

Session 7, Unit Six: The Sea, Water, Passing Time, and Destiny

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What Participants Should Have Read

Before this session, participants should have read Súrahs 21, 22, 23, and 24 of the Qayyúmu'l-Asmá. They should also have reviewed the Unit Five summary from Session 6, especially the Gate, the Path, Sinai, Light, the bloodied garment, the Fire preserved within Snow, and the discovery of Joseph as the hidden Youth.

Goal

To see how the discovery and sale of Joseph open into the creation of a new revelatory world. In Súrahs 17–20, the Gate opened after the chasm, the Path gave direction through false report, Sinai transformed grief into revelation, and Light began when the hidden Youth was discovered. In Súrahs 21–24, Joseph is found but undervalued. The world sees Him without recognizing His worth.

Beneath this Josephian movement, the unit reveals a larger pattern. Adam is identified with the Báb at the beginning of a new creation. The angels are commanded to prostrate before Him. The Qur'án is reopened from its ending. Heaven, Fire, Water, death, life, Spirit, judgment, mercy, and the Gate are gathered into a new order. The inward earth is shaken, and the movement culminates in the Báb's Night of Power and the command to recite.

In this session, the hidden Joseph begins to appear as the new Adam. Heaven recognizes the one mispriced by the world. The one brought from the depth becomes the Center of a renewed creation. The Book moves from hidden discovery to divine investiture, and from divine investiture toward the outward Mission.

Súrahs 21–24: The Sea, Water, Passing Time, and Destiny

Purpose of This Unit

Unit Six carries the story from the discovery of Joseph into the beginning of a new creation. Unit Five ended with Light entering the well and the hidden Youth being found. Unit Six shows that discovery is not yet recognition. Joseph is brought forth, but the world still does not know how to measure Him.

The Sea opens around Joseph's sale for a paltry price. The hidden treasure has been found, yet ordinary measure cannot determine His value. The Súrah then turns toward Adam, the Báb, the command to prostrate, the Tree, the Gate, and the refusal of Iblís. The Joseph who is undervalued by the world is revealed in the Adamic station as the beginning of renewed spiritual humanity.

At 21:36, the Qur'án is reopened from its ending. The language of the final Súrah becomes the threshold of a new Qur'anic movement. From there, Súrahs 22–24 enter one of the Book's densest sustained engagements with the closing Súrahs of the Qur'án. Water forms the elemental world surrounding the new Adam. Passing Time shakes inherited consciousness and brings hidden burdens to the surface. Destiny gathers the movement into the Night of Power, the descent of the divine Decree, and the command to recite.

These four Súrahs may be approached as one movement:

- Súrah 21: The Sea begins with Joseph being sold for a paltry price. The one drawn from hidden depth is present but unrecognized. The Súrah then identifies Adam with the Báb and commands the angels to prostrate before

Him upon the Land of the Inmost Heart. At 21:36, the final Súrah of the Qur'án becomes the threshold of a new Qur'anic movement.

- Súrah 22: Water forms a new elemental world through heaven, stars, death, life, Fire, Water, the Bird, leaves, Camphor, mercy, warning, and the Gate. Creation, community, judgment, and purification are gathered around the appearance of the Remembrance.
- Súrah 23: Passing Time begins when Joseph reaches maturity and receives judgment and knowledge. The earth shakes, hidden burdens emerge, false measures collapse, and the breast is expanded. Joseph's maturity becomes the foundation of a responsibility granted to the People of the Báb.
- Súrah 24: Destiny gathers the sequence into the Night of Power. The divine Decree descends, the hidden Word becomes audible, and the command to recite begins the outward movement of Revelation. The text then returns to Joseph within the house, where divine purity enters the enclosed world of desire, possession, accusation, and trial.

This unit marks the transition from hidden Joseph to speaking Messenger. The world assigns Him a price, but heaven recognizes the new Adam. The Qur'án opens from its ending. The inward world is shaken. The Night receives the Decree. The hidden Word becomes proclamation.

