

Gems and Jewels



Abdul Malik Mujahid



Gems and Jewels

Wise Sayings, Interesting Events & Moral Lessons from the Islamic History

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Contents

Publisher's Note	13
The Story Of Ibn Jud'an	14
Sustenance	15
"They have brought My Evil Deeds only."	15
"And He died!"	15
He made the Ruler laugh... ..	15
Fiqh	15
The Forbearance of 'Ali bin Husain (May Allah be pleased with them).....	16
A Bedouin's Saying	16
A Dialogue between a Scholar and an Alcoholic.....	16
Love of Allah	17
She is in Paradise	17
The Doctor and the Digger.....	17
The Worshiper Who invokes against the Oppressor.....	18
Who should be followed?	18
Truth and Lying.....	18
Humility before Three	19
The Prodigious Understanding of 'Ali	19
The Strange Inheritance Case	19
Leave Him in the Fire.....	20
Iyas and His Quick Decisions.....	20
In Short... ..	20
The Intelligence and Insight of a Judge.....	20
Good and Bad Deeds	21
He left without Anything.....	21
Preserving the Honor of the Muslim.....	21
As Time passes	22

Knowledge must be followed up by Action	22
The Scholar and the Laborer.....	23
Respect for the Scholars	23
Ibn Qayyim.....	23
The Beard	23
The Completeness of Religion and the Superior Mind	24
He had to choose between Money and His Beliefs	24
Good Advice	25
Who is more Honored?	25
A Simple Approach to complete the Qur'an once a Month.....	25
The Idol whose Counsel is sought.....	25
The Benefits of the Siwak.....	26
The Responsibility of a Ruler	26
"If You see it befitting, free Her Prisoner..."	27
The Brave Judge	27
'Umar bin 'Abdul-'Aziz.....	27
Inscribed in Gold	27
Our Pious Predecessors and Their Fear of Allah	27
The Honest Muslim Merchant.....	28
Our Pious Predecessors.....	28
Constant Strife of the Soul.....	28
Moderation in Worship.....	28
A Manifestation of Justice.....	28
The Question	29
A Mother Who spent Wisely on Her Son	29
The Many Guises of Backbiting	29
Tremendous Rewards for Simple Deeds.....	30
O Cousin, You spend extravagantly!	30

The Believer is not stung from the same Hole twice.....	30
The Sagacity of Suhail bin 'Amr	31
'Aishah bint Talhah	31
The Flock is the Responsibility of the Shepherd.....	31
Patience.....	31
Allah's Angels.....	32
The Slow One	32
Mother of the Martyrs.....	32
A Glimpse of the Prophet's Forgiveness.....	33
Patience and Lawful Sustenance	33
The Supplication of Those Who are Wronged.....	33
They were trying to make Him Angry	34
A Beautiful Approach to exhorting to Islam	34
Allah will make a Way	35
Allah's complete Justice and Mercy.....	35
The Declining and the Waning	35
The Story of a Woman and Her Children	36
A Proof of Allah's Existence	36
The Interpretation of Her Dream	36
The Mufti (the One Who gives Islamic Rulings) is like a Doctor.....	37
The Firsts	38
The Angel of Death	38
The Soul of the Son of Adam	39
Allah's Prophet in Jail.....	39
The Intelligent Questioner	39
The Sufficient Answer	39
The Sermons of the Wise.....	40
Each Person spends from that which He has	40

Do not hasten to make a Ruling.....	40
Five Matters	41
Competing to attain Virtue	41
Access to Rulers	41
A Good Deed that is not accepted	41
True Bravery	42
A Most Valiant Effort!	42
How Arthur Alison became a Muslim	43
The 'Uthmani Ruler and the Old Woman.....	43
Jawaiyu and His Journey to Guidance.....	43
A Lost Journey turns into One of Faith.....	44
The Leper, the Baldheaded Man and the Blind Man.....	45
A Wife can be a Source of Rewards and Gains.....	46
Sudden Death	46
The ill-used Cow	47
The Jealous King.....	47
A Supplication Answered.....	48
Nuruddin - the Ruler - Standing before a Judge	48
Salman's Journey to the Truth.....	48
He was True to Allah and so Allah was True to Him.....	50
Qarun	50
And Who is the Fool?	51
True Generosity	51
Asrna' bint Yazid Al-Ansariyah.....	51
The Kind of Tricks Used by the Generous Ones	52
Allah was indeed Pleased with Their Deed!	52
The Silent Charity.....	52
The Wife of the Caliph Nurses a Pregnant Woman	53

