



## Stories of Islam

### 1- Emperor and the Seed

An emperor in the Far East was growing old and knew it was time to choose his successor. Instead of choosing one of his assistants or his children, he decided something different. He called young people in the kingdom together one day. He said, "It is time for me to step down and choose the next emperor. I have decided to choose one of you."

The kids were shocked! But the emperor continued. "I am going to give each one of you a seed today and it is one very special seed. I want you to plant the seed, water it and come back here one year from today with what you have grown from this one seed. I will then judge the plants that you bring, and the one I choose will be the next emperor!"

One boy named Ahmed was there that day and he, like the others, received a seed. He went home and excitedly told his mother the story. She helped him get a pot and planting soil, and he planted the seed and watered it carefully. Every day he would water it and watch to see if it had grown. After about three weeks, some of the other youths began to talk about their seeds and the plants that were beginning to grow.

Ahmed kept checking his seed, but nothing ever grew. Three weeks, 4 weeks, 5 weeks went by and still nothing. By now, others were talking about their plants but Ahmed didn't have a plant, and he felt like a failure. Six months went by-still nothing in Ahmed's pot. He just knew he had killed his seed.

Everyone else had trees and tall plants, but he had nothing. Ahmed didn't say anything to his friends, however. He just kept waiting for his seed to grow.

A year finally went by and all the youths of the kingdom brought their plants to the emperor for inspection. Ahmed told his mother that he wasn't going to take an empty pot. But honest about what happened, Ahmed felt sick to his stomach, but he knew his mother was right. He took his empty pot to the palace. When Ahmed arrived, he was amazed at the variety of plants grown by the other youths. They were beautiful-in all shapes and sizes. Ahmed put his empty pot on the floor and many of the other kinds laughed at him. A few felt



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sorry for him and just said, "Hey nice try."

When the emperor arrived, he surveyed the room and greeted the young people. Ahmed just tried to hide in the back. "My, what great plants, trees and flowers you have grown," said the emperor. "Today, one of you will be appointed the next emperor!" All of a sudden, the emperor spotted Ahmed at the back of the room with his empty pot. He ordered his guards to bring him to the front. Ahmed was terrified. "The emperor knows I'm a failure! Maybe he will have me killed!"

When Ahmed got to the front, the Emperor asked his name. "My name is Ahmed," he replied. All the kids were laughing and making fun of him. The emperor asked everyone to quiet down. He looked at Ahmed, and then announced to the crowd, "Behold your new emperor! His name is Ahmed!" Ahmed couldn't believe it. Ahmed couldn't even grow his seed. How could he be the new emperor? Then the emperor said, "One year ago today, I gave everyone here a seed. I told you to take the seed, plant it, water it, and bring it back to me today. But I gave you all boiled seeds which would not grow. All of you, except Ahmed, have brought me trees and plants and flowers. When you found that the seed would not grow, you substituted another seed for the one I gave you. Ahmed was the only one with the courage and honesty to bring me a pot with my seed in it. Therefore, he is the one who will be the new emperor!"

### **Lesson Learned:**

- Allah does not reward liars, only the truthful succeed.
- Holy Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) taught, "Truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise." Sahih Bukhari
- You can lose friends with one lie
- One lie leads to many lies and people can stop trusting you even when you speak the truth.



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### 2- Balancing Mercury

There lived a pious man all by himself, who spent most of his time in praying, fasting and praising Allah. Almost all his waking hours were utilized in meditation and devotions. He was very happy with his spiritual progress. No wicked thoughts came to his mind and no evil temptations entered his heart.

One night, he dreamt a rather disturbing dream. He saw that a shopkeeper in the town was far superior to him in spirituality and that he must go to him to learn the basics of true spiritual life.

In the morning, the pious man went in search of the shopkeeper. He found him busy with his customers, selling goods and collecting money with a cheerful face. He sat there in a corner of the shop and watched the shopkeeper carefully. No signs of any spiritual life at all, he said to himself. His dream could not be true. But then he saw the shopkeeper disappear to pray his Salah. When he returned, he was busy dealing with money matters again.

The shopkeeper noticed the pious man sitting in the corner and asked: "As Salamu Alaikum, would you like something, brother?"

"Wa Alaikum As Salam. Oh! No! No!" said the pious man. "I don't want to buy anything, but I want to ask you a question." He then related his dream.

"Well, that is very simple to explain," Said the shopkeeper, "but you will have to do something for me before I answer your question."

"I will do anything for you," replied the pious man.

