

YOUNG READERS SERIES

SAADI SAYS

FIFTY
Stories

Compiled by

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SAMA-O-BASR PRESS

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لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ

لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُورًا

FOR THE SAKE OF ALLAH ALONE! WE SEEK
FROM YOU NEITHER REWARD NOR THANKS

QURAN 76:9



SAMA O BASR

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Introduction to the book



This book is a collection of short stories adapted from the works of Shaykh Saadi Shirazi. Saadi's books are taught to children in Persia and around the Muslim world to enhance their morality and foster akhlaq. The readers would be able to appreciate the powerful messages that have been embedded in these stories. This book has been designed to nurture positive thinking in the children and provide them with a moral compass that would guide them throughout their life. It would be an excellent gift from you to your children if you are able to make them understand these stories and the timeless lessons they carry for them.

Inshallah

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TRANSLATIONS OF SAADI'S WORK BY FRANCIS GLADWIN (PUBLISHED 1865), EDWIN ARNOLD (PUBLISHED IN 1888) AND OTHER WORKS HAVE BEEN UTILIZED IN THIS COMPILATION AFTER NECESSARY ADAPTIONS.

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Best way to use this book...

A parent should read the book to the children and explain the story.

It should be followed up by a discussion with the child regarding what he or she learnt from the story and what practical aspects can be drawn from that.

Link the learning to children's experiences.





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Story 1

The gold ring


I remember that in the time of my childhood, my father (may God's mercy be upon him every moment!), brought me a gold ring.



Soon after, a hawker took the ring from me in exchange for a candy.



When a child knows not the value of a ring, he will part with it for something as cheap as a lump of sugar.



You, too, do not recognize value of life and remain indulged in pleasures that vanish very soon. On the Day of Judgment, when the people who do good will attain to the highest dignity and mount from the bottom-most depths of the earth to the highest gardens in Jannah, your head will hang forward in shame if you keep exchanging the gold rings that Allah swt has given you for the worthless candies that this world is throwing to you. Are you able to identify some of the gold rings and candies in your life?

O brother! Be mindful of the works of the evil, for ashamed will be the people of evil on the day of Resurrection in the presence those who would come with the abundance of good.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “The feet of a servant will not move on the Day of Resurrection until he is asked about four matters: his lifetime and how he used it, his youth and how he exhausted it, his wealth and how he earned it and spent it, and his knowledge and how he acted upon it.”

Al-Mu’jam al-Kabīr 111 - Saheeh



Story 2

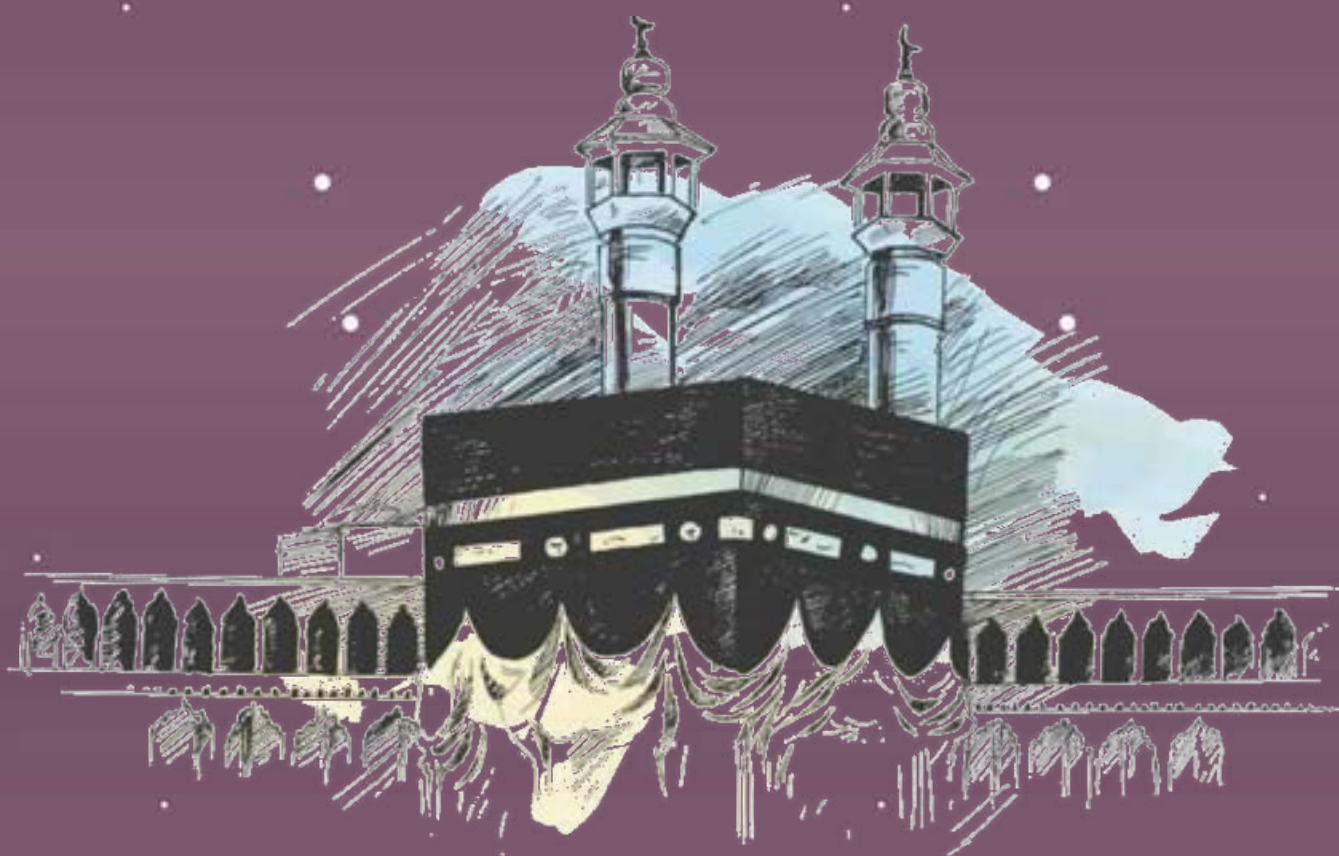
When sleeping is better than being awake to worship at night

I remember that since my childhood, I was brought up in a religious environment. My heart was always inclined to the practice of abstinence and seclusion.

One night, we were doing the Aitikaf in the masjid and I was sitting in attendance on my father. ,Never did I deviate my heart from the remembrance of Allah and dhikr the whole night. Only I and my father were awake. Everyone around us were deep asleep.



I said to my father : "Of all these people, not even one lifts up the head to offers the night prayer." He replied : "O sweetness of my eyes, my beloved son! Better would it have been for you that you would have slept too than to be remarking on the faults of others."



Abdullah ibn Umar reported: I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, peace and blessings be upon him, circling the Ka'bah and saying, "How pure you are and how pure is your fragrance! How great you are and how great is your sanctity! By the one in whose hand is the soul of Muhammad ﷺ, the sanctity of the believer is greater to Allah than your sanctity, in his wealth, his life, and to assume nothing of him but good."

Sunan Ibn Mājah 3932 - Saheeh

Story 3

Allah knows, You don't.

One night, a villager had a lot of pain in his stomach and he was unable to sleep. A doctor was called. After reviewing the patient, he said, “This pain is caused by his having eaten the leaves of the vine.”

He said further, "I will be surprised if he can survive the night for the arrows of a Tartar in his chest were better for him than the eating of such indigestible food.”

The doctor died that night. Forty years have since passed and the villager yet lives!



Allah can help you in the ways you cannot imagine. He has knowledge and power over everything.

[O Allah,] You cause the night to pass into the day and the day into the night. You bring forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living. And You provide for whoever You will without limit.

Surah Aal Imran, Ayah 27

Story 4

Soft Words will quench the anger

Once a slave of the king escaped. A thorough search was made but the slave could not be found anywhere.



Later, when the fugitive returned, the king became furious and ordered the run-away to be put to death. When the executioner brought out his sword, like the tongue of a thirsty man, the poor and helpless slave cried out:

“O, Allah, I forgive the king the shedding of my blood, for I have ever enjoyed his bounty and shared in his prosperity. Let him not suffer for this deed on the Day of Judgment, to the delight of his enemies.”

When the king heard these words, his anger went away. He waived off the punishment and appointed the slave to be an officer in the army.

The moral of this story is that soft speech acts like water on the fires of wrath. Do you not see the soldiers on the battlefield wear armor consisting of a hundred folds of silk?

O friend! Be gentle when you deal with a fierce one. Gentleness will blunt the sharpest sword.



Allah is gentle, likes gentleness, and gives for gentleness what he does not give for harshness.

Sunan Abi Dawud 4807 - Saheeh

Story 5



Regrets of a wasteful youth

One night, in the season of youth, several young men sat together and started to melodiously read some poetry as if they were the morning birds in the garden.

An old man sat apart silently; unmoved like a hazel nut sitting on a shelf. His tongue was closed from speech. A youth approached him and said, “O old man! Why do you sit so mournfully in this corner? Come, raise your head from the collar of grief and join us in our festivity.”

The old man replied, “When the morning breeze blows over the rose garden, it is for the young trees to proudly wave their branches. It does not look appropriate for me to be in your company, for the dawn of old age has spread over my cheeks.





Your turn it is to sit at this table of youth; I
have washed my hands of youthful pleasures.
Time has showered snow upon my crow-like
wings. My days to play in the garden like
chirping birds are gone. Soon will the harvest of
my life be reaped. For you, the new green
leaves are bursting. The bloom has faded from
my garden. Who makes a bouquet from
withered flowers? I wasted my time when my
petals were fresh and stalk was straight.