Giving Charity to One's Husband.....	54
A Comparison to the Generosity of Hatim.....	54
Perhaps My Brother has an Excuse.....	54
A Ruler Who was Generous and easily Accessible.....	54
Maintaining a Balanced Lifestyle.....	55
The Truly Generous Ones.....	55
Advice for Every Ruler.....	56
Do not scold the One Who asks of You.....	56
The Continuation of Your Deeds.....	56
Make My Braids into a Bridle for a Horse that is going in the way of Allah.....	56
The Generosity of the Poor.....	56
The Most Difficult of Deeds.....	57
Who is Most Generous?.....	57
Another Case of Tremendous Generosity.....	58
Brothers, each similar to the Other.....	58
From the Piety of Abu Hanifah.....	58
No One Else eats with My Spoon.....	59
Charity is Better than a Voluntary Hajj.....	59
Our Pious Predecessors and Their Aversion to Fame.....	59
Moderation in Joking and Laughing.....	60
Why One seeks out Knowledge.....	60
A Just and Pious Ruler.....	61
The Virtues of seeking Forgiveness from Allah.....	62
The Believer versus the Polytheist.....	62
The Intelligence of Khidr.....	62
The Removal of Knowledge and the Spread of Ignorance.....	63
The Color of the Dog that was with the People of the Cave.....	63
Supplication.....	63

Imam Shafi'i and the One Who debated with Him	63
Worldly Possessions	64
What has made this Nation important throughout History	64
Three Qualities that will be held against the One Who possesses Them	64
The Truthfulness of the Scholar and the Forbearance of the Ruler	64
The Transient Nature of this World	64
Magnanimity	65
Learn the Good Supplication.....	65
How You deal with Others is how You will be dealt with.....	65
Luqman the Wise was a black Man	66
Ibrahim and Namrud	66
Allah's Scales	67
Khalid bin Barmak and Qahtabah	67
A Gentle Admonition.....	67
The Impenetrable Fortress	67
The Way of a Muslim in His Life	68
Imam Ghazali.....	68
Safety comes Tomorrow.....	68
Wise Sayings from Fudail and Ibn Mubarak.....	68
The Bedouin and Ibn 'Uyainah	69
I came seeking Help, not a Religious Ruling	69
He is Insane	69
He Chose The Hereafter.....	69
Malik bin Dinar.....	69
True Honor	70
A Thief and a Message	70
"The Wicked Doer has sufficed Us all with His Evil"	70
Charity And Sickness	71

The Ruler and His Brother	71
Words of Wisdom	71
The Story of the Cow and the Dutiful Son	72
The Honest Opponent.....	74
The Intelligence of Al-Mahdi	74
The Insightful Interpreter of Dreams	75
The Prisoner's Intelligent Ploy	75
A Quick Save	75
Shunn's Search for a Suitable Wife	75
'Umar and Mu'awiyah	76
Arguing over that which is Delicious	76
Justice, even with the Enemy	77
He ran from the Prayer	77
Political Acumen	77
He deserved a Large Endowment	78
Choosing a Husband.....	78
A Bedouin at the Dinner Table of Al-Hajjaj	78
Our Pious Predecessors and Their Dutifulness to Their Parents.....	78
He had to choose between His Wife and Money	78
The Best of Women.....	79
"I was hoping to find Something else!"	79
He intended to repay His Debt and Allah helped Him do so	79
This is how Companionship should be.....	80
Juraij, the Worshipper.....	80
An Example of Piety	80
The Reward for visiting One's Brother	81
The Signs of an Ignorant Person	81
"If You choose Me as Your Leader, then You must obey Me"	81

How to make Amends after a Domestic Dispute.....	82
Hasan Basri	82
Generosity, Friendship, and Good Companionship	82
A Mother's True Love	83
One's Recompense for going through a Calamity	83
Strike Him as He struck You	83
I am the First to be led to the Truth.....	83
The Final Command of the Ruler Muhammad Al-Fateh to His Son.....	84
Wise Sayings.....	84
Advice from Fudail bin 'Iyad.....	84
'Umar bin 'Abdul-'Aziz.....	85
He wants to prolong Those Two States.....	85
He followed the Way of Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him).....	85
From the Wise Sayings of Luqman	85
The Opinion of a Woman saved the Army	86
A Mother's Advice to Her Daughter prior to Marriage	86
Eat, O Bedouin	87
Allah blinded Them	87
Umm Habibah's Dream	87
Do not attach Your Heart to Other than Allah.....	87
The Repentance of Abu Mahjan Ath-Thaqafi	88
The Repentance of a Man Who dealt in Usury.....	88
He Prevented Evil from Occurring	88
He rejected the Testimony of the Ruler	89
Choose well the Mother of Your Children	89
Allah's Prophet, Yunus (Peace be upon him) and the Whale.....	89
The First Time One Sins... ..	90
He forbade His Soul from Desires	90

Qutaibah and His Prisoner	90
"She Is Definitely No Good for You"	91
Begin with Yourself	91
The Quality of fulfilling One's Promises is akin to a Bright Light	91
Many Wives	92
His Dedication to Knowledge.....	92
A Profound Saying of Ibn Qayyim.....	92
I have traveled to the East and West Twice	93
He sinned for a long Time but then repented.....	93
Words of Wisdom	94
For what Sin was She murdered?	94
The generosity of 'Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her), the Mother of the Believers	94
He was seeking the Pleasure of Allah.....	95
The Story of Rukanah	95
The Importance Of Acknowledging Our Sins.....	96
Don't Flaunt the Faults of Your Brothers	96
The First University.....	97
Divine Preordainment	97
A Trustworthy Man.....	98
The Positive Effects of Giving Charity	99
Another Story about the Positive Effects of Giving Charity	100
The Most Just, The Most Merciful.....	100
Who Should I Obey?	101
The Devil-like Thief	102
The Potent Effects of Supplication	106
The First Step to Becoming Governor: Giving Away a Bunch of Grapes	106
Virtue and Integrity.....	110
It Runs in the Family.....	111

A Confession	111
"Let No One Issue an Islamic Ruling While Imam Malik Is in Madinah"	112
The Sacrifice That Comes with Knowledge	113
A Difficult Predicament Indeed	113
When Judges and Rulers Are Fair, Let Them Do Their Job So That Justice Is Achieved	114
True to His Word	116
Is Not Goodness the Reward of Goodness?	117
Allah's Countless Favors	118
A Very Special Dream	119
"Even the Ministers of Fir'aun Are Better"	121
"The Woman is correct and 'Umar is in error"	122
"But the Lord of 'Umar Sees Us"	122
"He Is Irreplaceable"	122
The Woman Who Humiliated Al-Hajjaj	123
The Wife of Khusru and the Fishermen	124
Standing Up Against A Tyrant	125
The Supplication Of The Wronged	126
The Supplication Of Dhun-Nun	128
Sincerity	129
Humbleness And A Sound Outlook	130
Refusing All Help, Except Help From Allah	132
How Perfect Allah Is!	133
Ease After Hardship	134
"Whatever Hardship You Are Afflicted With Is A Result Of What Your Own Hands Have Reaped"	135
The Good Life Is Achieved Through The Performance Of Good Deeds	135
The Answer To Your Supplications Is Delayed For A Reason	136

Publisher's Note

Darussalam is presenting Gems & Jewels for the readers. This book is based on excerpts and passages collected from many books written by the scholars of Islam. These wise sayings, interesting events, logical deductions, intelligent approaches, admonitions, moral lessons and teachings, etc., have been compiled to give readers the opportunity of knowing what some great personalities of Islam have done with their lives, and how their purity of character has been an example for us to follow.

We hope that the presentation of Gems & Jewels will be a continuing process, and we will be compiling and publishing one volume after another providing the readers gems and jewels from Islamic history.

The writings in this series will be of equal interest to all Muslims whether they are children or adults, and will help them gain all virtue, develop good character, and adopt intelligent behavior in their lives. Because of the usefulness of the series, we are planning to produce it in other languages also, so that many Muslims may benefit from it.

We pray to Allah for our success.

Abdul-Malik Mujahid

General Manager Darussalam

The Story Of Ibn Jud'an

When one thinks about pre-Islamic times in Makkah, certain names come to mind - such as 'Abdul-Muttalib, the Prophet's grandfather, or Waraqah bin Naufal. But there is another important person who is little remembered today: 'Abdullah bin Jud'an, the first cousin of Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq's father. In the early years of his life, 'Abdullah bin Jud'an was neither successful nor happy. In fact, growing up hungry and poor, he soon became embittered by life. For solace or perhaps out of spite, he turned to evil and committed many crimes. He was caught so often for his evil acts that he was considered by most to be an incorrigible criminal. People thought that he was evil incarnate and that there was no way that he could ever improve. Everyone hated him, including his fellow clansmen, his family, and even his own father; and he reciprocated that hatred with equal or greater vehemence.

One day, as he was walking in the valleys of Makkah, ruefully thinking about his bitter existence, he noticed a small opening in a mountain, perhaps an entrance to a cave. He thought that there might be something harmful inside, perhaps a venomous snake. That foreboding did not stop him from approaching; instead, it encouraged him to go to it, for his situation was so hopeless, that he actually wanted to be killed so that he could part from his miserable existence.

When he came near to the mouth of the cave, he saw a lean shape inside, and through the darkness, he perceived it to be a snake in an erect position, the position most favored by a venomous snake when it is ready to strike. Overcome by madness, 'Abdullah bin Jud'an was terrified, and suddenly realized that he did not really want to die. He imagined that the snake was coming at him, and so he jumped wildly, trying to fend off a lethal bite. After a short while, he calmed down, realizing that it was only him that was moving and that the snake was actually in a still position. And when he came nearer, he realized that it was only a statue of a snake, which was made of gold and had two eyes made of precious emeralds. He broke the emeralds off and took them. He then entered deeper into the cave, and from the writings he saw around him, he realized that the cave was a graveyard for the kings of the Jurhum tribe. At the head of each grave was a gravestone made of gold; on it was written a short history of the king who was buried underneath. Surrounding the graves were treasures of gold, silver, pearls, precious stones, and much else.

'Abdullah bin Jud'an picked up a few small treasures, made a sign outside the cave so that he could find it again, and then returned to his people. He was generous with his newfound wealth, giving to family, friends, and to the needy. He was especially generous in gathering people together and serving them food. As time went on, he gained status in society until he became one of the leaders of the Quraish. Whenever he ran out of funds, he would return to the cave and take some more. His generosity extended even beyond the boundaries of Makkah. Once when the people of Ash-Sham were suffering hard times, 'Abdullah bin Jud'an sent 2000 camels to them, loading each one with wheat, oils, and other provisions. And every night, someone stood on the roof of the Ka'bah and called out: "Come to the bowls (filled with food) of 'Abdullah bin Jud'an."

Yet in spite of all of that, the following is related about him in Sahih Muslim. 'Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) said to the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him), "Indeed, Ibn Jud'an used to provide food (for the people) and he would be hospitable to his guest[s]. Will any of that benefit him on the Day of Resurrection?" The Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) answered, "No. Indeed, on no day did he ever say: O my lord, forgive me my sin on the Day of Recompense."

Sustenance

Among the signs of Faith is that one does not look to please others and incur Allah's anger in that process. One avoids praising others for the sustenance that they have received from Allah (the Exalted), and also refrains from blaming others for sustenance that he has not received from Allah (the Exalted). Allah's distribution of provision is not increased for a recipient by the amount of greed or ambition that he shows, nor is it blocked by his hate or envy. Allah in His infinite justice grants provision and contentment for those with strength of Faith and satisfaction with what is divinely ordained. Likewise, misery and discontent are for those that live with doubt and anger. Let us be satisfied with His Will.

"They have brought My Evil Deeds only."

A Bedouin was accused of speaking too freely about the governor, and he was being led to him for judgment. The Bedouin knew that the followers of the governor were going to level at him many other accusations that he was not guilty of, so that they could be free of him and have him in prison. And so he prepared a letter, in which he attempted to appease the governor and drive away from himself those accusations that were leveled at him. When he entered the gathering of the governor, he read many plots that were written on the faces of those who were present, and so he took the letter from his pocket and gave it to the governor. He said, "Here take it and read my book," but the governor did not read the letter and instead merely said, "This is only said on the Day of Judgment, and not to us." The man quickly responded, "This day is worse than the Day of Judgment, for there both my good and evil deeds will be brought; as for your men, they have brought my evil deeds only, and have left off my good deeds." The governor was impressed by his words and freed him.

"And He died!"

A sh'ab was about to relate a story to a ruler, and he began: "There was a man..." But at that point he noticed a tray of food being brought to them. He paused as he was staring at the tasty food. The ruler said, "Yes...and then?" Ash'ab said, "And he died!"

He made the Ruler laugh...

A sma'i relates from his father that a prisoner was brought before 'Abdul-Malik and was accused of having rebelled against the ruler. 'Abdul-Malik said, "Strike his neck." The prisoner said, "O Leader of the Believers, this should not be the reward that I receive from you. By Allah, I did not join the ranks of such and such person except because I cared about you and was looking out for your best interests. I am an unlucky man, and I have never fought side by side with a man, except that we were defeated. Throughout the years, I have been better for you than 1000 people on your side who cared about you. I was with such and such person and we were defeated, and then I was with such and such person and we were defeated ..." He went on mentioning the people that were defeated by 'Abdul-Malik. 'Abdul-Malik laughed upon hearing this and freed the man.

Fiqh

A man looked at his wife as she was climbing stairs and he said, "You are divorced if you climb a single step, divorced if you descend a single step, and divorced if you stand still!" She slipped herself down over the railing and remained his wife.

The Forbearance of 'Ali bin Husain (May Allah be pleased with them)

'Abdur-Razzaq related that a slave girl who belonged to 'Ali bin Husain (May Allah be pleased with them) was pouring water over him so that he could make ablution, but the jug fell from her hand, landed on his face, and fractured his bone. He raised his head to her and she recited a part of Verse:

"...who repress anger..." (Qur'an 3:134)

He said, "I have indeed controlled my anger." She then recited:

"...who pardon men..." (Qur'an 3:134)

He said, "May Allah forgive you." She then recited the end of the Verse:

"...verily, Allah loves Al-Muhsinin (the good doers)." (Qur'an 3:134)

He said, "You are free for the Countenance of Allah."

A Bedouin's Saying

A Bedouin once said that if authority is given to people who are not accepted, and weapons are given into the hands of those who do not use them, and wealth is in the hands of those who do not spend it-then, surely, the affairs of society will be at a loss.

A Dialogue between a Scholar and an Alcoholic

Alcoholic: Do you think I am doing wrong by eating a date?

Scholar: No.

Alcoholic: And if I ate with it some grass? Scholar: There is nothing wrong with that.

Alcoholic: And if I were to wash them down with water?

Scholar: Drink and enjoy.

Alcoholic: Since all of that is permissible, then why do you forbid us from alcohol, which consists of the above-mentioned ingredients?

Scholar: If I poured water on top of you, would that hurt you?

Alcoholic: No it would not.

Scholar: And if I were to sprinkle some dirt in that, would you be hurt?

Alcoholic: That would not harm me.

Scholar: But if I were to mix water and dirt together and through a process make a large brick from those two elements, and then were I to throw that large brick at you, would you be hurt?

Alcoholic: That would kill me!

Scholar: The same goes for alcohol.

Love of Allah

Ibn Qayyim (May Allah has mercy upon him) said that there are ten things that bring about the love of Allah:

Recitation of the Qur'an with reflection and with understanding of its meanings.

Seeking closeness to Allah by performing voluntary deeds after having performed obligatory ones, for that leads one to the highest levels of love.

Remembering Allah during every situation - with one's time, heart and deeds ... one's share of that love is to the degree of one's share in that remembrance.

Preferring what He loves to what you love when your desires are strong.

Allowing your heart to reflect on His Names and Attributes.

Reflecting on His many favors and blessings, both the apparent ones and hidden ones, for that leads to His love.

Having your heart softened as it is worshipping Allah.

Being alone with Him in worship when He descends during the last third of the night. And this means to invoke Him, to recite His Speech, to stand with all sincerity and with good manners and with good submission, and then to end that with repentance and with seeking His forgiveness.

Sitting with those who are truthful in their love of Allah.

Staying away from all that creates barriers between the heart and Allah.

She is in Paradise

Khalid bin Safwan saw a group in the mosque of Basrah, and he said, "What is this gathering?" He was told, "There is a woman who informs men about women who are available for marriage." He went to her and said, "I want to marry a woman." She said, "Describe her to me." He said, "I want her to be a virgin who is wise like a married woman, or a married woman who is innocent like a virgin; she should be sweet when she is near, splendid when she is at a distance, she should have lived a life of luxury and then became afflicted with poverty - so she has the manners of the rich and the humility of the poor. When we gather wealth we should be as the people of the world, and when we become poor, we should be as the people of the Hereafter."

She said, "I know of such a woman for you." He said, "And where is she?" She said, "In Paradise, so work to achieve her!"

The Doctor and the Digger

There was a man who had a very lazy servant. One day, he sent him to buy grapes and figs, and he took so long in returning from the errand that the master's patience was running out. The servant finally came, but he only brought one of the two items that he was originally commanded to bring. The master beat him and reproached him severely and said, "When you go out to do something, you will be more productive if you try to do another task at the same time."

Some days passed and the master became sick, so he ordered his servant to bring a doctor. He took a long time to return, and when he finally did return he brought with him a doctor and another man as well. His master asked about the other man and the servant said, "You beat me and ordered me to do two things instead of one at a time, saying that it would be more productive. So, I came to you with a doctor, and if Allah cures you, then that is fine; otherwise, this other man will dig for you your grave, for he is a grave digger!"

The Worshiper Who invokes against the Oppressor

Ziyad (Ibn Sumaiyyah) wrote to Mu'awiyah stating, "Indeed I have taken Iraq using my right hand yet my left hand remains empty." He said this implying a desire to have the Hijaz added to his governorship. News of this reached the god-fearing, pious Companion, 'Abdullah bin Umar bin Khattab (May Allah have mercy upon them) who knew of Ziyad's tyranny and oppression. He raised his hands towards the sky and supplicated: "O Allah, keep us safe from the harm of Ziyad's left hand." A cancerous ulcer began to grow on Ziyad's left hand that ultimately caused his death.

Who should be followed?

A judge from Khurasan wanted to marry off his son, so he sought counsel with a man who was a follower of the Majus religion. The man said, "People come to you seeking judgment, and here you are coming to seek counsel from me!" The judge said, "You must advise me." He said, "Our leader, Khosrau (Kisra), would choose wealth (when seeking a wife); the leader of the Christians, Caesar (Qaiser), would choose beauty; and the pre- Islamic Arabs would choose based on ancestry and status; and your Prophet would choose based on religion- so choose which among them you will follow."

Truth and Lying

Allah (the Exalted) says in the Noble Qur'an about the basic qualities of a believer:

"O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do? Most hateful it is with Allah that you say that which you do not do." (Qur'an 61:2, 3)

Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) was asked, "Can a believer be a miser?" He said "Yes." He was asked, "Can a believer be a coward?" He said, "Yes." And he was asked, "And can a believer be a liar?" He said, "No."

It has been related that a man went to Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him), and said, "O Messenger Allah, indeed I do three sins in secret: (I drink) alcohol, fornication and lying. So inform me which of them I should abandon." He said, "Leave off lying." The man went away, and later desired to fornicate, but he thought to himself, "I will go to the Messenger of Allah and he will ask me whether I fornicated? If I say yes, he will punish me. And if I say no, I will have broken the covenant and lied." So he abstained from fornicating, and the same occurred regarding alcohol. He returned to Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) and said, "O Messenger of Allah, indeed I have abandoned all of them."

My brother, do you not see then, that lying is the root of every wicked deed, and it leads to all other sins. You will not see anyone more miserable and wretched than the liar, and disbelief is the most severe kind of lying, for it is lying upon Allah (the Exalted).

Humility before Three

Al-Kisai was the tutor of Ameen and Mamun, the two sons of Harun Rasheed (the ruler of the time). One day, the tutor got up to leave and both boys ran to their esteemed teacher in order to hand him his shoes. After much argumentation, they both agreed that each would give one shoe so both could share in the display of reverence. Upon hearing this act, Harun Rasheed went to Kisai and asked, "Who is the most honorable of people?" The teacher replied, "I do not know anyone more honorable than the Leader of the Believers." Harun Rasheed quickly replied, "No, most honorable among people is he for whom two fight to present him with his shoes, and to please both he instructs them to each give him one."

Kisai became somewhat anxious and began to justify what he had done. Harun explained, "If you had prevented them from giving you your shoes, indeed I would have unquestionably blamed you. Certainly, their deed did not compromise their honor; rather their status, inner merit and worth have increased. One can never be dishonored if he displays humility before these three: a leader, a teacher and parents."