"Alright, take this saucer; there is some mercury in it. Go to the other end of the street and come back fast within half an hour. If the mercury falls out of the saucer, you will hear nothing from me. There you go now."

The pious man took the saucer and started running. The mercury nearly



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wobbled out of the saucer. He saved it just in time, and slowed down. Then he remembered he had to return within half an hour, so he started walking at a fast pace. At long last he returned puffing and panting. "Here is your mercury, safe and sound," he told the shopkeeper. "Now tell me the true interpretation of my dream."

The shopkeeper looked at the pious man's weary condition and asked him: "Well, friend, how many times did you remember Allah while you were going from this end of the street to the other?"

"Remember Allah!" exclaimed the pious man. "I did not remember Him at all. I was so worried about the mercury in the saucer."

"But I do remember Him all the time," said the shopkeeper. "When I am doing my business, I am also carrying mercury in a saucer. I am fair, honest and kind to my customers. I never forget Allah in my dealing with other men."

### **Lessons Learned:**

- Remember Allah at all times because Allah is our Guardian.
- Purpose of life is to worship Allah but it does not mean that we stop living our life for our family and society.



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### 3- The Patient and the Old Man

When passing through a mountain pass, a Bedouin (villager) once came across an old man who was blind and who seemed to be afflicted with various ailments all over his body. It was clear that he was wasting away. He was even paralyzed and was constantly forced to remain in a seated position. The Bedouin could clearly hear him say, "All praise is for Allah, Who has kept me safe from ailments with which He has tested many among His creation; and He has indeed preferred me over many among those that He created."

"My brother!" exclaimed the Bedouin. "What have you been saved from? By Allah, I think that you have been afflicted with every single kind of ailment!"

"Go away from me," said the old man, as he raised his head. "Do I not still have a tongue with which I can pronounce His Oneness, and with which I can remember Him every single moment? And do I not still have a heart with which I can know Him?"

These words of the old man were enough for the Bedouin to repent to Allah for his sins and ask Him for forgiveness.

#### Lessons Learned:

- There is always someone else who is in more problem than you
- In Holy Quran Allah says, 'And We bestowed wisdom on Luqman, *saying*, 'Be grateful to Allah: and whoso is grateful, is grateful only for the good of his own soul. And whoso is ungrateful, then, surely, Allah is Self-Sufficient, Praiseworthy.' Surah Luqman (31:13).



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### 4- A Blind Boy

- A blind boy sat on the steps of a building with a hat by his feet. He held up a sign which said: "I am blind, please help." There were only a few coins in the hat.

A man was walking by. He took a few coins from his pocket and dropped them into the hat. He then took the sign, turned it around, and wrote some words. He put the sign back so that everyone who walked by would see the new words.

Soon the hat began to fill up. A lot more people were giving money to the blind boy. That afternoon the man who had changed the sign came to see how things were. The boy recognized his footsteps and asked, "Were you the one who changed my sign this morning? What did you write?"

The man said, "I only wrote the truth. I said what you said but in a different way."

What he had written was: "Today is a beautiful day and I cannot see it."

Do you think the first sign and the second sign were saying the same thing? Of course both signs told people the boy was blind. But the first sign simply said the boy was blind. The second sign told people they were so lucky that they were not blind. Should we be surprised that the second sign was more effective?

#### **Lessons Learned:**

- "It is He, Who has created for you (the sense of) hearing (ears), sight (eyes), and hearts (understanding). Little thanks you give." [Surah Al-Mu'minun; 78]
- Think positive



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### 5- A Truthful Boy

Long ago there lived a young boy who was fond of reading and writing. Unfortunately, there was no large school of learning where he lived. His father had died and the boy lived with his mother. One day he asked his mother if he could travel to Baghdad (Iraq) and seek knowledge there.

Baghdad was a very big city. There were many famous schools and colleges where great Sufis and people who were very close to Allah stayed. The youth said to his mother, "My dear mother, let me learn as much as possible because an unread person is called ignorant and useless. He is not respected. He is like a blind person who does not know what is happening in the world around him and in the life hereafter. Ignorance is death on earth and leads to gloom and despair. To know many things brings light into a person's life. A knowledgeable person is well-known and well-liked amongst those who are Allah's chosen ones. Without knowledge, one doesn't even know how to pray."

The mother was a good lady. She worshipped Allah day and night. Recitation of the Holy Qur'an was her hobby. She was delighted to hear that her son wished for learning. She thanked Allah that her son had no bad habits.

This pious lady had only managed to save forty *Ashrafis* (like dollars) but these she gladly gave to her son. She prepared some food for him to eat during his journey and sewed the money into the lining of his coat, thus hiding it away.

