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MAINTAINING INTEGRITY**

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**THE METHODOLOGY OF SURAH YUSUF IN RESISTING TEMPTATIONS AND
MAINTAINING INTEGRITY**

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Abstract:

Abstinence and chastity are noble virtues that elevate the human soul to the esteemed status that God has granted it. The teachings of the Holy Quran advocate the embodiment of this noble character. Among the Qur'anic examples of chastity in its highest and most beautiful forms is the story of Joseph (peace be upon him) during his second trial with the wife of the nobleman. This story outlines for the believer the milestones that lead to a good life in this world, eternal happiness in the Hereafter, purity for families, and integrity for society.

Keywords: Chastity and abstinence, the second trial, resisting temptation.

Introduction

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets and Messengers, and upon his family and companions.

A chastity and self-restraint: are great virtues through which individuals ascend to the ranks of the esteemed. These qualities purify and beautify families, elevate them, and contribute to the stability and cohesion of society. The teachings of the Holy Qur'an call for the cultivation of these noble traits both theoretically and practically. A prime example of self-restraint in its most refined and beautiful form is found in the story of Prophet Joseph (peace be upon him) during his second trial with the wife of Al-Aziz.

The Problem:

Contemporary society, made up of individuals, families and communities, is undergoing waves of trials that have distanced it from many of its values and principles. Among these are the facilitation of paths leading to sexual deviation and the indulgence of desires beyond their legitimate limits, especially in the face of the challenges posed by social media, which some may exploit to prioritize desires and fall into the traps of Satan. Conversely, there is a pure and clean segment of society that questions the means to free itself from these trials. If we turn to Surah Yusuf (peace be upon him), we find that the Qur'an presents us with a wonderful model of the virtue of chastity. What were the means of temptation that Joseph faced during his trial with the wife of Al-Aziz? How did Joseph (peace be upon him) deal with this temptation? What were the consequences of his action?

The significance of this study:

The importance of this study lies in the following points:

- Chastity is a great virtue because it is one of the five essential values. This study outlines the Qur'anic approach to chastity and self-control, thereby preserving lineage and wealth.
- Exploration of real issues related to chastity that require further research in our time.

The purpose of this study:

- To reveal the temptations Joseph (peace be upon him) faced during his second trial.
- To uncover the principles laid down by the Qur'an in dealing with trials.
- To guide and refine the approach to desires according to the Qur'anic methodology.
- To elevate the human soul to the esteemed rank that Allah has bestowed upon it.

My approach to this study follows an inductive analytical methodology, according to the following plan:

1. Introduction: An entry to define the subject.
2. First section: The means of temptation and warnings against them in the light of the Surah.
3. Second Section: The Surah's Methodology for Resisting Temptation and Embodying Chastity.
4. Third Section: The impact of chastity on the individual and society as presented in the Surah.
5. Conclusion.

Introduction to the Topic

In this introduction, I would like to define Surah Yusuf and the concept of chastity so that we can gain a deeper understanding of the subject of study.

Section One: Definition of the Surah First: Naming the Surah:

This Surah is commonly known as Surah Yusuf, which is the only name attributed to it. This is evidenced by its mention in the Qur'an, in tafsir (exegetical) literature, and in hadith and narrations. In the two Sahihs, it is narrated that Alqamah said: "We were in Homs when Ibn Mas'ud was

reciting Surah Yusuf. A man said, 'This is not how it was revealed. He said, "I recited it to the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, and he said, 'You have done well. He smelled wine on him and said, 'Can you deny the Book of Allah and drink wine?'¹

The reason for its naming is obvious, for it contains the best of all stories-the story of the Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him².

Second: Number of Verses in the Surah

This is a Makki Surah³. Al-Suyuti mentioned in his discussion about identifying Makki and Madani Surahs that it is indeed Makki and it consists of 111 verses⁴.

The Companions frequently recited Surah Yusuf, and some of them memorized it due to its frequent recitation in prayer. As narrated by Al-Qasim bin Muhammad, Al-Furafisa⁵ (son of Umair the Hanif) said, "I learned Surah Yusuf only from the recitation of Uthman ibn Affan during the Fajr prayer because of how often he recited it⁶.

Thus, Surah Yusuf is a Makki Surah that was revealed shortly before the migration to Medina, after the Year of Mourning, when the Companions were in distress. The Surah came as a consolation to them and sent messages to the Muslims that if they were sincere to Allah and patient, they would come out of their trials.

Section Two: Definition of Chastity

Linguistically: It is derived from the verb "the (عَفَّ): ('aff), meaning to abstain. Ibn Faris states "عَفَّ" are two correct roots: one indicates refraining from what is inappropriate, and the ف and ع root letters⁷. other denotes scarcity

Terminologically:

It refers to "the moderation of desire, which is the act of refraining from indulging in unlawful and improper desires⁸. Chastity was a prominent virtue among the Arabs, where it was known that a free

¹- Al-Bukhari: Muhammad ibn Ismail, The Compendium of Authentic Hadiths from the Messenger of Allah - Peace be upon Him - and His Sunnah and Days (Beirut, Dar al-Fikr, 1427 AH - 2007 AD), no edition, no date, vol. 6, Chapter on Recitation from the Companions of the Prophet, Hadith No. 5001, p. 186. Also: Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj al-Naysaburi: Abu al-Husayn, Sahih Muslim, The Authentic Compendium (Beirut, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 1421 AH - 2001 AD), 1st edition, vol. 1, Chapter on the Virtue of Listening to the Quran, Hadith No. 249, p. 551.

²- Narrated by Abu Huraira- May Allah be pleased with him: It was said to the Prophet - Peace be upon Him - "Who is the most honorable of people?" He said, "The most honorable of them is the most God-fearing." They said: "O Messenger of Allah, we are not asking about this." He said: "Then the most honorable of people is Yusuf, the Prophet of Allah, son of the Prophet of Allah, son of the Prophet of Allah, son of the Friend of Allah." *(Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 4, Chapter: Were you witnesses when Jacob was approaching death? Hadith No. 3374, p. 148.)

