

AKHLAQ **(Ethics)**

Lesson 1

Islamic Expressions

We have already learnt the following phrases in Book 3 and when to use them:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ

As-Salām ‘alaykum

When we meet someone. Instead of ‘Hi!’

وَ عَلَيْكُمْ السَّلَام

Wa ‘alaykum salām

The reply when someone says ‘Salām’ to us.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

Al-Hamdu Lilāh

To thank Allāh, when we finish our food and when we sneeze.

يَرْحَمُكَ اللَّهُ

Yarhamuk Allāh

Whenever we hear someone sneeze.

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ

Subhān Allāh

When we see anything beautiful. Instead of 'Wow!'

فِي أَمَانٍ لِلَّهِ

Fi Amāni Lāh

When we are leaving. Instead of 'Bye!'

إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ

In shā Allāh

Whenever we plan to do something. For example,
'Tomorrow I will.... In shā Allāh!'

Now we will learn three new phrases:

مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ

Mā shā Allāh

When someone does something very good and we want
to praise them.

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ

Astaghfirullāh

When we do something bad or harām or we see someone doing something bad or harām.

إِنِّ لِلَّهِ وَإِنِّ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

Inna lillāhi wa innā ilayhi rāji'un

When we hear someone has passed away or we know of some bad news or something terrible has happened

Sneezing

When we sneeze
we say:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

This means:
**All praise is to
Allāh.**



When we sneeze we should also put our sleeve in front of our mouth so that we do not pass on our germs on to our hands or to anyone else and give them a cold.

When someone else sneezes we should say:

يَرْحَمُكَ اللَّهُ

Which means:
May Allāh bless you.

Thanking Allāh

We say...

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

...not only when we sneeze but also to thank Allāh. Every time something good happens to you, say 'Al-Hamdu lilāh!'

Why do we thank Allāh?

We thank Allāh because of all the blessings He has given us. For example:



Eyes - to see with. Ears - to hear with.



Hands - that are very useful to us.

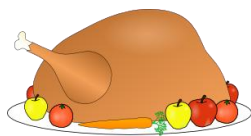
Legs - so that we can go wherever we like .





One of the best things Allāh has given us is the Mind (Brain). It helps us to know a lot of things like what is good for us and what is bad and the difference between right and wrong.

Allāh gave us our parents, who love us and take care of us. He created beautiful trees with tasty fruits in them for us.



Allāh made the day bright and beautiful

so that we can work and play. Then he made the night for us to rest in.

Another way of Thanking Allāh is by being good and kind to His creatures, just as He has been good and kind to us.



Alhamdulillah means **All praise be to Allāh.**



Allāh blesses the person who thanks Him.

Exercise: Think about how different your life would be without your eyes, ears, hands or legs. Remember that these are blessings from Allāh alone and we should never forget how fortunate we are. Alhamdu lillāh!

Remembering Allāh All the Time

Before I do anything I recite:
Bismillāhir Rahmānir Raheem.
*(I begin) in the Name of Allāh,
the Kind, the Merciful*

In every situation –
happy or sad I recite:
Alhamdu Lilāh
All praise is for Allāh

When I thank
someone I say:
Jazākumullah
*May Allāh
reward you*



Whenever I decide to do
something I say:
Inshā Allāh
If Allāh wishes

When I am leaving
someone I say:
Fi Amānillāh
*(I leave you) in the care
of Allāh*

Activity Ideas:

- Watch the funny cartoon 'Midnight Snack' in class (that is on the Teacher's DVD). It shows the usage of common Islamic Expressions and how and when to use them.

Lesson 2

Loving the Ahl al-Bayt ('a)

Allāh is very kind and merciful to us. One example of His kindness is that He gives us food to eat. Another example of Allāh's kindness is that Allāh guides us to the right path. Allāh guides us and tells us what is good for us and what is bad for us so that on the Day of Judgement we can go with our family and friends and live forever in a very beautiful place called Jannah.

To make it easy for us to be good and to obey Him, Allāh sent us special human beings to guide us. And Allāh put the love of all these true guides in our hearts. If you feel the love of Ahl al-Bayt ('a) in your heart, you should thank Allāh. It means you are a good person and Allāh wants to guide you.

When Prophet Muhammad (s) was leaving this world, he said to the Muslims, 'I am leaving behind two things: the Qur'ān, which is the Book of Allāh and my family, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a). If you hold on to these two, you will never be misguided. And the Qur'ān and the Ahl al-Bayt will never be separated until they return to me on the Day of Judgement.'

Prophet Muhammad (s) did not tell us to love the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) only because they are his family. He told us to love them because anyone who wants to be guided to the right path and to be successful in this world and the hereafter has to love and follow the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) and

the Qur'ān. So Prophet Muhammad (s) told us to love and follow the Qur'ān and Ahl al-Bayt ('a) for our own good.

Without the Ahl al-Bayt ('a), we would never be able to understand the true meaning of the Qur'ān and we would never be able to obey the teachings of Allāh and Rasulullāh (s) properly.

So how do we know if we really love the Ahl al-Bayt ('a)? If a person loves the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) they love to talk about them all the time. They celebrate all the birthdays of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) and are sad on the days when the Ahl al-Bayt (as.) suffered or were martyred. **But most importantly, a person who loves the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) follows them.** Such a person is called a Shi'ah. A true Shi'ah obeys Allāh and does everything that is wājib and keeps away from everything that is harām. This is because when we don't do what is wājib (like praying salāh or wearing hijāb) or when we do something harām (like eating harām food, lying or disobeying our parents) then we hurt the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) and make them sad. And one who loves the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) will never do anything to hurt them.

Reciting Salawāt

Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

Allāh and His angels send blessings on the Prophet. O you who have faith, send blessings and peace on him (as well) in a worthy manner.

- Surah al-Ahzāb, 33:56

To ask Allāh to send blessings on Prophet Muhammad (s) and his Ahl al-Bayt ('a) we recite **Salawāt** as follows:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

Allāhumma sali 'alā Muhammadin wa Aali Muhammad

O Allāh! Send Your blessings on Muhammad and the family of Muhammad

When we say 'Ahl al-Bayt' or 'The Family of Prophet Muhammad (s)' we mean the daughter of Rasulullāh (s) Sayyida Fātima az-Zahra ('a), her husband Imām Ali bin Abi Talib ('a) and the eleven Imāms from their descendants. Together they are known as the fourteen Ma'sumeen.

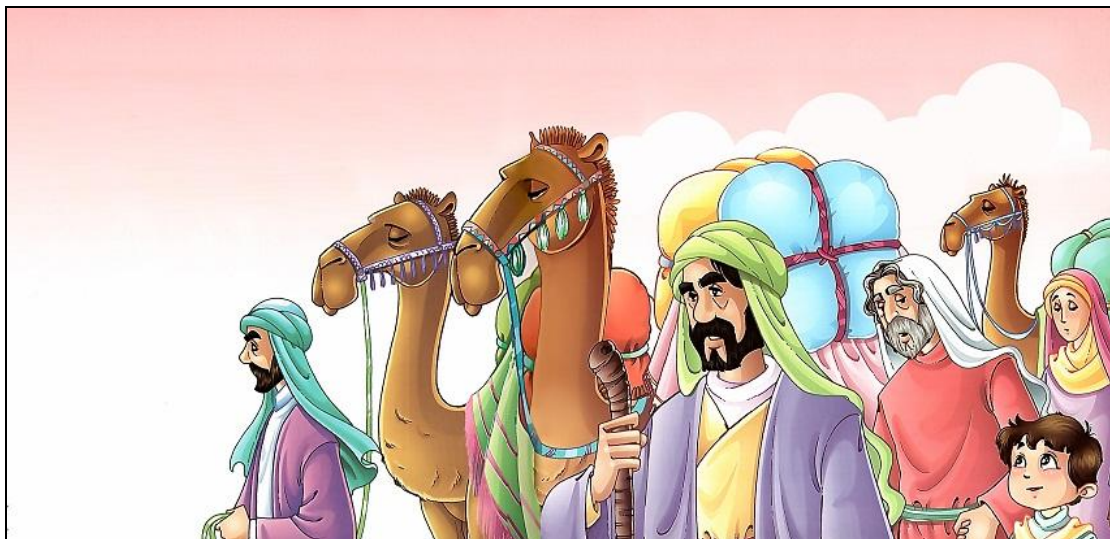
Whenever we hear the names of the fourteen Ma'sumeen - Prophet Muhammad (s), Sayyida Fātima ('a) or the Twelve Imāms ('a) we should recite salawāt.

