

## Chapter 2

### The King's Dream

As for the King's dream, then he saw seven fat cows eating, whom seven lean cows were devouring, and seven green ears of corn being eaten up and overcome by seven other weak and dry ears of corn. This terrified the King, so he gathered everyone whom he thought would know about dreams, but none of them had knowledge of its interpretation and so they said:

أَضْغَاثُ أَحْلَامٍ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِتَأْوِيلِ الْأَحْلَامِ بِعَالِمِينَ

<< 'Mixed up false dreams and we are not skilled in the interpretation of dreams.' >><sup>1</sup>

So after one of the two persons who had been in prison with Yusuf, left the prison, he understood the circumstances of Yusuf *-alayhi sallam-* and what he

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<sup>1</sup> [Yusuf: 44]

possessed of great knowledge and the knowledge of interpreting dreams.

This man understood Yusuf's command, which he wanted to convey to the master, but which Shaytaan made him forget to mention to their master. This was due to a wisdom which later became clear, which is that he would not leave the prison until Yusuf had become famous and highly distinguished above all the people due to his interpreting the King's dream.

So, this man requested the King to send him to Yusuf - *alayhi sallam*- and he was the guardian of interpreting the King's dream. When Yusuf came, the man said to him:

يُوسُفُ أَيُّهَا الصَّادِقُ أَفْتِنَا فِي سَبْعِ بَقَرَاتٍ سِمَانٍ يَأْكُلُهُنَّ  
سَبْعُ عِجَافٍ وَسَبْعِ سُنبُلَاتٍ خُضْرٍ وَأُخَرَ يَابِسَاتٍ

<<(He said): 'O Yusuf, you are a truthful person! Explain to us (the dream) of seven fat cows whom seven lean

ones were devouring, and of seven green ears of corn,  
and (seven) others dry>><sup>2</sup>

The man said, 'Indeed the King and the people who are with him have sent me to you to interpret the dream for them, and they are eagerly awaiting, greatly desiring the interpretation.' This is why the man said: << that I may return to the people, and that they may know >><sup>3</sup> which was very important for the King as it had troubled him and caused him anxiety.

At that moment, Yusuf *-alayhi sallam-* interpreted the dream, and in addition to its interpretation, he also explained how to act upon the dream correctly, and how to manage affairs correctly.

So, Yusuf informed them that the fat cows and seven green ears of corn would be the years of ease and continuous produce which precede years of drought. The lean cows and the dry ears of corn would be the years of drought which follow on after the years of produce. Also, that in

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<sup>2</sup> [Yusuf: 46]

<sup>3</sup> [Yusuf: 46]

those years of drought there would be a year where there would be lots of rain for the people and in it they would press (wine and oil). Also that they must, for the years of drought, take advantage of the opportunity and make preparations for the years of severity and that they should grow an enormous amount of crops, a major increase upon what they are used to. This is why he said:

تَزْرَعُونَ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ دَأْبًا

<<'For seven consecutive years, you shall sow as usual'>><sup>4</sup>

From what is known is that people grow crops every year, however what Yusuf *-alayhi sallam-* intended for them was that they should grow a large amount of crop and exert their strength with all that they were capable of and to be cautious with the produce and crops, if they achieved them, by storing and saving them.

So he said :

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<sup>4</sup> [Yusuf: 47]

فَمَا حَصَدْتُمْ فَذَرُوهُ فِي سُنْبُلِهِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ

<< and that (the harvest) which you reap you shall leave in ears of corn, (all)- except a little of it which you may eat.>><sup>5</sup>

Meaning, carefully look after what you have gained from the crops, look after it and protect it from going off or from being eaten by worms by keeping it in the form of ears of corn. Also, keep a middle course during this period, the period of ease, and do not waste it by spending it, rather they should only eat a little of it and keep most of it.