I must weep, like a child, in shame for my sins.
My Lord gave me blessings which I did not make
any good use of till I lost what you now have.

Well has Luqman said, “It is better not to live
at all than to live many years in sinfulness.”
Better, too, may it be to close the shop in the
morning than to sell the stock at a loss.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Take
advantage of five before five: your youth
before your old age, your health before your
illness, your riches before your poverty, your
free time before your work, and your life
before your death.

Shu’ab al-Imān 9575 - Saheeh

Story 6

Advice of a sorrowful old man

Today, O youth, take the path of worship, for tomorrow comes old age. Leisure you have, and strength. Strike the ball when the field is wide. I knew not the value of life's day till now when I have lost it. Go ahead young men, for you are sitting on the saddles of swift-paced horses. My days of fast pace are gone and I am like that old and weak horse who is unable to strive beneath its burden. How can I tell you about the weakness of the state passing time has put me in. A broken cup that is mended – what will its value be?

In carelessness, the cup of life has fallen from my hand. Nothing remains now but to join the pieces. Negligently have I let the pure water go; how can I now perform my ablutions, except with sand!



The Messenger of Allah ﷺ informed that seven are whom Allah would give protection with His Shade on the Day when there would be no shade but that of Him. One of them a youth who grew up with the worship of Allah.

Sahih Muslim 1031a - Saheeh

Story 7

Never let go his hand

In the time of my childhood, I went out with my father during the Eid Festival; in the tumult of the mob, I got lost. I started crying in fear. Suddenly someone pulled my ear from behind. My father it was. He said, “Haven't I told you several times not to take your hand from the skirt of my robe?”

A child knows not how to go alone; it is difficult to travel on any road unseen and unfamiliar.

You, O poor man, are as a child in your endeavor. Go, hold the skirt of the virtuous and never let it go of your hand. Do not just sit in their company, but fasten your hand to their the saddle straps of their horses.

Go, and feed yourself with the corn of wisdom in their company, so that you may become able to store a portion of the harvest of divine knowledge.

O believers! Be mindful of Allah and be with those who are truthful in word and deed.

Surah At-Tauba, Ayah 119

Story 8

The man who reared a wolf

Someone took a wolf cub as a pet and nurtured it in his house. When it grew in strength, it tore its master to pieces.



When the man was on the point of death, a sage passed by. The sage said, “Did you not know that you would suffer injury from an enemy that you bring up in your house?”

We should be mindful of who we befriend and whose company we keep. How can we raise our heads from shame when we ate at peace with Satan and remained at war with Allah swt?



Remember, Your friend regards you not when you turn your face towards the enemy. He who lives in the house of an enemy deems right estrangement from a friend.

“And (remember) the Day when the wrongdoer will bite his hands and say: ‘Woe to me! Would that I had taken a path with the Messenger. Woe to me! If only I had not taken so-and-so as a friend!’ He has led me astray from this Reminder (the Quran) after it had come to me. And Satan is ever a deserter to man in the hour of need.” (Quran 25:27-29)

Surah At-Tauba, Ayah 119

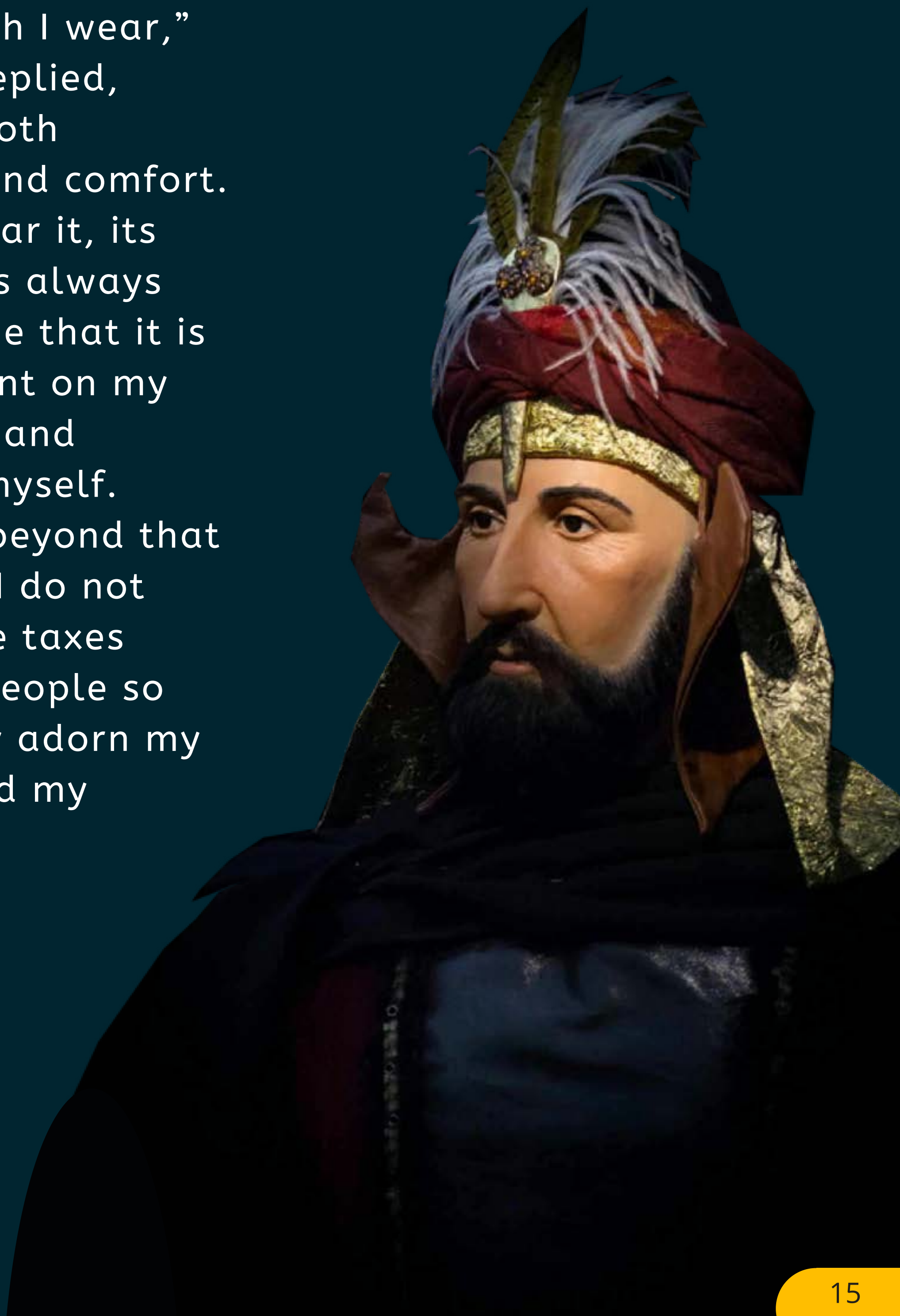
Story 9

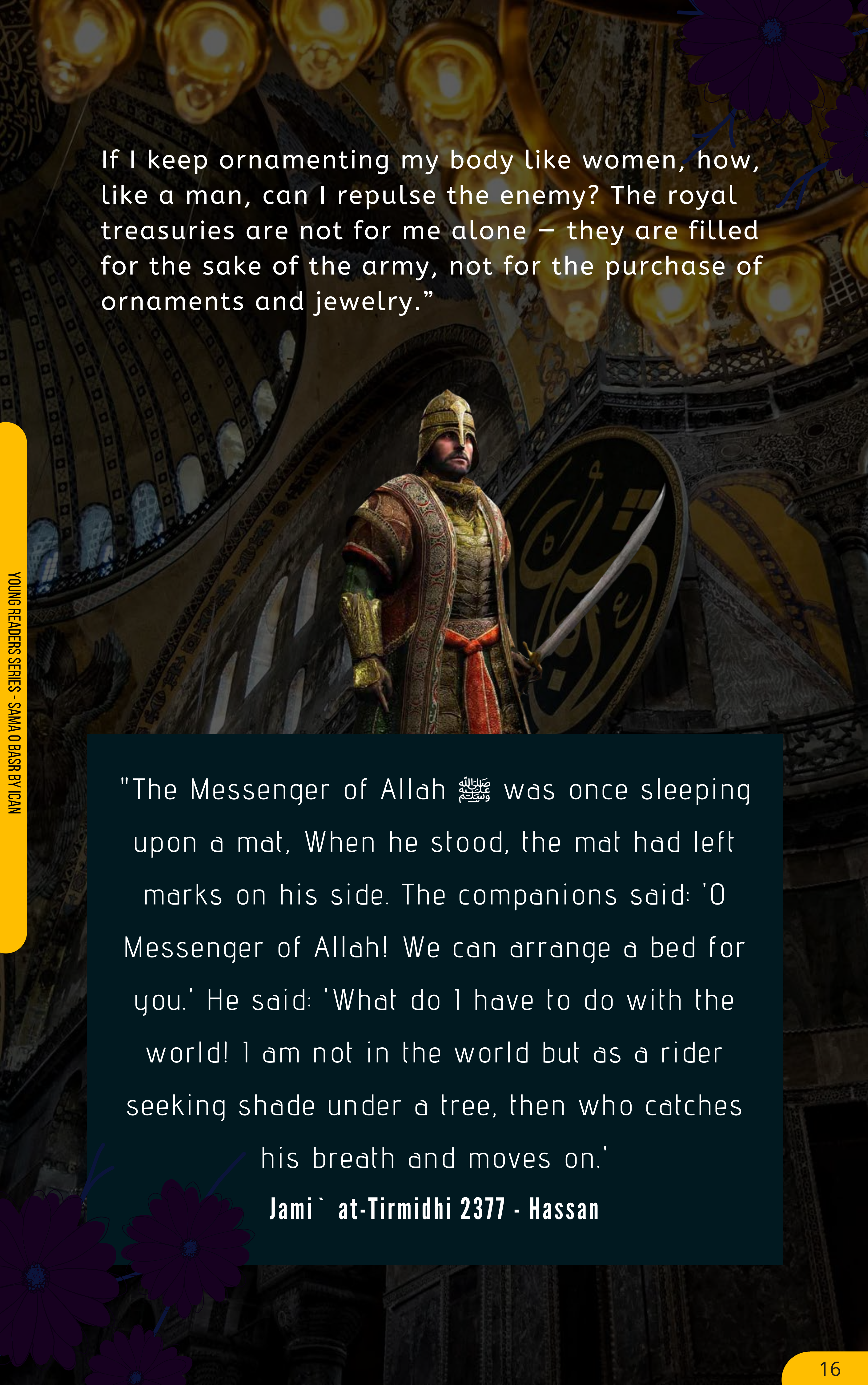
The uncomfortable coat

A certain king habitually used to wear a coat of a coarse material.