The Four Guiding Lenses for Unit Six

The first unit gave the pattern openly through Kingship, Clerics, Faith, and City. Unit Two carried it through Joseph, Testimony, Visitation, and Mystery. Unit Three moved through Cloud, Plot, Parallel, and Atonement. Unit Four raised the descent through Paradise, Holiness, Divine Purpose, and Throne. Unit Five began the movement out of concealment through Gate, Path, Sinai, and Light. Unit Six now opens a new creation through Sea, Water, Passing Time, and Destiny.

- Sea asks: what happens when Joseph is found, yet His true value remains concealed?
- Water asks: how is the world purified, reordered, and given new life around the Gate?
- Passing Time asks: how does hidden station ripen into judgment, knowledge, inward awakening, and responsibility?
- Destiny asks: how does the concealed divine Decree descend upon the Báb and become the command to recite?

The Sea contains the hidden treasure. Water forms the creation around Him. Passing Time ripens both Joseph and the world of recognition. Destiny concentrates the Revelation within Him and sends it forward in speech.

Reading Lens One: The New Adam and the Beginning of Creation

Main idea

The governing movement of Unit Six is the appearance of the Báb in the Adamic station. Adam is not introduced merely as a figure belonging to the distant beginning of human history. The command to prostrate is renewed before Adam, the Báb. The Báb therefore appears as Adam at the beginning of a new spiritual creation.

The angels recognize the divine Command embodied within Him. Iblís refuses because he sees only the outward human form and judges according to comparison, pride, and imagined superiority. The ancient refusal becomes the pattern of every rejection of the Manifestation when He appears in an unexpected form.

Joseph and Adam now overlap. Joseph is the hidden Beauty Whom the world undervalues. Adam is the divinely appointed Center around Whom the new creation is ordered. In the Báb, the hidden Joseph becomes the Adam of a new world.

Key themes

- The Báb occupies the Adamic station at the beginning of a renewed creation.
- The command to prostrate is a command to recognize divine appointment.
- The angels respond to the divine Command within the human Temple.
- Iblís represents pride, comparison, and attachment to outward form.
- Joseph and Adam reveal two aspects of the Báb's station.
- Recognition is the first spiritual act of the new creation.

Arabic watchwords

Ádam: Adam, the primordial figure at the beginning of creation.

Báb: Gate, the appointed entrance into the new Revelation.

Sujúd: Prostration, submission before divine authority.

Malá'ikah: Angels, beings responsive to the divine Command.

Iblís: The refusing one, pride before divine appointment.

Fu'ád: Inmost Heart, the inward land of recognition.

For the reader

The unit is not simply describing a new teaching entering the existing world. It presents the appearance of another spiritual world. The central question is not whether the Báb can be placed comfortably within inherited categories. The question is whether inherited knowledge, authority, and identity will bow before a new act of God.

Reading question

What causes Iblís to see Adam's outward form while remaining blind to the divine Command within Him?

Reading Lens Two: The Sea, Joseph's Price, and the Qur'án Reopened

Main idea

Súrah 21 begins with Joseph being sold for a paltry price in counted silver coins. He has been discovered, but He has not been valued according to His station. The Sea widens the earlier image of the well. Joseph has risen from hidden depth, yet His meaning remains submerged beneath the price placed upon Him.

The marketplace becomes a test of recognition. The world sees the hidden treasure and reduces Him to a measurable object. This failure of valuation prepares the appearance of Adam, the Báb. The one Whom the world treats as ordinary is the Center before Whom the angels are commanded to prostrate.

At 21:36, the language of Qur'án 114 begins another movement. The Qur'án is reopened from its ending. The final Súrah, centered upon the hidden whisperer within human breasts, becomes the entrance into a sustained passage through the Qur'án's closing field. The completed Book is not abandoned. It is turned back toward its source and opened as the womb of renewed Revelation.

Key themes

- Joseph is found but undervalued.
- Counted silver represents the failure of ordinary measure.
- The Sea expands concealment from physical depth into spiritual depth.
- Adam, the Báb, reveals the true station of the undervalued Joseph.
- Qur'án 114 becomes a threshold rather than an ending.
- The movement begins within the human breast, where recognition and refusal first arise.
- Backward movement through the Qur'án becomes forward movement in Revelation.

Arabic watchwords

Baḥr: Sea, expanse, hidden depth.

Thaman: Price, value, exchange.