³- See: Al-Suyuti: Abdul Rahman ibn Abi Bakr, The Mastery in the Sciences of the Quran, Edited by Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim (The Egyptian General Book Authority, no edition, 1394 AH / 1974 AD, 4 volumes), vol. 1, p. 43.

⁴- Same source, vol. 1, p. 233.

⁵- The text of Al-Jawhari: "Furafisa: The lion. And he was named thus..." From Ibn Faris, who said: "It is derived from Furafisa, which is the lion, as if it cuts things apart." Others said: "A Furafis man: Strong, large, brave." (Muhammad al-Murtada al-Zabidi, The Crown of the Bride from the Jewels of the Dictionary, Edited by Abdul Karim al-Azbawi, Dar al-Hidaya, Government Press of Kuwait, no edition, 1399 AH / 1977 AD, vol. 18, p. 70.)

⁶- Malik ibn Anas, The Muwatta of Imam Malik, Narration of Mus'ab al-Zuhri al-Madani, Edited by Bashir Awad Ma'ruf - Mahmoud Khalil (Dar al-Risalah, Beirut, 1st edition, 1412 AH / 1992, 2 volumes), vol. 1, Regarding the Recitation of Fajr, Hadith No. 222, p. 85.

⁷- Ibn Faris: Ahmad ibn Faris ibn Zakariya, Dictionary of Language Standards, Edited by Abdul Salam Muhammad Harun, 1st edition (Beirut, Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, 1403 AH - 1983 AD), vol. 4, Book of the Eye, entry for عَفَّ, p. 3.

woman would not commit the sin of adultery, as evidenced by Hind bint ‘Utbah’s famous question: “Does a free woman commit adultery?”

The term “chastity” and its derivatives appear in four verses of the Qur’an¹; however, the verses that specifically refer to abstinence from adultery and its precursors are those in Surah An-Nur. Many verses imply chastity in meaning, if not in wording, with a notable example found in the story of Joseph (peace be upon him) where Allah says: “And she certainly desired him, and he would have desired her, had he not seen the proof of his Lord. (Surah Yusuf, 12:24) In general, chastity encompasses two meanings: abstaining from what is in the hands of men and refraining from falling into immorality.

Requirement One: Ways of Temptation and Warnings Against Them in Light of the Surah

A close examination of the verses of Surah Yusuf reveals the trials that Joseph (peace be upon him) faced, especially the temptations he faced during his second trial with the minister’s wife. Allah says: “So she desired him, and he would have desired her, had he not seen the proof of his Lord. (Surah Yusuf, 12:24) The causes of temptation can be divided into two categories: those related to the defendant (Joseph) and those related to the minister’s wife. These will be discussed in the following subsections:

Subsection One: Causes Related to the Accused – Joseph

These causes can be summarized as follows, merging some reasons due to their strong interrelation:

1. Youth and Singleness: This is inferred from Allah’s statement:

“And when he reached maturity, We gave him judgment and knowledge.” (Surah Yusuf, 12:22)

Abu Ja’far interprets this as referring to Joseph reaching the peak of his youth and strength, typically between the ages of eighteen and sixty², though the majority agree on it being during his young adulthood. Scholars differ on the exact age; Ibn Mujahid suggests thirty-three years, while Ibn Abbas states thirty years, and others suggest twenty. However, they all concur that he was in his youth², which is a time of heightened desire and vigor³.

Ibn al-Qayyim, while discussing the passion for beauty, says: “Secondly, Joseph was young, and the desires of youth are stronger. Thirdly, he was single, lacking a wife or concubine to temper his strong desires.”⁴

Moreover, it is noted that when Joseph arrived in Egypt from Midian, he was still unmarried⁵.

⁸- Al-Suyuti: Abdul Rahman ibn Abi Bakr, Jalal al-Din (d. 911 AH), Dictionary of the Keys to Sciences in Definitions and Symbols, Edited by Dr. Muhammad Ibrahim Abadah (Maktabah al-Adab, Cairo, Egypt, 1st edition, 1424 AH - 2004 AD), vol. 1, p. 205.

¹- The verse of Allah: “...[Quranic text]...” (Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 273). And the verse: “...[Quranic text]...” (Surah An-Nisa, verse 6). And the verse: “...[Quranic text]...” (Surah An-Nur, verse 33). Lastly, the verse: “...[Quranic text]...” (Surah An-Nur, verse 60).

²- Al-Tabari: Abu Ja’far Muhammad ibn Jarir, The Comprehensive Statement in the Interpretation of the Quran, Edited by Abdullah bin Abdul Muhsin al-Turki, in cooperation with the Islamic Research and Studies Center at Dar Hajar, Dr. Abdul Sand Hassan Yamamah (Dar Hajar for Printing, 1st edition, 1422 AH - 2001 AD), vol. 13, p. 66.

³- See: Same source, vol. 13, p. 67.

⁴- Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah: Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, The Sufficient Answer for Those Who Ask About the Healing Remedy or the Disease and the Remedy (Dar al-Ma’rifah, Morocco, 1st edition, 1418 AH - 1997 AD), p. 209.

It is well-known that youth is one of the most vigorous phases of human life, situated between weakness and old age, characterized by peak physical and mental strength. This vigor can lead a young person to succumb to their desires, becoming enslaved by them.