Whenever we are sitting doing nothing, instead of wasting time, we should recite as many salawāt as possible.

And whenever we mention the 12th Imām, Imām al-Mahdi ('atfs), who is our Imām right now, we should recite salawāt and also stand up and place our hand on our head out of respect for him.

Now read the following story about the love of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a)...

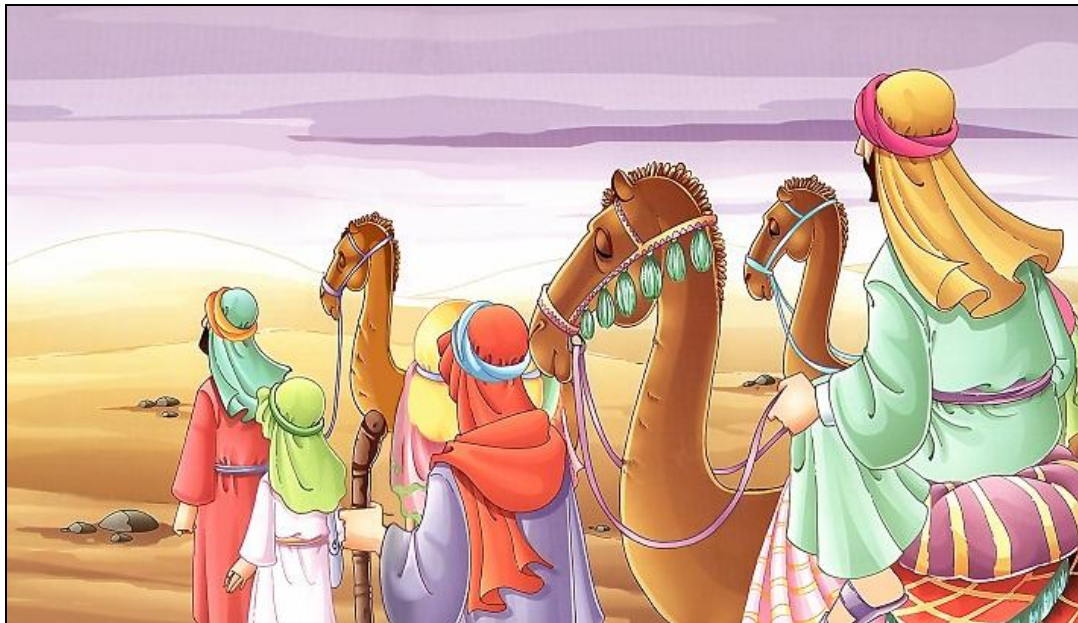
The Young Pilgrim



Most deserts are vast and dry. Hot winds blow through them carrying sand everywhere. There are hardly any trees, water or shade in the desert. And the sun shines

directly on the desert with intense heat. During the day the sand in the desert is so hot, it feels like it is on fire.

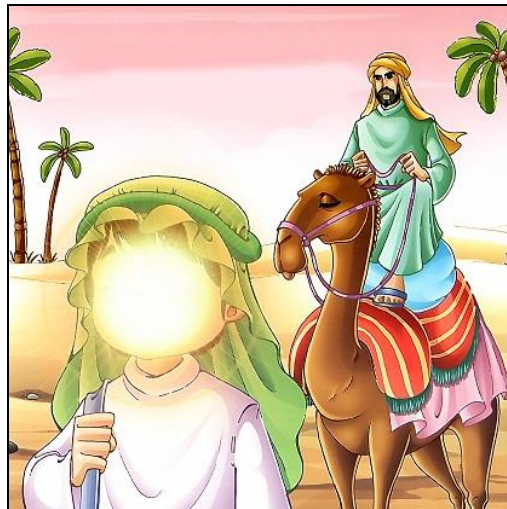
A long time ago, during the time of Imām Husayn (‘a), a caravan left Madina to cross such a desert and to go to Makkah for Hajj. All the men, women and children in the caravan were the Shi’ah of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and loved Imām Husayn (‘a). They believed Imām Husayn (‘a) was their leader and the real successor of Rasulullāh (s).



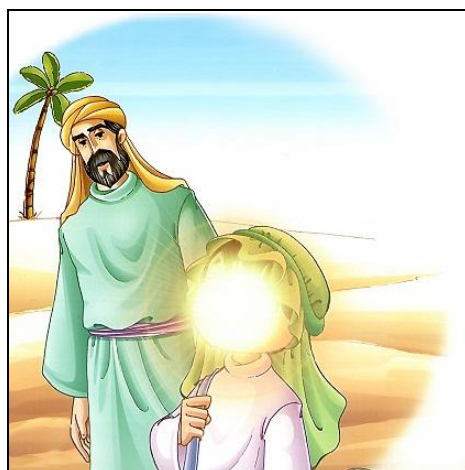
The pilgrims in this caravan did not feel tired or mind the heat of the desert because of their love for Islam and Rasulullāh (s) and the Imāms (‘a) and because of their love for the Ka’bah, the House of Allāh in Makkah, where they were going. They carried the love of all these in their hearts.

In the middle of the journey, one of the Muslims on the camel, as well as the other people in the caravan, noticed that there was a young boy who was barely

eight years old and he was walking in the middle of the desert, also heading towards Makkah. But the boy had no luggage or bags with him and no animal to ride on. He was walking alone and praising Allāh with his tongue and remembering Allāh constantly. There was a beautiful light shining from his face and he did not seem like an ordinary child. The people were very surprised to see this.



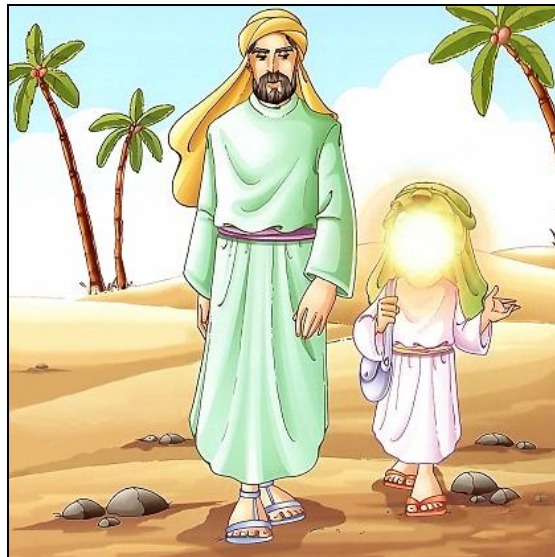
As the caravan got closer to this boy, they wanted to speak to him and find out who he was because they had never seen anyone like him. He seemed to be so wise and to have so much knowledge, and he appeared to be very special and near to Allāh (s.w.t.).



The man on the camel who first saw him, got off the camel and shook off the sand from his clothes and walked up politely to the young boy and said ‘as-salāmu alaykum’. And the young boy replied very politely, ‘wa alaykum salām wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh’.

Then the man asked, ‘Who are you, young boy? And whose company are you travelling with in this vast desert?’

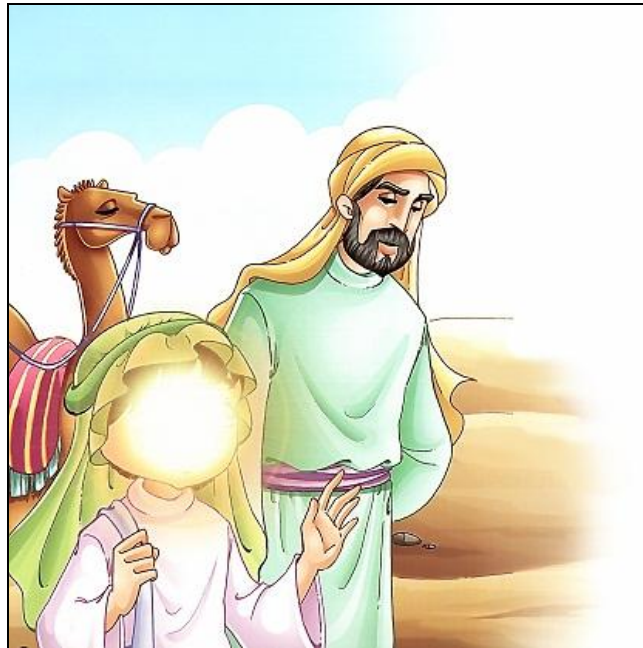
‘I am travelling with Allāh’s company,’ replied the young boy.



When the man heard these words, he was even more surprised and impressed by the young boy and he realized this was a very special person even though he was very young.

