

With Children in Mind

Islamic Lessons

Book Four

**SHORT STORIES
FOR CHILDREN**

(SLIGHTLY REVISED)

By

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the honoured ones on the Day of Judgment.

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PREFACE

Bismillaahir Rahmaan ir Rahiim

(In the name of Allaah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful)

“Say: If ye love Allaah, follow me; Allaah will love you and forgive you your sins; for Allaah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.”
(*Al Qur-aan Ch. 3 Verse 31*)

The short stories in this booklet relate some events in the lives of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), a few of his companions, and also some Muslims who lived over the centuries. They are intended to remind, or inform us, as the case may be, how we must conduct ourselves as Muslims.

I pray that those who read these stories will be inspired to follow in the footsteps of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) and other great Muslims, and that this will in turn encourage others to take example from them.

I thank those two persons who have assisted me, as they have with some of my other writings, for reviewing the draft stories and making valuable contributions thereon. Their reward is with Almighty Allaah.

I thank Allaah *Subhaanuhu wa Ta’ala* for once again granting me the knowledge, guidance and health to write these stories and pray that He will accept this humble service.

Allaah Haafiz - Allaah is The Protector

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1 - The Pigeon And The Spider

Thirteen years after Prophet Muhammad (*S.A.W.*) received the first revelation of Al Qur-aan only a few persons who had embraced the new religion, Islam, remained in Makkah. The majority of the converts had fled to Madinah because of the persecution by the disbelieving Makkans.

The disbelievers decided once again to murder the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) because of the increasing number of persons accepting Islam. They accordingly surrounded his home one night, planning to storm it and murder him when dawn broke. However, Almighty Allaah warned the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) of the disbelievers' plan and commanded him to leave the city for Yathreb (now Madinah) where, as mentioned above, most of the Muslims had already migrated. In obedience to this command the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) left his home in the early hours of the morning, reciting the first nine verses of *Suurah Yaasiin* of Al Qur-aan. As he did so he passed among the disbelievers without being seen by them. Such is the power of Almighty Allaah.

The Prophet (*S.A.W.*) then proceeded to the home of *Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.)*. From there they both travelled swiftly to Mount Thaur where they hid in a cave, as it was by then dawn. At daybreak the disbelievers, who were still waiting outside the Prophet's home, realised they had been outwitted. They decided to look for him, and obtained the services of an expert tracker for this purpose. The tracker led them to the mouth of the cave and said that the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) was hiding in it. *Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.)* heard the disbelievers moving around the entrance to the cave and told the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) that he was fearful because they were only two. The Prophet (*S.A.W.*) replied: "*Have no fear, for Allaah is with us.*" - (Al Qur'aan Ch. 9 V. 40).

The disbelievers considered entering the cave. However, one of them observed that a spider's web had been spun over its entrance and concluded that no one had entered it. Another pointed out that a pigeon was resting in its nest, which hung over the entrance to the cave. He also came to the same conclusion as the first. All concurred and as a result they left.

The Prophet (*S.A.W.*) and *Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.)*, both tired, sat in the cave to rest. The Prophet (*S.A.W.*) placed his head on *Hazrat Abu Bakr's* lap and fell asleep. A poisonous snake bit *Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.)* but he did not flinch for fear of awakening the Prophet (*S.A.W.*). The poison rushed throughout his body causing severe pain but still he did not move. However, tears filled his eyes and some eventually fell on the Prophet's face, awakening him. The Prophet (*S.A.W.*) assessed the situation and made an incision in *Hazrat Abu Bakr's* leg. He then drew out the poisonous blood. The two spent three days and nights in the cave, before proceeding on their way to Yathreb (now Madinah).

(Their arrival in that City is the subject of the next article)

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2 - The Full Moon Has Risen

(Being a continuation of the previous article entitled "The Pigeon and the Spider.")

Prophet Muhammad (*S.A.W.*) and *Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.)* hid in the cave at Mount Thaur for three days and nights to avoid being captured by the disbelievers. They left it on the

fourth morning as they then felt it was safe to do so. They then began their journey to Madinah, a distance of about 270 miles, where a large number of Muslim immigrants and converts were living. They were led by a non-Muslim guide and travelled by night to avoid being seen by their enemies.

In the meantime, the disbelievers in Makkah had offered a reward of one hundred camels for the capture of the Prophet (S.A.W.). A number of persons accordingly set out in pursuit of him. Eventually, a noted warrior by the name of Suraqaah bin Maalik came upon him. Suraqaah charged on his horse with an upraised weapon three times with the view of killing him but each time Suraqaah's horse stumbled and he fell to the ground. After the third attempt smoke arose around him like a sandstorm and he realised that the Most Powerful of All Beings was protecting the Prophet (S.A.W.). He therefore threw away his weapons and went to the Prophet (S.A.W.), seeking his forgiveness. The Prophet (S.A.W.) forgave him and told him to leave. Suraqaah, surprised that he was not killed, did so and shortly after accepted Islam. In later years he played a major role in many of the battles fought against the disbelievers.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) and *Hazrat* Abu Bakr (R.A.) then continued their journey. They eventually reached Qubaa, on the outskirts of Madinah, where they stayed for four days. During that time the Prophet (S.A.W.) laid the foundation for a *masjid*, the first in Islam. This *masjid* is called *Masjid Al-Qubaa* and is referred to in Al Qur-aan as the "*Masjid whose foundation was laid from the first day on piety*". (Chapter 9 Verse 108).

The Prophet (S.A.W.) and *Hazrat* Abu Bakr (R.A.), left Qubaa for Madinah, a distance of two or three kilometres on the morning of Friday the 12th. of *Rabi-ul-Awwal*. They offered the *Jumu'a salaah* on the way and then continued to Madinah proper.