2. Alienation and slavery: This is inferred from Allah's verses:

“And the one who bought him from Egypt said to his wife, ‘Make his dwelling comfortable.’” (Surah Yusuf, 12:21) Ibn al-Qayyim states: “Fourth, he was in a foreign country where a stranger can indulge his desires more easily than in his home among his family and acquaintances”.¹

Divine Providence facilitated Joseph's escape from his first trial. Ibn Abbas narrates that a caravan traveling from Midian to Egypt lost its way and wandered until they found the well where Joseph was imprisoned, far from the people. They sent one of their men to draw water, who discovered Joseph and exclaimed, “Oh, good news! This is a boy!” The following verse describes how they tried to sell him.

Second: The sellers of Joseph:

The second opinion is that the sellers of Joseph were those who took him out of the well. Muhammad ibn Ishaq said: “Your Lord knows whether his brothers sold him or the caravan.”³

Thus, it is clear from the preceding texts that Joseph was a foreigner and a slave. In a state of estrangement, sins may be committed if one lacks the fear of Allah, blessed be He, and awareness of Him in both private and public life. For this reason, some people, especially the young, when they find themselves in a foreign country, may give in to their desires, even if they are sins. As for slavery and servitude, a servant must not fear the shame that comes from committing immoral acts.

3- Beauty and Good Character:

This can be inferred from His saying: “Indeed, she desired him, and he would have desired her...” (Surah Yusuf, 12:23). Additionally, “And when she heard of their scheming, she sent for them and prepared for them a banquet...” (Surah Yusuf, 12:31). This indicates that Joseph was of remarkable beauty and character, as shown when the caravan rejoiced at the sight of the boy, along with the following texts and narrations:

“It was said that his beauty transcended humanity, and he possessed the attributes of angels.”⁴

Al-Baydawi said: “The combination of exquisite beauty, perfect character, and profound chastity is a quality of the angels, or that his beauty surpassed that of humans, with only the angels equaling him in this.”⁵

⁵- See: Al-Fayruzabadi: Majd al-Din Abu Tahir Muhammad ibn Yaqub, Insights of the Discerning in the Subtleties of the Noble Book, edited by: Muhammad Ali al-Najjar, (Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, Islamic Heritage Revival Committee, Cairo, no date, no date), vol. 3, p. 376.

¹- Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, The Sufficient Answer for Those Who Ask About the Healing Remedy or the Disease and the Remedy, p. 209.

²- See: Al-Fakhr al-Razi: Muhammad ibn Umar, Keys to the Unseen, The Great Exegesis (Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, Beirut, 3rd edition, 1420 AH, 32 volumes), vol. 18, p. 432.

³- See: Same source, vol. 18, p. 432.

⁴- Al-Zamakhshari: Mahmoud ibn Amr Abu al-Qasim, The Revealer of the Truths of the Hidden Revelation (Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, Beirut, 3rd edition - 1407 AH), vol. 2, p. 466.

In a narration from Anas ibn Malik, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: “I was brought the Buraq... and when I saw Joseph, peace be upon him, he had been granted half of beauty¹.”

“Joseph was favored in his time because of his beauty above the people, like the full moon on a clear night above the stars.²”

Ikrimah said: “The excellence of Joseph above all men in beauty is like that of the full moon³ above all the stars.”

In addition, he had excellent character, as indicated by his saying: “Verily, he was one of the righteous.” (Surah Yusuf, 12:23). Ibn Kathir said: “They would call the Master ‘Lord’, meaning, ‘Indeed, your Master has provided me with a good dwelling and has treated me well; I will not respond to him with immorality, for indeed the unjust will not succeed. This was said by Mujahid, Al-Suddi, Muhammad ibn Ishaq, and others⁴.”

This reflects the virtue of trustworthiness and keeping one’s promises. Trust has a broad meaning; it is not appropriate to repay the kindness of one’s master by betraying those closest to him. Indeed, treachery is injustice, and the unjust will not succeed or achieve good.

The virtue of chastity is also evident in his refusal to pursue the wife of Al-Aziz, where she admitted to the women that he was chaste and modest. Ibn Kathir stated: “And indeed, I tried to seduce him, but he resisted.” Some said: “When they saw his apparent beauty, she informed them of his hidden qualities, which were chastity besides this beauty”⁵.

Branch Two: Reasons Related to the Wife of the Aziz⁶

These can be summarized as follows:

1. Her status and beauty As mentioned in Surah Yusuf (30), “And the women of the city said: ‘The wife of al-Aziz is trying to seduce her slave...’” Ibn Kathir says, “This is at the height of her prestige, because with her youth, beauty, and wealth⁷, she calls her servant, and she is a woman of high status and beauty⁸. It is rare for anyone to control himself in the presence of a woman of such beauty and status. Therefore, the reward for one who resists the temptation of a woman of high status and beauty is immense, as indicated in the hadith of Abu Huraira, where the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon

⁵- Al-Baydawi: Nasir al-Din Abu Said al-Shirazi, Lights of Revelation and Secrets of Interpretation, Edited by Muhammad Abdul Rahman al-Mara’ashli (Beirut, Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, 1st edition - 1418 AH), vol. 3, p. 161.

¹- Sahih Muslim, vol. 1, Chapter: The Ascension of the Messenger of Allah - Peace be upon Him - to the Heavens, Hadith No. 260, p. 45.

²- Abu al-Hasan Maqatil ibn Sulayman, Exegesis of Maqatil ibn Sulayman, Edited by Abdullah Mahmoud Shahata (Dar Ihya al-Turath, Beirut, 1st edition, 1423 AH), vol. 2, p. 319.

³- Al-Baghawi: Al-Hussein ibn Mas’ud, Landmarks of Revelation in the Exegesis of the Quran, Edited by Abdul Razzaq al-Mahdi (Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, Beirut, 1st edition, 1420 AH, 5 volumes), vol. 2, p. 491.

⁴- Ibn Kathir: Ismail ibn Umar Abu al-Fida, Exegesis of the Great Quran, Edited by Sami ibn Muhammad Salama (Dar Taybah, 2nd edition, 1420 AH / 1999 AD), vol. 4, p. 325.

