

Yusuf (Joseph) - The Evil Plot of Joseph's Brothers

The scene of Jacob and his son closes. Another opens on Joseph's brothers plotting against him. "Truly, Joseph and his brother (Benjamin) are loved more by our father than we, but we are 'Usbah (a storn group). Really, our father is in a plain error. Kill Joseph or cast him out to some (other) land, so that the favor of your father may be given to you alone, and after that you will be righteous folk (by intending repentance before committing the sin)."

One from among them said: "Kill not Joseph, but if you must do something, throw him down to the bottom of a well, he will be picked up by some caravan of travelers." Surah 12: 8-10

The pages of the Old Testament say that Joseph told them his dream, whereas the Qur'an does not say that that happened. Had it been so, the brothers would have said so themselves. The Old Testament claims they had lost their own rights by him, and so they would kill him. Indeed Joseph kept his father's order and did not tell his brothers about his vision.

In spite of this, his brothers sat down to conspire against him. One of them asked: "Why does our father love Joseph more than us?"

Another answered: "Perhaps because of his beauty."

A third said: "Joseph and his brother occupied our father's heart."

The first complained: "Our father has gone all astray."

One of them suggested a solution to the matter: kill Joseph. "Where should we kill him?"

"We should banish him away from these grounds."

"We will send him to a distant land."

"Why should we not kill him and have rest so that the favor of your father may be given to you alone?"

However, Judah (Yahudh), the eldest and most intelligent among them, said: "There is no need to kill him when all you want is to get rid of him. Look here, let us throw him into a well and he will be picked up by a passing caravan. They will take him with them to a distant land. He will disappear from your father's sight and our purpose will be served with his exile. Then after that we shall repent for our crime and become good people once again."

The discussion continued on the idea of dropping Joseph into a well, as it was seen as the safest solution. The plan to kill him was defeated; kidnap into a distant land was approved. It was the cleverest of ideas.

[View Page](#)

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