The citizens of Madinah had been on the lookout every day for the arrival of the Prophet (S.A.W.) since they had heard of his departure from Makkah. As he approached the city he was first seen by a Jewish citizen who announced his arrival. The long-awaited news of the Prophet's arrival spread throughout the city like wildfire. On hearing of it the men and the women stopped what they were doing. The men grabbed their spears and, waving them in the air in joy, rushed headlong in the direction of the Prophet's entourage to see who would be the first to reach it. The women and children quickly climbed to the rooftops, which were flat, in order to obtain a first-hand view of the Prophet's arrival. He entered the city surrounded by a multitude of men waving their spears to express their happiness. As he passed through the city streets, the young Muslim girls sang:

"Tal'a albadru 'alaina Min Than-niy-yatil-wadaa'i. Wa-jabash-shukru 'alaina Ma d'a-aa lillaahi daa'i Ayyuh-ul-mab'usu fiina J'ila bil- amilmutaa'i"

("Today, the full moon arose upon us from the northern hill, Than-niy-yatul Wada'a. It is our duty to offer thanks for the call and teaching of the Apostle who invited us towards Allaah. O Prophet who has been sent among us! You have brought us such a religion that we will bear allegiance to it.")

Dear children, Friday the 12th. of *Rabi-ul-Awwal*, the day of the Prophet's arrival in Madinah, is a momentous day in the history of Islam. It marks the beginning of the Muslim calendar, which is denoted by the letters "A.H." (meaning "After the *Hijrah*" - migration). It also marks the beginning of a new era in Islam: an era that saw the rapid growth of the new faith in surrounding countries and eventually to the whole world. And of course, this is the date on which the Prophet (S.A.W.) was born and also departed this life.

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3 - The Prophet (S.A.W.) Rewards Physical Abuse With Kindness

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) preached the message of (among others things) one God, Allaah, and that idols must not be worshipped. As the people in Arabia at that time worshipped idols, like their forefathers before them, they were unwilling to change their beliefs. The vast majority of them initially rejected the Prophet's teachings. Some of those who did so even went to great lengths to abuse him verbally and/or physically.

One particular elderly lady took great pleasure in collecting her garbage and throwing it on the Prophet (S.A.W.) when he passed her house to go and perform *salaat*. He never rebuked the lady for what she did to him but would only smile at her and send salutations to her.

One day the Prophet (S.A.W.) passed the lady's house as usual and was pleasantly surprised that nothing had been thrown at him. He found this strange and thought the lady was ill. So he enquired of one of her neighbours about her health and was told that she lived alone and was, in fact, ill.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) went to the lady's home and knocked on the door. On being told to enter, he did so. The lady was surprised to see him. Noticing that her pitcher was empty and the dishes unwashed, the Prophet (S.A.W.) took the pitcher and went to the well and filled it. He returned to the lady's home and swept her house. then prepared a meal for her, which she ate.

The lady was so touched with the Prophet's kindness to her, especially having regard to the way she had treated him in the

past, that she apologized to him and accepted the new Faith.

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4 - Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) (No task below his dignity)

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) did not find it below his dignity to do any type of work, manual or otherwise. This, notwithstanding the fact that he was a prophet of Almighty Allaah and, in the course of time, the ruler of a kingdom.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) would mend his clothes, assist in the household chores and milk the sheep. When the first *masjid* was being built he worked as a labourer and, in the Battle of *Al Ahzaab* (the Trench), he joined with the others in digging trenches around the city of Madinah.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) assisted anyone who was in need of assistance. On one occasion he saw a slave labouring to operate a hand grinding mill. The man was crying as he ground the grain. The Prophet (S.A.W.) went up to him and asked why he was weeping. He replied that he was ill and could not operate the mill. He said further that his master was a cruel person and would punish him if he did not grind all the grain. The Prophet (S.A.W.) asked the slave to move aside. He then operated the mill and ground the rest of the grain himself. When he was finished he told the slave that if he ever had any grain to grind again, he should let him know so that he could do it for him.

On another occasion he saw an old man struggling to carry a

leather container filled with water. The man would walk a few steps and then stop to rest before continuing his journey. The Prophet (S.A.W.) took the container from the old man, placed it on his own back and carried it to the man's home.

Dear children, as you know, we must all follow in the footsteps of the Prophet (S.A.W.). Accordingly we must make it our duty to help others, especially the old and the infirm. Almighty Allaah will be pleased with us when we do so.

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5 - The Prophet Of Mercy

The tenth year of the Prophet's Mission is known in Islamic history as "*The Year of Sorrow*". This is because of the death of his dear uncle, Abu Talib, and his beloved wife, *Bibi Khadijah (R.A.)*. Abu Talib had taken care of the Prophet (S.A.W.) from the time he was eight years old until he married *Bibi Khadijah (R.A.)*. In addition, after the Prophet (S.A.W.) started receiving revelations from Allaah, Abu Talib, although not accepting the new faith, granted his protection to him. As a result the opponents of Islam were afraid to persecute or to physically harm the Prophet (S.A.W.). With the death of Abu Talib the Prophet (S.A.W.) was now practically defenceless against his enemies. As regards *Bibi Khadijah (R.A.)*, she was the first person to accept the new faith and had always been a source of comfort and strength to him.

After the death of Abu Talib the Quraish had no hindrance in persecuting the Prophet (S.A.W.) and this they started to do openly. He thus decided to journey to the city of Ta'if firstly,

to seek the protection of the Chiefs there against the Quraish and, secondly, to preach the new Faith.