⁵- Same source, vol. 4, p. 330.

⁶- “The name of the wife of al-Aziz was Ra’il, daughter of Riya’il. Others said her name was Zuleikha, and it appears that this is her nickname.”(Ibn Kathir: Abu al-Fida Ismail ibn Umar, The Beginning and the End*, Edited by Ali Shiry, Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, 1st edition, 1408 AH - 1988 AD, vol. 1, p. 232.)

⁷- Ibn Kathir Exegesis of the Great Quran vol. 4, p. 331.

⁸- Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, The Sufficient Answer for Those Who Ask About the Healing Remedy or the Disease and the Remedy*, p. 209.

him) said, “Seven will be shaded by Allah in His shade on the Day when there is no shade but His... and a man whom a woman of beauty and status calls, and he says, ‘I fear Allah.’¹”

2. Demand, Determination, and Pressure: Because she was in her own home and under her control, Yusuf was threatened with harm if he did not comply with her demands (Yusuf 23). “She urged him with subtlety, and the one who urges tries to be charming in his request... and she called to him, ‘Come, approach me’²... and he sought refuge in Allah and said, ‘I seek refuge in Allah from being among the ignorant and immoral.’”

3. The provision of secrecy: The verse indicates that she closed many doors, emphasizing her attempt to conceal her actions (Yusuf 23). “She closed many doors, and it is said that there were seven doors that she closed before inviting him to her³.” The number of doors suggests the luxury of a palace, and their closure is a means of increasing secrecy to satisfy her desires while maintaining her status.

4. Seeking help from women: When al-Aziz’s wife heard about the women’s gossip, she called them to her house, prepared pillows, and provided them with knives (Yusuf 31). “When she saw them, she told Yusuf to come out to them. When they saw him, they were astonished and marveled at his beauty, and they cut their hands in astonishment and said, ‘This is not a man, but a noble angel’⁴.

5. Weakness of the husband’s jealousy: The verse indicates a lack of jealousy on the part of her husband (Yusuf 28-29).

“It becomes clear to him, based on the testimony rooted in reality, that she is the one who seduced him and orchestrated the accusation. Here we see a reflection of the “elite class” in the pre-Islamic era, thousands of years ago, similar to today’s society. There is a leniency in dealing with sexual scandals and a tendency to hide them from society, which is the crux of the matter:

“Indeed, your cunning is great”. It is an artful way to address an incident that stirs the blood in the veins. It is a gentle approach to confronting the lady by attributing the matter to all women, almost as a compliment. It does not offend a woman to be told, “Indeed, your cunning is great,” which indicates to her perception that she is a complete woman, endowed with the full capacity for cunning! And a turn to the innocent Joseph: “So pay no attention to him... This is the important part... Keeping up appearances! A lesson to the woman who tried to seduce her servant and was caught in the act, tearing his shirt:

This is indeed a high-class aristocracy, among the courtiers, in any pre-Islamic society. The close are close! And the curtain falls on the scene and its content... The context portrays this moment with all its circumstances and emotions, but does not create an exhibition of blatant animalistic desire, nor a morass of repulsive sexual filth! The master did not intervene between the woman and her servant. Things went as they would. This is how things work in palaces! But palaces have walls, and they

¹- Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 1, Chapter: Who Sat in the Mosque Waiting for Prayer, Hadith No. 620, p. 133. Also: Sahih Muslim, vol. 2, Chapter on the Virtue of Concealing Charity, Hadith No. 91 (1031), p. 715.

²- Al-Maraghi: Ahmad ibn Mustafa (d. 1371 AH), Al-Maraghi’s Exegesis (Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi and Sons Library and Printing Company, 1st edition, 1365 AH - 1946 AD, 30 volumes), vol. 12, p. 128.

³- Al-Qurtubi: Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ahmad, The Comprehensive Book of the Rules of the Quran, Edited by Abdullah bin Abdul Muhsin al-Turki (Dar al-Risalah, Lebanon, 1st edition, 1427 AH - 2006 AD), vol. 9, p. 162.

⁴- Supervised by Saleh bin Abdul Aziz, a selection of scholars in exegesis, The Simplified Exegesis (King Fahd Complex for Printing the Holy Quran, Saudi Arabia, 2nd edition, 1430 AH / 2009 AD, 1 volume), vol. 1, p. 239.

have servants and attendants. What happens in palaces cannot remain hidden, especially in the aristocratic milieu, where women have nothing else to do but gossip about what is going on around them. This leads to the circulation of these scandals, which are discussed at meetings, parties, and visits:

Indeed, your cunning is great!¹

6- Threat of imprisonment:

And if he does not do what I command him, he will certainly be imprisoned and will be among the humiliated. The implication is that she intends to make the punishment more severe than what she initially threatened. She warned him of imprisonment, which could be in its mildest form, and a punishment of a lesser kind².

The Second Requirement: The Surah's Methodology for Resisting Temptation and Maintaining Chastity

In the face of the challenges of cultivating the virtue of chastity and resisting temptations such as blatant display, corrupt media in its various forms, forbidden seclusion and mixing, and the increase in singleness due to the lack of marriage, the youth in particular need means to strengthen their faith and keep them away from sins, so that Allah may divert the intrigues of the schemers from them”.

1. Seeking Refuge in Allah

Allah says:

“And she certainly intended to seduce him, and he would have inclined to her had he not seen the proof of his Lord.” (Surah Yusuf, 12:23).