So the man then asked the boy again, ‘Why are you not carrying any luggage for the journey and you don’t have any animal to ride on. Where are your bags and animal?!’

And the young boy smiled and replied, 'My food is remembering Allāh all the time. And my ride is my two feet that are carrying me on the journey. And my intention is to go to Allāh's House.'



The man was even more impressed and loved the young boy's wisdom and speech. And he asked him, 'From which family do you come?!'. And the boy replied, 'I am from the family of Abd al-Muttalib'.

'And from which tribe?' the man asked again. 'From Banu Hāshim', said the boy. 'So whose son are you?' the man asked. And the boy said, 'I am from the children of Imām Ali ('a) and Sayyida Fatima az-Zahra ('a)'.

And now the man walked with the boy and began asking more questions.

'Do you know any poetry?' asked the man.



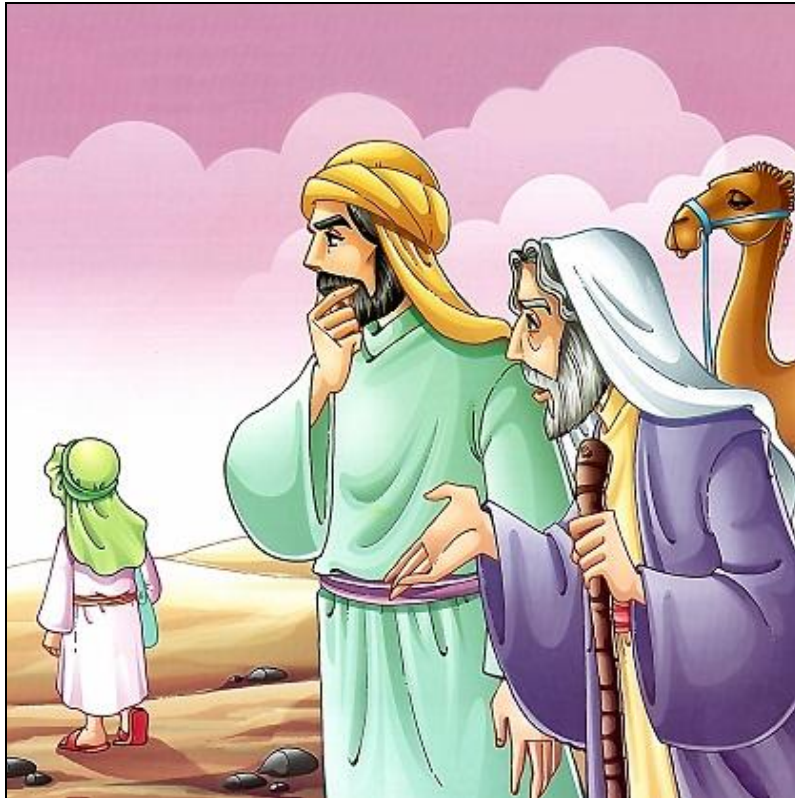
‘Yes,’ replied the young boy and he began reciting beautiful poetry in the most eloquent of manners.

The meaning of the words of the poetry said:

‘We are the people near the fountain of Kawthar on the Day of Judgement and in Jannah. It is a gift to us from Allāh. Whoever we choose and love, we will give them to drink from the fountain of Kawthar.’

‘None will go to Jannah except those whom we pray for. And one who loves us and follows us will never lose out when they come before Allāh on the Day of Judgement.’

‘Whoever rejoices with our rejoicing then Allāh will be pleased with him or her. One who hates us and torments us is not clean and he will go to Jahannam. Because Jannah is only for the clean and the pure. And whoever steals our right should have an answer ready on the Day of Judgement before Allāh (s.w.t).’



The man now was very perplexed and curious to know who this young boy was. An old man in the caravan who recognized the boy smiled and said to the man, 'Don't you recognize this young boy?! He is Imām Ali Zayn al-Abidin ('a), the son of Imām Husayn ('a)!'

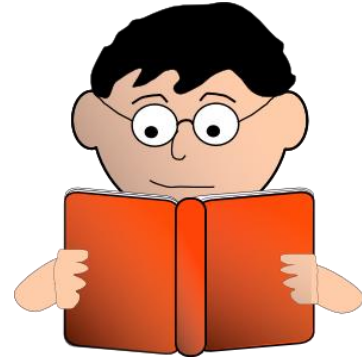
Thank you Allāh for making us the Shi'ah of Muhammad and Aali Muhammad and for giving us so much love for them!

Lesson 3

Importance of Knowledge

Importance of Madrasah

You can learn new things at home, at the masjid, at madrasah, at school, at the library and many other places.



There are some important things you must do whenever you learn something new:

- Remember to thank the teacher for teaching you.



- Practice and use that knowledge to make yourself a better person and also teach others (your younger brothers or sisters, and your friends) what you have learnt.

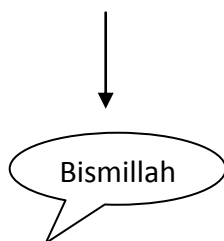
Manners in the Classroom

Remember
Allāh before
you start

Sit up
straight
on your chair

Do not talk
in class!

Listen
carefully
to the lesson



Importance of Knowledge

Many young people think that it is important to do well in studies so that one day they can get a good job or earn a lot of money. But knowledge is far more important than just a means of earning a living. Knowledge makes us better human beings. It makes us wiser. And people love and respect us when we have knowledge because we can also guide and help them.



Knowledge helps us understand who Allāh is and why Allāh created us and how to obey and please Allāh. Prophet Muhammad (s) said seeking knowledge is wājib on every Muslim, male or female. And he said, 'Seek knowledge even if it is in China.' (Meaning seek knowledge even if you have to travel far for it.) Imām Ali ('a) taught us that when we have money we have to protect it but when we have knowledge, it protects us.

Even presidents and kings respect and love a person who is wise and has lots of knowledge. The best forms of knowledge are the teachings of the Qur'ān, the teachings of Rasullāh (s) and the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) and the knowledge that we can use to help others.

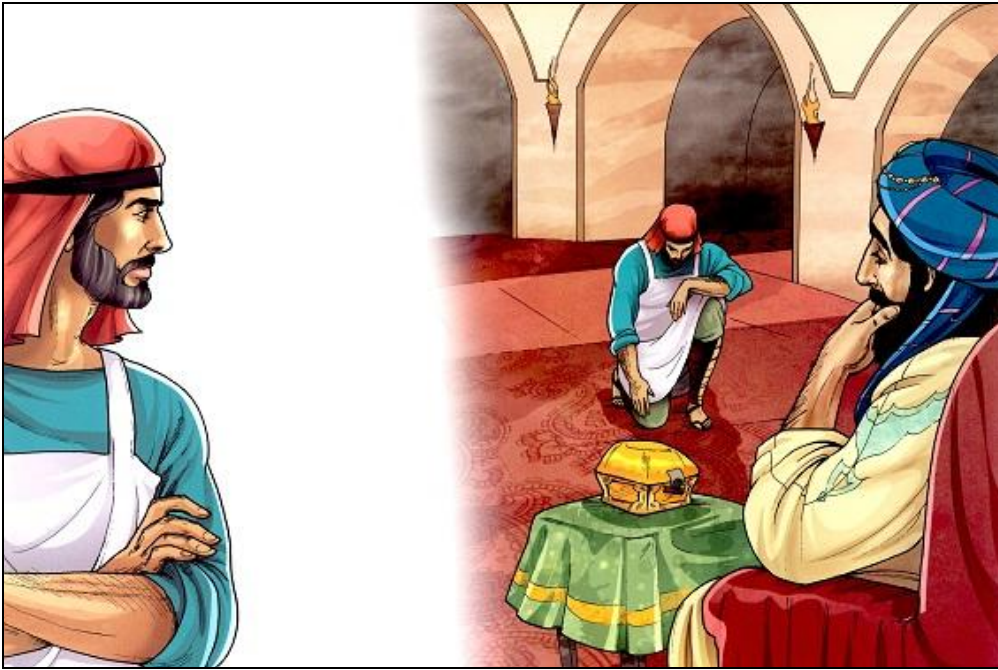
The following story teaches us that we should never lose hope in knowledge and always try and learn more even when we are grown up!

It is Never Too Late to Learn



In the city of Khawārizm, there lived a skilled ironsmith who had a shop where he made metal utensils, pots of every kind, beautiful swords and knives, and other iron tools.

But he always dreamt of making something new and wonderful that no one had thought of, which he could present before the King so that he would become famous amongst people and be close to the King.