The city of Ta'if is situated in a valley about forty miles from Makkah and, because of its cooler climatic conditions, its citizens comprised mostly of the better-educated and well-to-do persons. In addition, a beautiful temple was located there. This temple attracted many pilgrims to the city, and this resulted in a great amount of business for the merchants there.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) accordingly journeyed to Ta'if. On reaching the City he met with the various Chiefs and explained his mission. However, they all refused to accept the new Faith or even to grant him some protection. They went even further, and encouraged young thugs to abuse him and to throw stones at him. Many of the stones found their mark. With blood flowing from the many wounds on his body he left the City offering, as he did so, the following *du'a*:

“O Allaah! To Thee I complain of the feebleness of my strength, of my lack of all resourcefulness, and my insignificance in the eyes of people. O Most Merciful of all showing Mercy. Thou art the Lord of the weak and Thou art my own Lord. To whom Thou art entrust me, to an unsympathetic foe who would sullenly frown on me, or to an alien to whom Thou hast given control over my affair? Not in the least do I care for anything except that I may have Thy Protection for myself. In the Light of Thy Face do I seek shelter – the Light of which illumines the Heaven and dispels all sorts of darkness, and which controls all affairs in this world as well as in the Hereafter. May it never be that I should incur Your Wrath, or that Thou should be displeased with me. I must remove the cause of Thy displeasure till Thou art pleased. There is no strength or power but through Thee.”

Outside the City Angel *Jibraa-iil* appeared before the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) and told him that he had been commanded by Almighty Allaah, if he so desired, to give the angel in charge of the mountains the command to bring together the two mountains between which Ta'if was situated and so crush the city and its inhabitants. The Prophet (*S.A.W.*), Merciful Prophet that he was, declined to give such a command. In doing so he said that even if the present citizens of Ta'if did not accept the Faith, some of their progeny would do so.

The Prophet (*S.A.W.*) then started on his return journey to Makkah. It must be mentioned however that he lived to see not only the citizens of Ta'if but also the whole of Arabia and many of the surrounding countries accept Islam.

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6 - The Conversion Of The Jinns

The Prophet (*S.A.W.*) was returning to Makkah from an unsuccessful visit to Ta'if when darkness caught him at Nakhla, a suburb of Makkah. He camped there for the night with the intention of proceeding to Makkah the next day.

While he was performing the *Isha salaah* a company of Jinns from Nasiibiin was passing by on their way home. On hearing the recitation of Al Qur-aan, they stopped and waited until he had completed his *salaah*. They then told him they wanted to become Muslims. The Prophet (*S.A.W.*) granted their request, following which they continued on their journey.

When the Jinns reached their home they told their

fellow Jinns about their conversion to Islam. This incident is recorded in Chapter 72 Verses 1-2 of Al Qur-aan, which reads as follows: “*Say: It has been revealed to me that a company of Jinns listened to the Qur-aan. They said: ‘We have really heard a wonderful Recital. It gives guidance to the Right, and we have believed therein; we shall not join (in worship) any (god) with our Lord.’*”

Some years later the Prophet (S.A.W.) was reciting *Suurah Ar Rahmaan*. When he finished he asked those present why they did not respond like the Jinns did when he recited the verse: “*Fabi-‘ayyi ‘aalaaa-‘i Rabbikumaa tukazzibaan?*” (“Then which of the favours of your Lord will ye deny?”). The companions asked what had been the response of the Jinns and were informed they responded by saying they did not deny any of the favours of the Lord.

Dear readers, you too should follow the example of the jinns and reply like they did when the above-mentioned verse of Al Qur-aan is recited.

(See the previous story)

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7 - Luqman’s Advice To His Son

Luqman was an African shepherd who lived in a Middle Eastern country a few thousand years ago. He has the distinction of having a Chapter of Al Qur’aan named after him. He was a very simple person, was gifted with wisdom and thus known

as *“The Wise.”* His fame spread far beyond his small village and people from far sought his advice on a wide range of matters.

Once Luqman was speaking to a large crowd when someone asked him how, being a simple shepherd, he could have reached such an eminent position. He replied that this was because he always told the truth when speaking and that he avoided vain talk. On another occasion he told the questioner that he could be like him if he kept down his gaze, controlled his tongue, honoured his guests, took care of his neighbours and refrained from doing those acts which served no useful purpose.

Luqman gave some beautiful advice to his son, which is recorded in Chapter 31 Verses 16-19 of Al Qur-aan and reads as follows: *“O my son!’ said Luqman, ‘If there be (but) the weight of a mustard seed and it were (hidden) in a rock or (anywhere) in the heavens or on earth, Allaah will bring it forth; for Allaah understands the finest mysteries, (and) is well acquainted with them. O my son! Establish regular prayer, enjoin what is just and forbid what is wrong; and bear with patient consistency whate’er be-tide thee: for this is firmness (of purpose) in (the conduct) of affairs. And swell not thy cheek (for pride) at man, nor walk in insolence through the earth: for Allaah loveth not an arrogant boaster. And be moderate in thy pace, and lower thy voice; for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass.”*

Dear children, surely you would wish your friends and many other persons to come to you to seek your views on various matters. If so, then follow Luqman’s advice as given to his son, and *Inshaa Allaah*, you may, in the course of time be like him.

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8 - A Truthful Youth

A few hundred years ago there lived in Jilan, a small village in Persia (now Iran) a young man named Abdul Qadir (*R.A.*). Having learnt all he could of his beautiful religion in his village, young Abdul decided, with his mother's permission, to go to further his Islamic studies in Baghdad, Iraq and many hundreds of miles away. Train and motor vehicles, much less airplanes, had not yet been invented so he had to travel the long distance by foot, on camel or horse. It was very dangerous to travel far in those days because bandits would often attack travelers and steal all their belongings. So persons traveling formed themselves into groups (caravans) and moved together.

Abdul Qadir's (*R.A.*) mother had sewn forty gold coins in his jacket before he left. And her parting words to him were that he must continue to always tell the truth regardless of what may happen. Then he set out with a caravan on the long, harduous journey. After a few days, the travelers were attacked by bandits who approached everyone except the youth and made them surrender their money and other valuables. The bandits at first left Abdul Qadir (*R.A.*) alone because they felt he was too young to have anything of worth.