This means: “I seek refuge in Allah and ask for His protection from what you have called me to.” The source here indicates that it is a plea for refuge. Resorting to Allah and seeking shelter in Him is the primary means of repelling the whispers of Satan³. Human beings are created weak, and thus Prophet Yusuf (peace be upon him) turned to his Lord to save him from the plot of the wife of Al-Aziz. Allah has taught us to seek refuge in Him from the accursed devil when reading the Quran, as He revealed two chapters known as the Mu’awwidhat (the chapters for seeking refuge) and encouraged believers to recite them morning and evening. The Quran also guides believers to seek refuge in Allah whenever Satan whispers to corrupt them, as He says:

“And lower to the believers the wing of humility out of mercy...” (Surah Al-A’raf, 7:199-200).

2.

Allah says: “And he would have turned to her had he not seen the proof of his Lord. (Surah Yusuf, 12:24).

¹- Sayyid Qutb: Ibrahim Hussein (d. 138 AH), In the Shade of the Quran (Beirut, Dar al-Shuruq, 10th edition, 1402 AH / 1982 AD), vol. 4, p. 1979.

²- Ahmad ibn Mustafa, Al-Maraghi's Exegesis, vol. 12, p. 140.

³- Al-Qurtubi. The Comprehensive Book of the Rules of the Quran*, vol. 9, p. 162.

Scholars have differed in their interpretations of the term “intention”, with some suggesting meanings that contradict the concept of infallibility¹. However, they agree on the Quran’s declaration of Yusuf’s innocence² regarding Al-Aziz’s wife. Verses in the Surah affirm his purity. They also agree that her intention was sinful.

Al-Shanqiti summarized the meaning of intention in two ways:

- It refers to Yusuf’s fleeting thought about her, which was distracted by his sense of piety.
- Some suggest that it is a natural inclination and instinctive desire that is permissible because it does not involve disobedience³.

This inclination is similar to a fasting person’s desire for cold water, but his piety prevents him from drinking while fasting. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, “Whoever intends to commit a sin but refrains from doing it, a complete good deed will be recorded for him⁴,” because they resisted their natural inclinations out of fear of Allah.

The term “intention” can also mean love and desire. In contrast to the desire of the wife of Al-Aziz, it was a resolute intention, evidenced by her tearing his shirt from behind as he fled. Her failure to commit the inappropriate act was solely due to her inability⁵.

The Proof of His Lord

The proof here is a non-physical knowledge, as evidence does not solely rely on sight. The divine proof served as a deterrent from yielding to temptation. Had it not been for this proof, humanity would not have been spared from the inclination toward such actions, especially given the various temptations surrounding them.

Scholars have debated what this proof is, suggesting that it could be a rational argument that turned him away from such actions, divine revelation, divine protection, or visions that appeared to him.

The expression of divine protection indicates that the causes of immorality and disgrace were present, but Allah diverted them from him. The term “evil” refers to deception, while “fahsha” refers to immorality, especially adultery. The phrase indicates divine intervention to keep him away from both.

The statement about keeping him away from evil and immorality serves to explain why he was divinely protected, so as not to diminish Allah’s choice of him during such trials⁶

¹- See: Al-Tabari, The Comprehensive Statement in the Interpretation of the Quran, vol. 13, p. 85.

²- See: Muhammad Amin ibn Muhammad al-Mukhtar al-Shanqeeti, *The Lights of Explanation in Clarifying the Quran with the Quran* (Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, Lebanon, 1415 AH - 1995 AD), vol. 2, p. 206.

³- Al-Hakim: Muhammad ibn Abdullah, The Verification of the Two Authentic Books, Edited by Mustafa Abdul Qadir Atta (Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1st edition, 1411 - 1990), vol. 2, Chapter: Regarding the Hadith of Salim, Hadith No. 2761, p. 204. Al-Dhahabi said: “This hadith is authentic according to the conditions of Muslim, but they did not narrate it.”

⁴- Sahih al-Bukhari. vol. 8, Chapter: Who Intended a Good Deed or a Bad Deed, Hadith No. 6491, p. 103. Also: Sahih Muslim, vol. 1, Chapter: When a Servant Intends a Good Deed, it is Written, Hadith No. 206 (130), p. 118.

⁵- Muhammad Amin al-Shanqeeti, The Lights of Explanation vol. 6, p. 207.

⁶- Muhammad al-Tahir ibn Ashour, Liberation and Enlightenment (Tunisian edition, Dar Sahnoun, no edition, 1997 AD), vol. 12, p. 254/255.

The wisdom of his intentions Had he not seen the evidence of his Lord, it illustrates the wisdom behind Yusuf's refusal to comply with their advances. It was not due to any physical deficiency, but rather a divine command. Had it not been for this divine proof, anything could have happened between them. Allah intended to show that Yusuf's manhood was complete and his sexual desires intact; what prevented him from yielding was the proof of his Lord - this was a religious refusal, not a natural one¹.

Thus, knowledge of Allah leads to vigilance over one's actions, and this vigilance fosters fear of Him. Consequently, Allah protects His chosen ones from evil and immorality. The challenges facing the Ummah today stem from a lack of knowledge of Allah, which adversely affects the behavior of many individuals. Ignorance often leads to sin, and some indulge in immorality under the guise of freedom, while others do so in pursuit of wealth.

3- The Character of Loyalty, Patience, and Noble Conduct

God Almighty says:

...and she certainly desired him, and he would have desired her if it had not been for a sign from his Lord." (Surah Yusuf, 12:23).

Since Joseph's (peace be upon him) morals were high, he did not agree to betray his master, Al-Aziz, by being unfaithful to someone close to him. This is because Al-Aziz had said to his wife, "Honor his dwelling. Therefore, it is not appropriate to respond to kindness with wrongdoing. Instead, Joseph first sought refuge in God to avoid this betrayal, knowing that the wrongdoers would never succeed. This illustrates the character of trustworthiness and loyalty at its best.

The qualities of chastity and patience were also prominent in Joseph's character. Ibn Kathir states: "When the women saw his outward beauty, it informed them of his hidden good qualities, which is chastity besides this beauty².

