

The Eemaan Reading Series

Level 5

Stories

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The Goodwill Mirror

Taariq was unusually quiet and sad. He returned from an interschool football match. On entering the house, he greeted everyone by



saying “*As salaamu alaykum*,” as every Muslim should. He washed his hands before he sat down to have his afternoon meal. Afterwards, he did not sit and talk with his family as he always did. Instead, he went straight to his room and did his homework. But his heart was not in it. He did not even feel like studying. So he closed his books and slumped into bed for an afternoon nap.



Taariq was in sixth grade. He was the best-behaved student at school: he respected his elders, was kind and caring to younger students and helpful towards his classmates.

Taariq was a very sensible boy. He was not sad because his team had lost; he was sad because of the ill feelings and the fight on the football pitch. When the final whistle was blown, some of Taariq's teammates surrounded Abdullaah and a battle of words continued. The boys blamed Abdullaah for their defeat. They pushed him and said, "Silly! Silly! You don't know how to play. We will not have you on our team ever." Abdullaah began to cry.

Some of Taariq's teammates argued with the referee and told him he was unfair. To make it worse, students from the winning school started calling to the other team, "Losers! Losers!" Zaid and Anas from Taariq's team lost their tempers and a fight started. The boys began to throw rocks. However, the coach and the teachers quickly separated the fighting boys.

Taariq never liked to see people fight. It made him very sad. Now, lying in his bed, he wondered why people fought. His parents loved each other and their family, but at times he would see them arguing about small matters. His older sister would always quarrel with family members about which TV channel to watch. His relatives quarreled about incidents that happened, even long before he was born. At school the boys fought about grades, changing seats, and about choosing captains for teams.

Taariq also knew about some world events from the newspaper and things older people talk about. He had read and heard about fights between different groups of Muslims in many parts of the world. It made him sad to read about disagreements between Muslims all over the world. There would not be any fighting and quarrels among people anywhere in the world if people had goodwill for each other. He remembered the *hadeeth* of *Allaah's* Messenger (peace be upon him):

"A servant (of *Allaah*) does not (truly) believe until he likes for his brother what he likes for himself."

"Yes, goodwill towards others is the key to end quarrels, fights and wars," he said to himself, "but how could goodwill be spread to the hearts of people?" Taariq closed his eyes and thought about it. He thought and thought, but did not find an answer.

Suddenly a pleasant scent filled Taariq's room. Someone was there with him. An old man with a warm, kind face stood near Taariq's study desk. He was smiling at Taariq. A golden light spread from the man and his clothes and filled the room.



But Taariq was scared. He rushed towards the door. It was locked from the outside. Taariq tried hard to open it, but he could not. “Do not be afraid, Taariq,” the old man said gently. “I am your friend and have come to help you spread goodwill among people. Take this mirror. Whoever looks in it will always have goodwill for others. Since you so much wish goodwill among people, you’re the best person to use it. But remember this: if you ever think of using it selfishly, the mirror will break and disappear. May *Allaah*’s blessings be on you, Taariq.” With those last words, the old man disappeared and so did the pleasant scent and golden light.



Taariq rubbed his eyes and stared in disbelief. There on the desk was a small pocket mirror! Taariq picked up the mirror and looked at it. The mirror was just a common one, yet Taariq's image in it was encircled with beautiful flowers. The flowers had the colors of the rainbow.

