



سوء الظن

Suspicion

Objectives >>>

Students should:

- Understand what it means to assume something
- Understand how assumptions can become negative
- Understand that Allah does not like those who think negatively

Suspicion

To assume something is to think something about someone without knowing the truth. For example, if you see someone who is not fasting in the month of Ramaḍān, what thoughts will you get? You may think something like 'oh no its Ramaḍān and he's not fasting; he is such a bad boy'. But you do not know the *real* reason he is not fasting; it may be because he is ill and cannot fast.

So, it is never good to assume or think bad about others when we do not know the truth. Here is a story about the Clever Fisherman and King Parviz which may help you to understand why you shouldn't assume or think badly about anyone:

THE CLEVER FISHERMAN AND KING PARVIZ

As King Parviz and Queen Shirin were sitting in their palace one day, a fisherman who was selling beautiful fish was brought in front of them. King

SOCIAL ISLAM

LEVEL 1

Parviz decided to buy a fish and gave the fisherman 4000 dirham for it.

The fisherman was overjoyed. He thanked King Parviz and left.

Queen Shirin turned to her husband in anger and scolded him for paying so much for a fish. King Parviz let her have her say but said that the fish was purchased and that there was nothing that could be done about it.

However, the Queen Shirin was adamant and insisted that the fisherman be brought back.

"We will ask the fisherman about the gender of the fish," she said. "If he answers that it is female, we will say that we wanted a male fish and if his response is that it is male, we will say that we wanted a female fish! Either way, we will be able to return the fish and have our money back."

So the poor fisherman was called back and was asked the question.

Fortunately, he was clever enough not to be caught out. Fisherman replied, "This fish is unique in the sense that it is neutral i.e., it's neither male nor female."

King Parviz was so impressed by the ingenuity of the man that he ordered a further 4000 dirham to be paid to him. The fisherman thanked the King Parviz again but as he was about to leave with the heavy bag of money, one of the coins fell onto the floor. The fisherman immediately bent down to look for

the coin. Queen Shirin was already upset that the fisherman had been given 8000 dirham.

"Look how miserly this man is!" the Queen Shirin exclaimed. "One coin has fallen out of his bag full of money and he searches for it instead of leaving it for some other poor servant to find."

The fisherman heard this remark and said, "O Queen, it is not out of miserliness that I search for the coin but rather because it had the picture of generous King Parviz on it. I would not tolerate anyone to cause dishonour to the King Parviz by treading on the coin."



King Parviz was so flattered with this response that he immediately called for another 4000 dirham to be given to the fisherman. When Queen Shirin saw all this, she thought it was better to hold her tongue and let the fisherman go with the 12000 dirham before the King decided to increase the amount again.

Moral of the Story: We learnt that in this story that queen Shirin was very quick to judge and assume that the fisherman was being greedy and inconsiderate when he was picking up the coin he had dropped; when in fact he was doing it out of respect to the king.

WHY AVOID NEGATIVE SUSPICION?

You may wonder why is it so bad to assume bad things about other people; because sometimes what you are thinking could be true. Well, Allah (SWT) answers this question in the Holy Qur'an:

“O you who believe, avoid most assumption, because some assumption is evil...” (49:12)

In this āyah of the Holy Qur'an, Allah (SWT) is telling us that we should avoid assuming things altogether because most of the things we think about people are bad consequences. Having negative assumptions about people can cause friendships and relationships to break down, can hurt people's feelings and can cause to get upset when there was no need to be so.

We can try and understand this by using an example: you promised to meet your friend at a certain place. Just before you left, you fell ill and could not even get out of bed. Your friend spent a long time waiting at the park for you, but you did not show up. He assumes that you forgot and that you did not care about him. The next time he sees you, he comes up to you and very angrily says that he is not your friend anymore. You get upset that he is acting like this, and decide not to talk to him either. The friendship can break down simply because one person had a negative assumption about another, without knowing the truth.

This is why Allah (SWT) does not like it when we think bad things about other people as it breaks up communities, friendships and families. Whenever we think something bad about someone; it is a whispering (*waswasa*) from Satan; so we should ignore it. If we ignore it, then we have beaten Satan.

MORALS

So from this lesson we have learnt:

- 1) Never to think negatively about anyone.
- 2) Always to think positively about people
- 3) Thinking negatively & assuming leads to broken families and friendships.
- 4) Allah (SWT) does not like it when we think badly of anyone.
- 5) These bad thoughts are from Satan and should be ignored!

Activity - Role Play

Your teacher will give each of you a role to play. You can act out the story of King Paviz and the fisherman.