Eventually however one of the bandits questioned young Abdul and he replied that he had forty gold coins sewn in the lining of his jacket. The bandit did not believe him and passed on. After a while a second bandit asked him the same question and he gave the same answer. He also did not believe Abdul but decided to take him to his Chief. The Chief asked Abdul whether he had anything valuable and he gave the same reply as he had on the two previous occasions. The Chief did not believe the youth either but still gave the order for the jacket to be ripped open. When the gold coins fell out the Chief was

surprised and asked him why he did not lie and say he did not have any money. In reply, he said that his mother had taught him that, as a Muslim, he must always tell the truth no matter what the consequences.

On hearing Abdul's reply the Chief was amazed that a young man could be so truthful. He started to remember his whole life which had been spent in crime. Tears filled his eyes and he at once repented all his evil deeds. He returned all the valuables taken from the travelers and he and his followers pledged to live exemplary lives from that time.

Young Abdul eventually reached Baghdad, where he spent many years in furthering his religious education and improving himself spiritually. His writings and teachings have made a great impact on millions of Muslims over the centuries and still continue to do so. He is known in Islamic history as Abdul Qadir *Jilani* (R.A.), and "*The Saint of Jilan*."

Dear children, take example from the above incident in the life of a young Muslim and remember that Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said: "*A Muslim may be anything, but not a liar.*"

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9 - The *Khaliifaa'* And The Empty Pot

Hazrat 'Umar Al-Faruuq (R.A.), a noted warrior and wealthy merchant, was selected as the second *Khaliifaa'* when the first, *Hazrat Abu Bakr As-Siddique* (R.A.), passed away. In spite of his onerous duties as *Khaliifaa'*, he made it his duty,

as he had done before being so appointed, to walk the streets disguised during the night seeking out people to offer help. Once as he was walking with his aide, Aslam, he saw a light outside the city limits. Thinking it might be a caravan in need of help, he proceeded in its direction until he came upon a lady with some children sitting around a fire. The children were crying and looking at a pot on the fire with the apparent expectation that that food was being prepared.

Hazrat ‘Umar (R.A.) approached the lady and looked into the pot to see what was being prepared. To his amazement, there was only water in it. He asked the lady why the pot was empty. The lady did not recognize him because of the simple way he was dressed. She replied she did not have any food because of the negligence of the *Khaliifaa’* to help her. When asked, why then she was boiling water, she said that the children would believe that a meal was being prepared and so they would eventually fall asleep. She further stated that Allaah would judge between the *Khaliifaa’* and herself on the Day of Judgment because the *Khaliifaa’* had failed to assist her in her distress. *Hazrat ‘Umar (R.A.)* then asked the lady how could the *Khaliifaa’* know about her plight. She replied that the *Khaliifaa’*, as a ruler, must make it his business to be aware of the needs of all his people.

Hazrat ‘Umar (R.A.) was so touched at the lady’s plight that tears came to his eyes. He quickly went back to the city with his aide, filled a bag with foodstuff, and placed it on his back. The aide attempted to take the bag from the *Khaliifaa’* in order to carry it but the *Khaliifaa’* refused to allow him to do so. Asked by his aide why, the *Khaliifaa’* replied that he must carry it because he, and not the aide, will be the one who will be questioned about the lady’s plight on the Day of Judgment.

When the *Khaliifaa’* arrived back at the camp he prepared a meal which he served to the lady and her children. He also

gave them some money. The lady thanked him for his generosity and, still not recognizing him, told him that he deserved to be the *Khaliifaa*’ because of his concern for the poor. He then took his leave, telling her that if she ever visited the *Khaliifaa*’ she would find him there also.

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10 - Hazrat Ali’s Concern For The Needy

Hazrat Ali (R.A.) was the first youth and the second person (after *Bibi Khadijah - R.A.*) to accept Islam. He was then only ten years old. He earned his livelihood as a labourer and would draw water from wells for others for a small fee. If required, he would also carry the water to the person’s home or field. Some days he would earn a little money and on other days none. It was therefore not unusual for him and his family to go without a meal at the end of a day.

On one occasion as a young man he earned a small amount of money by irrigating a field. He bought some barley with the money and divided it into three parts, intending to cook one part a day and so have one meal a day for three days. He cooked one part of the barley and was about to partake of it when a beggar came asking for some food. Notwithstanding his own hunger and need, he gave the beggar the food. He then cooked the second part of barley and was about to eat when an orphan came requesting something to eat. Without any hesitation he gave the orphan the second portion of barley. He then cooked the third and last portion of barley. As he was

about to eat it a non-Muslim came to him and requested something to eat to satisfy his hunger. Again, he had no hesitation in giving away the food, which he himself needed. So he went without food for the day, something he was accustomed to experience very often in his life.

Hazrat Ali (R.A.) showed concern for the poor and needy during his lifetime, even when he became *Khaliifaa'*. We also should endeavour to do whatever we can to assist the less fortunate in our community. Almighty Allaah will be pleased with us for so doing and will reward us accordingly.

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11 - Bring Someone Who Knows You Well

A man wanted a favour from *Hazrat 'Umar Al-Faruuq (R.A.)*, the second *Khaliifaa'* of Islam. So the man took a friend with him to the *Khaliifaa'* to speak on his behalf. The friend spoke in glowing terms of the man, recommending him to the *Khaliifaa'*

The *Khaliifaa'* enquired of the friend whether he lived near to the man so that he could observe at what times the man left his home and at what times the man returned. The friend replied that he did not and so did not know. The *Khaliifaa'* then enquired of the friend whether he had ever traveled with the man so that he could observe his habits. Again, the friend replied in the negative. Finally, the *Khaliifaa'* enquired of the friend whether he had ever had any financial transactions with the man. To this question the friend also replied in the negative.

The *Khaliifaa*’ then told the friend that his impressions of the man must have been formed from seeing him in the *masjid* reciting Al Qur’aan and nodding his head. The friend replied in the affirmative. At this, the *Khaliifaa*’ told the friend to leave. He then told the man who wanted the favour to bring someone who knew him well to recommend him.

