

Abdullah and the soccer-ball or Shop “Kindness”



This is a story about two boys, Abdullah and Ebrahim. In this story they are taught an important lesson about charity and caring for the needy.

Abdullah and the soccer-ball

On Monday after lunch Abdullah visited his friend Ebrahim to play on the computer. Ebrahim had moved recently into the neighbourhood. Abdullah and Ebrahim became friends and were often seen playing together.

Ebrahim's family came to this country from their motherland - Tunisia. Ebrahim's father, Mr Abdul-Aziz was a businessman and had opened his office here in co-operation with some local firms.

Ebrahim was older than Abdullah by 2 years. From the beginning it was quite difficult for Ebrahim to get used to a new country. He had problems with English as his mother tongue was Arabic and he had studied English only at school. But months of hard work with an English teacher made a big change. Now Ebrahim easily communicated with everybody, and his parents decided to enrol him in the nearest school. Once he was able to

communicate, Ebrahim quickly made many friends. He was very friendly and caring, and everybody loved him. Moreover, Ebrahim knew a lot and used to tell them wonderful stories from Islamic history, stories of Sahabah and many interesting things about Tunisia. He also helped the kids with the Arabic language, which was a compulsory foreign language at their school.

Abdullah gathered a great deal of amazing information from his older friend. Abdullah's parents were very glad about their friendship as he had greatly improved in his behaviour.

Today, while playing on the computer with Ebrahim, Abdullah was attracted by a big packet lying on the floor, at the edge of the room. Through the plastic he could see some toys and something else.

Suddenly Ebrahim's father, Mr. Abdul-Aziz, entered the room.

“Ebrahim, are you ready?” asked Mr. Abdul-Aziz.

“Yes, daddy, everything is in that packet”, answered Ebrahim, pointing to the big packet, which Abdullah was looking at a couple of minutes ago.

“Are you going with me or would you like to stay here to play with Abdullah? Or maybe your friend also wants to go with us?” questioned Mr. Abdul-Aziz.

Ebrahim turned to his friend. “Abdullah, would you like to come with us?”

“Where?” asked Abdullah in surprise, not understanding what it was all about.

“Oh, sorry, Abdullah. I was going to tell you but I forgot. My parents are trying their best to help the poor by giving some clothes and other goods, and I’d like to help them. I’m giving some of my toys for the children who need it more than I do. They probably don’t have any toys at all.”

“But what will your parents do if they don’t have anything to give?” asked Abdullah.

“Then they will give some money,” explained Ebrahim. “There was a time, when my parents were very poor, so poor, that sometimes they didn’t even have anything to eat. But now, Al-hamdulillah*, my father has become a businessman, and I can say, successful businessman, Ma-sha-Allah**... But, my father and mother have not forgotten, how difficult it was to live without money. When you feel pangs of hunger and you don’t have anything to eat. When you don’t have any warm clothes to put on against the cold.

My parents are very grateful to Allah for everything, and now they always help the poor. Moreover, our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ (May Peace and Blessing of Allah be upon him) said:

“Allah says: ‘O Child of Adam, spend out of what I have given you (on the poor), and I shall spend on you.’”¹

*Al-hamdulillah - All praise is for Allah

**Ma-Sha-Allah - Just as Allah wished.

“By the way, there are many ahadeeth* about this theme,” added Ebrahim’s father. For example, there is another authentic hadeeth, which I would highly recommend you to memorize:

*“No person will be able to move from his place on the Day of Qiyamah** until he is questioned about his life... how he spent it; his knowledge... how he used it; his wealth... how he earned it and where he spent it; his body... how he used it.”*²

The boys remained silent for quite a while. They pondered at the beautiful saying and guidance, given in only a few lines. They felt that it should be learnt by heart.

“Mr. Abdul-Aziz, can you give me some other Ahadeeth to read?” inquired Abdullah.

*Hadeeth (Plural - Ahadeeth) - The Saying of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

**Day of Qiyamah - The Day of Ressurrection

“Sure. Choose the collection of Ahadeeth that you would like to read?” said Mr. Abdul-Aziz, pointing to the bookshelf.



Abdullah looked at the bookshelf and after hesitating he asked: “But which one would you recommend?”

“For the beginning take the first volume of Al-Bukhari,” Mr. Abdul-Aziz advised and gave him that book. “When you have read it, come and take other volumes. We also have the collection of Muslim, Abu

Daud and Al-Tirmidhi. I hope one day you will read them all, In-Sha-Allah*.” Mr. Abdul-Aziz looked at his watch. “I’m so sorry, but I have to leave, otherwise I’ll be late.”