Some one said to him: “O happy king! Make for yourself a coat of Chinese soft fur”.

"That which I wear,"
the king replied,
“affords both
covering and comfort.
When I wear it, its
coarseness always
reminds me that it is
still present on my
shoulders and
covering myself.
Anything beyond that
is luxury. I do not
collect the taxes
from my people so
that I may adorn my
person and my
throne.



A man in ornate armor, including a helmet and a long robe, stands in a grand, domed room. The ceiling is adorned with numerous golden, teardrop-shaped lamps. The walls feature intricate Islamic geometric patterns and a large circular emblem with Arabic calligraphy. The man is looking towards the right.

If I keep ornamenting my body like women, how, like a man, can I repulse the enemy? The royal treasuries are not for me alone – they are filled for the sake of the army, not for the purchase of ornaments and jewelry.”

"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was once sleeping upon a mat, When he stood, the mat had left marks on his side. The companions said: 'O Messenger of Allah! We can arrange a bed for you.' He said: 'What do I have to do with the world! I am not in the world but as a rider seeking shade under a tree, then who catches his breath and moves on.'

Jami` at-Tirmidhi 2377 - Hassan

Story 10

Your are a shepherd

The story is told of Abdul Aziz, a righteous king, that he had a pearl of great beauty and value set in a ring. It so happened that a severe drought occurred in his kingdom causing distress among the people.

Moved by compassion, the king ordered the pearl to be sold and the money that it fetched to be given to the poor.

Someone tried to pursue him to change his decision and said: “Never again will such an expensive stone come into your hands.”

Weeping, the king replied, “Ugly is an ornament for a king when the hearts of his people are distressed due to their unmet needs. Better for me is a stoneless ring than a sorrowing people.”

Happy is he who sets the ease of others above his own. The virtuous desire not their own pleasure at the expense of others.



When the king sleeps neglectfully upon his couch, this takes away the peaceful sleep of many.

Ibn 'Umar reported that the Prophet ﷺ, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, "All of you are shepherds and each of you is responsible for his flock. A man is the shepherd of the people of his house and he is responsible. A woman is the shepherd of the house of her husband and she is responsible. Each of you is a shepherd and each is responsible for his flock."

Al-Adab Al-Mufrad 212 - Saheeh

Story 11

Source of Luqman's wisdom

Once upon a time, people were gathered around Luqman and were asking him questions. Someone asked him about from whom he learnt his excellent manners. He replied: "From the ill-mannered! Whatever in their behavior appears to me disagreeable and inappropriate, that I refrain from doing myself." Not a word can be said, even in child's play, from which an intelligent person may not gather instruction and learning. But if a hundred chapters of "Wisdom" were read in the ears of a fool, to him it would sound as nothing but child's play.

Whoever is granted wisdom is indeed given a
great wealth

Surah Baqarah, Ayah 269



Story 12

Beauty in the sight of Allah

I saw some handfuls of fresh roses tied up with grass to form a decoration on a wall. I said to myself: What does this worthless grass has to do to be sitting in the rank of roses?"

The grass wept and replied: "Be silent! The generous never forget their companionship. Though I have no beauty, or colorfulness, or odor, am I not the grass of His garden? I am the servant of the magnificent Majesty; I am nourished from His fostering bounties. Whether I have any virtue, or whether I have it not, still am I hopeful of the mercy of my Master.

“Say, ‘O Allah , Owner of Sovereignty, You give sovereignty to whom You will and You take sovereignty away from whom You will. You honor whom You will and You humble whom You will. In Your hand is [all] good. Indeed, You are over all things competent.”

Surah Aal Imran, Ayah 26

Story 13

Open up your hands before its too late

I have heard of a wealthy man who was as notorious for his stinginess as was Hatim Tai for his benevolence. No one ever saw his door open for the needy or his table spread for the hungry.

He was sailing on the Western sea on his way to Egypt, when a contrary wind hit the ship and it started getting drifted in all direction.



This was the moment when his hands were lifted up in prayer. He began to utter vain lamentations.

What advantage can the hand of supplication be to the unhappy servant; Raised to God in the moment of peril, but when, spending in His cause is needed, folded they remain under the arms.



The Prophet ﷺ said, “Generosity is near to Allah, near to Paradise, near to the people, and far from the Hellfire. Miserliness is far from Allah, far from Paradise, far from the people, and near to the Hellfire. An ignorant generous person is more beloved to Allah Almighty than a stingy scholar.”

Sunan al-Tirmidhī 1961 - Saheeh

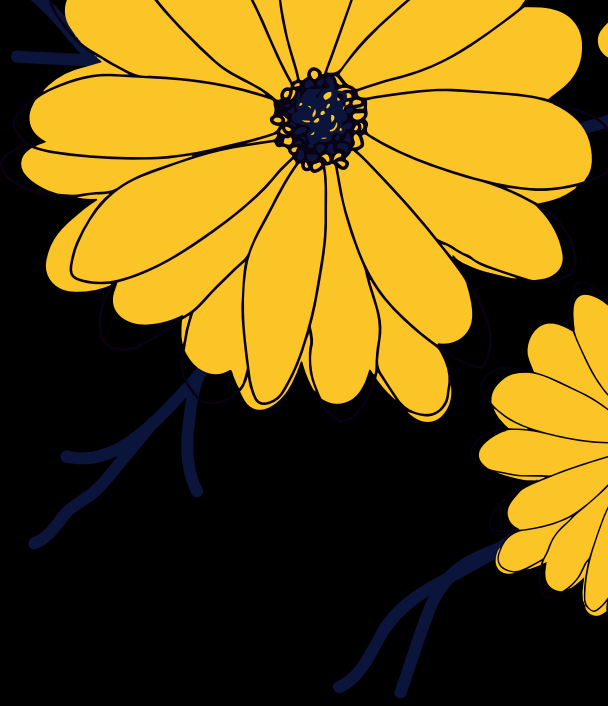
Story 14


Love's sacrifice

Someone said to a moth, “hey, you despicable creature! Make friendship with someone worthy of yourself. Go where you see the path of hope and not of destruction. What sort of bravery is this that you burn yourself in the fire of candle. It is not compatible with reason that you should acknowledge as a friend one whose companionship comes with burning yourself off.”

“Why does it matter if I burn?” The moth replied surprisingly.

“My heart is a pot filled with love for my beloved, and this flame is as a flower to me. Not of my own accord or choice do I throw myself into the fire; the chain of her love is upon my neck and it pulls me towards her.





Whoever it is that finds fault with my love for my beloved! Know, I am content to be slain at her feet. I burn because she is dearer to me than my own life"

Say not to the helpless man from whose hands the rein have fallen, 'Drive slowly.' Nothing can stop me for giving in love all I have in my hands. My life, my death, my sitting, my moving, my wealth, my time, my possessions, and all I have, I will sacrifice for my love!



Indeed, Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties [in exchange] for that they will have Paradise. They fight in the cause of Allah, so they kill and are killed [when they go to battle for just causes]. [It is] a true promise [binding] upon Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur'an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? So rejoice in your transaction which you have contracted. And it is that which is the great attainment..

Surah At-Tawbah, Ayah 111



Story 15

The food that you carry along

Once a man asked an Arab physician: "What quantity of food may one eat daily?" He answered: "A quantity that when you put on your palm would not fall from your hand."

He said: "What strength could such a quantity give?" He replied: "This much quantity will be sufficient to carry you, and whatever more you take you will have to carry."



Miqdam bin Madikarib said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say: 'A human being fills no worse vessel than his stomach. It is sufficient for a human being to eat a few mouthfuls to keep his spine straight. But if he must (fill it), then one third of food, one third for drink and one third for air.'"

Surah Aal Imran, Ayah 26

Story 16

A humble raindrop

A raindrop fell from a spring cloud, and, seeing the wide expanse of the sea, felt humbled and ashamed.

“Where the sea is,” it reflected, “and where am I? Compared with its vastness, I am extinct.”

While it was regarding itself with an eye of contempt and humility, an oyster took it to its bosom, and its fate so shaped its course that eventually the raindrop became a famous royal pearl. It was exalted, for it was humble.

Knocking at the door of extinction at one time, it gained its glory at another. Remember, your Lord is capable of everything. There might be a pearl in you too that is waiting for the right time.

Allah is the One Who created seven heavens 'in layers', and likewise for the earth. The 'divine' command descends between them so you may know that Allah is Most Capable of everything and that Allah certainly encompasses all things in 'His' knowledge.