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12 - The Delinquent Father

A man went to *Khaliifaa*’ ‘Umar Al-Faruq (R.A.) and complained to him that his son was always disobedient to him. The *Khaliifaa*’ called the boy and told him of his father’s complaint. The boy in turn enquired of the *Khaliifaa*’ whether he had any rights over his father and if so, what were they. To this the *Khaliifaa*’ answered in the affirmative and stated that the rights of the child over the father were three in number, namely:

1. the father should choose a good mother,
2. the father should give the child a good name, and
3. the father should teach the child Al Qur-aan.

The boy responded by saying his father had failed in his duties to him as his father had married a fire worshipper, named him *Ju’alaan* (which means dung), and never taught him anything about Islam. The *Khaliifaa*’ then told the father that he had failed in his duties to his son and, as a result, the son had been disobedient to him. The *Khaliifaa*’ further told the father that he had wronged his son before his son had wronged him.

Allaah Haafiz *Allaah is the Protector*

13 - *Hazrat Ali (R.A.)* And The Elderly Jew

Hazrat Ali (R.A.) was on his way as usual early one morning to the *masjid* to perform the *Fajr salaah*. He had to walk along a narrow trace which led from his home to the *masjid*. The trace was so narrow that two persons passing each other had to squeeze through in order to pass. One morning there were a number of puddles of water on the trace. In order not to wet one's feet one had to attempt to step on the numerous stones on the trace.

When *Hazrat Ali (R.A.)* reached a certain point on the trace he saw a gentleman in front of him slowly wending his way with the help of a staff. The man was using the full width of the trace as he moved along. He recognised the person as an elderly Jew who was going to perform his morning prayer. *Hazrat Ali (R.A.)* realised that it was getting late for the *salaah* and that he would miss it if he did not hurry. But the only way to overtake the gentleman would be to push his way past him. This *Hazrat Ali (R.A.)*, as a Muslim, could not do. So he walked patiently behind the gentleman praying that he would reach the *masjid* in time to join the congregation.

In the meantime the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) proceeded to take his position near the *mimbar* so that he could lead the *salaah*. He then attempted to recite *Suurah Faatihah*. To his utter surprise, however, no sound came out. He attempted to recite the *Suurah* for a second time. But still no sound came out. He made a third attempt, with the same result.

The Prophet (*S.A.W.*) then looked up and, seeing *Jibrael-iil (A.S.)* in front of him, asked why he had been stopped. The Angel pointed towards the outer gate of the *masjid* where

Hazrat Ali (R.A.) was taking off his shoes and distributing charity before entering. Continuing, the Angel told the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) that he had stopped him so that *Hazrat Ali (R.A.)* would not miss the blessings of the *salaat* in congregation because he had been delayed doing a good deed.

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14 - The Generosity Of *Hazrat Abu Bakr As-Siddique*

Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.) was the first adult male and the third person to accept Islam. He was a close friend of the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) and a rich merchant from a noble family. He spent generously in the cause of Islam and took pleasure in assisting the poor and needy. When the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) made an appeal for financial assistance to support an expedition to Tabuuk, he took a few used household utensils. Many of those present laughed quietly at what they considered a measly contribution. The Prophet (*S.A.W.*) received the items and asked *Hazrat Abu Bakr* what he had left for his family. *Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.)*, replied that he had left Allaah and his Prophet for his family.

By the time *Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.)* passed away he had very little material things. Prior to his demise he instructed that these should be sold and the receipts therefrom be used to pay any debts he may have incurred.

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15 - *Imaam* Abu Hanifa (R.A.) And His Detractor

Imaam Abu Hanifa (R.A.) is considered the greatest expert on *Shariah* (Islamic law). He was a very humble, pious and knowledgeable person. Muslims from various parts of the Islamic world respected him, and still do, for his in-depth knowledge of the *Shariah*. In addition, the vast majority of Muslims in the world follow the School of Law which he developed

The *Imaam* used to lecture regularly on various aspects of the *Shariah* and people traveled long distances to listen to his discourses in order to benefit from his knowledge. One day the *Imaam* was lecturing to a gathering when a man started to interrupt him. The man questioned the *Imaam's* knowledge and integrity from time to time. The *Imaam* ignored the man completely and after a while, the man stopped his interruptions.

At the end of the lecture the *Imaam* proceeded on the way home. The man followed him all the way to his house, repeating his accusations as he did so. The *Imaam* did not respond. However, when the *Imaam* reached the entrance to his home he turned around and invited the man to come into his home, telling him that he could sit there in comfort while continuing his abuse.

The man was very surprised and touched by the *Imaam's* unexpected action. He expressed regret for his own actions and sought forgiveness. The *Imaam* of course forgave him and the man became an ardent follower of his thereafter.

Allaah Haafiz

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16 - Sultan Salah-Ud-Diin (Saladdin) And King Richard The Lion-Heart

Sultan Salah-ud-diin was head of the Muslim empire at the time the various kings in Europe joined together in an attempt to destroy Islam. A number of battles, known as the Crusades, was fought and the invaders were eventually defeated. The Sultan led the Muslims in battle. He possessed all the traits of a Muslim such as humility, kindness, mercy and generosity, notwithstanding the fact that he was a warrior of note.

During the battles his greatest enemy, King Richard of England, known in history as Richard the Lion Heart, fell seriously ill. Sultan Salah-ud-diin, in keeping with his Islamic upbringing, sent fresh fruits for the King to nourish himself and also snow so that the King could keep his drinks cool in the hot desert temperature.

Allaah Haafiz Allaah is the Protector



17 - The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) And The Wrestler

Rukaana Al-Muttalib was the undisputed wrestling champion of Makkah and the surrounding areas at the time the Prophet (S.A.W.) received the first revelation of Al Qur-aan. He was known as a mean wrestler and such was his prowess that only a few accepted his challenge or challenged him.