“Daddy, I want to go with you,” said Ebrahim.

“But where are you going?” asked Abdullah.

“To the shop,” answered Ebrahim, “Recently a special second hand shop opened in our area, to help the needy. There one can buy a variety of things such as clothes, shoes, toys and more in very good condition for a very low price. Sometimes one can find brand new goods as well. And, what is very important, the profits from the sales are given to the needy. Many people also bring money for charity in cash or cheque. The donors can even choose to which country they want to send the money.

“It’s great. But what do they do with goods which are never sold?” asked Abdullah.

In-Sha-Allah* - If God wills.

“In such a case, the manager gives this to special organizations from where the goods are distributed to the needy,” answered Mr. Abdul-Aziz. “And remember, even to buy anything in this shop is a good deed, because the money goes to charity, to the people who really need it badly.” Mr. Abdul-Aziz added: “You do know what our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: *“There are seven things which will benefit a person even after his death. The seven are:*

- 1) Building a Mosque;*
- 2) Teaching people about Islam;*
- 3) Leaving behind a copy of the Holy Qur’aan for recitation;*
- 4) Bringing up good children, who’ll pray for him;*
- 5) Building a house for travellers;*
- 6) Giving sadaqa* during one’s lifetime;*
- 7) Digging a well, etc.”*

*Sadaqa - Charity.

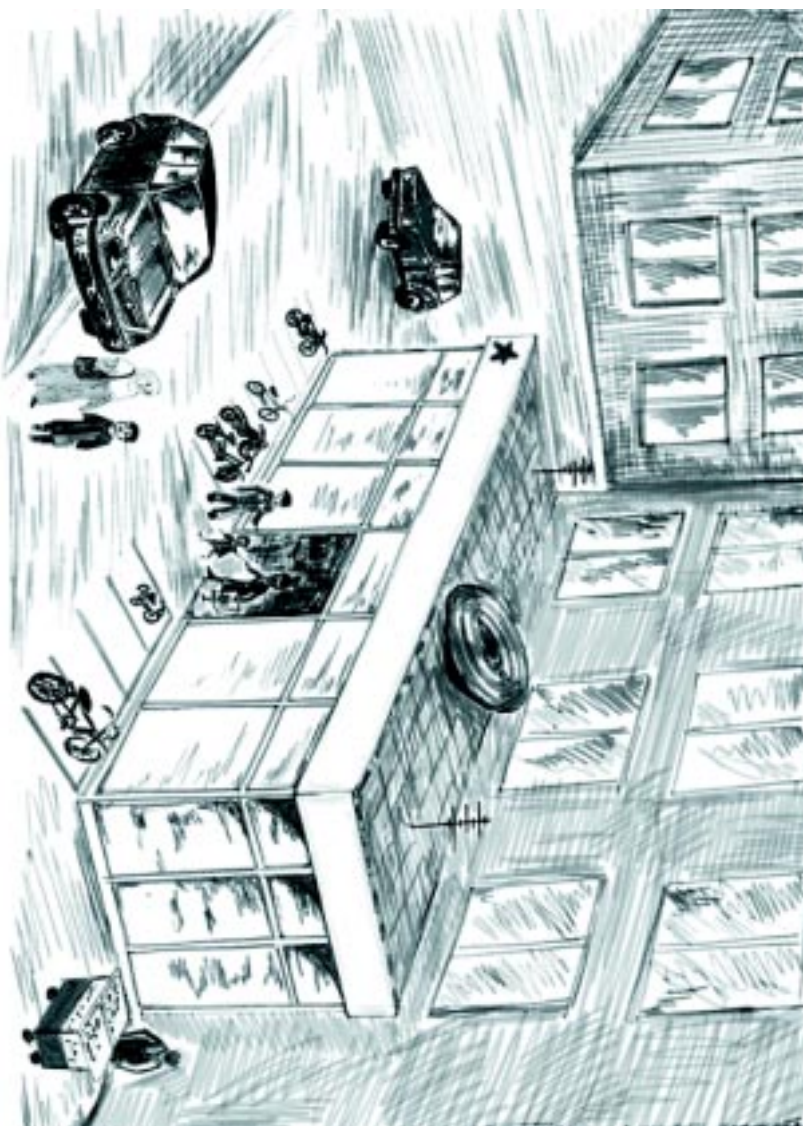
“I’d like to go with you,” exclaimed Abdullah. He was thinking that he would like to see where this wonderful shop was located so that he and his parents could also help the needy in the same way. He might also be able to buy there a gift for his mother. Eid-ul-Adha* was 3 days away and he had to get a present anyhow.