Surah At-Talaq, Ayah 12

Story 17


Forgive and smile

A group of dissolute men once came to dispute with a student of knowledge, and made use of improper expressions and foul language. Offended by this uncivilized behavior, he went to his spiritual guide and shaykh and complained of what had happened.



He replied: " O my son, the habit of a student of sacred knowledge is the garment of resignation. Whosoever wears this garb and cannot withstand injuries and attacks, is an enemy to the garb and the service of knowledge. Such a person is not entitled to the dress.

A' great river is not made turbid by a stone! The religious man who is hurt at injuries is as yet but shallow water.



If any misfortune befalls you, bear with it and do sabr; so that, by forgiving others, you may yourself obtain pardon from the most High.

O my brother! Not forgetting that we all have to leave this earthly abode and all we accumulate on it one day, let us humble ourselves in ashes before we are changed into dust."

Narrated Anas bin Malik: While I was going along with Allah's Messenger ﷺ who was wearing a Najrani Burd (shawl) with a thick border. A bedouin appeared and he overtook the Prophet ﷺ and pulled his Rida' (shawl) forcibly. I looked at the side of the shoulder of the Prophet (ﷺ) and noticed that the edge of the Rida' had left a mark on it because of the violence of his pull. The bedouin said, "O Muhammad! Order for me some of Allah's property which you have." The Prophet ﷺ turned towards him, smiled and ordered that he be given a gift.

Sahih al-Bukhari 6088 - Saheeh

Story 18

Argument between the flag and the curtain

In the city of Istanbul, once a contention arose between the flag and the curtain.

The flag, disgusted with the dust of the road and the fatigue of marching, said to the curtain in displeasure: "You and myself are school-fellows, both servants of the Caliph's court. I never enjoy a moment's relaxation from the work, being obliged to travel at all seasons; you, on the other hand, have not experienced the fatigue of marching, the danger of storming the fortresses, the perils of the desert, nor the inconveniences of whirlwinds and dust of the battlefield; my foot is more forward in enterprise and struggle – why, then, is your dignity greater than mine?"



You pass your time among youths, beautiful as the moon, stay away from tearing dust and the heat of the battlefields; You conveniently spend your time at home when I am burning in the desert heat. I am carried in the hands of menial servants; and travel with my feet in bands, and my head agitated by the wind."

The curtain replied, "My head is placed on the threshold, and not, like yours, raised up to the sky. As I am not the one being pride of the battle-fields, no one salutes me like they do to you and no one comes to kiss me as they bow down to kiss you.



It is your toil and effort which has made you the pride and glory of the entire ummah. I remain but a mere piece of cloth hung on a wall in a corner. "

Go forth, whether light or heavy, and strive with your wealth and your lives in the cause of Allah. That is better for you, if you only knew.

Surah Tawbah, Ayah 41

Story 19

The powerful wrestler

Once a shaykh saw a wrestler in extreme rage. He was foaming at the mouth out of anger. The shaykh inquired the cause, and was told that someone had abused the wrestler.

"This miserable fellow, who can lift a stone of a thousand pounds' weight, is not able to bear a single word!", thought the shaykh.

He counselled him: "Resign your boasting pretensions to strength and fortitude, you weak-spirited unhappy fellow!"



What is the difference between a man who is unable to control his rage and a raging bull who knows no limits for his anger?"



"Show your power by engaging others to speak kindly to you. It is not courage to drive your fist against another man's mouth. He is no man who has no humanity and dignity.

The sons of Adam are formed of humble earth; if you possess not humility, neither are you a man!"

‘Abd Allah (b. Mas‘ud) reported the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) as saying: Whom do you consider a wrestler among you? The people replied: (the man) whom the men cannot defeat in wrestling. He said: No, it is he who controls himself when he is angry.

Sunan Abi Dawud 4779 - Saheeh


Story 20

Undefeatable patience

When Bayazid, a revered spiritual master, was coming from his bath one morning during the Eid festival, someone unwittingly emptied a tray of ashes from a window upon his head.

With his face and turban colored black because of this, he rubbed his hands in gratitude and said, “I am, in truth, worthy of the fires of hell. Why should I be angered by a few ashes?”





The great men of God do not regard themselves above others. Look not for the piety in a self-conceited man. Eminence does not consist in outward show and vaunting words, nor dignity in proud haughtiness of manner and pretension.

On the Day of Judgment, you will see in Paradise him who sought truth and rejected vain pretension and arrogance.

He who is headstrong and refusing to move away from the path of unshakable forbearance and humility is on the path that leads to the gardens. Whoever has even a mustard seed's weight of arrogance in his heart, shall not be admitted in there. Therefore, keep cleaning your hearts of arrogance and self-praise.

If you desire greatness, abandon pride.

Narrated Haritha bin Wahb: I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) saying, "Shall I tell you of the people of Paradise? They comprise every poor humble person, and if he swears by Allah to do something, Allah will fulfill it; while the people of the fire comprise every violent, cruel arrogant person."

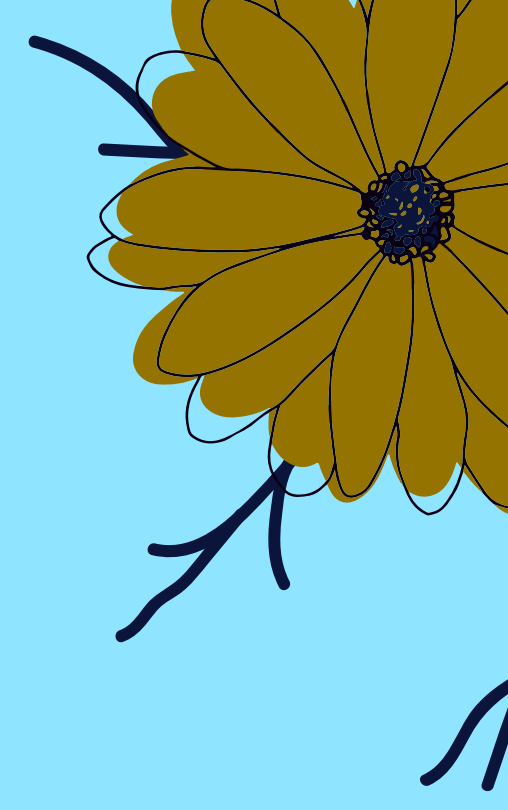
Sahih al-Bukhari 6657 - Saheeh

Story 21

A smiling honey-seller

A man of smiling countenance sold honey, captivating the hearts of all by his pleasant manner. His customers were as numerous as flies around the sugar cane – if he had sold poison people would have bought it for honey.





A not-so-happy looking man regarded him with envy, being jealous of the way his business prospered.

One day he paraded the town with a tray of honey on his head and a frowned face wrinkled with unhappiness. He wandered about crying his wares, but no one showed any desire to buy. At nightfall, having earned nothing, he sat dejectedly in a street corner with a bitter face. The wife of one of his neighbors jokingly remarked, “Honey doesn't seem to have reduced any of the bitterness of your sour temper.”

Remember, it is wrong to eat bread at the table of one whose face is as wrinkled with frowns as the cloth on which it is served. O my brother! Add not to your own burdens, for an evil temper brings disaster in its train. If you do not have a sweet tongue, you have neither gold nor silver.

Anas b. Malik reported the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), may peace be upon him, as saying: Do not hate each other; do not envy each other; do not desert each other; and be the servants of Allah as brethren.

Sunan Abi Dawud 4910 - Saheeh

Story 22

Story of a sea journey

A king was once travelling on a ship along with his viziers and a Persian slave. The boy having never before seen the sea, nor experienced the inconvenience of a ship, began to cry and lament, and his whole body was in a tremor. Notwithstanding all the soothings that were offered to him, he would not stop crying. The king was getting very disturbed and no remedy could be found.



A vizier who happened to be a philosopher too said to the king, "If you will command me, I will silence him." The king gave the permission. The philosopher ordered the soldiers to throw the boy into the sea, and after several plunges, they dragged him out towards the ship. He clung to the rudder with both his hands. When he got out of the water, he sat down quietly in a corner of the vessel. The king was pleased but surprised. He asked how this was brought about. The philosopher replied, "At first he had neither experienced the danger of being drowned; nor he realized the safety of the ship." In this manner, he realized the meaning of prosperity after going through the adversity.

O you who has satisfied his hunger! To you a barley loaf is on your table is barely noticeable; but for the one who has faced the starvation, this appears as a remarkable blessing.



But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah Knows, while you know not.

Surah Baqarah, Ayah 216



Story 23

Advice to an oppressor

Some years ago, I was sitting retired in the great mosque at Damascus, at the head of the tomb of Yahiya the prophet (on whom be peace!). One of the kings of Arabia, who was notorious for his injustice, happened to come there for a visit.

He came near me and asked for an advice: "What kind of devotion will be most meritorious for me to perform?" I replied, " That you sleep at noon, because by doing so, in that one moment you will not oppress mankind."

O my brother! Take the cotton out of your ear, and distribute justice to mankind; for if you refuse to be just, there will be a day of retribution. The children of Adam are limbs of one another, and are all produced from the same substance. When the world gives pain to one member, the others also suffer uneasiness. You who are indifferent to the sufferings of others deserve not to be called a human."

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Allah will not be merciful to those who are not merciful to people."