Indeed, after these years of produce there will come upon you seven years of severe drought, which will encompass the land of Misr and what surrounds it. They will then eat what is given to them- from what they stored during the years of produce – from the little they had stored.

The relevance of this has been mentioned previously, that a dream is interpreted according to the one who saw it

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<sup>5</sup> [Yusuf: 47]

and the circumstances connected to that dream. So the dreamer was the King, who has the rule of his subjects and their affairs connected to him, that is why his dream was not specific to him, rather it included the King and his subjects.

The relevance of the explanation of the dream is in reference to cows and ears of corn crops in relation to the length of time is clear, that it is connected to cows from two angles:

**Firstly:**

That cows are generally what are used to plough the land. Ploughing and growing crops and what results from that, is dependent upon the years of produce and drought. [relating to ploughing and growing crops.]

**Secondly:**

That cows are from livestock so them becoming fatter and leaner is also dependent upon years of produce and drought. If there is abundant crop, they become fatter and if there is a drought then they become lean and lose

weight. Likewise, ears of corn cause crops to blossom which become complete. They grow with plenty of water in years of rainfall but they become weak and dry during years of drought.

Therefore, the King's dream about cows and ears of corn was described as the years of produce and drought and their effects, and also a mention of their causes and effects.

So, ploughing the land is a means and the growth of crops and fattening the livestock was the goal and intent of the dream.

As for his saying:

ثُمَّ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ عَامٌ فِيهِ يُغَاثُ النَّاسُ وَفِيهِ  
يَعْصِرُونَ

<< 'Then thereafter will come a year in which people will have abundant rain and in which they will press (wine and oil).!>><sup>6</sup>

In that year, the people will have a heavy downpour of rain which will cause the land to be fertile and remove drought, this is what is understood from the restriction of the number of years of drought to being just seven.

This restriction indicates that what comes after these seven years eliminates their severity, and eliminates drought. It is known that after seven years of drought there are no remnants of greenery, vegetation, crops or anything similar to them remaining on the earth – neither a little nor a lot- and this great drought cannot be removed except with a great downpour of rain. This is very clear and is clearly understood from the King's dream.

What is amazing is that all the Tafseer books that I came across did not explicitly mention this meaning. Rather

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<sup>6</sup> [Yusuf: 49]



they said; that 'perhaps a specific revelation came to Yusuf -*alayhi sallam* – that in that year there would be heavy rainfall and in it they would press (wine and oil).'

But the issue is not in need of the explanation they have mentioned, in fact it is- and all praise is due to Allaah- clearly understood from the number of years mentioned and it is also clear from the context since he made this interpretation and Tafseer in a clarification of the King's dream.

So you must know that the King's dream and Yusuf's interpretation and reflection upon it, which was an amazing reflection, and was from the great mercy of Allaah upon Yusuf -*alayhi sallam*, upon the King and upon the people.

If it was not for this dream and its interpretation and the contemplation over it, then the years of drought would have taken the people by surprise before they could prepare for it in any way and so a great harm would have

befallen the lands of Misr and those surrounding them. So, this dream and its interpretation was a mercy for the people and for other than them from the creation.

Do you not see how this drought covered the lands of Misr, Shaam, Palestine and other lands so much so, that they had a need of food from Misr; this required Yusuf *-alayhi sallam-* to work out the amount of food that would be enough for everyone so that it could be distributed fairly, with gentleness for everyone and so it could continue to be given to them.

This great knowledge of Yusuf *-alayhi sallam-* was the major reason for him being released from prison and becoming close to the King. Due to his *-alayhi sallam-* speciality he was given authority in the land to take possession therein when and where he liked, and that was due to his goodness- Allaah does not cause the reward of the righteous people to be lost. Along with this excellence, the excellence of Allaah is greater than that, He bestows His mercy upon whom He wills from those whom He

chooses, and Allaah specified and gathered goodness of the Dunya the Hereafter for Yusuf *-alayhi sallam.*'