Daráhim: Silver coins, counted worldly measure.

Bakhs: Paltry, diminished, undervalued.

Nás: Humanity, the human world addressed at the Qur'án's ending.

Waswás: Hidden whispering within the breast.

For the reader

Súrah 21 joins two failures of recognition. The world misprices Joseph because it cannot perceive His true value. Iblís refuses Adam because he cannot perceive the divine appointment within His form. Both errors arise from measuring Revelation according to outward appearance. The Qur'anic movement begins where that error operates most deeply: within the human breast.

Reading question

How are the sale of Joseph and the refusal of Iblís two forms of the same failure to recognize divine value?

Reading Lens Three: Water and the Formation of the New World

Main idea

Súrah 22 forms the elemental world surrounding the new Adam. The Súrah moves through heaven, stars, death, life, Fire, Water, birds, leaves, Camphor, purification, warning, and the Gate. These are not isolated images. Together they form the spiritual environment of a new creation.

Its sustained Qur'anic movement passes through the late Súrahs of sovereignty, victory, separation, sacred community, protection, worldly power, wealth, slander, and Fire. These echoes expose the danger facing a religious community after outward victory. A people may possess a sacred center, inherited worship, and the memory of divine protection, yet still fail to recognize the Lord of that sanctuary when He appears again.

Water therefore descends into a world already under judgment. It gives life, but it also purifies. The Bird moves as a sign of Spirit. Camphor carries purity, cooling, fragrance, and paradisaal life. Fire and Water stand together as divine intensity and divine mercy.

Key themes

- The new creation is ordered around the Gate.
- Death and life become part of the divine test.
- Religious victory does not guarantee continued recognition.
- Sacred community is judged by its response to present Revelation.
- Water carries mercy, life, knowledge, and purification.
- Fire reveals judgment, command, and divine intensity.
- The Bird signifies the movement of Spirit between realms.
- The Twain Waters suggest distinct but related stages of communal and revelatory life.

Arabic watchwords

Má': Water, life, mercy, knowledge.

Ṭahúr: Purifying Water.

Nár: Fire, divine command and judgment.

Ṭayr: Bird, Spirit, elevated movement.

Káfúr: Camphor, purity and paradisaal refreshment.

Mawt: Death, limit, surrender.

Ḥayáh: Life, renewed spiritual existence.

For the reader

Water should not be reduced to gentleness. It descends where false worship, arrogance, violence, and spiritual blindness have already been exposed. Mercy does not erase judgment. It creates life within the world that judgment has uncovered.

Reading question

How do Fire and Water work together rather than cancel one another within the new creation?

Reading Lens Four: Passing Time and the Resurrection of the Inner World

Main idea

Súrah 23 begins when Joseph reaches maturity and God grants Him judgment and knowledge. Passing Time is therefore not empty delay. It is the interval in which hidden capacity reaches its appointed strength.

The Qur'anic movement passes through earthquake, Clear Proof, Time, rivalry in accumulation, the charging forces, the Calamity, and the expansion of the breast. The earth is shaken. Its burdens are cast forth. False measures collapse. The breast is opened.

This is a resurrection within consciousness. Revelation cannot simply be added to the inherited self. The inward earth must shake. Buried attachments must emerge. False values must lose their apparent weight. The breast must be opened to receive what it could not previously contain.

The closing movement returns to Joseph's maturity and grants the likeness of His reward to the People of the Báb. They do not become Joseph by identity. They are called to reflect His discernment, goodness, knowledge, and service. Recognition produces responsibility.

Key themes

- Joseph's maturity joins time to judgment and knowledge.
- The earth represents both the world and the embodied inner self.
- Convulsion brings hidden burdens into disclosure.
- The Clear Proof separates recognition from refusal.
- Passing Time reveals whether life has moved toward faith or loss.
- Rivalry and accumulation are exposed as false measures.
- The Calamity overturns inherited systems of weight.
- Expansion of the breast creates capacity for Revelation.
- Joseph's reward becomes a pattern of communal responsibility.

Arabic watchwords

Ashudd: Maturity, full strength, ripened capacity.

Hukm: Judgment, wisdom, authority.

'Ilm: Knowledge.

Zalzalah: Earthquake, shaking, disclosure.

Athqál: Burdens, concealed weights.

'Aṣr: Passing Time, the interval in which faith or loss is revealed.

Sharḥ: Expansion, opening of the breast.

For the reader

The new Adam requires a new humanity. The People of the Báb are not formed by recognition alone, but by the transformation that recognition demands. The inward earth is shaken so that the community may carry the qualities released through Joseph's maturity.

Reading question

What must be brought out of concealment before the soul can receive a likeness of Joseph's reward?

Reading Lens Five: Destiny and the Báb's Night of Power

Main idea

Súrah 24 gathers the unit into the Night of Power. Its Qur'anic movement passes through the Night of Power, the human being formed in the finest pattern, the orphan found and sheltered, Night and Day, the soul inspired with its wickedness and piety, and the command to recite.

This sequence reenacts the birth of Revelation within the Báb's own station. The divine Decree descends in the Night. The chosen human Temple receives it. The concealed and outwardly vulnerable one is sheltered. Night and Day separate. The soul receives divine inspiration. The command to recite brings the hidden Word into audible history.

The Night of Power is the inward concentration of the Mission. Recite is its first outward movement. After the command to recite, the text returns to Joseph within the house. Revelation enters the human world of closed doors, desire, ownership, accusation, and attempted control. The one upon Whom Destiny has descended appears outwardly vulnerable, yet the house cannot possess Him or alter His purity.

Key themes

- The Night of Power is the concealed concentration of Revelation.

- Destiny is divine measure rather than accident or fatalism.
- The Remembrance of the Há receives the divine Decree.
- The human Temple becomes the locus of renewed Revelation.
- Night contains what Day will disclose.
- The command to recite transforms hidden investiture into Mission.
- Joseph's trial in the house shows Revelation entering human history.
- Outward enclosure cannot possess the divinely protected one.

Arabic watchwords

Laylatu'l-Qadr: Night of Power, Night of Destiny.

Qadr: Divine measure, decree, destiny.

Dhikru'l-Há: Remembrance of the Há.

Rúh: Spirit.

Iqra': Recite, proclaim.

Bayt: House, enclosure, field of trial.

Burhán: Proof, decisive divine evidence.

For the reader

The Night of Power is the hinge between hidden Revelation and historical Mission. The Word first descends inwardly. It then becomes recitation. Once spoken, it enters the world of human response, where it will be loved, resisted, desired, misrepresented, and opposed. Destiny does not remove the trial. It establishes the divine purpose moving through it.

Reading question

Why does the command to recite lead directly back into the enclosed and dangerous house of Joseph?

Reading Lens Six: Reading the Four Together

Main idea

Unit Six moves through four connected questions:

1. Sea asks: what happens when the hidden Joseph appears but is measured by a paltry price?
2. Water asks: how is a new spiritual world formed, purified, and ordered around the Gate?
3. Passing Time asks: how are consciousness and community shaken into maturity?
4. Destiny asks: how does the concealed divine Decree become spoken Revelation and Mission?

Together, the four Súrahs form a single revelatory movement. Joseph is found and undervalued. The Báb appears as Adam at the beginning of a new creation. The angels are commanded to recognize Him. The Qur'án is reopened from its ending. Fire and Water form the world surrounding the Gate. The inward earth is shaken and the breast expanded. The People of the Báb receive a likeness of Joseph's responsibility. The Night of Power descends. The command to recite begins the outward Mission.

Joseph and Adam reveal complementary dimensions of the Báb. As Joseph, He is hidden Beauty, undervalued and tested within history. As Adam, He is the beginning of a new creation and the Center before Whom recognition is demanded. As the Remembrance of the Há, He receives the divine Decree. As the Gate, He opens the new world.

For the reader

Unit Six is the movement from hidden value to divine speech. The world assigns Joseph a price. God reveals Him as Adam. The Qur'án returns toward its source. Creation is reordered. The Night descends. The Word is spoken. The new Adam begins to move forward with His Mission.

Reading question

How does the unit move from the world measuring Joseph to God commanding Him to recite?

Final Reflection for Unit Six

Súrahs 21–24 carry Joseph from discovery into divine investiture. The Sea opens around the failure to value Him. The hidden Youth is brought forth, yet the world sees only counted silver and a paltry price. The Súrah then reveals Adam, the Báb, at the beginning of a new creation. The angels prostrate before the divine Command within Him, while Iblís refuses according to pride and outward comparison.

At 21:36 the Qur'án is reopened from its ending. Its final chamber becomes a new threshold. Water then gathers heaven, Fire, death, life, Spirit, judgment, mercy, and purification around the Gate. Passing Time ripens Joseph into judgment and knowledge while shaking the inward earth and bringing its hidden burdens to the surface. The People of the Báb receive the responsibility to reflect the qualities opened through Him.

Destiny gathers the movement into the Night of Power. The divine Decree descends upon the Remembrance of the Há. The hidden Word becomes the command to recite. Revelation then enters the house of human history, where closed doors, desire, possession, accusation, and divine preservation surround the new Joseph.

The world has found Him but has not measured His worth. Heaven has recognized Him as the new Adam. The Night has received the Decree. The Gate opens, and the Mission begins.

Discussion Questions

- What is revealed by the fact that Joseph is found but sold for a paltry price?
- How does the sale of Joseph expose the limits of ordinary measure?
- In what sense does the Báb occupy the Adamic station?
- Why are the angels commanded to prostrate before Adam, the Báb?
- How does the refusal of Iblís repeat itself whenever Revelation appears in an unexpected form?
- What is the significance of reopening the Qur’án from its final Súrah?
- How does backward movement through the Qur’án become forward movement in Revelation?
- How do Fire and Water cooperate in the formation of the new creation?
- What does the Bird contribute to the imagery of Spirit and descent?
- How does Passing Time differ from empty delay?
- What do the earthquake and the casting forth of burdens reveal about the inward life?
- What responsibility accompanies the likeness of Joseph’s reward?
- How does the sequence from the Night of Power to the command to recite reenact the birth of Revelation?
- What changes when the text returns to Joseph within the house immediately after that command?
- How do Adam and Joseph reveal different aspects of the Báb’s Mission?
- What symbols stood out most strongly in this unit: Sea, price, silver, Adam, prostration, Fire, Water, Bird, earthquake, breast, Destiny, Night, or recitation?
- Where did the translation feel especially beautiful, strange, difficult, or powerful?

How does Unit Six move from the discovery of the hidden Joseph to the beginning of the Báb’s Mission?

Looking Ahead: Súrahs 25–28

Main Themes

The Seal

Súrah 25 continues the late-Qur’anic movement through City, Dawn, the Overwhelming Event, the Most High, and the Piercing Star. The concealed Night of Power begins to move toward outward appearance, sealing, announcement, and cosmic witness.

The Solution

Súrah 26 reaches the Constellations. The Piercing Star opens into a larger celestial order of Witness, Testimony, Throne, promised Day, and Preserved Tablet. The late-Qur’anic progression begins to shift into concentrated scriptural fields and direct historical proclamation.

Lights

Súrah 27 brings Night, Day, Signs, obedience, earlier Gates, sacred succession, named figures, and the transmission of the Book into a more directly historical field. Light moves through persons, writings, and acts of recognition.

The Relatives

Súrah 28 brings the Revelation into the Báb’s household, relatives, family, commerce, writings, migration, and immediate surroundings. The Mission has moved from the hidden Night into the social world, where those nearest to Him must also face the test of recognition.

The Story Moving Forward

Unit Six culminates in the Báb’s Night of Power and the command to recite. Unit Seven begins the outward advance. The Night becomes Dawn. The hidden Word enters the City. The Most High reveals the Piercing Star. The Star opens into the Constellations. The symbolic creation enters family, community, writing, travel, and history.

Reading Assignment for Session 8

Read Súrahs 25, 26, 27, and 28 of the Qayyúmu’l-Asmá. As you read, mark any places where the story moves through sealing, answer, illumination, or relation. Watch especially for Seal, Solution, Lights, Relatives, City, Dawn, Star, Constellations, Witness, Throne, Book, family, migration, and Joseph’s garment. Watch especially for the transition from the concealed Night of Power into the forward movement of the Báb’s Mission.