Saheeh Bukhari 6941 - Saheeh

Story 24

Attitude of the leaders

Once a just king went out for hunting. He was able to hunt some game which he wanted to roast and eat. When the cooking was about to be commenced, it was realized that there was not any salt. The king sent a servant to fetch some from a nearby village. He asked his servant to pay the villagers handsomely for their assistance in an effort to make sure that exaction doesn't become a custom, and the villagers remain happy. The viziers said to him, "From these few grams of salt, what harm can the villagers really ensue if they are not paid?" He replied: "Oppression was brought into the world from small beginnings, which every new-comer has increased, until it has reached the present degree of enormity. If the people in-charge of others were to eat a single apple from the garden of a peasant, the servants would pull up the tree by the roots; and if the Sultan orders five eggs to be taken by force, his soldiers will spit a thousand fowls.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "A day of just leadership is better than sixty years of worship,

Al-Sunan al-Kubrá 16139 - Hassan

Story 25

Doorstep of The King

A king of Arabia commanded his ministers to double the stipend of someone, because he was constant in his attendance, and always attentive to his duty, while the rest of the courtiers were dissipated in their manners and negligent of their business.

A man of closeness to Allah swt, hearing this, remarked, that the high ranks of servants in the court of heaven are conferred in the same manner. If a person is vigilant in the service of a monarch during two days, on the third day he will certainly be regarded with kindness. The sincere worshippers entertain expectation that they shall not return from the doorstep of God unrewarded. Obedience insures greatness, whilst disobedience leads to a repulse.





Abu Dharr reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “Allah Almighty says: Whoever comes with a good deed will have the reward of ten like it and even more. Whoever comes with an evil deed will be recompensed for one evil deed like it or he will be forgiven. Whoever draws close to me by the length of a hand, I will draw close to him by the length of an arm. Whoever draws close to me the by length of an arm, I will draw close to him by the length of a fathom. Whoever comes to me walking, I will come to him running. Whoever meets me with enough sins to fill the earth, not associating any idols with me, I will meet him with as much forgiveness.”

Saheeh Muslim 2687 - Saheeh

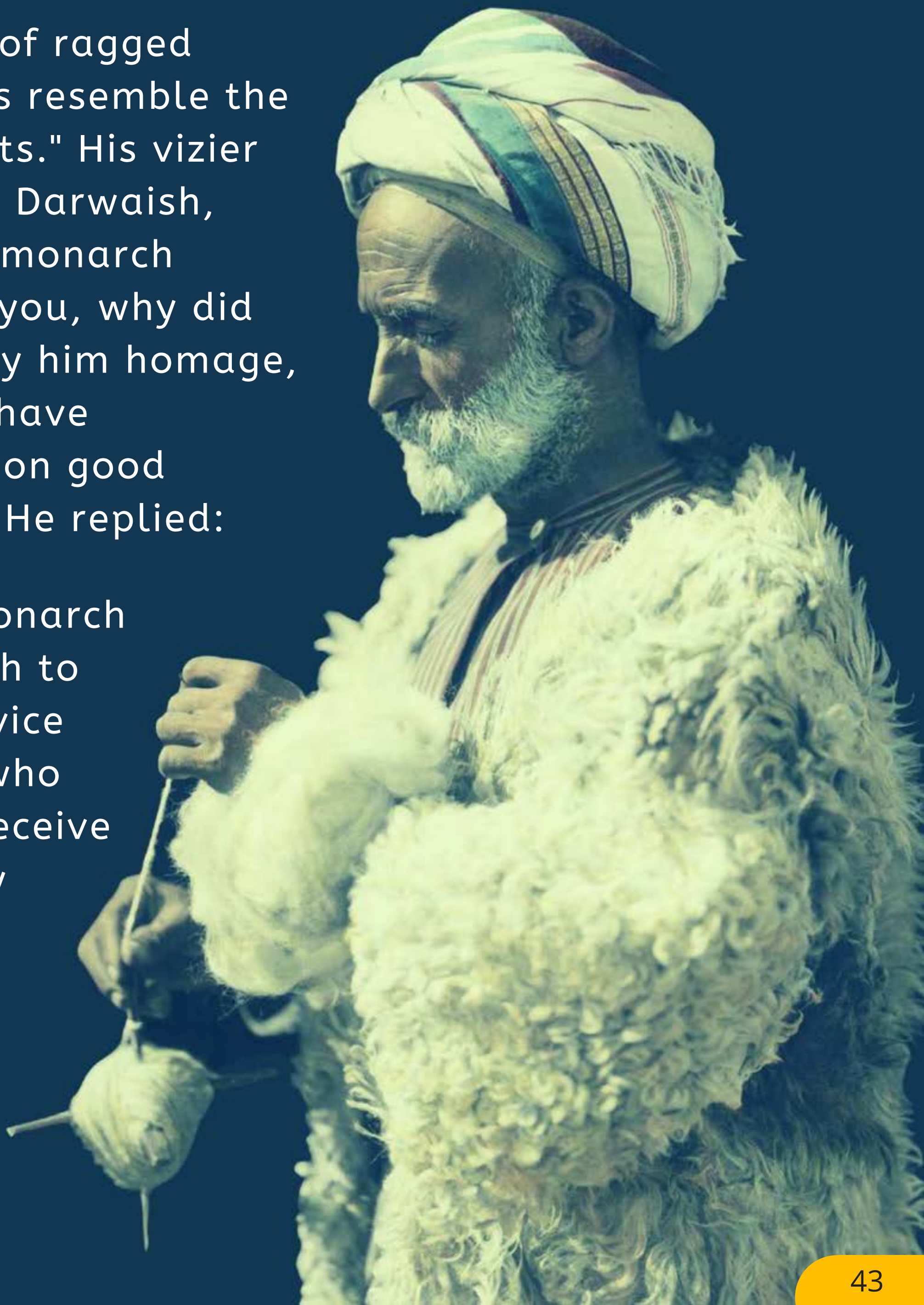
Story 26


A counsel to the monarch

A Darwaish had taken up his abode in a corner of a desert alongwith his tribe. The king passed by him once. The Darwaish, as retirement is the kingdom of contentment, did not even lift up his head, nor show any signs of artificial politeness. The monarch, conscious of his superior dignity, was chagrined, and said:

"This tribe of ragged mendicants resemble the brute beasts." His vizier said to the Darwaish, "When the monarch passed by you, why did you not pay him homage, or even behave with common good manners?" He replied:

Tell the monarch of the earth to expect service from him who hopes to receive the earthly benefits.





He further said, "let him know also, that the monarch is for the protection of his subjects, and not the subjects for the service of the king. The king is the guardian of the poor, although wealth, splendour in appearance, and power are his portion. The sheep are not for the service of the shepherd, but the shepherd is to look after them. Today you will see one prosperous, and another laboring under an afflicted heart; wait only a few days, when the earth will consume the brains of the vain thinker. The difference between royalty and servitude ceases, when the decrees of fate are fulfilled. If any one should open the grave, he could not distinguish the rich man from the poor." This speech of the Darwaish moved king's heart. The Darwesh counselled him: " Reflect, whilst you enjoy power, that wealth and dominion pass from one to another."

Know that this worldly life is no more than play, amusement, luxury, mutual boasting, and competition in wealth and children. This is like rain that causes plants to grow, to the delight of the planters. But later the plants dry up and you see them wither, then they are reduced to dust.

Surah Al-Hadid, Ayah 20

Story 27

When a moment becomes immortal

A king commanded an innocent person to be put to death. The innocent person cried, "O king, seek not your own injury by venting your wrath on me." The king asked: "How?". The man replied, "This torture will cease with me in an instant as I die, but the crime thereof will remain with your shoulders forever. The space of life passes away, like the wind over the desert; bitterness and sweetness, deformity and beauty, all shall cease. The tyrant got shook with these words and he pardoned his life.

O my brother! Be conscious about how you spend each and every moment of your life. It might become immortal and its reward or blame might be for your shoulders to keep forever.

On that Day will all men come forward, cut off from one another, to be shown the deeds they did. So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it. And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.

Surah Al-Zalzalah, Ayah 6-9

Story 28

Do good, have good

Once there was a certain vizier in India that showed great clemency and affection towards his people irrespective of their degree and status. It so happened that he fell under the king's displeasure who imprisoned him. The other viziers as well as common people all exerted their interest to obtain his release, and those prison guards to whose custody he was committed showed him great indulgence in safe-guarding him. Other courtiers also mentioned his virtues to the king, till at length the monarch pardoned his fault.

A righteous man, when apprised of the circumstances, said, " Sell even your patrimonial garden to gain the hearts of your friends. In order to boil your well-wisher's pot, it is advisable to burn all your furniture. Do good even unto the wicked; for it is best to close the dog's mouth with a morsel."

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Be merciful to those on the earth and the One in the heavens will have mercy upon you."

Sunan al-Tirmidhī 1924 - Saheeh

Story 29

Goodness comes back

I was sitting in a boat, in company with some persons of knowledge and distinction, when a vessel near us sunk, and two brothers fell into a whirlpool. There was a skilled mariner available with us on board who could save their life. One of the people of knowledge on our boat offered the mariner a hundred dinars, if he would save both the brothers. The mariner tried his best but he could only save one of them and the other perished in the deep blue water.



I said "The other had no longer to live, and therefore he was taken out of the water the last." The mariner replied, "What you say is true; but I had also another motive for saving this person first in preference to the other; once, when I was tired in the desert, he mounted me on a camel; and from the hand of the other, I received a whipping in my childhood." I replied, "Truly, the great God is just, so that whosoever does good shall himself experience good; and the doer of evil shall suffer evil.

As far as you can avoid it, distress not the mind of any one, for in the path of life there are many thorns. Assist the exigencies of others, since you also stand in need of many things."



Whoever does good, whether male or female, and is a believer, We will surely bless them with a good life, and We will certainly reward them according to the best of their deeds.