So one day, he made a small iron chest with a lock that was amazing and that no one had ever imagined before. Then he took it to the King and presented it with a lot of joy and pride, hoping to impress the King and win his favour.

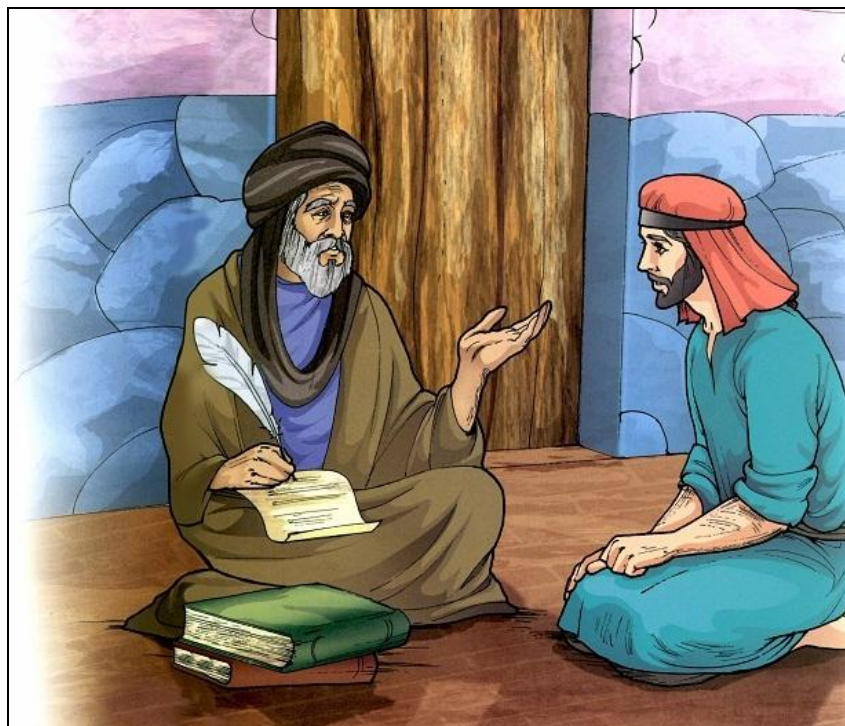
The King was impressed and amazed with his work and skill and how he had made the lock. But he didn't give the ironsmith as much importance and respect as the ironsmith had hoped.

While the ironsmith was still in the palace with the King, another man walked in and the King stood up to honour the man and showed him a lot of respect.

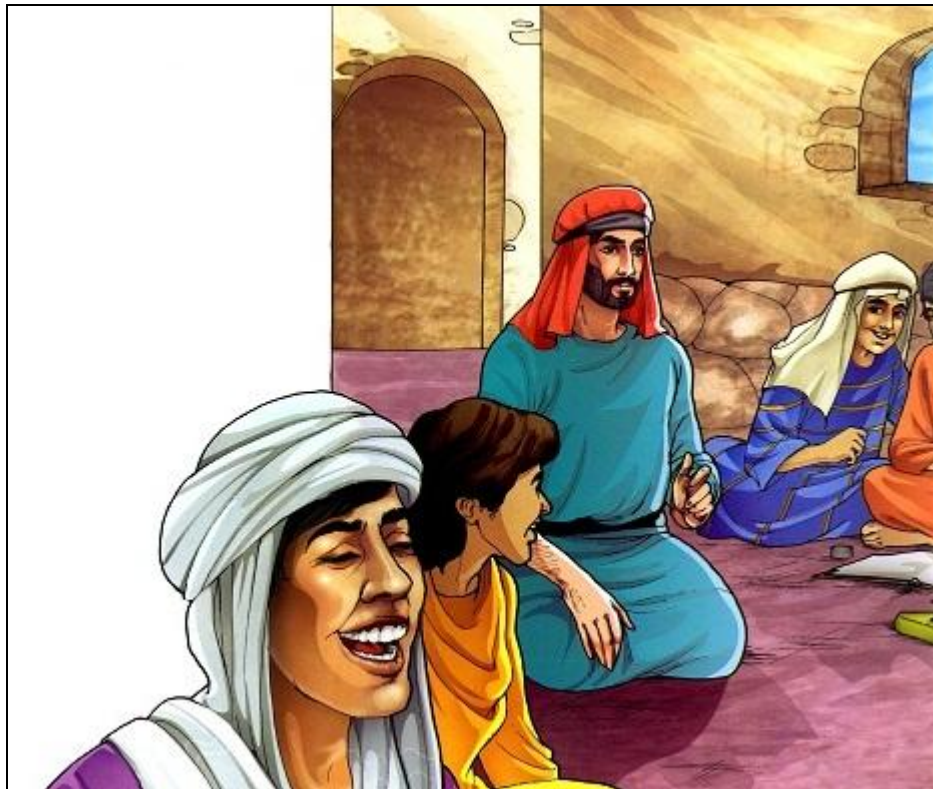
That surprised the ironsmith. He asked someone, 'Who is this man whom the King stood up to receive and is showing so much respect?!' And he was told, 'He is a learned man (an *'ālim*).'



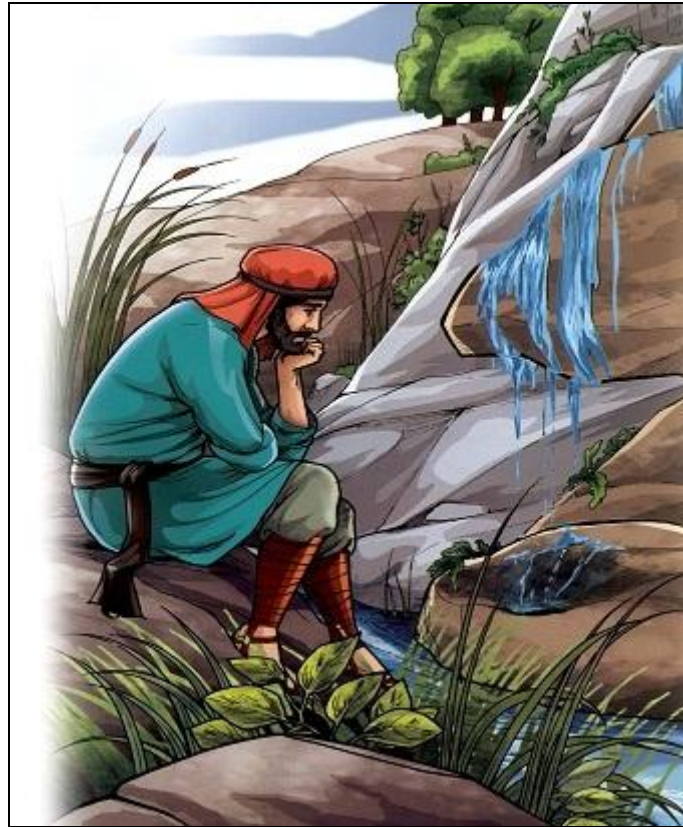
The ironsmith thought to himself, 'If only I was a scholar too. The King would have shown me so much respect and honoured me like this.' And he realized that it was only because of knowledge that the scholar was so special and held such a high position before the King.



So he left the palace and decided to gain knowledge. But he was well past thirty years old and nearing forty. He found a teacher and began studying day and night. The teacher told him he was too old to start learning now but he insisted he wanted to become a student and so the teacher began teaching him and helping him to memorize whatever he taught him.



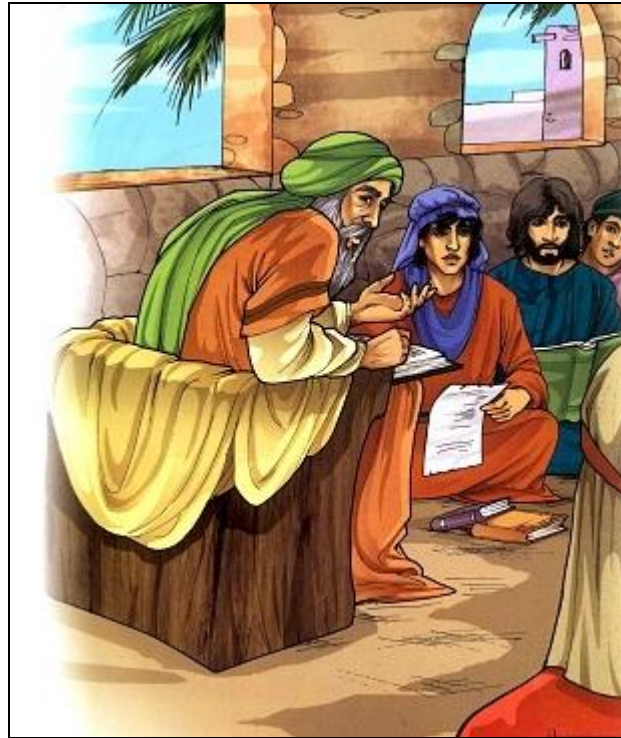
The next day, the teacher asked him to repeat before the other students what he had taught him the previous day but he couldn't remember and gave the wrong answers. All the children in the class began laughing at him because of how he couldn't answer even the simplest of questions and couldn't remember what he was taught the previous day.