Some scholars have stated that Joseph's patience in rejecting the advances of Al-Aziz's wife was more complete than his patience when his brothers threw him into the well, sold him, and separated him from his father. These events happened without his choice, and he had no recourse but patience. However, his patience in resisting sin was a matter of choice and consent, a struggle against his own desires, especially the temptations that encouraged compliance. Thus, in the face of all these temptations, he chose to be patient, preferring what was with God. This is different from the patience he showed at the well, which was not due to his own actions³.

4- Choosing Prison and Trials Over Sin

God Almighty says:

¹- Al-Shaarawi: Muhammad Metwally al-Shaarawi, Al-Shaarawi's Exegesis, Edited by Dr. Ahmed Omar Hashem, Vice President of Al-Azhar University (Egypt, Islamic Research Academy, Department of Research, Authorship, and Translation, 1st edition, 1411 AH / 1971 AD), vol. 5, p. 2984.

²- Ibn Kathir, Exegesis of the Great Quran. vol. 4, p. 330.

³- Al-Fayruzabadi: Majd al-Din Abu Tahir Muhammad ibn Ya'qub, Insights of Those with Distinction in the Subtleties of the Noble Book, Edited by Muhammad Ali al-Najjar (Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, Heritage Revival Committee, Cairo, no edition, no date), vol. 3, p. 376.

“He said, ‘My Lord, prison is better for me than that to which they invite me...’” (Surah Yusuf, 12:33).

Despite the blessings Joseph had in the palace of his mistress, he preferred the eternal over the immediate in order to gain God’s pleasure. It was narrated that when Al-Aziz’s wife threatened him, the women advised him to obey his mistress and do as she commanded. Therefore, Joseph said, “...from what they invite me to,” indicating his submission to God and his desire for Him, meaning: “If You do not save me, I will perish.” This reflects the context of his words and situation, with the pronoun referring to the sin mentioned in “what they invite me to.”

The term (patience) here refers to the inclination to sin. The “ignorant” are those who do not observe God’s limits and prohibitions.

Joseph’s plea to God to divert the women’s plans illustrates his lament over his situation with them and his prayer for relief from his affliction. Thus, it is stated that after Joseph’s declaration, “his Lord answered him,” that is, He responded to his request and averted their plans, thus saving him from sin. The attributes “The All-Hearing, The All-Knowing” are appropriate in this context because they refer to God’s response¹.

Joseph sought refuge in God from the intrigues of the women and chose prison as the lesser of two evils for the following reasons:

1. Zuleikha, in addition to her beauty and status, was determined to force Joseph into submission.
2. Fear of the women’s deception, since they had developed an attachment to his royal beauty.
3. Fear of being beaten, killed, or tortured.

We learn from this that although prison may seem undesirable at first, if it is a means to avoid disobedience to God or to protect one’s honor and dignity, then prison becomes a mercy that ultimately leads to happiness in the hereafter.

In addition, the soul needs to be reminded of the dire consequences of sin. These points, if followed, can help individuals avoid many sins and wrongdoings.

Section Three: The Impact of Chastity on the Individual and Society Through the Surah

The virtue of chastity is a great moral quality, attainable only by sincere and truthful individuals. Its positive effects benefit both the individual and society, and while many exist, I will focus on those mentioned in Surah Yusuf, categorized into the following sub-sections.

Sub-section One: The Impact of Chastity on the Individual Through the Surah

Innocence in this world before the Hereafter: The more a Muslim is chaste and sincere to Allah, the more Allah will protect him from accusations and reveal his innocence. Prophet Yusuf (peace be upon him) was proven innocent and his suffering was alleviated in two stages:

1. The private family stage: This refers to his master, Al-Aziz. When Al-Aziz’s wife closed the doors and invited Yusuf to commit an immoral act, he fled. When Al-Aziz surprised her, she accused

¹- Ibn ‘Atiyyah: Abdul Haq Abu Muhammad al-Andalusi, The Concise Commentary on the Noble Book, Edited by Abdul Salam Abdul Shafi Muhammad (Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1st edition, 1422 AH), vol. 3, p. 241.

Yusuf of treason. However, after examining evidence and witnesses, Al-Aziz finally recognized Yusuf as innocent and pure and declared that his wife was the one at fault, as stated in the Quran: “It was she who tried to seduce him” (Surah Yusuf, 29).

2. The Small and Large Community Stage: After Al-Aziz acknowledged Yusuf’s innocence, he was vindicated in the larger community. The women who had assisted Al-Aziz’s wife in her plot finally saw Yusuf’s beauty, both outwardly and inwardly. They were so taken with him that they cut their hands in admiration. When confronted, Al-Aziz’s wife admitted that Yusuf was indeed the one they had condemned her for, implicitly admitting her own wrongdoing. This is confirmed by the verse: “I was the one who tried to seduce him” (Surah Yusuf, 32).

After years in prison, Yusuf’s reputation rose when he interpreted the king’s dream. He refused to leave prison until he could publicly declare his innocence and chastity¹. He asked the king to ask the women who had cut their hands about Yusuf, and they affirmed that they knew of no wrongdoing on his part. Al-Aziz’s wife, though not directly asked, came forward to reveal the truth¹ (Surah Yusuf, 51).

Her testimony was significant because it confirmed Yusuf’s innocence and her own wrongdoing, demonstrated her repentance², and strengthened Yusuf’s honor. In particular, her confession was more compelling than mere testimony because it emphasized Yusuf’s truthfulness through both confession and testimony (Surah Yusuf, 51)³.

In Al-Aziz’s wife’s remarks, we observe three key points: first, the declaration and manifestation of the truth; second, her acknowledgment of her own actions; and third, her affirmation that Yusuf was indeed truthful, using various linguistic devices to emphasize her sincerity.

