



There was once an evil king who threatened his subjects announcing, “If any person gives anything in charity, I will ensure that I have both his hands amputated!”

Thereafter, it so happened that a man approached a certain woman and begged her saying, “Please give me something in charity!” The woman responded, “How can I give you charity when the king is cutting the hands of all those who give charity?” The man implored her saying, “I beg you to give me something for the sake of Allah!” The woman finally relented and gave him two loaves of bread as charity. However, when the news reached the king, he sent for this woman and had both her hands amputated.

After some time had passed, the king said to his mother, “Find me a beautiful woman whom I can marry.” His mother replied, “There is a woman who is so beautiful that I have never seen beauty such as hers before. However, her beauty is marred by one severe defect.” The king enquired, “What is it?” His mother answered, “Both her hands are amputated.”

Nevertheless, the king sent for her, and on seeing her, was completely besotted by her as she was extremely beautiful. Hence, he sent her a proposal via his mother who said, “The king would like to marry you. (Do you accept his proposal)?” She replied in the affirmative, and they were married soon thereafter. On marrying her, the king showed her much honour, kindness and care.

After some time, it so happened that an enemy of the king launched an attack against his land, compelling the king to march out and fight. While away, he wrote a letter to his mother, requesting her to look after his wife and take good care of her.

As the messenger brought the letter, however, he first encountered the other wives of the king. (When they saw the letter,) they became jealous of her and thus took the letter from the

messenger and completely changed the message. (In the king's name,) they wrote to his mother saying, "Check on this wife of mine, for information has reached me that numerous men are engaging in zina with her. Ensure that you expel her from the palace."

When the king's mother received the letter, she wrote in reply, "This is a lie. She is a woman of loyalty and honesty." However, while carrying the letter, the messenger again encountered the other wives of the king. They took the letter from him and changed the message. They wrote, "She is a shameless woman who has given birth to a boy (from her illicit activities)."

When the king received this fabricated message, he wrote to his mother saying, "Tie the child to her neck, beat her, and expel her from the palace into the desert." On receiving the letter, the mother read it to the wife and did as requested, and accordingly, the wife and her child were abandoned in the wilderness.

Helpless and alone, the mother began to walk, with her child on her shoulders, until she came to a river in a state of thirst. Seeing the river, she went towards it to drink water. However, as she kneeled to drink from the river, the child fell from her neck into the water and drowned.

The woman was overcome by grief and began to weep (over her loss and her pitiable plight). While weeping (and grieving for her child), she suddenly saw two men approach. They asked her, "Why are you crying?" She answered, "My son was on my neck, and I do not have hands, so he fell into the water and drowned." The two men asked her, "Do you want us to return your son to you?" When she replied in the affirmative, they made du'aa to Allah Ta'ala, and before long, her son emerged from the river.

The two men then asked her, "Would you like your hands to be returned to you?" She replied in the affirmative, and the two men made du'aa, after which her hands were restored to her.

The two men then asked her, "Do you know who we are?" When she replied that she did not know who they were, they said, "We are the two loaves of bread that you had given in charity."

(Hilyatul Awliyaa vol. 3, pg. 102 and Kitaabul Birri was Silah – Ibnul Jawzi [rahimahullah] #379)

Lessons:

1. Charity has the special effect of drawing the mercy and assistance of Allah Ta'ala. Hence, we should endeavor to give sadaqah every day. We should give whatever we are able to manage, and should not regard any amount as too small – even if it be just R2. Often, through the blessing of our charity, Allah Ta'ala diverts away from us certain calamities that were destined to befall us, or He sends us His special assistance in our hour of need.

2. When we receive information – especially negative information regarding people – then we should ignore it if it does not relate to us, as this information may be gheebah (backbiting) or buhtaan (slander). If the information does concern us (e.g. it relates to our wife, child or someone over whom we have some responsibility or influence) then we MUST ensure that we verify the information before accepting it and taking a decision. In many cases, to further their own agendas, people convey information out of context, or fail to narrate the full story, or exaggerate, or even fabricate. Don't be gullible and take every person at his word, as the day may then come when you will be forced to eat your words.

3. When a person is consumed by jealousy, he finds no happiness and joy in life, and is not prepared to allow others to experience happiness or joy. His own life is ruined and he wishes to ruin the lives of others. Hence, the outcome of jealousy is that one spends his life 'burning' within, over the prosperity of others, and he will burn in the Hereafter as well, as punishment for the serious sin of jealousy.