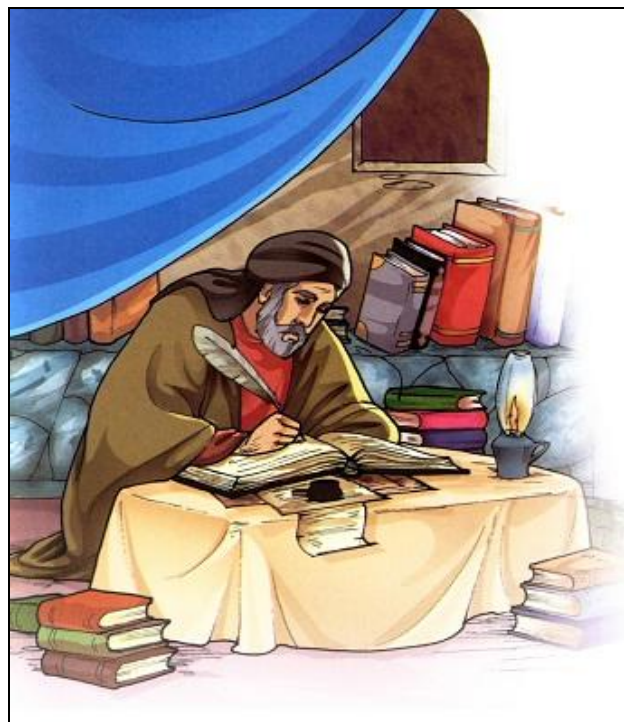
The ironsmith began thinking perhaps his teacher was right that he was too old to learn anything now. So he left the class and went out and sat alone feeling very sad and sorry for himself.

Just then, the ironsmith noticed that there was water falling from the top of some rocks and in one spot, because the drops of water were constantly hitting the smooth rock, they had dug a hole into the rock.

The ironsmith was amazed to see this and said to himself: 'My heart and mind are not harder than a rock! If I study constantly and persistently like the water falling on to the rock, it will penetrate my heart and mind!'



So he returned to study with a lot of hope and determination. And he kept studying and gaining knowledge until he became one of the greatest scholars of his time and wrote books that became famous as the best books in Arabic language and grammar.



Lesson 4

Keeping Pets

Muslims are not allowed to keep dogs or pigs as pets. Dogs are only allowed for special reasons. For example, if a person lives in a country where they need to keep a dog for security against thieves or if a person is blind and needs an 'Eye Dog' to guide him or her when walking outdoors.

When a Muslim *has to* keep a dog, they should try and keep them outdoors or in a separate dog kennel so that it cannot lick pots, utensils or anything in the house. Dogs and pigs should also not be hugged or kissed or allowed to lick your hands or legs. This makes a person najis and they cannot pray until they clean themselves again.

Cats are not najis but according to some mujtahids you cannot pray salāh if you have cat hair on your clothes. So if you wish to keep a cat as a pet, find out what your mujtahid says first. And if he says you cannot pray with cat hair on your clothes, you have to be very careful and keep a separate place at home for your salāh where the cat cannot enter and also separate clean clothes for wearing when you pray salāh.

If a person keeps birds or fish as pets, or if they have a farm and they keep goats, chicken, lambs, etc. they must never forget to feed them and they must keep the area the animals lives in (cage or aquarium) clean. It is

the duty of a Muslim who owns an animal to feed it and take care of it. Islam forbids cruelty to any animal.

Whenever we see animals that are cute, we always feel like taking them home. But looking after a pet is not easy. Listen to your mom and dad's advice and speak to others who have pets first to find out what is easy and what is difficult about keeping pets.

If you buy a pet and later find it hard to look after it, it is better to give it away instead of keeping it and not looking after it properly.

Some pets can teach you a lot about friendship and responsibility and some pets are meant to live freely and not to be kept in a cage or a box. So think carefully before you get a pet. And if you still decide to get one, also think carefully about what kind of a pet you should keep.

Lesson 5

Kindness to Others

When we say that Allāh is the most ‘merciful’ we mean that Allāh is the kindest and always helps us when we need it. Allāh has been very kind to us, so we should also be kind to others.

To be kind to others means we should always help anyone who asks us for help. If someone does something wrong towards us we should forgive them and be kind towards them, this is what being merciful means.

It is good to help someone when they ask for it, but it is even better to help someone who is in difficulty, without them having to ask. Some people may feel ashamed to ask for help when they are in trouble. Or they may not ask for help because they do not want people to feel pity for them. So when you see someone who needs help and you can help him or her, you should not wait for him or her to ask you for help. Instead you should offer to help them yourself.

To be kind also means to be gentle and friendly and to care for things or people.

If you are kind to others, then they will always be kind to you. In the same way, if you are mean to others than everyone will be mean to you.

*A Kind Person Forgives Others
Instead of Fighting With Them
Even When It is the Other Person's Fault*



A person who is kind-hearted does not get angry easily and does not shout when someone makes a mistake or unintentionally does something to annoy him or her. Instead they are always polite and explain to others

until they understand what they did wrong.

It is not always easy to be kind, especially when someone is bad to you. If you can be kind and gentle even to those who are mean to you, you will please Allāh and you will also earn the other person's friendship.

Kindness always pays, because if you are kind to others, then one day when you are in difficulty, people will remember and say, “you helped me when I needed it, let me help you now.”

Allāh tells us in many places in the Qur’ān that He loves people to forgive others when they do wrong and He forgives those who forgive others.

For example:

﴿...وَالْكَاطِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ

يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾

(the pious Muslims are those who) suppress their anger, and excuse (the faults of) the people, and Allāh loves those who do good (to others).

- Surah Aal-I Imrān, 3:134

﴿وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ

وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ...﴾

and let them (the faithful Muslims) excuse and overlook (the fault of others). Do you not love that Allāh should forgive you? And Allāh is all-forgiving, all-merciful.

- Surah Nur, 24:22

Finally, remember that kindness is not just doing good deeds. It is also not forcing people to do good unless it is a matter of wājib or harām. And even then, we have to be as gentle and polite as possible.

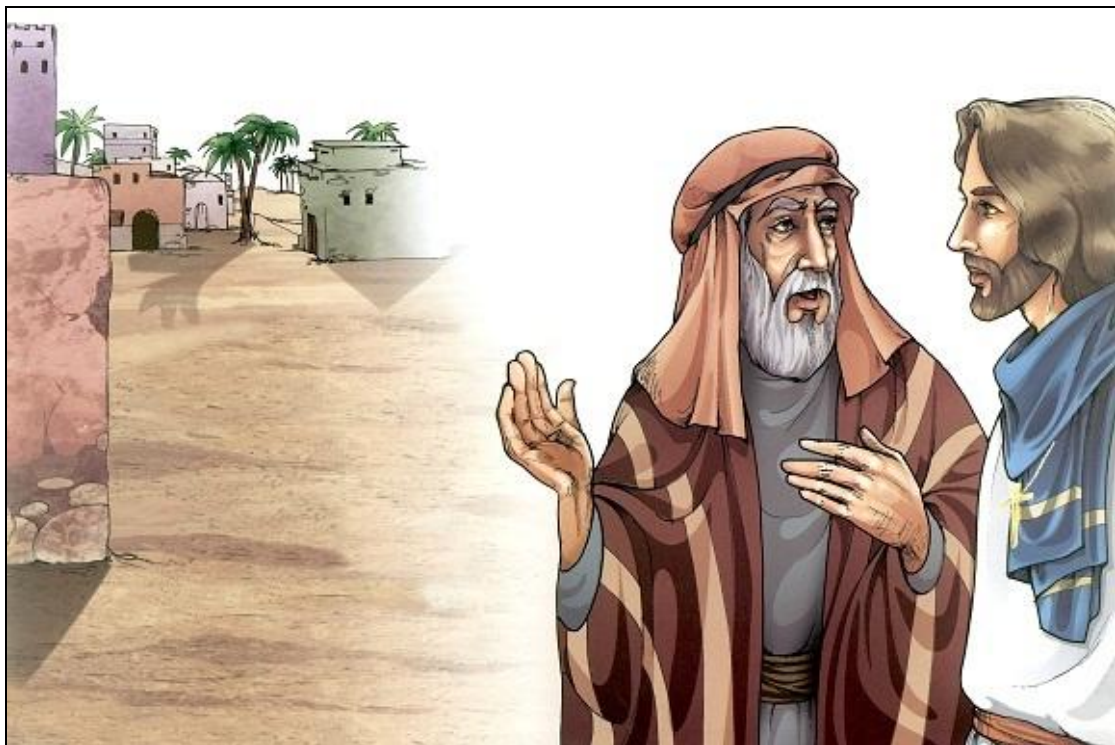
Sometimes we are kind by doing things for people or helping them, like helping an old person to cross the road or playing with a little child or helping our parents with housework.

And sometimes we can be kind by thinking of other people's needs and not demanding that they should

only do what we want. When we try and force people to do everything that we want, we are bullying them and being unkind. Even if it is something religious, we should only insist that others should do what is wājib and that they should keep away from what is harām. But for mustahab actions, we can encourage and recommend it to others but not force them. Instead we should let people practice mustahab deeds to their own ability.

Now read the following story that Imām Ja'far as-Sādiq ('a) once told some people.

The New Muslim



Once upon a time, there lived a Christian man in the midst of Muslim neighbours in a town where both Muslims and Christians lived together. The Christian was

a good friend of a Muslim who was his neighbour and they would often talk about Islam and its teachings. The Muslim kept praising Islam until one day the Christian decided to become a Muslim.



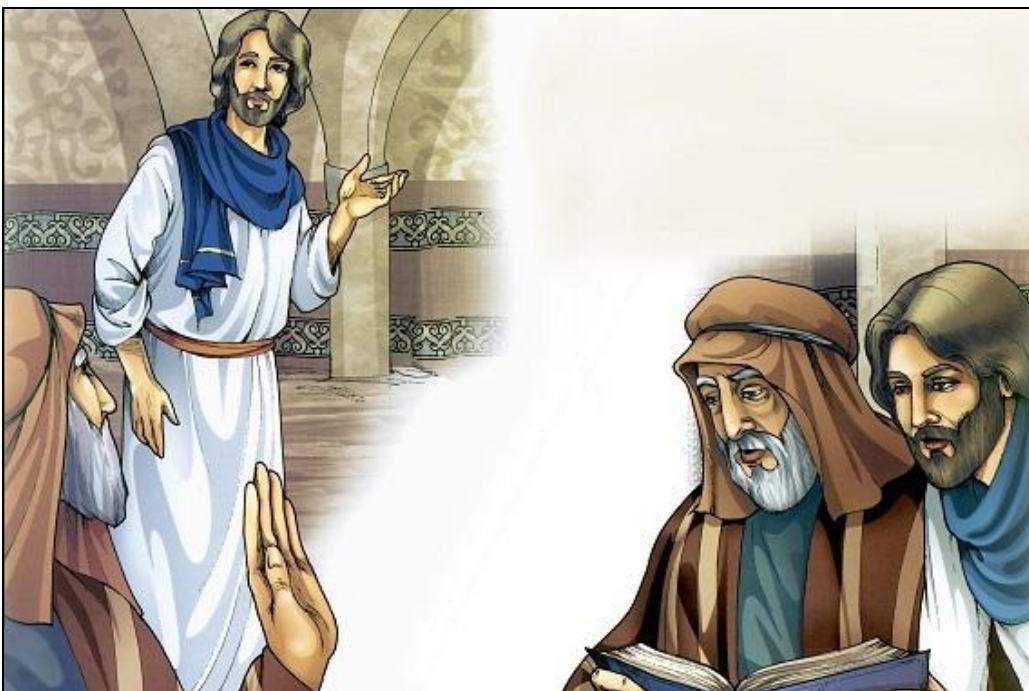
The next day, early in the morning, even before dawn, the new Muslim who was Christian before, heard a knock on his door.

‘Who is it?’ he asked. ‘It is me, your neighbour,’ said his Muslim friend. So the new Muslim opened the door and said, ‘Ah.... What is wrong? Is everything ok? How come you’re here at this time of the night?’

And the Muslim said, ‘Come, do wudu and put on your clothes, we have to go to the masjid to pray!’

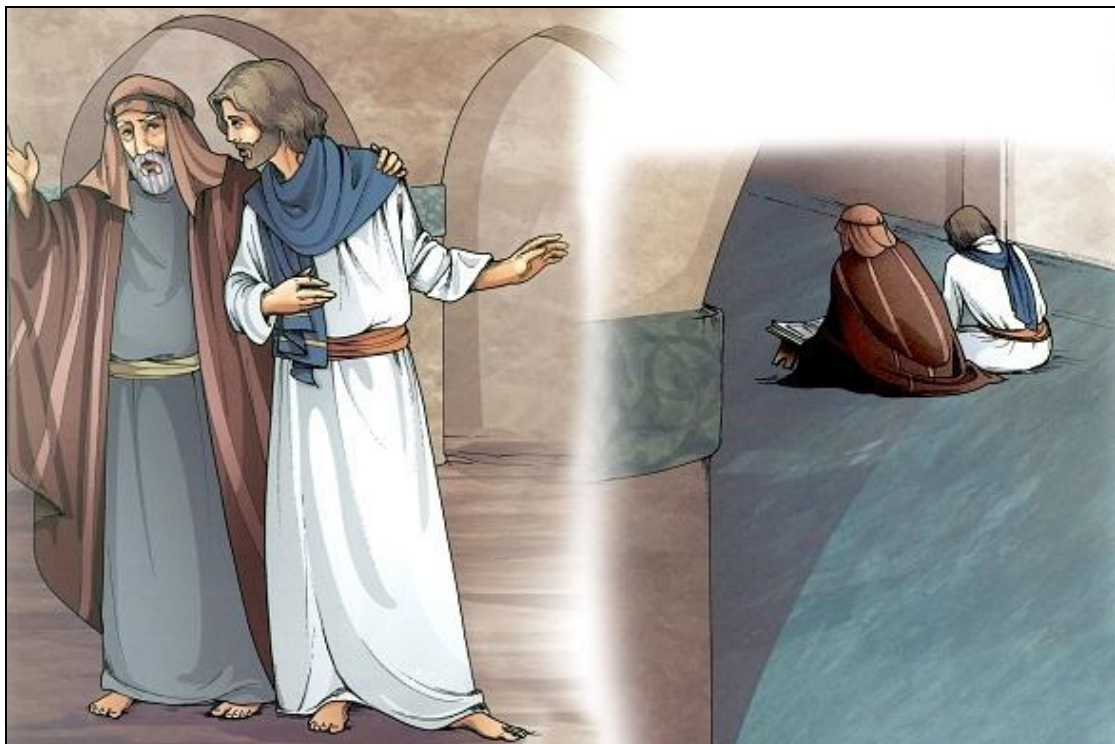


And so for the first time in his life, the new Muslim went to the masjid with his Muslim neighbour. The time was nearing dawn (*fajr*) so they prayed a lot and recited tasbih and duas and other prayers, until they prayed Salāt as-Subh and then praised Allāh and glorified Him some more.



When the sun began to rise, the new Muslim stood up to go home and his friend asked him, 'Where are you going?'

'Home,' he replied. 'I still have a lot of things to do and I have to go work.' But the friend said to him, 'Wait a bit longer. Let us read the Qur'ān together.' And so they began reading it for some time.



When the sun had risen completely and it was mid-morning, the new Muslim wanted to leave again but his friend insisted he waits a little longer. Then he said to the new Muslim, 'Make an intention to fast a mustahab fast today'. And he began telling him how much *thawāb* there was in fasting. And so the new Muslim agreed to fast and soon it was time for Salāt adh-Dhuhr.

After Dhuhr prayers, the new Muslim wanted to leave but again his friend would not permit him and said, 'In a little while it will be time for 'Asr. So let us worship some more and remember Allāh until it is time for Salāt al-'Asr.'