“But I’ve only a little money with me, only the money which my mother gave me for a soccer ball,” he said sorrowfully.

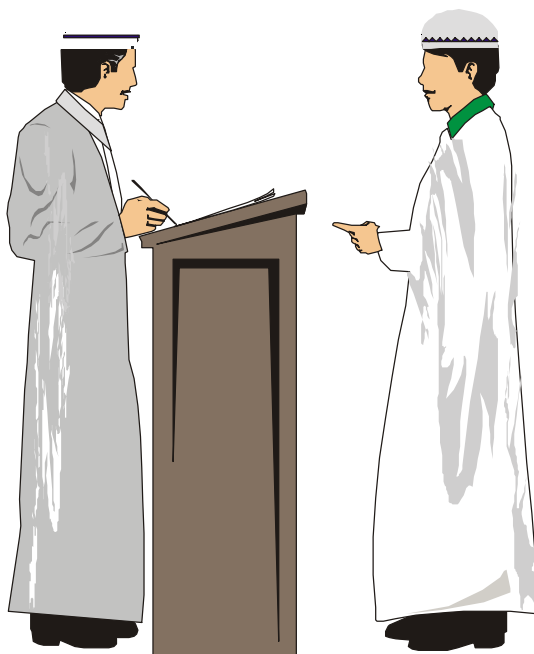
“It’s OK,” Ebrahim told him . “At least you’ll go with us and have a look at this shop. And, probably, you might be lucky and buy something you need for a low price.”

Fifteen minutes later they were entering the shop. The salesmen greeted them with happy smiles.

*Eid-ul-Adha - The 10th day of Zul-Haj, when the pilgrims in Mekka have completed most of their rituals. Those at home also celebrate a day of Joy.



“As-salaamu ‘alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu*, Mr. Abdul-Aziz,” greeted the manager Mr. Rashid. “How are you? How is your family?”



They started to talk. Mr. Rashid informed Mr. Abdul-Aziz that from now on their sponsors are going to have a fundraising lunch every month, Insha-Allah. “So, you are welcome, it’s going to be this Sunday” added Mr. Rashid.

“As-salaamu ‘alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu* - Peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah and His blessings.

An oriental style building was being erected opposite the shop.

“It’s going to be the Islamic bookshop, In-Sha-Allah,” said Mr. Rashid, catching Abdul-Aziz’s eye. “Many people bring books to our shop, so our sponsors decided to open a bookshop as well,” he explained.

“Will the system of donation in the bookshop be the same as here?” asked Mr. Abdul-Aziz with interest.

“Yes, only with a difference. We are planning to give away some books for free on a regular basis. We have an agreement with some printing companies already,” answered Mr. Rashid. “You know how important Islamic literature is to all of us. As stated in the Hadeeth:

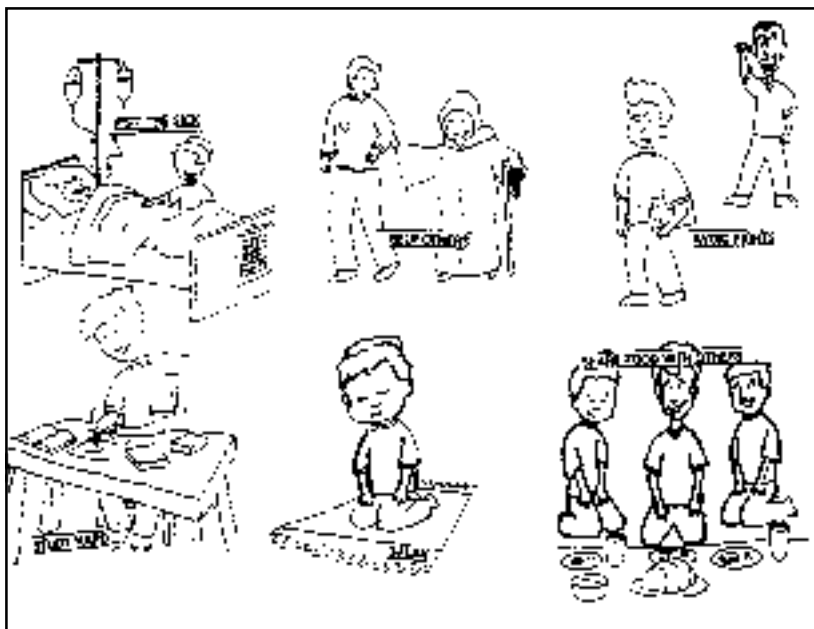
“Seek knowledge even if you have to go to China,”

and

“Seeking knowledge - is compulsory for every Muslim.”

