

Yusuf and Binyamin: The Reconciliation Moment as Told Through Quranic Recitation

The story of Yusuf (Arabic for Joseph) is told in both the Hebrew Old Testament and the Quran scriptures (Quran 12). Within the Quran both letters and punctuation convey meaning and Quranic recitation follows these rules so that both content and delivery contain the intended meaning to be conveyed.

Read Quran Chapter 12. At this crucial point in the story where Yusuf is reunited with his brother Binyamin, he says this:

Lo! I, even I, am thy brother [Qur'an 12:68]

(12:69:10)

anā

[I] am

أَنَا

PRON

PRON – 1st person singular personal pronoun

ضمير منفصل

[http://corpus.quran.com/wordbyword.jsp?chapter=12&verse=69#\(12:69:1\)](http://corpus.quran.com/wordbyword.jsp?chapter=12&verse=69#(12:69:1))

The vowel in the word 'am' in Arabic is elongated when recited. This adds to the drama of this reconciliation between brothers and emphasises the emotional impact of the scene. The purpose is to prompt understanding and empathy in the hearer. Muhammed (PBUH) often liked to have the Quran recited back to him to fully appreciate the impact of its words for himself.

Listen to Quran 12: 69 read in Arabic here: <https://www.quranexplorer.com/Quran/>

Explore the impact this way of reciting has on a text. Give out the verse and have pupils sit in groups. They can take turns to each recite the verse in a normal, natural way. Then repeat this process, playing with putting emphasis on different parts (words and vowels within words) of the line. Can they settle on a recitation that conveys the full meaning of this reconciliation moment between brothers?