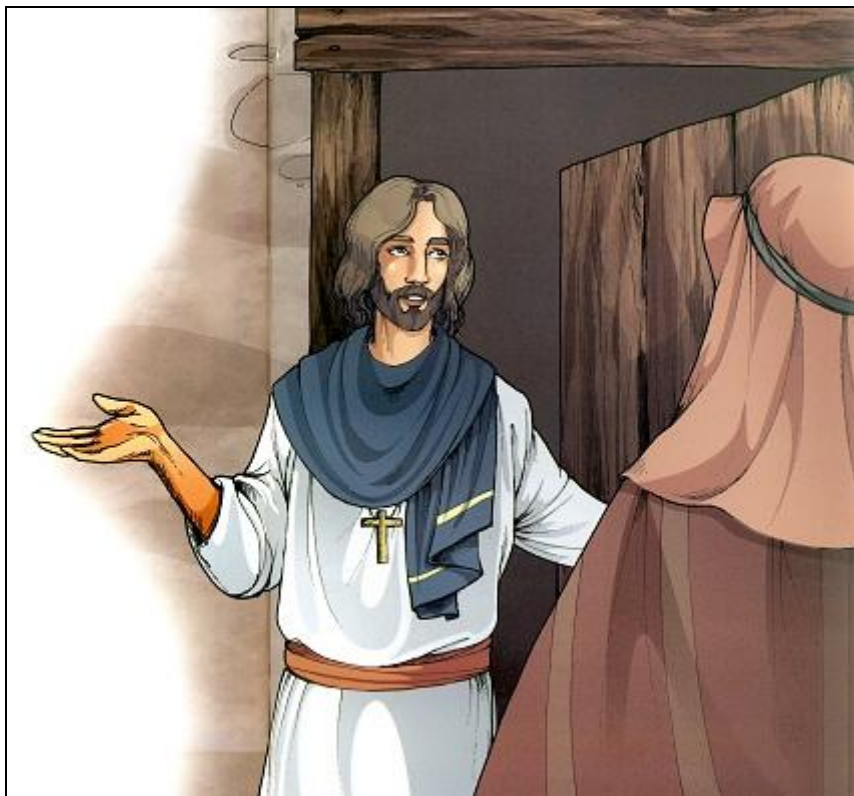


The Muslim neighbour continued convincing the new Muslim like this and they remained in the masjid until Maghrib time, praying, reciting the Qur'ān and reciting other duas and tasbih. After Salāt al-Maghrib, the friend told the new Muslim, 'May Allāh accept your fast. For you have finished your day while fasting for Allāh's sake!' Then they bade farewell to each other and returned to their homes.

The next day, in the early hours of the morning when it was still dark, the new Muslim heard his door being knocked again. So he opened the door and there was his

Muslim neighbour again, asking him to go to the masjid with him.

The Christian said to him: 'I am no longer a Muslim and I have become a Christian again. I cannot follow this religion because I have children to look after and have to work. Go and find another man who can spend all his day in the masjid!'



So the same man who changed the Christian to a Muslim was also responsible for changing him back to becoming a Christian! Why? Because of being unkind and forcing him to become like him and to practice so many mustahab things in Islam all at once!

Kindness is to think of others before you think of yourself

Lesson 6

Obeying our Parents

Nobody is born with manners. When you were a baby, you just did whatever you wanted. You picked up whatever you saw; you never said, “thank you” to your mother when she fed you. Nobody told you that this is right or that is wrong.

But when you became old enough to understand, your parents began to teach you how to behave correctly. So the first people to teach you good manners were your parents. And the first place where you learnt how to behave was at home.

This tells us that the first step to learning good manners



is to listen to our parents and obey them. Why? Because no person loves us more than our parents and they have a lot more experience in how to behave with others than we do.

Allāh also wants us to respect and obey our parents. Allāh tells us in the Qur’ān that if our parents ask us to do something, we should not even say “ah” to them in complaint.

Remember that when you were a baby, your parents worked very hard to keep you happy. And they still continue to work hard so that you can have a nice home to live in, clothes to wear, food to eat, and toys to play with. And they love you more than anything in the world.

Some of the ways in which we can respect and obey our parents are:

- We should never call our parents by their real names. We should always call them as “mummy” and “daddy” or “mum” and “dad” or “mama” and “baba” (or “papa”), or similar words in our own language.
- When our parents call us or speak to us, we should always answer them politely and respectfully. What we say is important. But more important is how we say it. We should not speak rudely.
- When we wake up in the morning or return from school, we should always say salām to our parents. Before going to bed, we should always hug or kiss our parents and tell them we love them and thank them for everything they do for us.
- We should never go out of the house without our parents’ permission. Even if our parents tell us not to go to our friend’s place, it is wājib to obey them.

- We should make sure our parents are never worried about us and never angry with us. When our parents are angry with us, we should immediately say to them we are sorry and try and make them happy again by doing something nice.
- We should never break the rules set by our parents unless they tell us to do something harām. Obeying the rules of our parents will help us to obey the rules of Allāh.
- Our parents like it when we trust them. So when we are in trouble, we should always talk to our parents first and tell them to help us.
- Parents are a special gift from Allāh and a great blessing. We should always pray to Allāh to be kind to our parents and to keep them and us safe.

Allāh orders us in the Qur'ān:

﴿وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا﴾

Worship Allāh... and be good to parents...

(Surah an-Nisā, 4:36)



Lesson 7

Jealousy and Showing Off

In Arabic, jealousy is called *Hasad*. Hasad means when we see someone whom we think is better than us, or has more than we do, instead of trying to become like them, we hate them and try to stop them from gaining more. Islam teaches us not be jealous because a person who is jealous will never accept the truth even if he or she knows it. Most of the enemies of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) were their enemies because of jealousy. They could not become like the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) and so instead of following them, they tried to fight them and oppose them.

The first creature ever to be jealous was Shaytan. When Allāh created Nabi Adam (‘a), Shaytan became very jealous and hated Nabi Adam (‘a). Shaytan stills likes to make people do wrong because they are the children of Nabi Adam (‘a) and Shaytan was jealous that Allāh chose Nabi Adam (‘a) as His Prophet and not him.

Allāh does not like jealousy and He says in the Holy Qur’ān:

﴿أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ﴾

Are they jealous of (other) people because of what Allāh has given them of His grace?

- Surah an-Nisa, 4:54

This means when we are jealous of others, we don't like that Allāh has given them something that we don't have. And we want Allāh to give us everything and no one should be better than us! That is why people who are jealous are also very selfish.

Besides Shaytān, another example of jealousy (hasad) and how harmful it can be is the story of the two sons of Nabi Adam ('a) who were called Hābil and Qābil. Qābil killed his brother Hābil because he was jealous that Hābil was so religious and loved serving Allāh so much. Instead of trying to become like Hābil, he just wanted Hābil to become bad like him. And out of jealousy, Qābil killed his own brother Hābil.

Later on, Qābil was very frightened because of what he had done. But it was too late. He could not bring his brother back to life. When we become very jealous, we also go too far in disobeying Allāh and often we do things that we later on regret very much.

Imām Ali ('a) taught us that jealousy burns up our good deeds like fire burns wood.

So when you see someone who is better than you, like for example, someone who is more clever or richer or has been blessed with more things than you, you should be happy for him or her and congratulate them. And you should also pray to Allāh to bless you as well.

Everyone has a special gift from Allāh and we only have to find what we have been blessed with. For example, someone may be an artist but not have a good voice to recite Qur'ān or nasheeds in public. Another person may be a poet but not very good with building and repairing things with their hands. Yet another person may be very good with cooking but someone else may be better with teaching and helping little children. If you are not jealous, Allāh will help you find your special gift in life!

And once you find your special gift from Allāh and you realize you have a special ability that others do not have, you must never be proud and boast about it or show off. Instead you should thank Allāh and try and use your gift to help people, and in fact to help all creatures of Allāh.