One day the Prophet (S.A.W.) met Rukaana alone. He invited him to believe in Almighty Allaah and to become a Muslim.

Rukaana replied that he would follow the Prophet (S.A.W.) only if he believed that what he was saying was the truth. The Prophet (S.A.W.) in turn enquired of Rukaana if he would believe in him if he defeated him in a wrestling match. Rukaana, confident of his prowess, replied in the affirmative. The Prophet (S.A.W.) and Rukaana then started to wrestle. The Prophet (S.A.W.) threw Rukaana to the ground after a short while thus winning the bout. Rukaana, however, expressed dissatisfaction with the result and asked for a re-match. The Prophet (S.A.W.) agreed and they started the second bout.

The Prophet (S.A.W.) again won quickly but Rukaana was very surprised that he had beaten him a second time and said so. In reply the Prophet (S.A.W.) told Rukaana that he could give him a bigger surprise by calling a tree some distance away to come to them. Rukaana asked him to do that. The Prophet (S.A.W.) responded by telling the tree to come to them and it did so. The Prophet (S.A.W.) then told the tree to return to its original position and it also did so. By now Rukaana was convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt that the Prophet's Message was indeed the truth and he immediately became a Muslim.

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18 - The Qadi (Judge) Rules Against The Khalifaa'

Hazrat Ali (R.A.) was the fourth *Khalifaa'* in Islam. He was known for his piety and bravery, among other attributes. Once he lost his sword which was later found in the possession of a Jew. The *Khalifaa'* asked the Jew to return it but he refused. The *Khalifaa'* accordingly requested the *Qadi* (Judge) to rule in the matter.

The case was called and the *Khalifaa*’, in accordance with Islamic law, was asked to produce two witnesses. The *Khalifaa*’ called his son, Hassan, and his slave, Quambar, to give evidence on his behalf. The *Qadi* stated that under Islamic law witnesses must be independent, and the two called by the *Khalifaa*’ were not. He thus dismissed the case. The Jew was so impressed with the principles of Islamic law that he not only returned the suit of armour but accepted Islam.

Allaah Haafiz Allaah is the Protector



19 - Dr. Iqbal And The Luxurious Guest Room

Allama Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal was perhaps the greatest Muslim poet, philosopher and thinker of the last century. He was born in the Indian subcontinent and was a lawyer by profession. He received numerous honours during his lifetime, including a knighthood. His writings received international acclaim from Muslims and non-Muslims alike. He was also the architect of the proposals which led to the creation of Pakistan.

Dr. Iqbal followed in the footsteps of Prophet Muhammad (*S.A.W.*) and so lived a very simple life. On one occasion he and some other persons were invited to spend a few days at the home of a well-to-do gentleman to discuss certain matters. On arriving at his host’s palatial dwelling Dr. Iqbal was shown to a luxurious room in which he was expected to stay. As he looked at the beautiful furnishings in the room, he thought of the simple room in which the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) lived and of the fact he slept on a mat on the floor. His eyes became filled with tears and he declined to sleep on the luxurious bed. He asked

his host to have a cot placed in the bathroom for him and he slept there instead.

Allaah Haafiz *Allaah is the Protector*



20 - *Imaam* Bukhari And The Deceiver Of Animals

Imaam Bukhari was born towards the end of the second century of the Islamic era. He excelled in the collection of *Ahadith* and his collection of these is considered to be among the best. He went to great lengths to ensure that any *Hadith* he entered in his collection was authentic and thus could bear the minutest scrutiny. He would travel long distances to meet and question anyone who he was told knew a *Hadith*.

On one occasion the *Imaam* was informed about a certain man who was reputed to know a *Hadith*. The man lived a long distance from him. This did not deter him from setting out to meet the man in order to question him. He sought directions to the man's village and reached it after a long journey.

The *Imaam* then sought directions on how to get to the man's home and eventually someone pointed to a man as being the person he was seeking. The man was holding a basket while encouraging a horse to eat from it. The *Imaam* remained where he was to observe what was happening and saw the horse reach the basket and place its mouth in it to eat. To the *Imaam's* disgust the basket was empty. The *Imaam* thought, quite rightly, that if the man could deceive a dumb animal then he could not be trusted. So he turned around and started his journey back home without even questioning the man.

Allaah Haafiz *Allaah is the Protector*

21 - Young Sharafuddeen Waits Until His Mother Awakens

Young Sharafuddeen tried his best to follow the teachings of Islam. He knew that among his obligations his duties to his parents were second only to his duties to Almighty Allaah. So he made every effort to please his parents: for example, he would speak respectfully to them; show them love and affection; respect their wishes; and be attentive to their needs.

Once Sharafuddeen's mother was not feeling well. She asked him to bring her a glass of water. He quickly did so but on returning to her side he found that she had fallen asleep. He was in a quandary as to what to do as he could either disturb her by awakening her, or he could wait until she awoke and give her the water. He naturally took the latter course.

After a while his mother awoke and saw him waiting with the water. She asked him whether he had been waiting a long time and he replied "Yes". She was happy that she had such a loving and caring son and made *du'a* to Allaah to always keep him on the path of Islam. Her *du'a* was answered as young Sharafuddeen grew up to be one of the most respected persons in the community.

Dear reader, remember that the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said: "*Paradise lies at the feet of thy mother.*"

Allaah Haafiz Allaah is the Protector



22 - Learning To Love One Another

Prophet Muhammad (S. A. W.) said: “You cannot enter Paradise until you attain piety and you cannot attain piety unless you learn to love each other. Let me tell you of a device. If you use it, you will learn to love one another. Make the practice of offering “Salaam” to each other common amongst you.”

As you know, when two or more Muslims meet they must exchange ‘salaams’. The way to do this is one says “Assalaam U Alaikum” (Peace be unto you), and the reply to this greeting is “Wa Alaikum Us Salaam” (Peace be unto you also). It is recommended that the person replying add the words “Wa Rahmatullaahi wa Barakaatuuhu (and Allaah’s Mercy also).

