witness of her household bore witness (saying): "If it be that his shirt is torn from the front, then her tale is true and he is a liar! But if it be that his shirt is torn from the back, then she has told a lie and he is speaking the truth!"

So when he (her husband) saw his (Joseph's) shirt torn at the back; (her husband) said: "Surely, it is a plot of you women! Certainly mighty is your plot! O Joseph! Turn away from this! (O woman!) Ask forgiveness for your sin. Verily, you were of the sinful." Surah 12: 26-29

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