

Lies
Truth

LYING

SOCIAL ISLAM

LEVEL 1

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand what it means to be truthful in speech and action
- Understand that lying is forbidden in Islam
- Understand briefly the consequences of lying in this world
- Be reminded of the punishments of lying
- Understand that lies lead to more lies
- Know that listening to or obeying a liar or a person who speaks falsehood is also ḥarām

Lying I

What does it mean to lie? It simply means when someone is not saying the truth. Now tell me, do you think it is good to lie?

All of us agree that lying is bad, and that we should avoid it at all times. But yet there are people who lie. Can you think of the reasons they would lie? Some of the obvious reasons would be:

- 1) They are scared of someone or something
- 2) To cover up something wrong they have done
- 3) To make someone like them.

Let us look at what Islam says about lying: Our dear Prophet Muḥammad (saw) used to be known as 'the Truthful One'. This meant that he never lied to anyone. This shows us that lying is not a good quality to have, and that we should follow the footsteps of Prophet Muḥammad (saw) and be honest.

Let us look at what advice our dear Prophet Muḥammad (saw) gives a person.

Once a man came to Prophet Muḥammad (saw) and said, "O Messenger of Allah, I have many bad habits. Which one of them should I give up first?" Prophet Muḥammad (saw) said:

"Give up telling lies first and always speak the truth."

The man promised to stop lying and left. At night the same man was about to go out to steal. Before setting out, he thought for a moment about the advice of

Prophet Muḥammad (saw) and his promise. "If tomorrow Prophet Muḥammad (saw) asks me where have I been, what shall I say? Shall I say that I went out stealing? No, I cannot say that. But nor can I lie. If I tell the truth, everyone will start hating me and call me a thief. I would be punished for stealing."

So the man decided not to steal that night, and gave up this bad habit of stealing. The next day, he felt like drinking wine, when he was about to do so, he said to himself, "What shall I say to Prophet Muḥammad (saw) if he asks me what did I do during the day? I cannot tell a lie, and if I speak the truth people will hate me, because a Muslim is not allowed to drink wine." And so he gave up the idea of drinking wine.

In this way, whenever the man thought of doing something bad, he remembered the advice of Prophet Muḥammad (saw) to tell the truth at all times. One by one, he gave up all his bad habits and became a good Muslim and a very good person.

If we always speak the truth, this will help us not to commit many of the other sins as well. Then hopefully Allah (SWT) would be pleased with us and give us a place in Paradise. Imam Ḥasan al-‘Askari (as) has said:

“All the evils have been locked in a room and its key is lying.”ⁱ

If you knew that there was something terrible was behind a locked door and you had the key would you open it? I know I wouldn't! As our Imam has told us, lying is like a key that opens a door for other bad things, and so we should keep this door closed by never lying and always telling the truth.

Imam ‘Ali (as) also teaches us that being truthful has a lot of other benefits. He says:

"The truth teller achieves three things: (other's) trust, love, and respect."

This means that if we always tell the truth, people would love, respect and trust us.

Homework

CHALLENGE

Start

THE CHALLENGE
You must tell the truth everytime you speak. You can not even tell one white lie but must be truthful in all matters. You must do this until the challenge is complete.

At the end of each day, if you have done the challenge, colour in one step.

Always telling the truth is the best quality in every human being. Every nation recognises that telling the truth is a noble action. The prophet (pbuh) taught us that telling the truth leads to virtue and virtue guides us to paradise. We must make truthfulness one of our virtues.

When all the steps are coloured, you have finished the challenge.

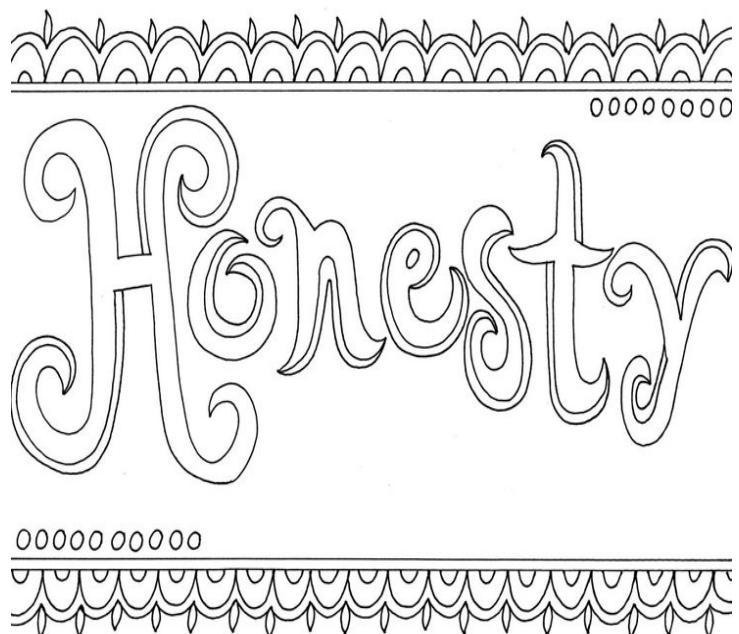
Finish

Lying II

In the last lesson, we learnt how important how it is to be honest, and to never lie!