“Surely, it is a great idea - to open an Islamic bookshop,” encouraged Ebrahim’s father, opening the bag with goods which he had brought.

Meanwhile the kids were staring at the big poster on the wall of the shop. There were some pictures with notes under each one:



“It seems that everyone here knows your father very well,” said Abdullah.

“Yes, but we have been here for more than a year already, almost from the time this shop was opened. So, everybody who works here knows us quite well,” explained Ebrahim. “But now let us go inside and have a look. Maybe we’ll find something interesting.”

Passing numerous shelves something attracted Abdullah at once. It was a beautiful clock shaped like a Mosque. Abdullah came near and took it from the shelf. He noticed the clock was new and what fascinated him, was that the alarm had the sound of the Adhaan*. He looked at the price. To his surprise, it was not expensive at all. The money, which he had was about enough for the clock.

“But, in this case, I’ll stay without a soccer ball,” thought Abdullah and went on to look at the shelves with different toys.

*Adhaan - Call to prayer.

And, oh a miracle!!! There he saw the ball, a real soccer ball. Abdullah ran there and took it. The ball looked very pretty and was very nice to touch.



“Oh boy, this is exactly what I need,” thought Abdullah. “Interesting, how much does it cost?”

He didn’t see any price for the ball, neither on the ball, nor on the shelf from where he took it. Abdullah then went to the salesman. “Could you tell me, how much is this?” asked Abdullah.

On hearing the answer, Abdullah was ready to jump for joy. The price of this ball was three times cheaper than he expected. Now his money will be enough for the

ball and for the clock as well. Mama will hardly believe that I bought such a nice soccer ball for so cheap. And this clock - she will be so glad. Abdullah saw the same clock in the house of his aunty Sumaya and knew that she brought the clock from Saudi Arabia where she was on Haj with her husband Ismael. Abdullah remembered how much his mother was fascinated by the clock that she specially went to some shops looking for it, but in vain. She couldn't find it anywhere. And now she will receive it for Eid from him. Surely she will be pleased with such a gift.

At this moment Ebrahim came to Abdullah, holding a box with slides and disks for the computer. "Just have a look!" exclaimed Ebrahim. "There are slides about my motherland - Tunisia and about countries in the Gulf. I'd like to ask my dad to buy these slides so that I can show it to all my friends. I'll go show it to him."

“Good idea,” said Mr. Abdul-Aziz. “I’d like to see them and I am sure, your mother will be interested too. And what is there on the disk?”

“There is clipart with many photos of Mosques,” said Ebrahim. “It can be very useful for school projects!”



“All right. Here is the money. You can pay for it while I’ll be waiting for both of you over there. I have to make an urgent phone call.”

Ebrahim and Abdullah paid and went towards the exit.

“Oh, you are not leaving this shop with empty hands,” smiled Mr. Abdul-Aziz at Abdullah, and they went to the car.

“Abdullah, when did you promise to return home?” asked Mr. Abdul-Aziz suddenly.

“Sometime after Maghrib*,” said Abdullah.

“In that case you may want to go with us?” asked Mr. Abdul-Aziz.

“Where?” asked Abdullah.

“We are going to the Mosque to make Maghrib Salaah** with jamaat***. According to a hadeeth “*Salaah in congregation is 27 times superior to the Salaah offered by a person alone,*”³ answered Mr. Abdul-Aziz.

* Maghrib - Prayer, performed after sunset.

** Salaah - Muslim Prayer.

***Jamaat - congregation.

“I want to go with you to the Mosque,” exclaimed Abdullah without any hesitation.

“Good. But first call your mother and ask her if you can go with us to the Mosque. Tell her that immediately after Salaah I’ll drop you at your home,” with these words Mr. Abdul-Aziz gave Abdullah his cell-phone.

Smiling Abdullah dialed home. “I’ll tell mother I have a surprise for her when I get home. I’ll tell her where I have been today. I wish to help the poor through this shop.”

On hearing his mother’s voice, Abdullah asked her permission to join Ebrahim and his father to go to the Mosque. He told her that Ebrahim’s father will bring him home after that. Abdullah then added, “Mama, I have something for you, which you will like a lot, for sure. And, moreover, I have an idea which you will like even more than the gift....”

¹The first Hadeeth on page 4 reported by Al-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Barzah رضي الله عنه.

²The second Hadeeth on page 5 reported by Bukhari & Muslim.

³The third Hadeeth on page 18 reported by Al-Bukhari on authority of Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه.