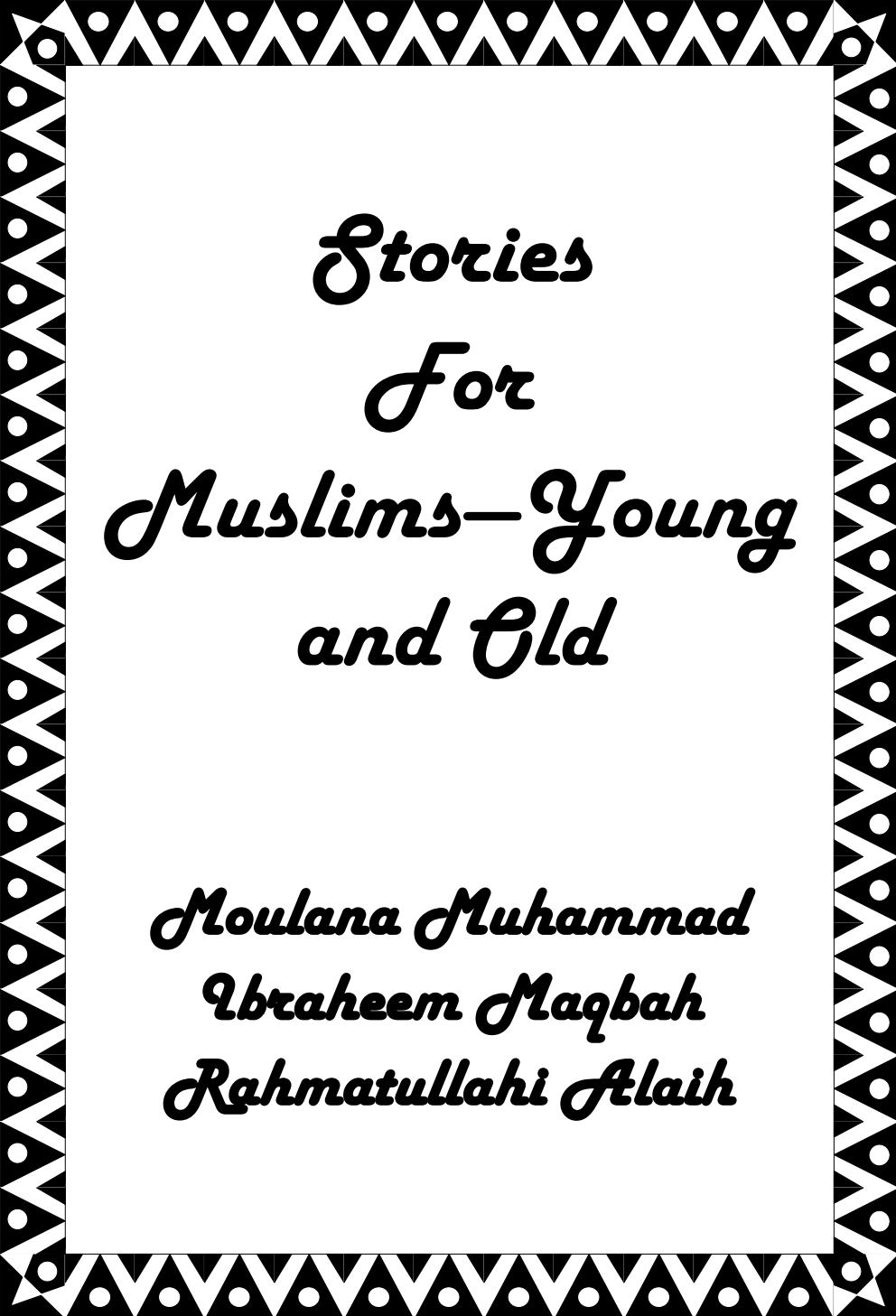


*Stories
For
Muslims—Young
and Old*

*Moulana Muhammad
Ibraheem Maqbah
Rahmatullahi Alaih*



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Part One: Learning to Read and Write	5
<i>Story One:</i>	5
<i>Imam Shaafi'i (Rahmatullahi Alaihi)</i>	5
<i>Story Two:</i>	5
<i>The Two Brothers</i>	5
<i>Story Three:</i>	7
<i>Advice from a Buzrug</i>	7
<i>Story Four:</i>	7
<i>First Make Your Effort</i>	7
<i>Story Five:</i>	8
<i>Early to Learn</i>	8
<i>Story Six:</i>	9
<i>With Effort Comes Good Fates</i>	9
<i>Story Seven:</i>	10
<i>The Prince and the Pauper</i>	10
Part Two: Manners and Good Behaviour	12
<i>Story One:</i>	12
<i>A Fortunate Lad</i>	12
<i>Story Two:</i>	13
<i>The Means to Acquire Wealth and Honour</i>	13
<i>Story Three:</i>	15
<i>A Sincere Student's Concern</i>	15
<i>Story Four:</i>	16
<i>One Boy's Haughtiness and</i>	16
<i>Another Boy's Friendliness</i>	16
<i>Story Five:</i>	19
<i>The Humbleness of the Cow</i>	19
<i>and the Insolence of the Donkey</i>	19
<i>Story Six:</i>	20
<i>Hazrat Faqeeh Ali Makhdoom (Rahmatullahi Alaihi)</i>	20
Part Three: Benefits of Speaking the Truth and Harms of Lying and Backbiting	23
<i>Story One:</i>	23
<i>The Boy who was Honest</i>	23

<i>and the Boy who was Dishonest</i>	23
<i>Story Two:</i>	25
<i>Mr. Mutthu</i>	25
<i>Story Three:</i>	26
<i>The Man Who Cried, “Robber!”</i>	26
<i>Story Four:</i>	27
<i>The Woodcutter and the Axe</i>	27
<i>Story Five:</i>	29
<i>Honesty Defeats Robbery</i>	29
<i>Story Six:</i>	31
<i>A Crime against Humanity</i>	31
<i>Story Seven:</i>	32
<i>The Tale-Bearing Backhiter</i>	32
<i>Story Eight:</i>	33
<i>Shah Guzaari ... and Gheebat!</i>	33
<i>Story Nine:</i>	34
<i>Piercing the Arrow into the Heart</i>	34
Part Four: Ibaadat (Prayers) and Piety	35
<i>Story One:</i>	35
<i>The Age of Forming the Habit of Salaat</i>	35
<i>Story Two:</i>	36
<i>A Happy Life in this World and in the Next</i>	36
<i>Story Three:</i>	38
<i>How to Solve All Your Problems</i>	38
<i>Story Four:</i>	40
<i>Shame on You, O Muslim!</i>	40
<i>Story Five:</i>	42
<i>What is Ibaadat?</i>	42
Part Five: The Disgrace of Drinking	43
and the Evils of Drugs and Bad Company	43
<i>Story One:</i>	43
<i>Bringing Disgrace on the Family</i>	43
<i>Story Two:</i>	45

<i>The Root of All Evil</i>	45
<i>Story Three:</i>	47
<i>Save Yourself Young Man</i>	47
<i>Story Four:</i>	49
<i>A Tragic End</i>	49
<i>Story Five:</i>	52
<i>Substance Abuse</i>	52
Part Six: The Harms of Craving and Greed and the Benefits of Patience and Contentment	55
<i>Story One:</i>	55
<i>Your Parents' Food and Your Friends' Food</i>	55
<i>Story Two:</i>	56
<i>Desiring Other People's Things</i>	56
<i>Story Three:</i>	57
<i>Not Satisfied with Your Lot?</i>	57
<i>Story Four:</i>	58
<i>The Greedy Dog</i>	58
<i>Story Five:</i>	58
<i>The Fatal Poison of Greed</i>	58
<i>Story Six:</i>	61
<i>The Discontented Parrot</i>	61
<i>Story Seven:</i>	63
<i>Shaikh Sa'di's Lesson</i>	63
<i>Story Eight:</i>	63
<i>Be Contented and Grateful</i>	63
<i>For That Which Allah Ta'ala Gives You</i>	63
<i>Story Nine:</i>	64
<i>A True Mu-min in the Face of Adversity</i>	64
<i>Story Ten:</i>	65
<i>Fantasies Go Up in Smoke</i>	65
<i>Story Eleven:</i>	67
<i>True Gratitude</i>	67

Part One: Learning to Read and Write

Story One:

Imam Shaafi'i (Rahmatullahi Alaih)

Hazrat Imam Shaafi'i (Rahmatullahi alaih) learnt the Qur'aan Shareef and became a Hafiz at the age of 7. When he reached the age of 10, through the grace of Allah Ta'ala he learnt a lot of knowledge. At the age of 15 he became accomplished and qualified in all Islamic subjects. Thereafter he wrote many Kitaabs and became the leading Imam of his Math-hab.