The “Salaam” has a great deal of significance because “As Salaam” is one of the ninety nine attributes of Allaah. The word means “The Source of Peace” Therefore when you tell a person “Assalaam U Alaikum” you are in fact praying that Almighty Allaah will grant “Peace” to him and protect him and his family from all evils.

Hazrat Abdullaah, the son of Khaliifaa’ Hazrat ‘Umar (R.A.), loved the Prophet (S. A. W.) very much and tried to emulate him in every possible way. He had seen the Prophet (S. A. W.) extending “Salaams” to everyone he met regardless of age or rank. So he knew its full significance and made it his duty to do the same. Thus he would go to the shopping district every day and walk around, extending “Salaams” to everyone.

One day someone asked him why he went to the shopping district so often but did not purchase anything most of the times. He replied that he went there solely for the purpose of extending “Salaams” to as many persons as possible.

Dear reader, you too must follow in the footsteps of the Prophet (S.A.W.) and extend “Salaams” to your Muslim brothers and sisters whenever you meet them.

Allaah Haafiz *Allaah is the Protector*

23 - The Fortitude Of Bilaal Ibn Raba'ah (R.A.)

Hazrat Bilaal bin Raba'ah (R.A.) was the son of an Abyssinian slave. He lived in Makkah at the time when Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) received the first revelation of Al Qur-aan. His master was a rich merchant of Makkah. He was tall, handsome, intelligent and, above all, honest. So much so that his master would send him as his representative on trade missions to Syria. He also had a beautiful voice and would sing for his fellow slaves and fellow travelers while riding with the caravans. His master's friends would also often request that he sing at functions to entertain their guests.

Hazrat Bilaal (R.A.) became very friendly with *Hazrat* Abu Bakr (R.A.) while on one of his journeys with a caravan and secretly accepted Islam at his hands shortly after the latter became a Muslim. When *Hazrat* Bilaal's master found out that he had accepted the new religion he tried to persuade him, by speaking to him at first and then by inflicting physical punishment, to revert to his former belief. But *Hazrat* Bilaal (R.A.) refused and would only say "Ahad" (One God) when being punished.

The physical punishment inflicted on *Hazrat* Bilaal (R.A.) kept increasing in intensity but he still kept to his new faith. Then his master, in the hope that an extremely severe punishment would cause him to recant, had him clothed one morning in a suit of metal armour. He then had him chained and laid in the hot desert sun with a stone on his chest. As the sun kept rising *Hazrat* Bilaal (R.A.) kept suffering more and more from the terrible heat. He was also taunted and stoned by some of the polytheists, but all he would say, as he did in the past, was "Ahad!" (One God!).

Late in the day *Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.)* was passing by the place where *Hazrat Bilaal (R.A.)* was put to lie down and saw his good friend and fellow Muslim being tortured. He approached *Hazrat Bilaal's* master and successfully negotiated his purchase at an exorbitant price. *Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.)* then gave *Hazrat Bilaal (R.A.)* his freedom.

Hazrat Bilaal (R.A.) went on to serve Islam with great distinction, being appointed the first *mu'addhin* and also Treasurer of the *Bait-ul-Mal* (Treasury). He also took part all the battles in which the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) fought.

Of *Hazrat Bilaal (R.A.)*, the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) said: “*On the day of Judgment I will be carried on Al-Buraaq, Faatimah on my own she-camel – Al Qaswa, and Bilaal will be carried on a she-camel from Paradise.*”

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24 - How The 'Adhaan Was Introduced

In the early days of Islam in Makkah there was no *'adhaan* or other announcement to inform the Muslim community of the times to offer the five daily compulsory prayers. This was due in part to the fact that the Muslims were few in number and also a closely knitted community. Thus they could easily congregate at the prescribed times for this purpose.

After the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) migrated to Madinah in the eleventh year of his mission, one of his first acts was to construct a *masjid*. There was initially still no *'adhaan* or other call to prayer. This naturally created some problems as the Muslim community in that City was fairly large. This was because

firstly, most of the Muslims from Makkah had migrated to Madinah and, secondly, a large number of the population of Madinah had already accepted the new faith.

Prophet Muhammad (*S.A.W.*) eventually felt there was need to institute some method by which the Muslims would be informed that the prayer was about to commence. At first, he thought of using a trumpet but discarded the idea because the Jews used this instrument for the same purpose. After considering several other methods, he eventually decided to use a pair of clappers and ordered that a set be made.

Before the clappers could be used however one of the companions, namely ‘Abdullah bin Zaid, told the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) that he had a dream in which he saw a man in green garments carrying a pair of clappers in his hands. Continuing, Abdullah said he asked the man to sell the clappers to him and the man asked him the purpose for which he wanted them. Abdullah further said he told the man the reason and the man advised him that a better way to achieve the purpose was to announce:

“*Allaahu Akbar*” (God is Great) – four times

“*Ashadu anlaa illaaha illallaah*” (I bear witness that there is none worthy of being worshipped except Allaah) – twice

“*Ashadu anna Muhammadar rasuulullaah*” (I bear witness that Muhammad is the Apostle of Allaah) - twice

“*Hayya ‘ala-Salaah*” (Come to prayer) - twice “*Hayya ‘alal-Falaah*” (Come to success) twice

“*Allaahu Akbar* (God is the Greatest) - twice

“*Laa ilaaha illallaah*” (There is no deity but Allaah)”

After Abdullah finished relating his dream to the Prophet (*S.A.W.*), he said that it was a true vision. He then instructed him to go and request *Hazrat* Bilaal (*R.A.*), who had a beautiful voice, to announce that it was time to perform the prayer by repeating the words he said he had heard in his

dream. Abdullah duly informed *Hazrat Bilaal (R.A.)* of the Prophet's decision. When the appropriate time came for the next prayer *Hazrat Bilaal (R.A.)* climbed to the rooftop of a high house near the *masjid* and loudly repeated the words. On hearing the announcement from his home *Hazrat 'Umar (R.A.)* went to the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) and told him he had had a vision in which a man informed him of the exact words as recited by *Hazrat Bilaal (R.A.)* to call the prayer. Upon hearing this the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) sent praise to Almighty Allaah.

Thus *Hazrat Bilaal (R.A.)* became the first *mu'adhin* in Islam. He continued to call the '*adhaan* until the Prophet's death. When the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) passed away and it was time to call the '*adhaan* for the *Zuhr* prayer, he broke into tears while he was repeating the Prophet's name. His love for the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) was so great that he could not call his name without breaking out into tears. He struggled to control his feelings and was able to complete the call after regaining his composure to some extent. Immediately thereafter, he announced that he would discontinue the practice of calling the '*adhaan*.

Hazrat Bilaal (R.A.) lived for ten years after the demise of the Prophet (*S.A.W.*). He only called the *adhaan* on two occasions after. The first was at the desecrated site of the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem, which had been allocated after the fall of that city to the Muslim army. The second was when, in response to a yearning to visit the city of his beloved Prophet (*S.A.W.*) and offer salutations at his grave, he went to Madinah. While visiting the Prophet's grave he was prevailed upon by the Prophet's two grandsons, *Imaams* Hassan and Hussain (for whom he had a great deal of love and affection) to call the *adhaan*. He did so for the *Fajr* prayer the next morning. On both occasions many of the companions of the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) who heard the '*adhaan* recognised *Hazrat Bilaal's* voice and broke down in tears as memories of the Prophet of Allaah (*S.A.W.*) were brought back.



25 - The Angels

Belief in the existence of angels is one of the seven Cardinal Articles of Faith in Islam. Angels are created from light, jinns from smokeless fire, and man from clay. Angels obey Allaah implicitly and cannot act on their own. They are, among other things, spiritual in nature, have no relatives, are neither male nor female, do not eat or drink or sleep, have no bodies, do not grow or age, do not get tired and can assume any shape they wish. They have feet, shoulders, ears, hands and from between two to six hundred wings. They also have specific duties.

The best known angels and their respective duties are:

- (i) *Jibra-iil* - who is the angel with the highest status and is the Messenger of Almighty Allaah to the Prophets. Sometimes he was sent to assist the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) in battles against the enemies of Islam,
- (ii) *Asraa-iil* - who is the angel of death,
- (iii) *Asraa-fil* - who will blow the trumpet on the Day of Judgment,
- (iv) *Mika-iil* - who is in charge of the rain and provisions to Almighty Allaah's creatures,
- (v) *Ridwaan* - who is in charge of Paradise,
- (vi) *Maalik* - who is in charge of Hell,
- (vii) *Rafaa-iil* - who is in charge of relieving the sadness of believers,
- (viii) *Ismaa-iil* - who is in charge of 12,000 angels,
- (ix) *Munkir* and *Nakir* - who question the deceased in the grave.

There are also a number of angels assigned to each person. These include:

- (a) the two angels (*kiraaman kaatibiin*) sitting on one's shoulders: the one on the right shoulder recording his good deeds and the one on the left shoulder his bad deeds;
- (b) the two "guardian" angels constantly attached to a believer (one in front and the other behind) for the purpose of protecting him throughout the his life, and
- (c) the angel near a person's forehead, who writes down the *Daruud Shareef* the person recites and conveys it to Prophet Muhammad (*S.A.W.*).

In addition, there are numerous angels with other duties. Among these are those who:

- (i) carry the *'Arsh* (throne of Allaah);
- (ii) roam the earth and join assemblies where Allaah is being praised, leaving only when the last person has departed from the gathering; and
- (iii) under the direction of other angels of superior rank.

On Fridays angels position themselves at the entrances to all the *masaajid* and record both the names and times of arrival of those entering. As soon as the *Imaam* sits on the *mimbar* the angels close the record books and prepare to listen to the *Khutbah*.

Allaah Haafiz Allaah is the Protector



26 - Prophet Muhammad's (*S.A.W.*) Farewell Address

Prophet Muhammad (*S.A.W.*) gave his famous and instructive Farewell Address on the evening of the 9th. of *Zil Hajj* in the year 10 *A.H.* at Mount Arafat during the Hajj (Pilgrimage). The main points made in that Address are as follows:

- (a) the life and property of all Muslims must be regarded as sacred.
- (b) everyone will have to appear before Almighty Allaah and account to Him for his or her actions
- (c) husbands and wives have certain rights over each other and wives must be treated kindly.
- (d) one should always be careful of Satan, because he wants to prevent us from worshipping Almighty Allaah and follow His Commands.
- (e) All Muslims are brothers
- (f) No person is superior to another, except in obedience to Almighty Allaah and in piety.
- (g) He was leaving two things, namely Al Qur-aan and his example, for all mankind to follow and anyone following these would never go astray.
- (h) we must always worship Almighty Allaah,
- (i) Prophet Muhammad (*S.A.W.*) is Almighty Allaah's last Prophet and there will be no prophet or new religion after him.
- (j) those who were present must convey the Message to others and the others who heard the Message must convey it to other persons.

He ended his Message by turning his face to the heavens and asking the assembly, which numbered 120,000, whether he had conveyed Almighty Allaah's Message to them. All present replied that he had done so.

Dear children, the instructions given by the Prophet (*S.A.W.*) can go a long way towards solving the problems that face the people of the world today. You must therefore understand fully the meaning and importance of all these instructions. If you do not, ask your teacher or parents to explain them to you. Once you understand the Prophet's instructions, you have a duty to tell others about them. When you have done so, on the Day of Judgment you can stand before Almighty Allaah with the full knowledge that you have not only heard and understood the Message, but you too have conveyed it to other persons, as indeed you are duty-bound to do