2- Response of God to His Sincere Servants

God says: “And I seek refuge with You from their scheming.” (Surah Yusuf, 12:33).

God has made it known that Joseph (peace be upon him) is among His sincere servants. Allah has commanded us to pray and seek refuge in Him, promising us a response. Joseph turned to his Lord and chose imprisonment to preserve his faith and seek God’s pleasure, and thus God responded to him. Scholars have identified etiquettes, conditions, and prohibitions regarding supplication, based on Quranic and prophetic texts⁴.

3- Preserving the Limbs from What Allah Has Forbidden

Allah has commanded us to preserve our limbs and use them for their intended purposes. Chastity helps keep the tongue from speaking falsehood, slandering others, and violating people’s honor. It also serves to keep one away from the wealth of others. The Prophet Joseph was careful to protect both his outer and inner faculties by remaining trustworthy, chaste, and pure.

¹- See: Sayyid Qutb, In the Shade of the Quran, vol. 4, p. 2004.

²- Ibn Ashour, Liberation and Enlightenment, vol. 12, p. 289.

³- Al-Qurtubi, The Comprehensive Book of the Rules of the Quran. vol. 9, p. 205.

⁴- See: Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali: Zain al-Din Abdul Rahman, The Collection of Sciences and Wisdom in Explaining Fifty Hadiths from the Comprehensive Words, Edited by Shu’aib al-Arna’out - Ibrahim Bajis (Dar al-Risalah, Beirut, 7th edition, 1422 AH - 2001 AD, 2 volumes), vol. 1, p. 270.

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah stated that preserving these faculties is like preserving capital: “The preservation of the seven faculties is the capital, and profit comes after it. Those who lack capital cannot seek profit. These seven faculties-eye, ear, mouth, tongue, genitals, hand, and foot-are the vessels of destruction and salvation. Some perish by neglecting them, while others survive by preserving them; thus, “preservation is the foundation of all good, and neglect is the foundation of all evil¹.

By preserving one’s faculties, a person can achieve inner peace and physical comfort, which leads to tranquility and peace of mind. Despite the successive trials that Joseph faced, he experienced complete psychological comfort even in prison.

4- Completeness of Reason and Certainty in the Hereafter

Embodying the quality of chastity indicates the completeness of intellect and certainty about the Day of Judgment. This completeness is evident in Joseph’s unwavering reliance on the Lord of the Worlds, as he sought refuge in God to protect him from the schemers. His strong belief that the oppressor will never succeed, along with his noble conduct in the house of the nobleman and during his trials, showcased his complete intellect. Thus, some prisoners sought his interpretation of their dreams, perceiving him as a person of excellence (Quran 12:36).

Ibn Ashour commented, “These two young men perceived in Joseph (peace be upon him) the completeness of intellect and understanding, leading them to believe that he was skilled in interpreting dreams, despite not having prior knowledge of this.”²

Thus, a person either responds to the call of the Merciful and gains His paradise and pleasure or succumbs to the call of Satan, losing both this world and the Hereafter.

5- Achieving a Good Life God says: “And he said, ‘You will plant for seven years without interruption.’” (Surah Yusuf, 12:54-57).

Al-Miraghī sums up the general meaning of this verse by saying: “After the investigation of the matter of the women and the revelation of Joseph’s innocence from all evil, the king requested his presence from the prison after he had fulfilled the conditions for his coming. When he arrived and spoke, the king understood from the content of his speech his honesty regarding the nobleman’s wealth and honor, his good conduct in prison, his knowledge and understanding in interpreting dreams, and his desire to uphold his dignity in the matter of the women. This indicated that he was worthy of being elevated to the highest ranks and appointed to the most esteemed positions, which the king did, recognizing his wisdom and insight into the status of individuals. The fact that he was a foreigner, poor, or enslaved did not deter the king from this decision³.

The king recognized that Joseph possessed qualifications and morals that enabled him to uphold truth and justice. This led Joseph to ask for the position of authority, believing it would save the nation from destruction. The king agreed, knowing that Joseph was then the one most capable of bearing this responsibility.

¹- Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah: Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, Relief from the Distressed from the Traps of Satan Edited by Muhammad Hamid al-Faqi (Maktabah al-Ma’arif, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 2 volumes), vol. 1, p. 80.

²- Ibn Ashour, Liberation and Enlightenment, vol. 12, p. 269.

³- Ahmad ibn Mustafa. Al-Maraghi’s Exegesis. vol. 13, p. 4/5

“Here it is mentioned that his request was granted and he was made a minister in the state, managing its affairs because of his excellent management and keen insight. This is in keeping with God’s way of creating; only those who are given divine gifts that enable them to manage affairs and establish order will attain high positions and esteemed ranks¹.

The good life that Allah grants to those who do righteous deeds is defined differently by different scholars. Ibn Kathir sees it as various forms of comfort, while Ibn Abbas interprets it as lawful sustenance, happiness, and Ali ibn Abi Talib refers to it as contentment. Mujahid described it as comfort in paradise, while Al-Dhahak said it includes lawful sustenance and worship in this world. The correct view is that the good life includes all these aspects².

This difference is a diversity of expression, and in general, the good life is a life of contentment, gratitude, and patience that can only be achieved by a believer. This good life is a tangible reward for faith and righteousness among men and women. There is no greater happiness than the joy that comes from contentment with righteous deeds, the tranquility of the heart in remembrance of Allah, and reliance on Him in times of need and distress after taking the necessary means and turning to Him. The final reward, which is certain and beyond doubt, is in the Hereafter³.