Story Two:

The Two Brothers

Two brothers would go to a Madrasah to learn. One was 9 years of age and the other 8 years of age who started going to the Madrasah a year after his elder brother. However, after nine or ten months he [the younger

brother] caught up with the elder brother's sabaq [lesson]. After a further seven to eight months he was very much ahead of his elder brother.

His father went to the Ustaaad and said: "Moulana! What is this? Are you not giving due attention to my elder son? Are you not showing kindness to him and hence he is lagging far behind the younger boy?"

The Ustaaad responded: "I put in equal effort on all the boys. Then we have some boys who put their minds and hearts into their lessons. They learn with effort. Daily they take new sabaq. And we have boys who come to the Madrasah and take sabaq. They move their heads to and fro when learning. But in their minds they have play and other things. They do not put their minds to their lessons. For this reason they are often punished. Your elder son belongs to the second class."

When the father heard this he was very much annoyed at the elder son and he became very strict on him. At home he would give him punishment. Only then did he [the elder son] give up play and put his mind to his learning. In consequence he started to learn quickly.

Story Three:

Advice from a Buzrug

A person went to a certain Buzrug [saintly person] and said: “Hazrat! Make Du’aa for my son that he learns properly and his mind and intelligence increase.”

The Buzrug replied: “Listen! I will make Du’aa for him; however, I have some words of advice. Emphasize to him that when he sits down to learn then he should apply his mind to his sabaq and he should spend much time learning. All the time he should have eagerness in him to learn. He should not waste his time in play and laziness. Then the benefit and barkat of Du’aa will be with him and his mind will become bright and very intelligent. Through the fazl [grace] of Allah Ta’ala quickly he will learn, become qualified and complete with his studies.”

Story Four:

First Make Your Effort

A Mureed [disciple] came to his Peer [spiritual mentor and guide] without his turban. The Peer asked him:

“What have you done with your turban?” He replied: “I left it in the Masjid where I stay.”

Peer: Did you entrust it to someone for safekeeping?

Mureed: Not to any person. Trusting in Allah Ta'ala I left it there.

Peer: Go! Firstly see to your turban then put your trust in Allah Ta'ala.

Thus it is binding upon a person to carry out whatever he knows of a particular work, followed by his trust in Allah Ta'ala. Through the fazl [grace] of Allah Ta'ala he will attain his goal. However, to allow your work to be harmed and your fortune to be spoilt through laziness and carelessness is extremely foolish.

In exactly the same manner, if a student does not strive and make an effort himself; he does not put his heart and mind to his learning trusting in the effort and affection of the Ustaaad, or he places his hopes in only ta'weez and du'aas then it will be very surprising if he gains Ilm.

Story Five:

Early to Learn

There was a boy who always would be the first to go to Madrasah and learn his work. The other boys would

become angry at him and say: “Why do you come so early to class? It Moulana finds out he will tell us also to come early and learn.” The boy replied: “If I do not come early and learn my work then Moulana will punish me [for not knowing my work]. My parents will be disappointed with me and other people will make a joke out of me saying that this boy does not learn well. Tell me what stops you from coming early to learn your lessons? If you do so then Moulana will not become angry with you. You will learn your lessons quickly and you will not be punished.”

Story Six:

With Effort Comes Good Fates

An elderly lady sent her child to Madrasah to learn how to read and write. The child would learn and forget. However, his mother did not become despondent. She would send him to Madrasah regularly for three or four years and make Du’aa for him. In the end, by the grace of Allah Ta’ala her son started to excel in his work until he received employment by a prominent person and by virtue of his education he was able to carry out all his responsibilities and handle all the accounts. Then he worked for a businessman until he himself became a wealthy businessman.

Poem:

*“Whoever makes an effort to read and write,
though he may be dull he will achieve good fate”*

Story Seven:

The Prince and the Pauper

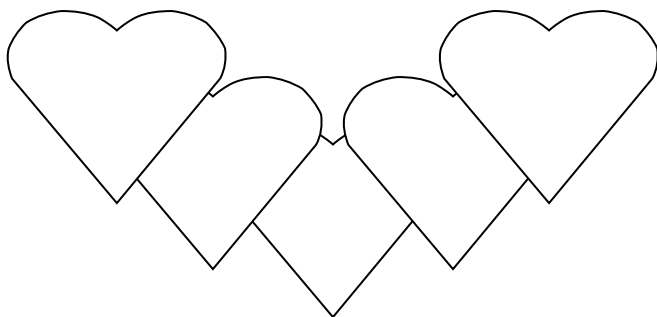
A certain city was hit by a famine. The inhabitants of the city and the outlying areas—those who held government posts and the public, men and women, young and old—all in a state of distress and confusion left their homes, mansions, orchards, gardens, belongings and possessions and fled in all directions to other cities. Everyone was heading for wherever he/she could get to. Even the king of that city was afflicted with this calamitous, dismal and distraughtful condition. As he was fleeing he died on the way. The prince was with him.

Now separated from his father and in a pitiable condition he reached another country. Coincidentally the son of a villager from his [the prince’s] country also reached the city where the prince reached. The prince was not educated. He was ignorant. So, he wandered about begging for food. On the other hand the villager’s son was very educated, alert and intelligent. He received

some employment by the king of that country. In time his status increased and it wasn't long thereafter that he received such honour and greatness that he became the prime minister of the king.

*The pen said: "I am the king of kings.
Whoever can write I crown him as a king.
Even if he is a wretched one then too for a time,
I give him the taste and pleasure of money and
wealth."*

[The lesson to learn from this story is that if you learn the Kalaam or Speech of the King of the Universe—Allah Ta'ala—and if you study and learn His Laws—the Shariah, the Deen—then most assuredly you will receive honour and glory in His Kingdom.]



Part Two: Manners and Good Behaviour

Story One:

A Fortunate Lad

A boy was on his way to the bazaar with his father. He was walking in front of his father. After walking for a while an elderly and holy person coming from the opposite direction appeared before them. He was walking slowly and behind him 5 to 7 strong young men were also walking slowly.

The boy asked his father: “Who is this old man and why are these people walking slowly behind him? Why don’t they walk ahead?” The father replied: “Son! This holy man is a big Aalim. Out of respect for him people do not walk in front of him.”

The boy was good and clever. He immediately started walking behind his father. The father saw that his son was a very fortunate boy; etiquette of manners quickly left its impression on him. He became very happy and at home he kissed the boy and showed much affection to him.

He mentioned to the boy's mother and family what had transpired. Everyone became very happy at the boy and made Du'aa for him. From then onwards they showed much more love and affection for him.

Story Two:

The Means to Acquire Wealth and Honour

There was a wealthy businessman. He had a son by the name of Abdullah. The businessman brought his son up well and taught him manners, respect and orderliness. When the businessman passed away the son inherited all his father's money, wealth and properties. All authority became vested in him.

For many years he ran his father's business well. He was friendly with everyone in the city and he would show them kindness and politeness. He would show equal respect and humbleness to rich and poor. Suddenly his business started to drop and all his business dealings came to a standstill. He had to close down all his shops. In this helpless and pitiable condition he left his city and came to a far off country where he took up employment by a certain wealthy person. Seeing his conduct, manners and respect the wealthy person treated him very well.