When everything was ready, she said to her son, "I must tell you one thing. Listen to it carefully, remember it always and do it. Whenever you speak, speak only the truth. Remember that the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, 'Truth is Salvation.' You can save yourself from great worry by telling the truth. Truth will save your life."

In those days there were no motors, buses or trains and the only means of travel was by camel, horse or on foot. It was often very dangerous because travelers were attacked by robbers. So they travelled together in large groups called *caravans*.

Luckily, there was a caravan going to Baghdad. The young boy went with it. They travelled for some time until one day a band of robbers came down from the hills. The robbers began to steal all they could. One of the robbers took everything from the young boy and asked him roughly if he had anything else.



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The boy calmly answered, "Yes, I have forty *Ashrafis (dollars)*." The robber said, "You must be joking!" The boy replied, "No, I am not." Indeed, had his mother not told him to speak the truth! The robber stared at him as the boy carried on speaking, "I am traveling for a good cause. Those who go out to look for learning are walking towards Heaven. The angels will help them on their journey. I am going to be a learned man. I am a descendant of the Holy Prophet (pbuh). Telling lies does not befit me. What are forty *Ashrafis (dollars)* that I should tell a lie in order to keep them? Not even if I were to be killed would I do this. A Muslim does not tell a lie but speaks the truth even in the face of fear and danger."

While the boy was talking, another robber came up to him. He pushed him and said, "What have you got?" The boy replied, "Forty *Ashrafis (dollars)*." This prompt reply made the robber stop and think. Everyone except the boy, who remained completely unmoved, seemed to be lost in amazement or terror-stricken. Indeed he must not be joking. Puzzled, the robber took him to his leader.

"What is your name and town?" the leader asked.

"My name is Abdul Qadir and I come from Jilan," the boy said.

"And where are you going?"

"Baghdad."

"What will you do in Baghdad?"

"I am going to be educated."

"Well, well! Have you any money?"

"Yes sir, I have forty *Ashrafis (dollars)*. Haven't I already said so?"

"Where are they?" enquired the leader. He looked closely at the boy.

"Here, under my armpit," the boy answered as he pointed to the lining in his sleeve. "My mother sewed them inside my coat."

The leader laughed. "You must be very simple. You don't tell people such things."



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"Muslims don't tell lies," the boy replied.

The leader raised his eyebrows. "The boy is not so simple after all," he thought. "What great faith in Islam has this young boy. Without it he would not have told the truth. We make our children into clever liars; we tell lies ourselves day and night and destroy Allah's creatures by making them hide the truth. This life is not worth living. This boy knows more of Allah's wisdom than I, a grown man."

He bent his head in shame. Tears rolled down his cheeks. He stood up, embraced the boy and asked his forgiveness.

Greatly surprised, the boy exclaimed, "Pray to Allah for forgiveness, for he expects His creatures to ask Him alone for His mercy."

There, before him, the leader and his companions repented of all their sins and promised to live the lives of noble people, their first good action being that of returning all the stolen loot to the travelers

### Lessons Learned:

- Speak the truth even if your life. Example: Once an unbelieving Arab Bedouin found the Prophet (pbuh) sleeping alone under a tree. He was holding a sword and saying to the Prophet (pbuh): "Who will now save you?" The Prophet (pbuh) replied smilingly: "Allah, the All- Powerful." Suddenly, the sword fell from the Arab's hand and the Prophet (pbuh), taking it in his hand, said to him: "Who will save you from my hand?" The Bedouin then pleaded for his life and the Prophet (pbuh) forgave him.
- Also refer to: Boy who cried wolf.



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### 6- A Wealthy Man

There was a very wealthy man who saved his gold and silver under a tree. One day he went to check on his savings, he digs up the place and finds nothing under the tree. Someone had stolen his life's saving. He started crying.

A noble man who knew him was passing by; he asked him, why are you crying? Wealthy man said, he was crying because someone had stolen his Gold and Silver.

Noble man replies, you have been collecting Gold and Silver all your life, it was not blessed by Allah because you chose not to spend in the way of Allah. Why don't you put some rocks under the tree and assume you still have that Gold and Silver.

One of the surest ways for a Muslim to attain blessings from Allah is to spend in the way of Allah. The Holy Qur'an says:

"Never shall you attain to righteousness unless you spend out of that which you love; and whatever you spend, Allah surely knows it well." (3:93).

#### Lessons Learned:

- Spend in the way of Allah because Allah gave you all what you have.
- Help the poor

**Note:** Please discuss more lessons learned with your parents.