Surah An-Nahl, Ayah 97

Story 30

Loss of your enemy is not a gain for you

Somebody brought to the caliph the good tidings, that Allah has taken the soul of such and such of your enemy. The caliph asked, "Have you heard that He, the Most-High will, by any means, spare me because of this? The death of my enemy is no cause of joy to me, since neither is my own life eternal, nor he will be answerable for any of the sins that I do. My love and hate is for the sake of Allah and I ask Him to forgive me before I depart this world too."



No bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another. Then to your Lord is your return

Surah Al-An'am, Ayah 164

Story 31

Silence of the wise

At the court of a king a number of wise men were debating on some affair, while a learned elder remained silent. They asked him why in this debate he did not say even a thing. He replied: "Ministers are like physicians, and the physician administers medicine to the sick only; therefore, when I see that your opinions are judicious, it would not be consistent with wisdom for me to obtrude my sentiments. When a business can be managed without my interference, it is not proper for me to speak on the subject. But if I see a blind man in the way of a well, if I keep silence, it is a crime."



Al-Rabia' ibn Sulayman reported: Al-Shafi'i, may Allah have mercy on him, said, "Seek help in speaking with silence, and in reasoning with reflection."

Surah Al-An'am, Ayah 164

Story 32

Think well of others

A man asked a noble shaykh what he said of a particular worshipper, of whose character others had spoken disrespectfully. He replied, "My eyes have seen no fault in his exterior, and I am ignorant of what is concealed within him. Whomsoever you see in a religious habit, consider as a pious and a good man. You don't know what is hidden in his mind. What business has the Mohtasib (judge) with the inside of the house?"



The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Beware of suspicion. Suspicion is the most untrue speech. Do not spy, do not eavesdrop, do not compete with each other, do not envy each other, do not hate each other, and do not shun each other. Be slaves of Allah as brothers."”

Surah Al-An'am, Ayah 164

Story 33

Keep your state of loss hidden from the eyes of people

A merchant, having suffered a loss of a 1000 dinars, said to his son, "You must not mention this matter to anyone." He answered, " O father, it is your command, and therefore I will not speak; but please tell me, what is the use of keeping it secret? " He replied, "In order that we may not suffer two misfortunes: one, the loss of the money, and two, the reproach and taunts of our fellows.

O brother! It is of no benefit to make a mention to people of the state of loss you are in. The All-knowing knows it. Bow down on his door for he knows your misfortunes as well as the way out of them.

A believer will be brought to his Lord, the Exalted and Glorious, on the Day of Resurrection and He would place upon him His veil (of Light) and make him confess his faults and say: Do you recognise (your faults) ? He would say: My Lord, I do recognise (them). He (the Lord) would say: I concealed them for you in the world. And today I forgive them. And he would then be given the Book containing his good deeds.

Saheeh Muslim 6670 - Saheeh

Story 34

The devout who didn't want to disappoint the thief

A thief got into the house of a religious man, but, after the most diligent search, had the mortification not to find anything. The man of piety whose house the thief had come into, discovering his situation, threw the blanket on which he had slept in the way which the thief had to pass, in order that he might not be disappointed. I have heard, that those who are truly pious distress not the hearts of their enemies let alone the hearts of their friends.



If you are in strife and contention with your friends, how is it possible for you to attain dignity? The affection of the righteous is the same in presence as in absence; not like those who censure you behind your back, but before your face are ready to die for you; when you are present meek as a lamb, but when absent, like the wolf, a devourer of mankind.

Whosoever recounts to you the faults of your neighbor will undoubtedly expose yours to others.



Abu Hurayra reported that the Prophet ﷺ, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "A man visited a brother of his in a village, so Allah put an angel in wait for him on the road. He asked, 'Where are you going?' He replied, 'To a brother of mine in this village.' He said, 'Is he responsible for some blessing you have?' He said, 'No, I love him for Allah.' He said, 'I am a messenger of Allah to you. Allah loves you as you love him.'"

Surah Al-An'am, Ayah 164

Story 35

Humility - a trait of the learned

In a company where everyone was praising a scholar, and extolling his virtues, he raised up his head, and said: "I am such as I know myself to be, whilst you who reckon up my good works judge from the external, but are ignorant of my interior. My external form, in the eyes of mankind, is a goodly object; but from the baseness of the interior, I bow down my head with remorse. Mankind praise the peacock for his beautiful plumage, but he is ashamed of his ugly feet." It is true that the true scholars are the most humble people. A pot has to turn down towards earth when it is to fill others. The most God-fearing people on the face of earth are those who are truly knowledgeable.



Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying: Charity does not in any way decrease the wealth and the servant who forgives Allah adds to his respect, and the one who shows humility Allah elevates him in the estimation (of the people).

Sahih Muslim 2588 - Saheeh

Story 36

Actions are upon intentions

A certain pious man saw in a dream a king in paradise, and a holy man in hell. Confused at what he saw, he went to a shaykh and asked what could be the meaning of the exaltation of one, and the degradation of the other, as the contrary is generally considered to be the case?

He replied, "The king has obtained paradise in return for his love of holy men; love of knowledge and the people of knowledge is the path that leads to jannah. The religious man, on the other hand, has gone to hell on account of his altering the rulings to please the kings and a lack of sincerity in his actions.

Of what use are the coarse clothing, the beads, and patched garments? Abstain from evil deeds, and there is no need of a cap of leaves. Color yourself in the color of The Most High - from inside as well as out.

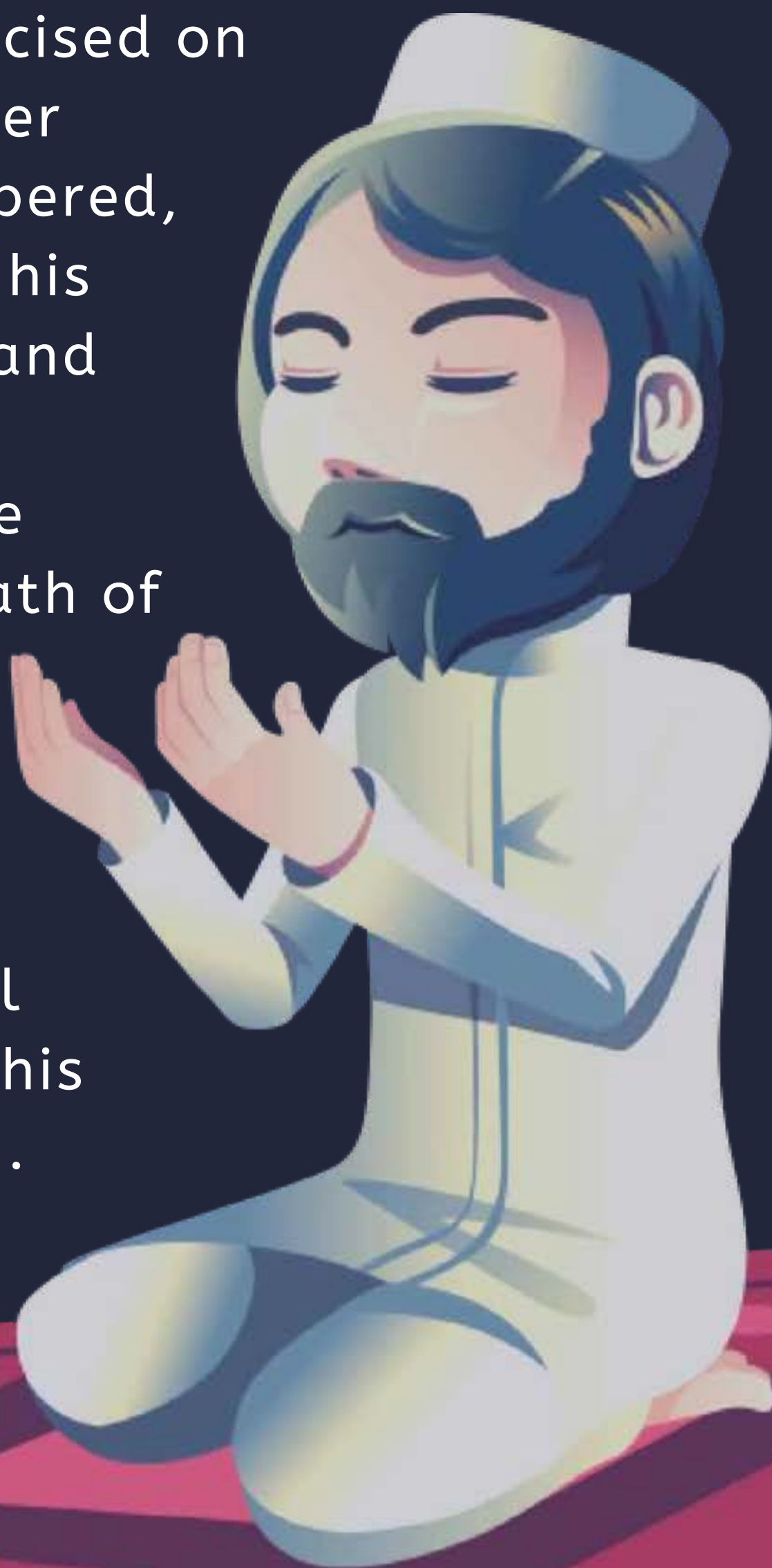
The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "The deeds are considered by the intentions, and a person will get the reward according to his intention.


Sahih Muslim 2588 - Saheeh

Story 37

Those who love your faults

Once an sinful person received a great divine favor which completely transformed him. The lamp of grace and rahmah shone on his path, and he managed to enter into the circle of the God-fearing. By the blessing of their company and righteousness, his ill-morals and bad habits vanished and he was able to decorate his character with goodness and virtuous deeds; and he ceased to entertain any undue sensual inclinations. Nevertheless, the tongue of calumny was still exercised on his character; his former manners being remembered, and no credit given to his current state of piety and virtues. By means of repentance you may be delivered from the wrath of God; but you cannot escape from the tongues of men. Unable to support the violence of reproachful tongues, he lamented his situation to his shaykh.