One day the wealthy person asked him: “Who are you? Where do you come from? What is the purpose in you coming here?” He then revealed his whole story. The wealthy person took pity on him. He started to treat him like his own son.

The wealthy man also had a son of his own. But his son was very haughty and rebellious. Neither would he obey his father, nor would he have manners for anyone. Neither would he show respect for others, nor would he make Salaam. He thought himself to be great. The father would be very heartsore and grieved over him.

Although Abdullah was not his son, the wealthy man was in his heart very much pleased with him over his manners and humbleness. In view of this he gave half his wealth and possessions to Abdullah and sent him to his homeland.

Poem:

مال و عزت کا وسیلہ ہے ادب
بے ادب پر تو سبھوں کا ہے غضب

*“The means to acquire wealth and honour is
good manners.
An ill-mannered person makes everyone furious.”*

Story Three:

A Sincere Student's Concern

Many boys would attend a certain Madrasah. Among them was a young boy whose father was poor. This boy would show more respect to the Ustaad and be better behaved than the other boys. He would not speak loudly to anyone in front of the Ustaad. He would not sit with his back to the Ustaad. When seeing the Ustaad or someone senior he would get up and make Salaam respectfully. The Ustaad was very much pleased with his behaviour and would teach him with affection and kindness. The other boys in the Madrasah would also readily help him due to his manners, humbleness and good character. The Ustaad would put more effort into this boy's teaching and education.

One day the Ustaad was not present at the Madrasah. Another boy started to fight with him. It was not the fault of the boy who was very respectful. Nevertheless out of fear he became very worried and he said: "If my Ustaad or my parents come to know they will become angry and punish me." This made him very sad.

Truly, a boy whom Allah Ta'ala has made good and fortunate, he is always well-behaved. If coincidentally he does something wrong then he becomes very fearful and as a result his heart grieves and becomes sore. Then he never repeats such an action.

Story Four:

One Boy's Haughtiness and Another Boy's Friendliness

A person went to the home of a rich man for some work. The rich man was not at home. However, his son and another boy who was a son of a poor man were sitting there together. The man greeted them. The poor man's son replied to the greeting and stood out of respect. But the rich man's son did not move his lips or acknowledge with his hands. He sat quietly and stared at the man's face. The man was surprised that this was such a rich man, but his son had no manners. He thought to himself that when this boy grows up what good will there be in him? In any case he did his work and left.

A few days thereafter the man saw the rich man's son walking on the road. He followed him. There were many people walking on the road—old, young, children. But that boy did not make Salaam to anyone. He looked to the right and to the left avoiding looking at anyone and continued his way.

When any poor person would recognize him as the rich man's son and make Salaam to him then he would either move his head slightly or wave his hand a little. The people of the city were aware of his haughtiness. In view of his bad ways many would not expect any reply of *Wa Alaikumus Salaam* from him and they would not feel like speaking with him.

Then that man had some work again with the rich man. He went to the rich man's home but again the rich man was not at home. However, that son of his was there sitting and the poor man's son was standing in front of him and speaking. The man greeted them. This time also the poor man's son said, "Wa Alaikumus Salaam," but the other boy said nothing and remained expressionless. The man asked: "Where is your father?" The son gave no clear answer. The poor man's son responded: "He is not at home. He went out." Hearing this, the man went away.

After some time, the man went on a journey to a distant city where he stayed for 10 to 12 years. One day he saw the rich man's son walking along. He came close to him and asked: "How come you are here in this city?" The rich man's son replied: My father died and at the time of his death he gave all his money and wealth to my younger brother. Everything was in the custody of my mother who would give me a little. Then I had an argument with my mother and I was forced to leave home. That is why I am here."

The man asked: “There was a poor man’s son, who would keep company with you. Where is he?” The rich man’s son replied: “He is now a big businessman. His brother is here on a business trip on behalf of him. He saw me in a bad state and taking me to be his old-time friend he sent me with his brother on this trip.”

Listening to his story the man recalled the boy’s haughtiness and the manners and friendliness of the poor man’s son, and said to himself: “This is the misery of haughtiness and acting great, and look at how Allah Ta’ala loves manners and friendliness! Whoever is destined to be good or bad, he follows that path when he is young.”

عاجزی اور خاکساری دولت و عزت دکھائے
فخر و مغروری تو خواری سے بڑی ذلت دکھائے

*“Humbleness and politeness bring a fortune and respectability.
Boasting and acting great bring utter disgrace and misery.”*

Story Five:

The Humbleness of the Cow and the Insolence of the Donkey

In a certain village a cow went out grazing in the fields. A donkey was also grazing there. Suddenly a lion appeared on the scene. Out of fear the cow stood still and quiet. It humbly lowered its head and looked down. But the donkey started braying and jumping.

The lion saw that the cow out of fear was standing still and quiet. “It will not run away. But the donkey arrogantly and inconsiderately is jumping and making a big noise. This disrespectful idiot should be taken care of first.” So the lion went after the donkey and dropped it. It filled its stomach with the donkey’s flesh and quenched its thirst with its blood.

As the lion was engaged with the donkey the cow saw the opportunity and made a decision to run for its life. The lion however was not neglectful of the cow. When the cow made a dash the lion went after it. Just then 20 to 30 men from the village appeared on the scene. They had rifles with them which were loaded. Upon seeing the lion they fired 5 to 7 shots at it. The shots hit their target and the lion fell down dead.

Due to the humbleness and respect of the cow it was saved from the first attack of the lion, and through the barkat [blessing] of that humbleness and respect it survived the second assault.

Story Six:

Hazrat Faqeeh Ali Makhdoom (Rahmatullahi Alaih)

Hazrat Faqeeh Ali Makhdoom Muhaayimi (May Allah Ta'ala be pleased with him) was an outstanding saint, great Aalim and a Friend of Allah Ta'ala. From childhood he was pious and honourable. His respected mother was very devout and would all the time be engaged in Ibaadat and devotion unto Allah Ta'ala. She was the friend of Allah Ta'ala.

From childhood Hazrat Makhdoom Saheb would serve, respect and honour his mother excessively. One night his respected mother asked him for some water to drink. Happily Makhdoom Saheb quickly went and washed the glass with his own hands, filled it with clean and cool water and brought it to his honourable mother.

When he came to her he saw that she had fallen asleep. Makhdoom Saheb kept the glass of water in his hand

and stood by silently in anticipation of his mother waking up and asking for the water. However, out of respect he did not disturb her sleep by calling out. Quietly he remained standing and waiting.

When it was close to Fajr his mother woke up and what did she see? Her fortunate son was standing by her bedside with a glass filled with water. She asked: “My Dear Son! How long are you standing here?” With great respect he replied: “You asked for water. I brought it. When I came I saw that you had fallen asleep. I did not wish to wake you up or go from here. I stood here waiting for you to wake up and ask for the water. It is almost morning now.”

When the honourable mother heard the reality and saw his humility she became extremely pleased and realized that her son was indeed a pious boy. In fact, through the grace of Allah Ta'ala he was worthy of being conferred the mantle of sainthood. Mercy engulfed her heart and she raised both her hands in Du'aa unto Allah Ta'ala: “O Creator and Cherisher of His servants! Make this son of mine successful in both worlds. Make him accomplished in Your love and grant him the wealth of Your friendship.”

Her Du'aa was accepted and through the barkat of Makhdoom Saheb's respect and the Du'aa of his honourable mother he achieved good fortune in Deen and dunya. He became a Wali [Saint] of Allah Ta'ala

and he could perform miracles. He passed away in the year 835 of the Hijri [Islamic] calendar. The date of his demise auspiciously stands for 'Jannaatul Firdous' or 'Gardens of Paradise'. His blessed name is alive and well known in the world and his writings are popular and praised all over.