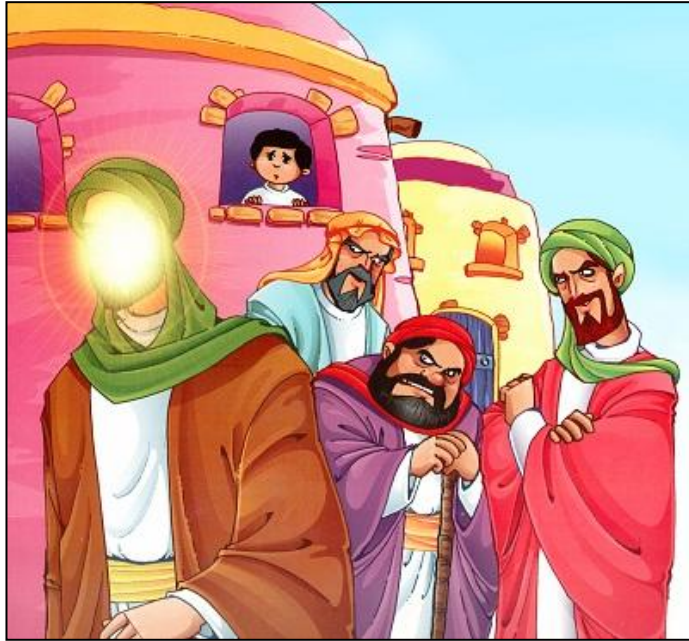
When we thank Allāh and use our gift from Allāh to help others, Allāh makes us better and gives us more. But when we use it to show off and brag, Allāh takes it away or the gift becomes a punishment and we harm ourselves with it.

In the following story, you will learn about three men who were very powerful and rich in Makkah during the time of Rasulullāh (s). But they used their power and wealth to show off. So when Rasulullāh (s) brought the message of Islam to people, and the people of Makkah began following Rasulullāh (s), these three men became very jealous. And even though they knew it was the truth, they remained enemies of Rasulullāh (s) and of the Qur'ān until they died. Because of their jealousy,

they became hateful and enemies of Islam and will go to Jahannam on the Day of Judgement.

The Jealous Leaders of Makkah

The rich and powerful leaders of Makkah, Abu Sufyan, Abu Jahl and Akhnas came to know that Prophet Muhammad (s) was receiving messages from Allāh. They heard Rasulullāh (s) telling people that he was a Messenger from Allāh and that they should stop worshipping idols and should worship Allāh alone.



Abu Sufyan, Abu Jahl and Akhnas became very angry and jealous because they used to profit and make money from the idols when people would come and visit and give money to the idols.



If people stopped worshipping idols then they would lose their fame and wealth.

So these three men and their friends would get together at different places in Makkah and make fun of Rasulullāh (s) and his teachings. They would tell people that Prophet Muhammad (s) does not receive any messages from Allāh and that he was a magician. Soon, because of their greed and jealousy, they became the most evil men in Makkah.



One day, the three men got tired of seeing how so many people were becoming Muslims and following Rasulullāh (s), so each one of them decided to go and secretly listen to what Rasulullāh (s) was reciting without letting each other know.

And so Abu Sufyan, Abu Jahl and Akhnas went out one night and each one of them hid himself separately listening to Rasulullāh (s) while he was praying and reciting the Qur'ān. And each one of them thought they were alone and didn't know the other was also listening.

As the day became brighter, each one of the men decided to return home before anyone would see them.

But on the way back, they all bumped into each other and realized that all of them were eavesdropping on Rasulullāh (s). So they were all very embarrassed and didn't know what to say to each other.

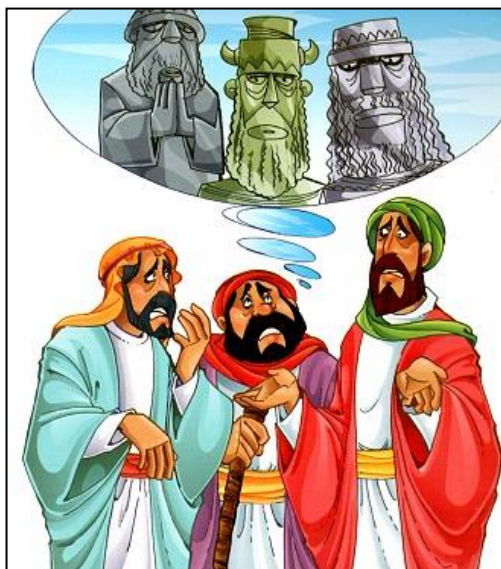
The three leaders of the idol-worshippers therefore decided that they would never go out and listen to Rasulullāh (s) again because if people find out, they will realize that their leaders are listening to the Qur'ān and therefore they will stop worshipping the idols and will make fun of them.



The next night, each one of them broke their promise and cheated again because they loved listening to the Qur'ān. So they went out to listen to Rasulullāh (s) reciting the Qur'ān again. And once again they bumped into each other and were ashamed because they had all broken their promise and lied to each other.

This time they swore by their idols that they would never go and listen to the Qur'ān again. But on the third

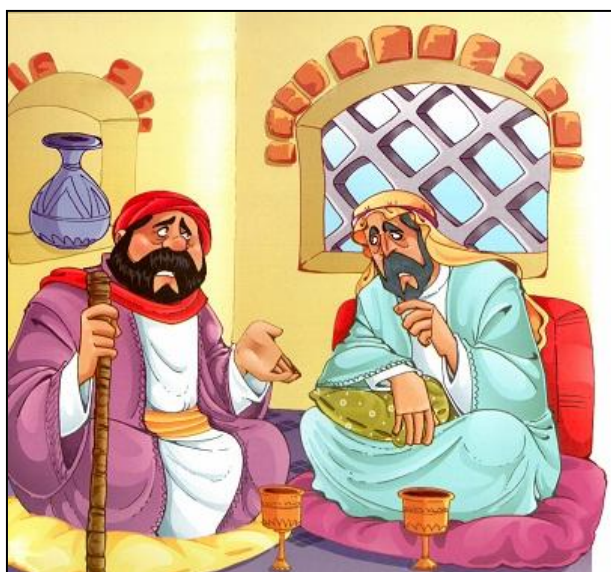
night, each one of them broke their promise again and went out to listen to the Qur'ān because it was not like the words of any human being and they couldn't resist the temptation to listen to it.



And once again, each one of them saw the other returning to their home and they knew that they could not keep their promise and they were just lying to each other.

On the fourth day, Akhnas went out to the house of Abu Sufyan and said to him, 'What do you say, O Abu Sufyan, about what you have heard from the speech of Muhammad (s) for the last three nights?!

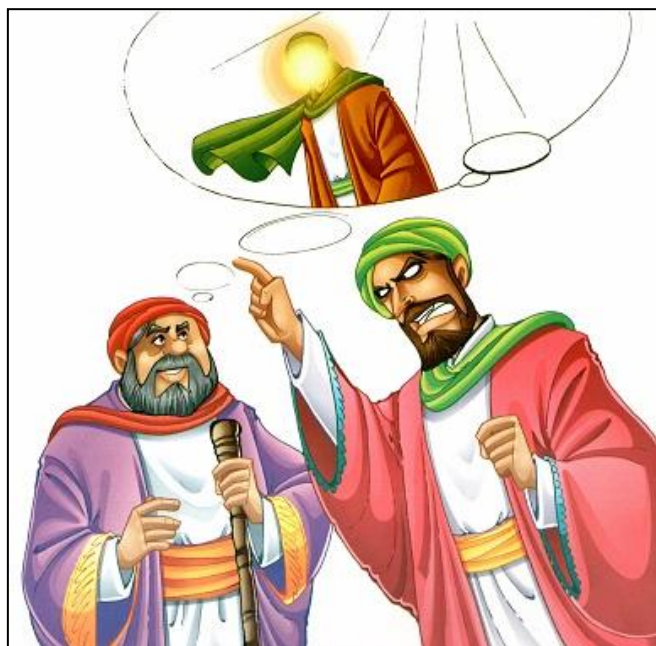
And Abu Sufyan replied, 'I swear that I heard the most beautiful words every night. Some of it I understood and some of it I did not understand. But it was still very beautiful to listen to!' And Akhnas said, 'It was the same for me too!'



Then Akhnas went to see Abu Jahl and asked him the same question and Abu

Jahl replied the same as well, that he had heard wonderful and amazing words from Rasulullāh (s) even if he could not understand all of it. But then, Abu Jahl said jealously, ‘But we can never accept Muhammad as Rasulullāh (s)! Because we are the children of Harb the son of Umayya and he is the grandson of Abd al-Muttalib!! We have always competed for power with his family and we can never obey him! We have to fight him and try and prove we are better than him all the time!’

‘If we accept that Muhammad (s) receives messages from Allāh and is a Messenger from Allāh then it means the Banu Hāshim will be better than the Banu Umayya and we can never accept that!’ shouted Abu Jahl. ‘It



is true that the words we heard for three nights were from Allāh but how can we accept that the family of Muhammad is better than our family! Never!!’ said the jealous Abu Jahl.

And so they remained enemies of Islam and never became Muslims or accepted the truth and they continued to worship idols. That is why jealousy is so bad. It keeps a person ignorant and never allows him or her to become better.