

Stories from the Life of Prophet Muhammad (s)



Sources:

- 1) The Messenger of Mercy – Ansariyan Publications
- 2) <http://www.ezsoftech.com/stories/>
- 3) <http://www.oocities.org/mutmainaa/kids/story.html>

The Holy Prophet (s) and the Sour Grapes



One day a poor man brought a bunch of grapes to the Holy Prophet Muhammad as a gift. He was very excited to be able to bring a gift for the Prophet (s). He placed the grapes beside the Prophet (s) and said, 'O Prophet of Allah, please accept this small gift from me'. He was a poor man who could not afford more. His face beamed with happiness as he offered his small gift. It was evident that he loved the Prophet a lot.

The Prophet thanked him graciously. As the man looked at him expectantly, the Prophet ate one grape. Then he ate another one. Slowly the Prophet finished the whole bunch of grapes by himself. He did not offer grapes to anyone present. The poor man who brought those grapes was very pleased and left.

The companions of the Prophet (s) who were around him were surprised. Usually the Prophet (s) shared whatever he got with them. He would offer them whatever he was given and they would eat it together. Usually he would start first, out of respect to the person who had given him the gift. But he would always offer it to others. This time had been different. Without offering it to anyone, the Prophet (s) finished the bunch of grapes by himself.

One of the companions asked respectfully, "O Prophet of Allah! How come you ate all the grapes by yourself and did not offer to any one of us present?"

The holy Prophet (s) smiled and said, "I ate all the grapes by myself because the grapes were sour. If I would have offered you, you might have made funny faces and shown your distaste of the grapes. That would have hurt the feelings of that poor man. I thought to myself that it's better that I eat all of them cheerfully and please the poor man. I did not want to hurt the feelings of that poor man."



Moral:

- 1) Consideration for the feelings of others
- 2) Graciousness in accepting gifts.

The Sacrifice of the Lamb

On group journeys, the Holy Prophet (s) would work like the others and would never let anybody work instead of him. One day the Prophet (s) and his companions were traveling. When they reached a certain destination, they stopped their camels. They laid their loads down. Everybody was tired from the journey, but they were also very hungry. It was decided that they would sacrifice a lamb for dinner. The companions began to divide the tasks between themselves.

One of the companions volunteered: "I will sacrifice the lamb."

Another companion said: "I will skin it."

Third companion said: "I will cook it."

Fourth one: "I will ..."



The Prophet (s) said: "I will gather the wood from the desert."

The group: "O Messenger of Allah (s), it is not becoming of you to discomfort yourself as such. Please don't worry about collecting wood. You can rest, you must be very tired. We will be honored to do all this on our own."

The Prophet (s) would not let them do all the work. "I know that you are eager to do it all, but Allah isn't pleased with the person who lets others work for him and he does not do anything. It is not right for a person to feel that he is better than others and he should just sit while others work for him.

So the Holy Prophet (s) went around looking for logs of wood to create a fire. He gathered some and brought them to the companions. Then they lit the fire upon which the lamb was cooked.



Moral:

- 1) Everyone must work together
- 2) Do not set yourself above others.

The Holy Prophet (s) and tying the Camel



The caravan of the Holy Prophet (s) had been traveling for a few hours now. Signs of fatigue were obvious on everyone's faces. They arrived at a point and stopped. The Holy Prophet (s) who was also in the caravan, stopped the camel, and landed. Before anything else, they went to look for water to prepare for prayer.

The Prophet (s) also started searching for water. But soon, he returned to his camel without saying anything to anyone. The companions were surprised that the Prophet (s) had ordered that they stop here, but now he was coming back. Did he perhaps want to move again? Eyes and ears were awaiting his order. But the surprise of the group increased as they saw him approach his camel. He tied it to a post, and returned back in search of water.



People were surprised. Why had the Prophet (s) not asked one of them to do that for him? Instead he returned himself from his search for water to tie his camel: "O Messenger of Allah", they said. 'Why didn't you order us to do this for you, and instead you put yourself in discomfort? You came back just for this? We would have proudly done that service for you."

The Prophet (s) responded: "I was able to do it myself so I didn't want to trouble any of you. When someone can do something himself, he should never ask others to do it. Never seek others' help in your affairs, don't lean on others, even if it is a small piece of Miswak (the wood used for brushing teeth). If you can do things by yourself that is the best way to do your own tasks.

Moral:

- 1) Do your own work as much as you can without troubling anyone else or asking for help.
- 2) Respect other people's time and efforts.

The Prophet's Iftar (Fast breaking meal)

Anas ibn Malik was one of the companions who had served the Holy Prophet (s) for many years. He therefore knew Prophet Muhammad's habits very well.

When the Prophet (s) observed a fast, he usually broke it with milk and dates. And in the early hours of the night, he would take some simple food for his suhoor.



One day, Anas ibn Malik knew that the Prophet (s) was fasting; so he arranged for his iftar (fast breaking). He kept the milk and dates ready. At the time of iftar the Prophet (s) did not appear for the breaking of the fast. Anas ibn Malik thought that he may have accepted an invitation from someone and broken his fast elsewhere. So Anas ibn Malik ate the food himself and decided to go and sleep.

Soon however, the Prophet (s) entered the house with another companion, Anas ibn Malik inquired from the companion whether the Prophet (s) had already eaten.

'No' said the companion. 'The Prophet (s) has not eaten yet'. He had been dealing with some urgent work and was delayed, and so was late in coming for iftar.

Anas ibn Malik felt so ashamed. There was nothing left that he could offer to the Prophet(s) if he asked for food. There was no more milk either. He waited expectantly, ready to explain the situation to Prophet (s) The Prophet (s) immediately sensed that Anas ibn Malik was hesitant in offering him food. This was very unlike how Anas behaved usually so the Prophet understood that there was no food or milk in the house. He behaved as if he were not hungry at all and went without supper with a cheerful face.

Anas ibn Malik used to say: 'The Messenger of Allah never mentioned this incident during his lifetime to anyone.'

Moral:

- 1) Consider the feelings of other people
- 2) Patience and tolerance of the mistakes of others

The Rich man learns a lesson

It was a usual meeting. The Prophet (s) was in his place in the mosque of Madinah and his companions gathered around him to hear the words of wisdom and guidance.

A rich person dressed in clean and elegant clothes arrived in the presence of the Prophet (s) and sat down before him. A short while later, a poor person wearing old and tattered clothes, appeared, saluted the assembly: "Salamun Alaikum" (Peace be on you)! And finding a vacant place comfortably sat down.

The Prophet (s) had taught them that all Muslims were brothers and in an assembly one should sit wherever one finds a place, regardless of any status. Now, it so happened that this poor man was seated next to a very rich man. The rich man felt very disturbed and tried to collect the edges of his dress around himself, so that the poor man didn't touch them.

Having observed this, the Prophet (s) was very disturbed. Later he called the rich man aside and asked him why he had behaved the way he did. "Did you fear that the poor person next to you might make your clothes dirty?"

"No," replied the rich person.

"Then why did you behave so?" asked the Prophet (s)

"I admit that was the most undesirable thing to do. It was an error and I confess my guilt. I have a companion (soul) that makes good deeds appear evil to me and vice-versa. O' Prophet of Allah! As a punishment for this reprehensible act of mine, I gift half of my wealth to the poor man."

Turning to the poor man, the Prophet (s) inquired, "Do you accept the offer?"

"No, O' Prophet of Allah," said the poor man.

People present were taken by surprise, they thought that the poor man was a fool, but then he explained: "O' Prophet of Allah, I refuse to accept this offer because I fear that I might then become arrogant and ill-treat my Muslim brothers the way he did to me."

Moral:

- 1) Arrogance and discrimination against others is highly disliked.
- 2) Small gestures reveal what is felt by the heart.



Work hard for yourself

One of companions of the Holy Prophet (s) was very poor. He felt he could not do anything to earn and get money to feed his family. His wife advised him to go to the Prophet (s) and request his help.

The companion approached the Prophet (s), but as soon as the Prophet (s) saw the man, he said: "If a person seeks something from me, I shall certainly grant it to him, but if he were to be self-sufficient and work hard, Allah will make him free of want.

Hearing this, the companion said to himself, the Prophet (s) has intended me by this speech of his. Without uttering a word, he returned home and narrated the incident to his wife.

His wife said, 'I think you should still talk to the Prophet (s). Explain your dilemma to him and see what he has to say.'

The companion returned to the Prophet (s) for the second time but heard the same sentence from him and again came back home without saying a word.

When this was repeated for the third time, the companion borrowed a pickaxe from one of his friends and set off towards the mountains. Throughout the day he worked hard to gather firewood which he sold for some flour and that night he and his wife had bread for dinner.



The next day, the companion worked harder and collected more firewood and this continued for several days till he was able to purchase a pickaxe for himself.

After some period, as a result of his hard work, he managed to purchase two camels and a slave, and slowly became one of the rich ones.

One day, he came to the Prophet (s) and narrated to him the events of his life and the effect of his words, whereupon the Prophet (s) responded: I had said (before): "One who seeks to be independent (of others), Allah shall make him independent."

Moral:

- 1) Work hard for yourself
- 2) Do not request for help when you can work on something yourself.

The Unhappy Nightingale

I am a beautiful nightingale. I lived in a beautiful ranch. I am not sure how much you know about nightingales. We are like sparrows but are bigger than they are. We have beautiful crests. We fly quickly in space and we are known for the nice sounds we produce when we sing.



I spent many happy days at the ranch. God blessed me with a young one and I became a mother. The days passed nicely until one day a man came into the ranch. I was flying from branch to branch, singing happily, unaware of what was going to happen. The man gazed at the trees. Then he came near my nest, extended his hand and took my young one.

My baby was shouting and calling me to save him. But how can a weak bird like me face a strong man like him? I flew over the man's head to see where he would go with my young one. He went to his friends and showed them the little bird he had caught. 'I got him from a nest in the ranch' he told them. The man seemed proud of what he had done, not realizing the grief he had brought me.

Then I saw someone coming whose face radiated light and love for others. I recognized him as the Messenger of God. I had seen him before and knew that he was kind to all creatures. I decided to ask him for help. I flew around him and made sad sounds. The Prophet (s) knew that I had a problem. When I flapped my wings he knew my request. His friends were surprised at what I was doing.



The Prophet (s) turned to them. 'Which one of you has distressed this bird by taking its young' the Prophet (s) asked. The man came forward. 'I did' he said. 'I took its young'. 'Have mercy on this bird and give her back the young one' said the Prophet (s). 'It's distressful for a mother to be separated from her baby'.

So the man went back to the ranch and neared my nest. He placed the young one back into the nest and walked away. I was so happy to have my baby back again. I was grateful to the Prophet (s) and thanked God that I had seen him in time to save my little one.

Moral:

- 1) Kindness to animals.
- 2) Respect for all creation.

The Old Camel

I am an old camel. I had worked for my owner for many years. I spent my life in his service. I carried his loads from one land to another. Before I became old I used all my strength for him. We spent many hours together on journeys, carrying loads on my back. We would go through the burning desert, my feet carrying him wherever he wanted to go.

But when I became old my owner decided to slaughter me and sell my meat. I was very sad to know that. I began to think of how I could save myself. "How can he be so unfeeling?" I asked myself. 'Does he not have any loyalty?'

I wondered how I could save myself. If I stayed in his house he would certainly slaughter me. So I went away, out of the city and into the desert.



On the way I met the Prophet (s). I knew he was a very kind man with a lot of love and respect for all creatures. I knew he would understand my sorrow. I came up to him and sat near his feet. The Prophet (s) understood that I was distressed. Since I was old he knew it was to do with the fact that I could not be of service anymore. He patted me on my head and took me to my owner.

The Prophet (s) asked the owner if he could buy me from him. 'I will give you whatever price you want' said the Prophet. 'This camel seems very sad and I would like to make him happy. I will buy him from you and set him free'. The owner was surprised. 'You don't need to buy him from me, I will give him as a present to you' he said. He felt honored that the Prophet (s) wanted his camel.

So the Prophet (s) set me free and let me go wherever I wanted. I would always stay close to him. Whenever people saw me they said, 'This is the camel that was saved by the Prophet (s) of God'.

Moral:

- 1) Kindness to animals
- 2) Respect for all creation

The boy who threw stones at trees

There was a boy who lived in the city of Madinah, who loved the taste of dates. He would do almost anything to enjoy dates fresh from the tree. Just outside the city was a beautiful pool, an oasis. Round the pool there were many palm trees. And on the palm trees grew the dates which the boy loved so much.



Each day the boy slipped away from his friends and went by himself to the oasis. There he took out a handful of stones which he had collected during the day. He chose a tree where he could see the dates hanging, ready to eat. Selecting a stone with care, the boy took aim and threw it hard at the tree. With luck he would hit the tree just right, and a date would fall to the floor, ripe and juicy. Then he would choose another stone, and another, until lots of dates lay in the sand around, leaning against the tree and ate his fear of fresh dates. He never thought about the damage he had caused to the trees. He never imagined that the trees might never grow fruit again, at that they might even die.

When the people who owned the trees came to check their fruit, they were very surprised. Each day there were fewer dates to be seen. Each day the trees looked less and less healthy. They decided to watch the trees for a whole day, to see what was happening. They were curious when the boy arrived to throw his stones and eat his dates. They were angry when they saw what he was doing to the beautiful trees. No wonder they did not look healthy. The owners stepped out of their hiding place and took hold of the boy. He was surprised, and a little frightened. They were angry, and a little confused. They did not know what to do, "let's take him to Prophet Muhammad," one said "He will know what is right."

Standing in front of The Prophet (s), the boy was afraid. He was usually very well behaved and had never been in serious trouble before. But he did love fresh dates. And it was easy to knock them out of the branches with stones. Prophet Muhammad (s) looked at the boy. He spoke very quietly, because he was not angry. He could tell that the boy loved dates so much that he did not think about damaged he had caused to the trees. "Why do you throw stones at trees? Don't you know it hurts them?" The boy said he was sorry. He had not thought about the trees. He only thought about the delicious taste of the dates. "Why don't you wait," said Prophet Muhammad, "until the dates are really ripe, and fall from the trees themselves. They will taste even better." The boy smiled. He could still enjoy his dates. The trees would stay healthy, and grew more dates next year. And sure enough, the boy found that the dates he picked up from the sand the trees tasted wonderful.

Moral:

- 1) Respect for nature.
- 2) Respect for other people's wealth and property.