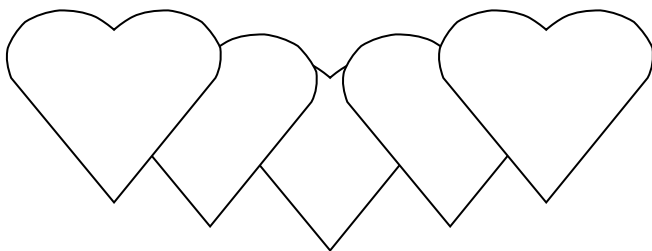
Poem:

ادب ہے تاج لطف رب کا اے یار

اسے سہر پر رکھے سو ہووے سردار

*“My Friend! The Crown of Allah’s grace is good
behaviour.*

Whoever adorns himself with it will be a leader.”



Part Three: Benefits of Speaking the Truth and Harms of Lying and Backbiting

Story One:

The Boy who was Honest and the Boy who was Dishonest

One boy went late to Madrasah. The Ustaad asked: “Why are you so late?” The boy replied: “There was some show on the way. I stood and watched. That is why I am late. Please make me maaf [excuse me]. I will not do so again.”

The Ustaad became happy over him speaking the truth and asking for maaf over his wrong. He thus said: “You spoke the truth and asked for maaf. This is your first ghunaah [wrong, sin]. I will therefore not punish you. But, remember don’t do so again otherwise you will be punished.”

Just then another boy turned up, also late. The Ustaad posed him the same question: “Why are you so late? What were you doing up till now? Why did you not come on time?” The boy replied: “My father sent me for

some work. That is why I am late.” Coincidentally his father was passing by. The Ustaad called the father and said to him: “Don’t send your son to do any work during his learning time. See, he has only come now!” The father replied: “I never sent him anywhere!”

Hearing this, the boy became embarrassed. The Ustaad shouted him saying: “Speak the truth; otherwise you will regret it later.” Out of fear the boy spoke: “I was watching with other boys a show on the road. That’s the reason for me being late.” The Ustaad said: “Listen! You have committed two wrongs; one coming late to Madrasah and the second—a major wrong—you spoke a lie.” He then gave the boy a stern warning and some appropriate punishment so that he understood the gravity of speaking lies.

The boy realized that the misfortune he was caught in was on account of the evil of speaking lies.

In the evening he went home. His father also gave him a stern warning. “If the Ustaad never disciplined you I would have taught you a good lesson,” he said. “Now, remember what happened and beware of ever speaking lies! Speak what is the truth. Don’t add or delete anything from your own side. A person loses his reliability because of that and in fact he is punished.

Story Two:

Mr. Mutthu

There was a person by the name of Mr. Mutthu. When he would speak about something he had the habit of including a couple of lies to his story. He would chatter a lot. When someone would investigate his stories and learn of his lies then he [Mr. Mutthu] would become very embarrassed and he would hide his face. But still he would not give up his bad habit and he would be disgraced.

One day Mr. Mutthu said: “There was a downpour in the city last night and all groceries and food were washed onto the roads. Rain fell heavily flooding the shops. Plenty of goods have been damaged.” When people investigated the news they learned that there was a downpour the previous night. This was true. But, neither were goods washed onto the roads and nor were the shops damaged. Now people firmly believed that Mr. Mutthu was a big liar and that he will never leave his habit of speaking lies. They decided not to listen to him anymore, and if by chance someone did hear what he had say then no trust should be placed in what he said.

Poem:

بات جیسی ہوئی ہے ویسی بول

جھوٹ پر کم زیادہ منہ مت کھول

*“Relate something just as it took place.
Do not lie by speaking a word more or less.”*

Story Three:

The Man Who Cried, “Robber!”

There was a man who made a noise in his house at midnight screaming falsely, “Robber! Robber! Come! Come! I am going to be killed!” Hearing this, his neighbours and people living nearby came terrified. But they found that nothing had happened. He was crying out falsely and as a joke. In this way he did this two or three times troubling and deceiving people. They made up their minds then never to come running to him when he cries out again.

Not long thereafter one night truly robbers broke into his home. The man called out and called out but no one came. The robbers casually took everything from his home and left.

Thus it is certain that whoever becomes notorious as a liar, even if he speaks the truth he is not trusted.

Poem:

جھوٹ بکے میں کوئی ہو مشہور

اسکی سچ بات بھی نہ ہو منظور

*“When a person becomes a liar reputed,
the truth he speaks is also rejected.”*

Story Four:

The Woodcutter and the Axe

An old woodcutter would cut the dry branches of a huge shrub by the banks of a river. One day his axe slipped out of his hand and fell into the river. The distressed poor old woodcutter started to cry profusely. Just then a saintly person appeared on the scene. He took pity on the poor weak person and asked: “Old Man! Why are you crying?” “My axe fell into the water. I cannot take it out,” replied the old woodcutter.

The saintly person dived into the water and came out with a golden axe. He showed it to the old woodcutter who said: “Hazrat! This is not mine.” The saintly person dived into the water again and this time he came out with a silver axe. Upon showing it to the woodcutter, the woodcutter said: “Mister! This is not mine.”

The saintly person dived down for the third time and this time he came up with the woodcutter's axe. The old man recognized it at once. He became extremely happy and said without hesitation: "Yes, this is my axe." He thanked the saintly person abundantly, very humbly and earnestly. The saintly person was also very happy at the honesty and righteousness of the man and congratulated him. He rewarded him by giving him both the golden and silver axes as well.

When the old man came home he was beaming with happiness. His life changed to one of comfort and ease. He disclosed to his friends all that transpired. After listening to the old man's story one person immediately took an axe and went to the bank of the river. He threw the axe into the river and sat down crying and moaning.

Again the saintly person appeared and asked him for the reason for his crying. He answered: "Hazrat! My axe fell into the river." The saintly person dived into the river and came out with a golden axe. The man ran out of greed to grab hold of the golden axe. The saintly person realized that this was a liar and he became displeased. He did not give him the golden axe and he left the man's axe in the river.

From this episode we can see how a person is honoured through honesty and righteousness and how a person is disgraced through dishonesty and greed.

Story Five:

Honesty Defeats Robbery

Hazrat Sayyid Abdul Qadir Saheb Jilaani (Quddisa Sirruhu) was ready to leave for Baghdad to study as a young man. He came to bid farewell to his mother. His honourable mother was deeply grieved at the thought of him being separated from her. But for the sake of his studies she was constrained to permit him to leave. She gave him forty gold coins which he inherited from his honourable father. The money was sewn into a pocket inside his garment and upon departure she imparted the following advice to him: "Always speak the truth. I trust that you will never go against these words of mine." Saying this she entrusted him in the care of Allah Ta'ala and bid farewell to him.

The young Abdul Qadir set out with a caravan. After travelling for a few days the caravan was suddenly attacked by a gang of sixty robbers. The robbers robbed every one of their money and valuables. However, they left Abdul Qadir Jilaani taking him to be a poor boy. One robber coincidentally asked the boy: "Young man! Do you have anything with you?" "Yes, I have forty gold coins with me," said Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jilaani. "Where are they," asked the robber. The young Abdul

Qaadir replied: “Sewn into a pocket on the inside of my robe.” The robber thought that the boy was making a joke. He went away.

Thereafter another robber came and asked: “Do you have anything with you?” The young boy gave the same reply. This robber also went away. Both reported the boy’s words to their leader. The leader told them to bring the young man before him. They brought him before the leader. The leader asked: “What do you have on you?” Abdul Qaadir replied: “Forty gold coins.” “Where?” asked the gang leader. “Show me.” Abdul Qaadir showed him the pocket on the inside of his robe.

The robber said: “O Good Boy! Why have you told us about your money?” The young Abdul Qaadir replied: “My dear mother left me with the advice of always speaking the truth. How can I then go against her advice?”

These words of Abdul Qaadir Jilaani left such an impression in the heart of the gang leader and fear for Allah Ta'ala gripped him to such an extent that there and then he took the boy’s hand and kissed it. He made taubah [that is, he repented for his evil action of robbery] and returned to everyone in the caravan their money and belongings.

Seeing the action of their leader the other robbers also made taubah. “Our leader has repented. We will recite

Istighfaar [Nastaghfirullah: O Allah! Forgive us] before the pious boy and stop our banditry,” they said.