The Prodigious Understanding of 'Ali

A woman gave birth to a child only six months after she got married; obviously, however, most women only give birth after nine months, or if the case is really premature, after seven months. People began to become suspicious, thinking that the child was not that of her husband, but of a man with whom she had relations prior to her marriage.

They took her to the caliph, so that she could receive her punishment. The caliph at the time was 'Uthman bin 'Affan (May Allah be pleased with him). When they went to him, they found 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) to be in his company, and he was 'Uthman's judge. 'Ali said, "You have no right to punish her for this reason."

They were surprised and asked, "And how is that?" He recited to them two Verses:

"And the bearing of him, and the weaning of him is thirty (30) months." (Qur'an 46:15)

(this means that the period of pregnancy as well as the period of breast-feeding is a total of 30 months.)

"The mothers shall give suck to their children for two whole years." (Qur'an 2:233)

(this means that the period of breast-feeding is two years - in other words, 24 months.)

Then 'Ali said, "It is possible, therefore, for the period of pregnancy to be six months only." And thus was the woman saved from stoning.

The Strange Inheritance Case

A woman once went to an Islamic scholar and asked, "My brother died, and he left behind 600 dirhams. When they distributed that wealth, they gave me only one dirham!" The scholar thought for a while and then said, "Perhaps it is because your brother left behind a wife, a mother, two daughters, and 12 brothers (other than you)." The woman was stunned and confirmed that what he said was true.

He said, "This dirham is your share, and they have not wronged you in the least. The wife's share is 1/8th, and that is equal to 75 dirhams; the share of the two daughters is two thirds, and that is equal to 400 dirhams; the mother's share is 1/6th, and that is equal to 100 dirhams; only 25 dirhams remain, and that is distributed among his 12 brothers and one sister, and in such situations, the male receives twice as much as does the female. So each brother receives two dirhams, and all that remains for the sister- i.e., you - is a single dirham." Thus was the sister made to comprehend that her brothers did not wrong her.

Leave Him in the Fire

A man who was an adherent of the Majus religion died and left behind a huge debt. Some of his creditors said to his son, "Sell the house and pay off your father's debt." The son said, "If I sell the house and pay off my father's debt, will he enter Paradise?" They said, "No." He said, "Then leave him in the Hellfire and leave me in the house."

Iyas and His Quick Decisions

Iyas bin Mu'awiyah was a famous judge known for his intelligence and insight; some people, however, were jealous both of his status and of his ability, so they tried to raise doubts about him. They said, "He has in him a fault that no judge should have: when people come to him seeking judgment, he is quick in issuing his ruling."

When Iyas became aware of what they said about him, he called them to him, and bestowed upon them wonderful hospitality. He extended forth one of his two hands, and asked them, "How many fingers do you see?" They immediately said, "Five." He said, "How come you were so quick to answer? Why did you not first count them - one, two, three ... and become from those who do not hasten in their judgment?" They said, "We are not slow in counting that which we already know." He said, "Likewise with me; I do not delay in a matter regarding which I already know the ruling." And in this way, the distinguished judge showed them that he did not issue rulings in a quick or hasty manner.

In Short...

Luqman said to his son: "My son, if you have doubts about death, then do not sleep, for as you sleep so too will you die. And if you have doubts in the resurrection, then do not wake up from your sleep, for as you wake up from your sleep, so too will you be resurrected after you die."

The Intelligence and Insight of a Judge

'Umar bin 'Abdul-'Aziz wrote the following to 'Adi bin Artah: "Meet with Iyas bin Mu'awiyah and Qasim bin Rabi'ah Al-Jawshani, and appoint the more skilled of the two as a judge."

When 'Adi gathered the two together, Iyas said to him, "Ask the two jurists of Basrah about me and about Qasim: Hasan Basri and Ibn Sirin." Qasim knew that whereas he would go to Hasan and Ibn Sirin, Iyas wouldn't, and so he knew that if the two of them were asked, they would advise that he should be made judge. And so he quickly said, "Ask not about me nor about him. By Allah and none has the right to be worshipped except Him, indeed Iyas bin Mu'awiyah has a better understanding and is more knowledgeable than me in issuing rulings. If I just lied, you should not appoint me, and if I was truthful in what I said, you should accept my plea."