Class Activity

Colour in the picture below:



Islam teaches us to be honest at all times, even if it means we may get into trouble. It is better to be in trouble in this world, than to face the fire of hell due to lying. Let us read the story of the boy who cried "wolf":

THE BOY WHO CRIED "WOLF"!

There was once a shepherd-boy who kept his flock at a little distance from the village. Once he thought he would play a trick on the villagers and have some fun at their expense. So he ran toward the village crying out, with all his might,--

"Wolf! Wolf! Come and help! The wolves are at my lambs!"

The kind villagers left their work and ran to the field to help him. But when they got there the boy laughed at them for their pains; there was no wolf there.

Still another day the boy tried the same trick, and the villagers came running to help and got laughed at again. Then one day a wolf did break into the fold and began killing the lambs. In great fright, the boy ran for help. "Wolf! Wolf!" he screamed. "There is a wolf in the flock! Help!"

The villagers heard him, but they thought it was another mean trick; no one paid the least attention, or went near him. And the shepherd-boy lost all his sheep.

That is the kind of thing that happens to people who lie: even when they tell the truth no one believes them. ⁱⁱ

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF WE LIE?

The above story about the boy who cried wolf makes us realize that if we lie, people will not believe us and help us when we tell the truth – because they will not know when we are telling the truth and when we are lying. This shows to us that if we lie people will not love or respect us, and definitely won't trust us. Allah (SWT) also tells us in the Holy Quran that we will be cursed if we lie. Allah (SWT) becomes very angry with those who lie.

Allah (SWT) does not like people who lie, and those who lie will be punished severely. We have to control ourselves from now, so that we get in to the habit of speaking only the truth!

Lying III

From the previous lessons we should all know that lying is an act that is not liked by Allah, His Prophet and our Holy Imams. We also have learnt that when we lie, people will not like us and we do not feel good when others lie to us. In the same way we should also not tell lies because one lie could lead to another lie.

Most of you must have heard the story of Pinocchio whereby every time he lies, his nose grows longer and longer, until he realises that it is best to say the truth right from the beginning. He was being punished for every lie that he would say such that his nose would grow longer. Of course this is only a story, but there is a message for us to learn, that we too are being punished for every lie we say by Allah (SWT), only we cannot see it. However Allah (swt) is very kind and merciful, and if we ask Him for forgiveness sincerely, He will forgive us.

Colour in the picture of Pinocchio.



HONESTY

Let's listen to the following story to see what happens when we are honest.

Ahmad wanted to buy a soccer ball. His mother refused to give him money, but she said that he could save some of his pocket money and then buy his soccer ball. One day, Ahmad's mother said: 'Ahmad! Go and buy a box of tea from uncle Salim's store.'

'Yes mother!' said Ahmad. And off he went to uncle Salim's convenience store down the street from

where he lived. Uncle Salim, the owner of the store, was an old man who could not see much without

his glasses.

'As-Salāmu 'Alaykum, ncle Sālim!' said Ahmad. And Uncle Salim recognized Ahmad's voice.

'Wa 'Alaykum Salām Dear Ahmad!' said old uncle Salim.

'Can I have a box of tea please?' asked Ahmed politely. And so Uncle Salim picked a box of tea and

gave it to Ahmad. 'Here you are my dear,' he said.

Ahmad gives him a 5-dollar bill. Old Uncle Salim took the money and returned some change to

Ahmad. On the way back to home, Ahmad realized that the poor Uncle Salim had given him more

change than he actually should have. He happily said, 'Wow! Now I can buy the soccer ball without

saving any more of my pocket money!'

But then he said to himself: 'Hmm.. isn't this dishonest? Am I not cheating poor old Uncle Salim who cannot see very well without his glasses?! But if I return the extra money, then what will happen to my soccer ball??!'

While Ahmad was thinking about what to do, he remembered what his mother had once said: "Whenever you are in trouble, say:

"A'udhu bil lāhi minash shaytānir rajīm".

This means "I ask for help from Allah against Satan."

And so Ahmad began thinking how Allah was watching him to see what he would do. He said the above words, and then made his decision. He decided to be truthful and honest and he ran back to the store and returned the extra change to Uncle Salim.

Ahmad realized that keeping that money would be dishonest. When Uncle Salim saw what Ahmad did, he was very happy. 'May Allah bless you, my dear son. Here, take this candy as a gift from me,' he said.

That evening, when his father returned from work, Ahmad told him the whole story. His father was very, very proud of his son. Ahmad's father took out some money from his wallet and said, 'Dear Ahmad, take this money as a gift for being honest and truthful. Tomorrow you can go and buy a soccer ball for yourself. May Allah bless you, my son!'

So finally Ahmad did not have to wait any longer to get his soccer ball. Because he was honest and

truthful, Allah was happy with him and his parents were happy with him. Uncle Salim was happy with

him and he felt good that he did not cheat anyone.

Review Questions

Q1. Telling one lie:

- Never leads to telling other lies
- Sometimes leads to telling other lies
- Usually leads to telling other lies

Q2. Being honest will mean:

- We will not get what we want
- We will eventually get what we want the right way

ⁱ(*Mustadrakul-Wasa'il*)

from *Stories to Tell to Children* by Sara Cone Bryant

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<http://www.rickwalton.com/folktale/bryant19.htm>