In this way through the barkat [blessings and good fortune] of honesty all of them had a beautiful life in this world and will be rewarded in the Aakhirat [Hereafter], Insha Allah.

Story Six:

A Crime against Humanity

One person was speaking with his friend. During the conversation he started saying: “That person [he took the person’s name] is so shameless. He does not pay his debts, yet he sports expensive garments.” The friend replied: “Why are you making his gheebat? Why are you speaking badly about him behind his back? To make gheebat is a major sin. If the person whom you are making gheebat of hears you, he will be so upset. If the fault you mention is really in him then too it is gheebat. If not, then it is tuhmat [slander]. In other words you are making up a story and you are lying. This is another sin.”

The friend who made gheebat became very embarrassed and he told his friend: “I make taubah. I will never make

gheebat of anyone again. You have guided me with sympathy. I am happy over this favour of yours.”

Poem:

عیب سے تو بھی بھرا ہے سر بسر

دوسروں کے عیب پر طعنہ مت کر

“You are also steeped in evil.

Do not take out the faults of other people”

Story Seven:

The Tale-Bearing Backbiter

A person went to a wealthy man and trying to gain favour with the wealthy man he said: “So-and-so friend of yours speaks bad about you.”

Listening to this the wealthy man replied: “He has committed one sin. But you have committed three sins.” “How?” asked the man. The wealthy man replied: “One is that you want to make me annoyed at my friend. Secondly, you have made yourself unreliable by carrying tales. Thirdly, you have to answer to Allah Ta’ala for backbiting. Make taubah from what you are doing. Then Allah Ta’ala will forgive you.”

Poem:

ہے چغاور پور سے بدتر لوٹ لیتا ہے دوستی کا گھر

*“Compared to a thief a tale-bearer is worse.
The home of friendship he plunders.”*

Story Eight:

Shab Guzaari ... and Gheebat!

Hazrat Shaikh Sa'di (Rahmatullahi alaih) says: “I was with my father at a certain home spending the entire night in Ibaadat and making Tilaawat. Many people were sleeping around us. I said to my father: “Look at these people! Not one of them is getting up to read two Rakaats Namaaz! All of them are sleeping so heavily, as if they are dead corpses.”

My father spoke: “Son! If you were sleeping it would have been better than you making their gheebat and finding fault with them.”

Poem:

خدا سے مانگ نیکی کی ہدایت تو خود بد ہے نہ کر کسی کی شکایت

“Ask Allah Ta'ala for the taufeeq of doing an act of good.

Do not find fault with anyone for you are also not so good”

Story Nine:

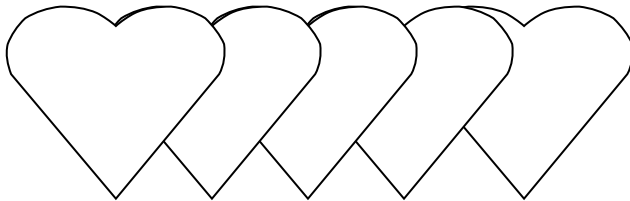
Piercing the Arrow into the Heart

Someone said to a wise man: "So-and-so person swore you." The wise man thought for a while and then spoke: "Brother! It is as if he who has sworn me has shot an arrow in my back. But you have taken that arrow and pierced it into my heart. Tell me, what joy have you received from this?"

Poem:

غیبتی سے تو خدا بیزار ہے خلق میں بھی وہ بہت سا خوار ہے

*"At a backbiter Allah is disgusted.
Even among people he is detested."*



Part Four: Ibaadat (Prayers) and Piety

Story One:

The Age of Forming the Habit of Salaat

A rich man had a son of twelve years of age. The father hired the services of an intelligent person to teach and train his son. The son was the darling of his parents. The intelligent person imparted to him words of advice and wisdom with gentleness and kindness, but the boy remained neglectful.

The intelligent person became angry and told the rich man: “I teach your son manners and knowledge with affection and gentleness. When I see him uninterested then too I lovingly and with great effort try to make him understand. But he is still too lazy to read Namaaz. This I cannot tolerate. Either you caution him or give me permission to punish him and bring him on to the correct path.

The rich man replied: “Ustaad Saheb! He is still small. Emphasize to him with wisdom and softness.” The intelligent Ustaad responded: “The order in respect to the upbringing of boys is that when the son reaches seven years of age then stress on him to read Namaaz.

And when he reaches ten years of age and still does not read Namaaz then beat him.”

Hearing this, the rich man immediately called his son and in front of the boy he instructed the Ustaad to give his son a good hiding if he does not read Namaaz. “And inform me so that I also teach him a good lesson,” said the rich man. When the boy heard this he became frightened and thereafter he stopped his laziness and carelessness in regard to Namaaz.

Poem:

لڑکپن میں جو کچھ عادت پڑیگی بڑھاپے تک وہی نصلت رہیگی

*“Whatever habit you form from childhood,
that same trait will remain through adulthood.”*

کہ تازمی ڈالی کو چاہو سو خم دو جو سوکھی تو نہ آتش بن نمیگی

*“For a fresh twig you can bend as you desire.
A dry one will not bend even in a forest fire.”*

Story Two:

A Happy Life in this World and in the Next

A person went to an accomplished saint (Buzrug, Wali) and said: “Hazrat! Give me such naseehat [advice] by

virtue of which I live nicely in this world and my Aakhirat is also good.”

The saint replied: “Do not let up in the Ibaadat of Allah Ta'ala.”

The man then asked: “Hazrat! What Ibaadat are you referring to?” The saint answered: “Firstly, read all your Namaazes on time. This is a fardh of Allah Ta'ala. Slackness in this regard is a major sin.

Also, learn and remember the laws of Deen and the Shariat which are necessary. Do your work as required by those laws.

And when you have a moment or two free from your work and job, then sit in privacy and think about Allah in your heart. Have fear for him. Think that He is your Master. He sees whatever you do.

If you think about Allah Ta'ala and have fear for him in your heart in this manner, then by virtue of this you will always do good things, through which you will always be happy in this world and you will enjoy the good of the next world.”

Story Three:

How to Solve All Your Problems

A person was going to the Masjid to read Namaaz. On the way he met a friend. He asked the friend: “Brother! Where are you going? The friend answered: “What must I tell you? For three days now I am caught up in such a problem that I am confused as to what should I do? The problem is agitating me.”

The person going to the Masjid replied: “Come with me and read Namaaz. Make Du’aa unto Allah Ta’ala to solve your problem and remove all your worries and grief. I am aware that you are lax in reading your Namaaz and for this reason you are gripped in hardship.”

Hearing this, the friend became startled and he thought to himself: “This is true. I am negligent in reading Namaaz.”

In short, he went to Masjid and after performing his Namaaz he repented with humbleness and tears for his wrongs and he made Du’aa profusely.

When he came out of the Masjid he could immediately feel some joy in his heart. He was therefore not unmindful of the next Namaaz.

At night he sat alone, turned his heart to Allah and made Du'aa for his problem to be solved and his need to be fulfilled.

Whenever he had the opportunity he would engage in the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala and occupy himself with Namaaz, Durood and Wazeefahs [prescribed form of Du'aas and Zikr for different occasions]. Through the barkat of this the weight of grief and pain on his heart went away quickly and his problem was solved.

Three or four days later he met his friend who after greeting and asking him of his wellbeing enquired from him about his problem. He replied: "Through the grace of Allah Ta'ala and the medium of Namaaz and Du'aa my problem has been solved and all my worries and troubles are gone."

It is a certainty that whoever is mindful of Ibaadat his heart is free from worry and the stress of worldly activities. His difficulties became easy and daily his mind is at ease and his heart with peace.

On the other hand one who is lazy in Ibaadat finds it arduous to even do his daily and basic work. He becomes dull and his sustenance lacks blessings.

It is therefore imperative to be conscious of Ibaadat as it is a security against all calamities.

Story Four:

Shame on You, O Muslim!