Section Two: The Impact of Chastity on Society Through the Surah

1- Preservation of Lineage and Honor

Preserving lineage is a key objective of Islamic law to prevent the mixing of genealogies. To achieve this, the Quran has prohibited anything that could undermine this goal, such as adultery, and has prescribed punishments for it. Allah says: “And do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse. Indeed, it is ever an immorality and is evil as a way.” (Surah Al-Isra, 17:32). The Quran further emphasizes this objective in Surah An-Nur, which highlights various measures to protect families and society, including the prohibition of adultery and slander, the injunction against spreading immorality, the establishment of rules for seeking permission and hospitality, the command to lower one’s gaze, and the prohibition of revealing one’s adornment. It also advocates for chastity, the marriage of those without spouses, and the prohibition of coercing maidservants into immorality.

2- Protection of Society from Afflictions:

Both family and society thrive on purity and chastity; thus, Islam has prohibited anything that could tarnish their integrity, including the grave sin of adultery.

“A family cannot be established, nor can a society be upright, amid the filth of immorality, whether overt or covert. Purity, cleanliness, and chastity are essential for the stability of families and communities. Those who wish to spread immorality are the ones who desire to undermine family structures and societal integrity.”

The chastity of families and society signifies safety and security from the consequences of immorality, such as the mixing of lineages, which has been previously discussed. “Adultery is a

¹- Same source, vol. 13, p. 7.

²- See: Ibn Kathir, Exegesis of the Great Quran, vol. 4, p. 516.

³- Abu Zahra: Muhammad Ahmad Mustafa, The Flower of Exegeses (Al-Azhar, Islamic Research Academy, General Administration for Research, Authorship, and Translation, 1987 AD, no date), vol. 8, p. 4295.

grave sin because it leads to the mixing of genealogies and provokes conflicts and strife over honor.¹”

Among the most dangerous consequences of these afflictions is the taking of human life. Reflecting on the following verses reveals that one cause of murder is the sin of adultery: “And do not kill your children for fear of poverty². We provide for them and for you. Killing them is a great sin.” (Surah Al-Isra, 17:31-32). By forbidding the killing of children, Allah also forbids the unlawful means of conception, which entails a prohibition against adultery³.

Countless unborn children have been lost due to the crime of adultery, and many lives have been taken due to marital infidelity. Unfortunately, society suffers from these ailments but fails to address them from a preventative standpoint, which is exemplified by the cultivation of chastity.

Moreover, the prevalence of singlehood and the delay in marriage, especially in the context of widespread immorality, are pressing issues. With the ease of accessing sinful avenues, including social media, many may seek to satisfy their sexual desires in inappropriate ways, leading to the spread of vice, tarnishing families, and disrupting societal order.

In addition, the increase and spread of disease is a major concern. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) warned, saying: “O gathering of emigrants, five things, if you are tested with them, I seek refuge with Allah that you may meet them: Immorality has never appeared among a people until they openly declare it, except that plagues and diseases have spread among them which were not present among their forefathers⁴.

To summarize: “Adultery is a form of killing in many ways. It is the first taking of life, as it inappropriately spills the essence of life. This often leads to the desire to eliminate the consequences by aborting the fetus before or after it takes form, leading to a life of shame and degradation, ultimately resulting in a wasted existence in society. It is also a communal killing, as the mixing of lineages leads to the erosion of trust in honor and offspring, dismantling community ties and resulting in societal decay.⁵

Thus, the extent to which a society adheres to virtuous values and morals corresponds to its cohesion and unity, as vividly illustrated in the story of Prophet Joseph (peace be upon him).

Conclusion

The conclusions of this study are as follows:

1. Chastity is related to desire: It involves the proper management of the desires of the stomach and the private parts. Chastity also involves abstaining from forbidden acts, which includes controlling the desire for illicit relations, restraining the tongue, and avoiding sin.

¹- Sayyid Qutb, In the Shade of the Quran, vol. 3, p. 1230.

²- Al-Maraghi's Exegesis. Ahmad ibn Mustafa, vol. 15, p. 29.

³- Abu Hayyan: Muhammad ibn Yusuf al-Andalusi (d. 745 AH), The Comprehensive Sea in Exegesis, Edited by Sidqi Muhammad Jamil (Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, 1420 AH), vol. 7, p. 43.

⁴- Ibn Majah: Muhammad ibn Yazid al-Qazwini, Sunan Ibn Majah Edited by Muhammad Fuad Abdul Baqi (Dar Ihya al-Kutub al-Arabiyyah - Faisal Issa al-Babi al-Halabi, no edition, no date, 2 volumes), vol. 2, Chapter on Punishments, Hadith No. 4019, p. 1332.

⁵- Sayyid Qutb, In the Shade of the Quran, vol. 4, p. 2223.

2. The second trial of Joseph: The trial he faced with the wife of al-Aziz was more severe than the first for two reasons:

- God gave him judgment and knowledge.
- All the means of temptation and passion were present.

3. The social situation described in the verses: The ten verses of Surah Yusuf, from verse 23 to verse 32, portray a social situation within a household, illustrating what happens in palaces and the possible deviations among certain wealthy classes.

4. Excessive focus on sexual desires: An excessive focus on sexual desires distracts society from adhering to divine laws and leads it to respond only to earthly laws, as it becomes enslaved and unaware of its true interests and the realities of life.

5. The Challenge of Temptation: The test becomes difficult and arduous when all the conditions for deception and temptation are present. However, Joseph was able to succeed and remain steadfast in this challenging test because of his sincerity and morality.

6. Guidance from Surah Yusuf: Surah Yusuf provides a methodology for overcoming Satan's plots by emphasizing the importance of fearing God and seeking refuge in Him in both ease and hardship, as well as embodying virtuous morals.

7. Trials as a pathway to blessings: Trials can be a gateway to many blessings, provided they are faced according to divine laws. As it is said, "There is no trial without a blessing behind it.

8. Foundation of Chastity: The essence of chastity is sincerity toward God. If abstinence from forbidden acts is due to inability, fear of disease, or shame, it is not true chastity. (Indeed, he is among Our sincere servants.)

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