The Shaykh wept, and said, "How can you be sufficiently grateful for this blessing, that you are better than they suppose you to be? How often will you repeat to me that the 'Evil-minded and envious men are seeking out my faults, wretch that I am!'. If they rise up to shed your blood, or if they sit down wishing you evil, be you good, although mankind speak evil of you. It is better than being bad, whilst they think you good. But look at me, of whose perfection mankind entertain a high opinion while I am full of imperfections and shortcomings. If I had performed what they ascribe to me, I should indeed be a man of virtue and piety. I conceal myself from the eyes of my neighbors; but Allah knows my secret and public actions. I shut the door against men, that they may not discover my faults; but what advantage is there in shutting the door, as the All-knowing knows both what is behind the doors as well as outside them.

“And with Him (Allah) are the Keys of the Unseen. No one knows them (the Secrets of the Unseen) except for Him (Allah). And He (Allah) knows all that is on the land and all that is in the seas and there is not even a single leaf that falls except that He has full knowledge of it.

Surah Anam, Ayah 59

Story 38

Manner of responding to taunts

I complained to a venerable Shaykh, that some one had accused me falsely of immorality and mischief. He replied, "Put him to shame by your virtue. Respond back hard by increasing your good acts to such an extent that it would not be in the power of the detractor to convict you of evil. When the harp is in tune, how can it suffer correction from the hand of the musician?"

Good and evil cannot be equal. Respond 'to evil' with what is best.

Surah Ha-Mim, Ayah 34

Story 39

Gratitude is a treasure

I have never complained of my condition, nor murmured at the ordinances of Heaven, except once, when my feet were bare, and I had not the means of buying myself shoes. I entered the great mosque at Kufa with a heavy heart, when I came across a man who had no feet. I offered up praise and thanksgiving to Allah for his bounties, and bore with patience the want of shoes.



A well-roasted lamb in the eyes of one who has satisfied his appetite, is of less estimation than a leaf of greens on a dish; but to him who has not the means of procuring food, a boiled potato is not of less value than the lamb meat.

So which of the favors of your Lord would
you deny?

Surah Rahman

Story 40

The real wealth



An Arab traveler was sitting in a circle of jewellers of Basrah. He related to them an event from one of his journeys: " Once upon a time, I got lost in the desert. And having no provisions left, I gave myself up. It was at that moment when I happened to find a bag full of pearls. I shall never forget the relish and delight that I felt when I saw it from a distance and thought it is filled with wheat that I can eat. I shall never, also, forget the bitterness and despair which I suffered, on discovering that the bag contained pearls and not wheat. In the parched desert of quicksands, pearls or shells, in the mouth of the thirsty traveler, are alike unavailing. When a man destitute of provisions is fatigued, it is the same thing to have in his girdle gold or potsherds."



O my brother!
Differentiate between
your needs and the
desires. Often times a
bag of wheat is much
more precious than a
bag full of pearls and
jewels of all sorts.



Abu Dharr R.A. reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “O Abu Dharr, do you say an abundance of possessions is wealth?” I said yes. The

Prophet said, “Do you say a lack of possessions is poverty?” I said yes. The

Prophet repeated this three times, then he said, “Wealth is in the heart and poverty is in the heart. Whoever is wealthy in his heart will not be harmed no matter what happens in the world. Whoever is impoverished in his heart will not be satisfied no matter how much he has in the world. Verily, he will only be harmed by the greed of his own soul.”

Al-Mu’jam al-Kabīr 1618 - Saheeh

Story 41

Do not debate with the ignorant

A man famous for his learning, happened to have a dispute with an infidel. Realizing that his argument will have no effect, he gave up the contest, and retired. Somebody said, "How come it happened that you, who possesses so much superiority in learning, virtue, and wisdom, is not a match for this infidel in this discussion?" He replied, "My learning is the Quran, the traditions of the Prophet ﷺ, and the doctrines of the fathers, which he will neither hear nor believe; and what use is there in my listening to his blasphemy? To him who will not be convinced by the Quran and the Sunnah, the proper answer is, not to answer him."



And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say salam.

Surah Furqan, Ayah 63

Story 42

Consistency over pace

Once in the vigor of youth I had performed a long journey without stopping. At the night, excessively fatigued, I laid down at the foot of a mountain as I could not move ahead with the caravan. A debilitated old man, who arrived after the caravan, said, "Why do you sleep? Get up; this is not a place and time for repose." I said to him, "How can I proceed, not having the ability to use my feet anymore?" He replied, "Have you not heard how it has been said, that proceeding and halting but continuing to move ahead is better than running only to get fatigued and missing the caravan".

O you who wish to reach the end of your day's journey! Be not in haste; Listen to my counsel, and learn patience.

The Arab horse makes two stretches on full speed, and the camel travels slowly but unstopped day and night.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Take up good deeds only as much as you are able, for the best deeds are those done regularly even if they are few."

Sunan Ibn Mājah 4240 - Saheeh

Story 43

The essence of goodness

A rich miser's son got sick. His friends suggested him that he should either get the Qurn to be read for him from beginning to end, or else offer sacrifice, that the high God might restore his son to health.

After a little consideration, he said, "It is better to read the Quran, as it is at hand, and the flocks are at a distance."

A holy man, on hearing this, said : "He preferred reading the Quran because the words are at the tip of his tongue, and the money is in the depth and the inside of his heart."



Alas! if the performance of religious rites was to be accompanied with giving in the way of Allah, they would keep their hands tied, but if you require Surah Fatiha to be read, they will repeat it a hundred times - but without any of its words moving ahead of their mouths and throats."



Righteousness is not in just turning your faces towards the east or the west. Rather, the righteous are those who believe in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Books, and the prophets; who give charity out of their cherished wealth to relatives, orphans, the poor, 'needy' travellers, beggars, and for freeing captives; who establish prayer, pay alms-tax, and keep the pledges they make; and who are patient in times of suffering, adversity, and in 'the heat of' battle. It is they who are true 'in faith', and it is they who are truly mindful 'of Allah'.


Surah Baqarah, Ayah 177

Story 44

The wealth that doesn't decrease

A shaykh was exhorting his sons and daughters in this manner: "My dear children, acquire knowledge; for on worldly riches and possessions, no reliance can be placed. Rank will be of no use out of your own country, and on a journey, money is in danger of being lost; for either the thief may carry it off all at once, or the possessor may consume it by degrees. But knowledge is a perennial spring of wealth, and if a man of education ceases to be opulent, yet he need not be sorrowful, for knowledge of itself is riches. A man of learning, wherever he goes, is treated with respect, and sits in the uppermost seat, whilst the ignorant man gets only a scanty fare, and encounters distress.





After enjoying power, it is distressing to be obliged to obey, and he who has been used to caresses cannot bear rough usage from the world." In a few years, there once happened an insurrection in Damascus, where every one deserted his habitation. The wise sons of a peasant became the king's ministers and his daughters were respected in the community for their wisdom and advice, while the stupid sons of the Vizier were reduced to begging in the village. If you want a paternal inheritance, acquire from your father knowledge, for his wealth may be spent in ten days.

Verily, the angels lower their wings for the seeker of knowledge. The inhabitants of the heavens and earth, even the fish in the depths of the water, seek forgiveness for the scholar. The virtue of the scholar over the worshiper is like the superiority of the moon over the stars.

The scholars are the inheritors of the Prophets. They do not leave behind gold or silver coins, but rather they leave behind knowledge. Whoever has taken hold of it has been given an abundant share.

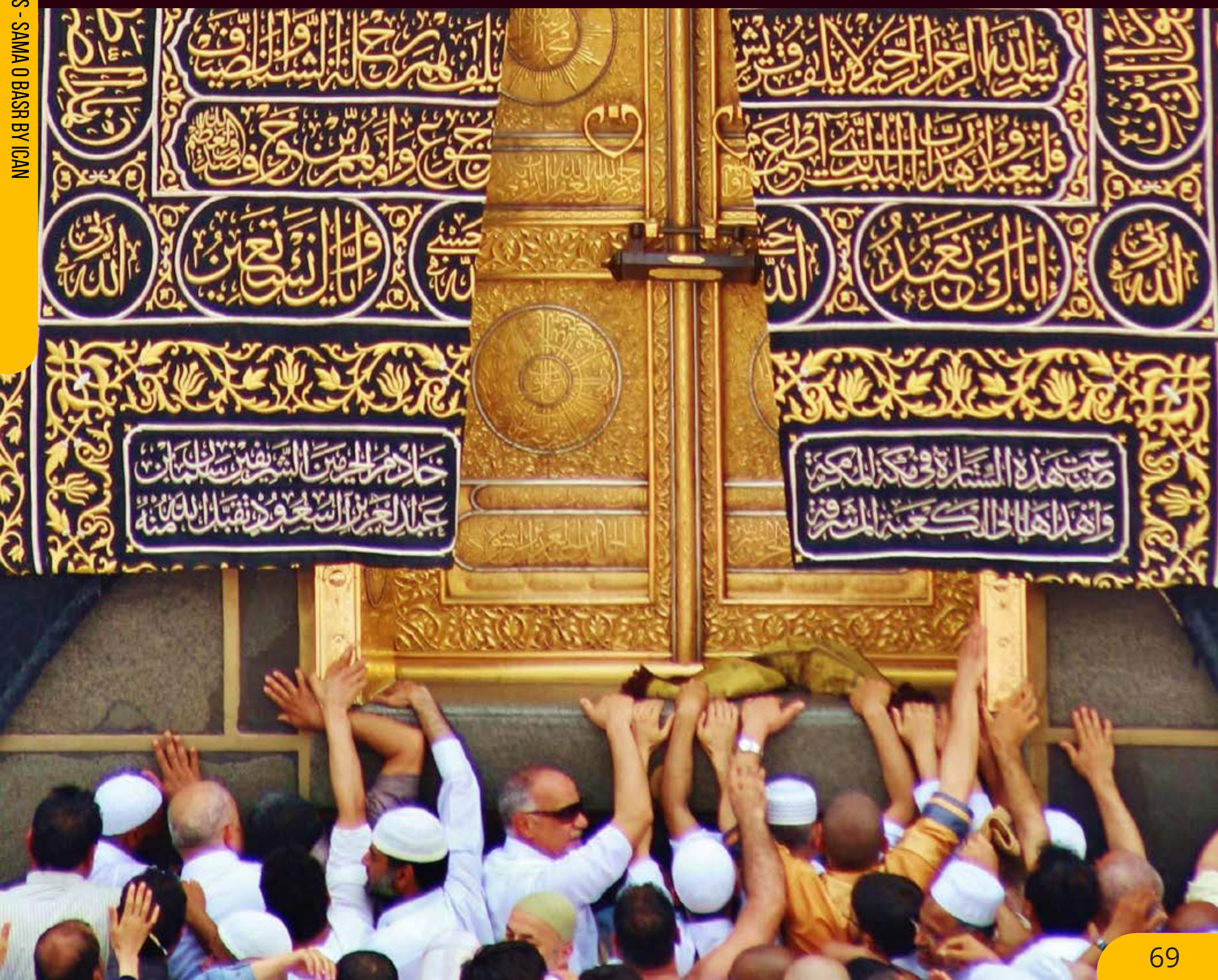
Sunan Abī Dāwūd 3641 - Saheeh

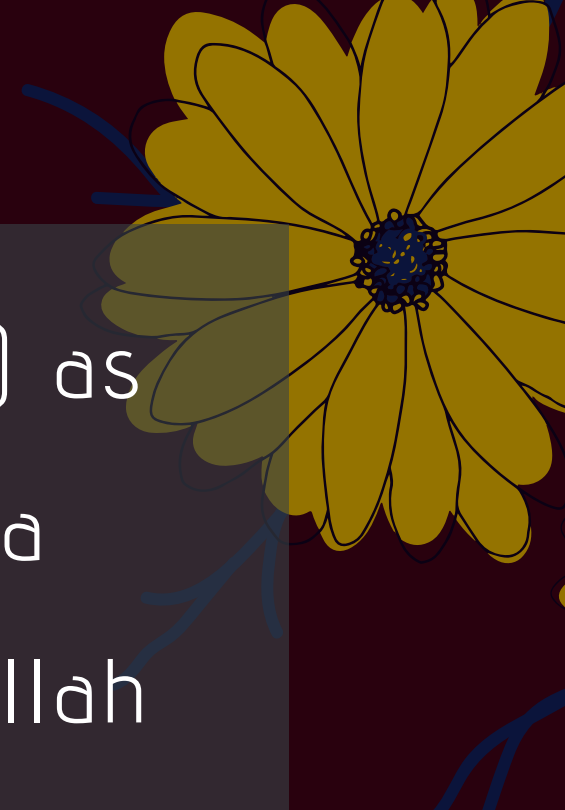
Story 45

No benefit of lineage on that day

I saw an Arab shaykh who was saying to his son, "O my child! on the day of resurrection, they will ask you, 'what have you done in the world?' and not 'from whom are you descended?'; That is, they will inquire about your virtue, and not about your father."


The cloth that covers the Kaaba, the one that they kiss, is not famous because it is produced by the silkworm; it is because it associated itself for some days with one who is venerable. On account of that, it became venerable like him."





Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying: He who alleviates the suffering of a brother out of the sufferings of the world, Allah would alleviate his suffering from the sufferings of the Day of Resurrection, and he who finds relief for one who is hard-pressed, Allah would make things easy for him in the Hereafter, and he who conceals (the faults) of a Muslim, Allah would conceal his faults in the world and in the Hereafter. Allah is at the back of a servant so long as the servant is at the back of his brother, and he who treads the path in search of knowledge, Allah would make that path easy, leading to Paradise for him and those persons who assemble in the house among the houses of Allah (mosques) and recite the Book of Allah and they learn and teach the Qur'an (among themselves) there would descend upon them tranquility and mercy would cover them and the angels would surround them and Allah mentions them in the presence of those near Him, and he who is slow-paced in doing good deeds, his (high) lineage does not make him go ahead.

Sahih Muslim 2699a - Saheeh



Story 46

Mechanisms of Rizq and sustenance

Someone saw a fox that had broken legs. He was wondering how the poor animal managed to live in this condition. In the meanwhile, a tiger drew near with a jackal in its claws. The tiger ate the jackal and left; the fox finished the remains. The next day also did the Omnipotent Provider send the fox its daily meal. The eyes of the man were thus opened to the light of true knowledge. "After seeing this," he reflected, "I will sit in a corner like this and my sustenance would come". So did he sit in silence, waiting for his daily food to come from the Invisible.



No one gave him any attention, and soon he was reduced to skin and bones. When his senses had almost gone through weakness, a voice of a Khateeb came out from the wall of a mosque, saying: “Be the rending tiger and pose not as a paralytic fox. Exert yourself like the tiger, so that something may remain from your spoil. Eat of the fruits of your own endeavors. Strive like a man, and relieve the wants of the needy.”

Anas ibn Malik reported: A man said, “O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, should I tie my camel and trust in Allah, or should I leave her untied and trust in Allah?” The Prophet ﷺ, peace and blessings be upon him, said: “Tie her and trust in Allah.”

Sunan al-Tirmidhī 2517 - Hassan

Story 47

Live like a traveller

I saw the son of a rich man, sitting by his father's tomb, and disputing with the son of a poor devout, saying, "My father's monument is of stone, the inscription is in gold, and the pavement is made of marble. The siding is made with special turquoise-colored bricks. What is your father's grave but a couple of bricks laid together, and sprinkled with a handful of mud?" The son of the poor devout on hearing this said, "Hold your tongue, for before your father can move himself from under this heavy stone, mine will have arrived at paradise."

To the poor death is a state of rest. The load-carrying animal who carries the lightest burden travels easiest. In like manner, the devout whose only burden is poverty will enter the gate of death lightly-loaded. And, in every view, the captive who is released from confinement is happier than the nobleman who is taken prisoner.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Be in this world as if you were a stranger or a traveler along a path."

Saheeh Bukhari 6053 - Saheeh

Story 48

Rebeliousness of desires

They inquired of a religious man the meaning of the saying, "You have not any enemy so powerful as the passion of lust and desires, which is within you." He replied: "Because that any enemy to whom you show kindness becomes your friend, excepting, lust and desires, the indulgence of which increases its enmity."

By abstinence a man may obtain the disposition of an angel, but if you eat like a beast, you will be degraded to an inanimate fossil. Those whom you gratify, become obedient to your command; but desires and lust, on the contrary, when indulged, is rebellious.

Have you seen him who takes his own lust
(and vain desires) as his god!

Surah Jathiya, Ayah 23

Story 49

The scorpion's approach

A scorpion once asked a frog to carry it across a river. The frog hesitated being afraid of getting stung. The scorpion argued that if it did so, they would both drown. Considering this, the frog agreed, but midway across the river the scorpion did indeed sting the frog, dooming them both. When the frog asked him why, the scorpion replied: "That's the scorpion's way!".

In the writings of the sages, they have related that scorpions are not produced according to the ordinary course of nature, as other animals. In order to come out, they eat up on mother's organs, and tear open her belly, and flee to the desert.

My heart bears evidence to the truth of this observation. It cannot be otherwise for since in their infancy, they behaved so towards their parents, the rest of their life is a display of the same trait of stinging and tearing even those who are merciful to them.



A father exhorted his son, saying, "Young man, store up this lesson in your memory, – He who is not grateful to those who gave him birth will never be favored by fortune."



And honour your parents. If one or both of them reach old age in your care, never say to them 'even' 'ugh,' nor yell at them. Rather, address them respectfully. You shall lower to them your wings of humility and pray: "O Rabb! Bestow on them Your blessings just as they cherished me when I was a little child."

Surah Israa, Ayat 23-24

Story 50

Rain on a fertile ground

A Sultan placed his son with a shaykh, and said, "He is like your own sons; educate him in the same manner as one of your own." The shaykh took pains with him for a year, but without success, whilst his own sons excelled in learning and accomplishments.

The king reprimanded the shaykh, and said, "You have broken your promise, and not acted faithfully." He replied, "O king, the education was the same, but the capacities are different. Although silver and gold are produced from a stone, yet these metals are not to be found in every stone. The star Canopus shines all over the world, but the scented leather comes only from Yemen."



Not everyone can excel in every skill or every field of knowledge. As for Islamic sciences, everyone should learn the basics. What is beyond this, opens up through one's aptitude and ability to learn. If one cannot engage in scholarly discourses himself, the least he should do is to transmit what he listens from scholars and writes from their words of wisdom. This might result in a rain on a fertile ground somewhere else where many beautiful flowers and plants would grow.



Zayd ibn Thabit reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: May Allah brighten the face of a person who hears a tradition from us and he memorizes it until he can convey it to others. Perhaps he will convey it to one who understands better than him, and perhaps one who conveys knowledge does not understand it himself.

Sunan Abī Dāwūd 3660 - Saheeh



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