A Muslim was on a journey. On the way he met a Hindu. Both travelled together. When it was night they stopped over somewhere. In the morning both moved on and at night they stopped. In the morning they were on their way again.

When they would stop for the night the Hindu would wash up and carry out some acts of worship before eating. After waking up and before the sun rose he would wash his hands and face and make some worship and prayer. Thereafter he would prepare to travel.

During this journey he [the Hindu] did not see the Muslim praying in the morning or in the night. He was surprised.

On the third night he decided to find out why, and he waited for the morning. When he saw that the Muslim did not make any Ibaadat he asked: "O Muslim! Is this

your way? Neither do you worship your God in the day nor in the night!”

The Muslim spoke: “Muslims have to read five Namaazes for the day and night.” “What kind of Muslim are you,” questioned the Hindu.” I did not see you making any Namaaz at any time for these three days.”

The Muslim answered: “What must I do? The day long travel leaves me tired. In this state of weariness I cannot read Namaaz.”

The Hindu responded: “Yet, you do not get tired eating two meals a day! But you are tired to worship that Allah who created you and looks after you? I am disgusted with your company. Looking at the face of a person like you in the morning will spoil my whole day, for whoever is careless in remembering Allah will sooner or later be struck with some calamity and difficulty.”

Poem:

کاہلی حق کی بندگی میں نہ کر کہ نہ آوے گا درد و غم تجھ پر

*“Do not be lazy in Allah Ta'ala's prayers,
so that you are not smitten with stress and sadness.”*

Story Five:

What is Ibaadat?

A Moulana was giving a bayaan in a Masjid. “Brothers,” he said, “Always make Ibaadat of Allah Ta’ala in this world and keep on remembering him. Nothing but this is going to help you in the next world.”

A boy who had listened to the Moulana’s bayaan asked his Ustaad: “In the bayaan the Moulana said that we must always make Ibaadat of Allah Ta’ala. If I make Allah Ta’ala’s Ibaadat and his Zikr day and night then when am I going to find time to learn my sabaq [lessons] and come to Madrasah?”

The Ustaad replied: “Learning your sabaq and acquiring Ilm [Islamic knowledge] also fall under Ibaadat, as these are also farz [compulsory] on a person.

Then whatever livelihood you seek and whatever work you do to feed and look after your parents, your wife and your children is also Ibaadat of Allah Ta’ala.

Besides these whatever good acts you engage in is obviously Ibaadat in the Eyes of Allah Ta’ala.”

Part Five: The Disgrace of Drinking and the Evils of Drugs and Bad Company

Story One:

Bringing Disgrace on the Family

The son of a wealthy Jew became addicted to liquor. His father became very angry at him. The father would threaten the son and even beat him. But this did not serve any use.

One day, the son was very drunk and lying on the road. The father was informed. His blood started to boil out of embarrassment. Unable to do anything else he sent someone to bring the boy home.

The next day after recovering from his hangover, the son ran away from home fearing the wrath of his father. After much persuasion the son was brought back home upon the father's instructions.

The father gave a long talk to the boy. For some time he stayed at home.

After several days the urge to do evil overwhelmed him and at midday he went and drank himself drunk. On the road somewhere he fell unconscious. Froth flowed from his mouth and swarms of flies flew around his mouth.

Police constables saw him lying on the ground in a bad state. They put him in their vehicle and rode to the police station.

After he came about the chief-superintendent ordered that his head should be shaved and he be made to stand in the market place all day long. In the evening he should pay a sum as a fine and be set free. If he does not pay the fine then he should be imprisoned for three days, as a warning that whoever drinks himself so drunk that he falls on the road, he will be punished in this manner.

When the father heard of this he became extremely depressed and heartsore. Unwillingly he left the son three days in prison to be punished for his shamelessness. In fact, for the duration of the three days he did not even send food for the son. After three days when the son was released and he came home then for the rest of his life he never again drank liquor.

Story Two:
The Root of All Evil

A poor Hindu labourer lived next to a Muslim. The poor Hindu labourer had three sons who also lived with him. The whole day he [the Hindu labourer] would work and he would come home in the evening very tired. Supper time the father would give his sons a little beer as part of his evil habit and he too would drink to take away his tiredness and stress from working. In this way he would fall asleep quickly.

When the father was old and the boys grew up they started earning and feeding the father. They started making and saving a lot of money.

Now they started drinking more than what they usually would drink. They started becoming addicted to beer and even during the day they started drinking.

It was not long thereafter that the only thing they did day and night was to drink. All the time they would remain drunk and out of their senses. They could not even carry on with their jobs. They became lazy and would lie at home the whole day. All the money they had saved was used up in this way.

Then one son joined gangsters and started stealing. But he was caught. The governor passed sentence over him and his hand was amputated.

The second son in a state of intoxication murdered someone. He was brought to justice and beheaded.

The old father came to his Muslim neighbour sobbing and in shame. He heaved heavy sobs relating the fate of the two. He started asking how his third son could be rehabilitated.

The neighbour took pity at the old age of the man and the terrible state of the boys. He asked questions endeavouring to find out the root of the problem. He finally came to the conclusion that all this evil and disgrace was on account of drinking beer. “Had they not been in the habit of drinking sips of beer when they were young,” he said, “then it would not have led them to drink more and more. This day of calamity would then not have come. That is why liquor is such a detestable substance according to Muslims. Anything which leads to intoxication, even drinking or eating a little of it we regard as *haraam*.”

Listen! Although eating or drinking a little may not make one intoxicated, however, many misfortunes arise through it. Now, leave your third son by me to work. I

will get him out of the habit of drinking and I will look after him.”

The old Hindu man was very thankful and he left that son of his to work by his Muslim neighbour who brought the boy on the right path with determination by keeping a constant watch over him and not allowing him to go near liquor. Then only he forgot about his beer and he started taking interest in his work.

Poem:

جو کوئی پیوے گا تاڑی یا شراب دو جہاں میں ہووے آخر خراب
جاوے مال اور آبرو اور عافیت پھر خدا کے یہاں بھی پاوے گا عذاب

*“Whoever drinks beer and liquor,
in both worlds his ending is sour.*

*In money, respect and wellbeing he’s a loser.
Then by Allah also he will be thrown into the Fire”*

Story Three:

Save Yourself Young Man

In one country there was the curse that when a rich man died then often his young sons would throw away his wealth and riches by indulging in drinking and partying.

Not long thereafter they would be left penniless and depending on others.

An Aalim travelling the world happened to reach there. When he learnt of this state of affairs he lamented. After much investigation he commented: “The root of this curse is company of evil people. If the uncle or any other senior relative or a friend of the parents sympathises and takes care of the sons after the father’s death and emphasizes upon them not to associate with bad boys, warns them in this regard, utilizes some of their inheritance to earnestly raise them with beautiful qualities then most probably they will not become rotten and they will occupy themselves with their livelihood and work.

Whether a rich man’s son or a poor man’s son it is vitally important for boys to firstly stay far away from the company of bad boys. When they grow up then they should never allow their hearts to be captivated by evil company and they should never entertain the idea of drinking liquor and taking drugs. Bad company and intoxication are two things which before everything else take boys away from the path of virtue, throwing them into the pits of vice.

These two evils start by wasting time in company and engaging in talk which captures the heart. This captivation of the heart is in fact being under the spell of Shaitaan.

When a boy has no character-training and he has no fear for any senior then in his youth he often falls prey to Shaitaan. Now further on what good is going to come from him and what goodness is he going to reap in his life?

Buzrugs [Saintly people] have said: “Intoxication is self-annihilation and evil association ruins one’s life and burns away one’s wealth.”

Story Four:

A Tragic End

Once, there was a boy who when he was young would go to Madrasah. He would listen to his parents and to his Ustaad. He would be in the company of good boys and stay far away from the company of bad boys. His parents and family would be very happy at his ways.

When the boy would see anyone drinking beer or any other liquor he would become very angry and say to those with him: “Look at this evil! Spending one’s money to disgrace oneself in the eyes of people and be sinful in the eyes of Allah Ta’ala!

His father looked after him well, bought him nice clothes and whatever he required. After some time the father passed away and left behind a huge sum of money. Now the mother started to see to the boy as best as she could. For two to three years after the father passed away he lived well following his mother's guidance.

Then the madness of youth hood started rumbling in his heart and his mind started becoming obsessed with evil thoughts. He started befriending wayward boys secretly. His mother and his family trusted him. They took him to be a good boy. No one even thought of him becoming immoral, whereas the young master quietly started sitting in the company of new friends.

First he used to listen to their evil talk with interest. But out of fear for his mother and shame he would not go with them to do haraam. He would come away when they would spend their nights at evil places.

After a few more days in their company and their persuasion he started going out with them. They bought beer to drink. They gave him some. He never drank liquor before. He drank some and became nauseous. After vomiting quite a bit he came back to his senses and started making taubah. He started grinding his teeth and telling himself: "I used to laugh at drunken people and now what am I doing? I'm never going to drink again."

A week past by like that, when suddenly he was struck by the thought of visiting some bad places. Quietly he went alone to a prostitute. She ordered beer for him. He refused at first saying he could not drink it. The prostitute persisted and said to him: “Just drink a little for my sake.”

Finally, his resistance dropped and he drank some. His eyes became red with intoxication. Fear departed from his heart and the veil of shame was ripped apart. He indulged in sensual pleasures and he was struck down by the sword of zina.

Gradually his heart became more and more attracted and emboldened to drink beer and visit prostitutes. With his friends he became more and more audacious and shameless. After eight or ten months he was drinking just like them, in fact even more and enjoying himself with immoral women. Now he had no shame for anything and no fear for anyone.

His mother would speak to him. Afterwards she also got tired of speaking. Not long thereafter she passed away. Disgraced and distressed the son regularly visited the haunts of prostitutes. Soon he was parting with all his money and selling all his belongings to satisfy his haraam desires and to keep his friendship with bad friends.

The time came when he was without a cent. He went from bad to worse. In this abject state of poverty he died. Someone even had to donate some money for his burial expenses. He died an outcast.

Poem:

گلستان میں کما سعدی نے سنئے کہ پنہا ایسی مجھے کر باب گزرے
کہ شہوت آگ ہے کر اس سے پرہیز نہ کر دوزخ کی آگ اپنے اوپر تیز

*“Shaikh Sa’di said in Gulistaan, listen!
Give me Naseehat and stop this argumentation.
Desire is a fire, don’t play with it.
Don’t go anywhere near to Jahannam’s heat.”*

Story Five:

Substance Abuse

A person asked a wise man: “There are so many harms of drinking liquor, yet so many people drink. What is the reason for this?”

The wise man replied: “The reason is subtle. Let me explain it to you. Listen attentively and do not forget it.

When a person drinks liquor for the first time then for the first few weeks he sees much benefit in it and he

thinks that whatever he eats is digested with his intake of liquor. In this way he has an appetite for more food, his heart is contented and the strength of his body increases.

However, once drinking becomes a habit then liquor becomes his food and all those benefits are suspended. Now the force of intoxication asserts itself on him and he starts to drink more. He derives some benefit in drinking more for sometime.

When that increased intake also becomes normal and like food to him, its benefit diminishes and he feels more intoxicated. Heat builds up in his body. Through this heat the body becomes dry and the veins weak. The mind becomes impaired, one's senses out of order, the face pale and the eyes crinkled.

The same thing happens with drugs, dagga, etc. An ignorant person gloats at the first joy and deception of liquor and drugs. Feeling some benefit in the beginning, he forgets the harms and disgrace of these things. Then for the rest of his life he is in a bad state and in anxiety.

Some people think that by drinking liquor their weakness will go away and their strength and energy will increase. This is absolutely erroneous. Once the intoxication is gone, one is left even weaker. The hands and feet become infirm, the heart worried and grieved.

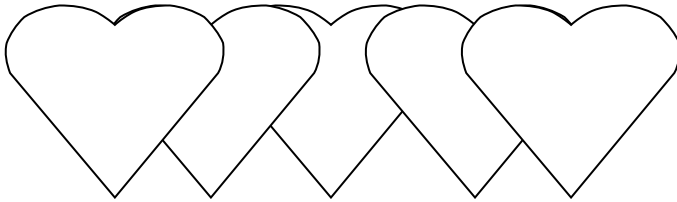
The following words are true for all times:

*“Drinking is a bad habit.
Disgrace in this world and punishment in the
Aakhirat.”*

Poem:

شرابی کی خرابی تو ہے ظاہر کہ کھو وے مال اور حرمت کو آخر
پھر اسکے تن کو اور جی کو نہ راحت اگرچہ مال رکھتا ہو وے وافر

*“The ruin of a drinker is there for everyone to see.
He loses his money and his respect finally.
Neither does he enjoy comfort in his heart and his body,
even though he may have money aplenty.”*



Part Six: The Harms of Craving and Greed and the Benefits of Patience and Contentment

Story One:

Your Parents' Food and Your Friends' Food

There was a poor man who had four sons. Whatever simple food he would get he would feed his sons. One of the sons was mischievous. He would be dissatisfied with the poverty of his father.

This son made friends with the sons of a rich man and now and again he would go to their home and eat. Craving for delicious food he started going more often.

One day he and one of the rich man's sons had a fight over something. The rich man's son gave him a good hiding. He punched his head and broke his teeth.

Now he made taubah and said to himself: "The loving dry bread of my father is better than a plate of delicious food dished out with hiding. Had I not craved for nice

food and drink then I would not have been beaten today and my teeth would not have been broken.”

Story Two:

Desiring Other People's Things

A person had a beautiful coloured scarf. One boy saw it. Now he started coveting it and he made his mind up to take it. When he saw the opportunity he stole it.

When the owner saw his scarf missing, he looked everywhere for it. After much searching he found it by that boy. He beat the boy, warned the boy and made him embarrassed.

Other boys started to call him scarf-rogue. When the boy's father came to know of his son's theft he gave his son a sound beating. Thus take a lesson of how bad craving is. It brings utter disgrace and embarrassment.

Poem:

طمع میں ہے رسوائی اور درد سخت نہ کر کچھ طمع گر تو ہے نیک بخت

“Craving brings disgrace and bitterness.

Do not crave if you are righteous.”

Story Three:

Not Satisfied with Your Lot?

A person was working for someone. His monthly salary was R5000. After a few years working there greed overtook his heart. He thought to himself: “Many people earn much more than what I earn. I will quit this job and look for a higher-paid work.”

He was restless with this thought. It so happened that one day he received an offer of work for R10 000 a month. But after only three months of work at his new employer he was forced to leave.

Now he wanted to go back to his previous employer but he [the previous employer] had hired the services of someone more capable and hardworking. Now, he had no work and for quite some time he went around begging for work in disgrace. He cursed his own greed.

He regretted deeply being greedy for more and in the process losing everything. In desperation he accepted some employment for only R3000 a month. Thereafter he stayed far away from greed and craving for more.

Story Four:

The Greedy Dog

A hungry dog stole a chunk of meat from a butcher's shop and went to the river. The water of the river was very clear. When the dog looked into the river he saw his reflection in it, but he thought that it was another dog with a chunk of meat in its mouth.

Out of greed the dog at the river bank opened its mouth to bark and snatch away the other dog's chunk of meat. He just opened his mouth and the meat he was holding in his mouth fell into the water.

This is what happens when you are greedy for more; you do not get what you are craving for and you lose even that which you do have.

Story Five:

The Fatal Poison of Greed

Two people left their city travelling to another city. They travelled for fifteen to twenty days when they were passing on a desolated road. There they found a purse

filled with gold coins. They became overjoyed and decided to return home with it quickly.

When it was night time they came close to a certain town. After Fajr one of them went to the bazaar of the town to buy food. The other person stayed behind looking after the gold coins.

The one who went to buy food thought to himself: “My companion is going to take half of the gold coins. I would be better off if I kill him.” He therefore bought some poison and returned.

Upon his return the other partner said to him: “Friend! I wish to buy something from town. While I am away prepare the food.” This brought joy to the first person and he started his preparation.

When the second person went to town the same thought of killing his companion and taking all the gold coins crept into this person’s mind. He decided not to let his companion get any of the gold coins and to achieve this he also bought some poison to kill his friend and he returned.

The first person was busy preparing the meal. He sprinkled poison in the food and drink of his companion. His companion also looked for a chance and he added poison to the other one’s food and drink.

Both sat down to eat. After they had eaten, just two or three minutes passed when the poison started to take effect and they started vomiting. A few minutes later both were dead.

Had both of them been contented with their share and had both of them saved themselves from the snares of greed then they would have enjoyed themselves with the gold coins they found and they would not have died through poisoning.

[Important Mas-alah: Actually it was not even permissible for them to keep the gold coins for themselves. They were required by the Shariah to establish the rightful owner and return the money to the owner. In the event of the owner being unknown it was Waajib on them to make Sadqah (give in charity) the gold coins to the poor on behalf of the owner.

If they were poor and desperate then it would have been permissible for them to utilize the gold coins they found. However, in this case, as well as in the case of making Sadqah of the coins, had the owner turned up and demanded his money they would have had to reimburse the owner. Discarding the beautiful teachings of Islam they met with a disastrous fate.]

Story Six:

The Discontented Parrot

A wealthy man had a parrot. He just adored the parrot. He would feed it with luxury food and always be mindful of it. Its cage was lovely. It was decorated very beautifully. The man would feed the parrot on most occasions himself and he would be present when the cage would be cleaned out. Daily he would place the cage in the middle of the garden so that the parrot could have fresh air and it could stay healthy.

The family of the wealthy man also loved the parrot. They would lovingly stroke their hands over its feathers and speak to it with affection.

Notwithstanding such a bounty, such comfort and such love and attraction the parrot just wanted to escape from the prison of the cage and fly around freely on the branches of shrubs in the field.

One day the door of the cage was open. The parrot was just waiting for such an opportunity for a long time. Quietly he slipped out of the cage and flew away.

It firstly flew to a nearby field. From there it took flight to a field even further away. Sometimes it would get food, sometimes it would not. Sometimes it would just sit hungry and thirsty. It never even came close to

smelling anything like the wonderful food it used to eat day and night at its master's home.

A week or so passed by in this manner when a severe storm broke out. Incessant rain and terrifying thunder and lightning came down. The parrot was battling to survive in the terrific storm. Due to the heavy rain it could not sit at ease and there was no chance for it to fly. It started to shiver and die. As the last few breaths of its life departed it said: "Alas! Had I been contented with my lot in the cage and had I made sabr over my difficulty in that confinement then I would not have died so terribly."

[Lesson: Allah Ta'ala is our Master, Owner and Creator. We are His servants and we belong to Him. He showers His favours of food, drink, clothes, fresh air, etc upon us day in and day out. We are simply required to remain within the confines of His Shariah—the Deen of Islam—in appreciation of His countless favours. If we leave those sacred confines we can expect a terrible death; like the death of the discontented parrot.

Mas-alah: It is not permissible to cage such birds that can fend for themselves in the open. Furthermore, it is best to keep small birds born in cages and unable to survive in the open in spacious cages. Many people are neglectful in this regard.]

Story Seven:

Shaiikh Sa'di's Lesson

Hazrat Shaikh Sa'di (Rahmatullahi alaih) says: "Once I did not have shoes to wear. On account of this I was somewhat disheartened. The Qudrat of Allah Ta'ala; just then my eyes fell on a person who didn't have feet! When I saw this I expressed my gratitude unto Allah Ta'ala and I adopted patience over not having shoes.

Story Eight:

Be Contented and Grateful

For That Which Allah Ta'ala Gives You

There was a man who was very pious and learned. His holiness and fear for Allah Ta'ala were famous among people.

One day a person came to him and started to tell him about his problems. The visitor said: "I have a family of four and I only earn R3000 a month. This is not

sufficient for my needs. Make du'aa to Allah Ta'ala for His bounties to come down upon me.”

After him another person came and said: “Hazrat! I have a family of five to feed and I only earn R4000 a month. This is not sufficient for my expenses.”

When he went away, a short while thereafter a third person came. He said: “Hazrat! We are seven at home and I only earn R5000 wages per month.”

The Buzrug saw that each person was unhappy over his lot inspite of earning more than others. But if a person wishes to stay happy in this world and successful in the Hereafter then it is incumbent that he be contented over whatever Allah Ta'ala has given him and he should be patient and grateful. By virtue of this the Gracious Creator and Sustainer Who is the One unto whom we should entrust our affairs will grant us more.

Story Nine:

A True Mu-min in the Face of Adversity

A person went to a Buzrug and said: “Hazrat! I have lost a lot of money. Due to this I am in a lot of difficulty.”

The Buzrug replied: “For a Mu-min not to experience some money problems and not to be afflicted with some difficulty is a danger-sign. Allah Ta'ala tests the one whom He has befriended with loss in his wealth and pain in his body. The Mu-min is put into some difficulty or the other so that he who is true in his Imaan is recognized from he who is an impostor.

Whoever carries out these three practices is indeed fortunate: *Number One:* He is contented with whatever command Allah Ta'ala has decreed in regard to him.

Number Two: He is patient over any pain or adversity that overcomes him. He does not become impatient.

Number Three: When he receives wealth or something good then he verbally expresses Shukr unto Allah Ta'ala as well as physically; that is he utilizes the bounty he has received for the benefit of others.”

Story Ten:

Fantasies Go Up in Smoke

There was a recluse who stayed next to a shopkeeper. By virtue of this the recluse lived happily and with ease.

The shopkeeper sold honey and ghee. Every day he would send some honey and ghee to the recluse.

The recluse would use some of the honey and ghee and the leftover he would carefully store away in earthen pots. One day he looked at the earthen pots and thought to himself: “When the pots are filled I will sell them and purchase five goats. In six months they will give birth and each will have two kids. Every year I will have twenty kid goats. After five years I will have a huge flock.

I will deal in goats, selling and earning my livelihood. I will then look for a wife from a respectable family and marry. After nine months a boy will be born. I will bring him up and educate him. I will teach him good manners. If by chance he is badly behaved I will put him straight with this stick of mine.”

Whilst lost in this thought and thinking that his “badly behaved son” is in front of him he lifted his stick and started striking the earthen pots of honey and ghee. The pots were on an elevated shelf. When he hit, the pots broke and honey and ghee splashed on his head, face and clothes. All his fantasies disappeared like a puff of smoke. Poem:

*“Do not crave for a lot and lose your little.
Contentment over a little brings you a lot.”*

Story Eleven:

True Gratitude

It is said that Sultan Mahmood [a mighty king of central Asia] was very fond of Ayaaz [Sultan Mahmood's slave] and hence all the ministers and attendants of the king's court harboured enmity towards Ayaaz.

One day all of them told the king: "Everyday Ayaaz is alone in the treasure chamber. It appears that he is stealing from the treasure chamber, otherwise what work does he have there?"

The king replied: "When I see that with my own eyes I will believe it."

The next day the courtisans informed the king that Ayaaz was in the treasure chamber. The king looked through a lattice window and what did he see?

Ayaaz opened a chest and took out some old and dusty clothes which he wore and gazed at. The king immediately went inside and asked Ayaaz: "Ayaaz! Why have you put on such worn out clothes?" Ayaaz replied: "Your Highness! When I was as yet not honoured with your service I had these garments. Now through your wealth and good fortune I wear beautiful garments. I wear my old clothes daily so as not to forget

about my former condition and so that I be aware of Allah Ta'ala's favour upon me."

When the king heard this he became delighted. He embraced Ayaz and gave him a higher rank in the Royal Court.

The End

*All praises are due unto Allah Ta'ala from
beginning to end.*

*May Allah Ta'ala grant us beautiful character and
may He make us embodiments of noble service unto
Him.*

Aameen

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