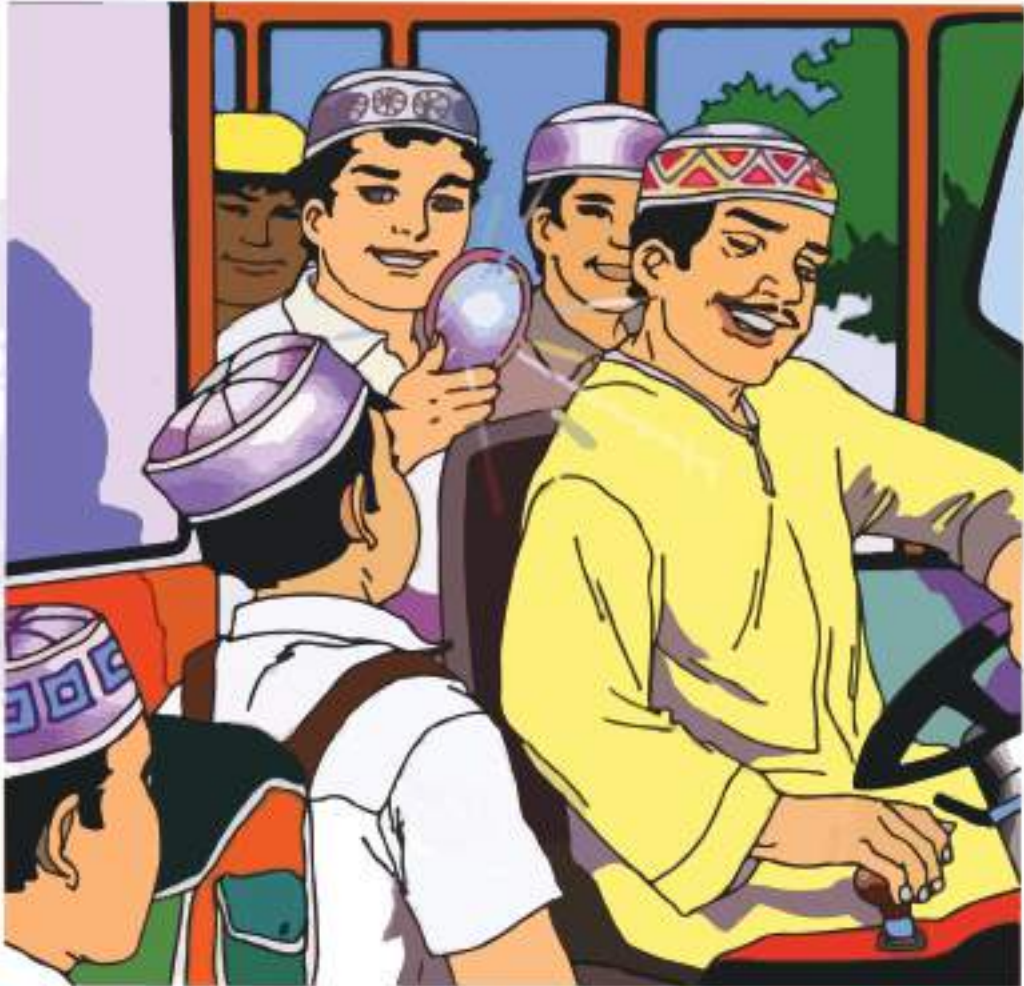
Taariq put the mirror in his pocket and decided to test it.

Taariq went to the living room. His sister, Farihah, was playing her favorite game. She yelled, "Go away! I was here first." Taariq replied, "Don't worry, I'm going outside to play. I just wanted to show you this mirror." Farihah looked at herself in the mirror. Her face was beautiful with the many colored flowers around it. "O Taariq," she said handing him back the mirror, "I look so pretty in it." Farihah continued in very gentle tones, "Taariq, you can play on the computer if you wish. I'm sorry I yelled at you a moment ago." It was strange, Farihah wasn't bossy.

The goodwill mirror worked wonders at dinnertime, too. There were no arguments. Before going to bed, Taariq carefully put the mirror in his schoolbag.

The next morning when Taariq got on the bus he showed the goodwill mirror to the driver. Taariq sat on the front seat by the door, so everyone

getting on the bus saw the mirror. It was amazing how the boys were peaceful and pleasant. The bus driver did not shout at the boys boarding the bus. He did not even shout any bad remarks to other drivers on the road. This time, the older boys did not push the younger ones to grab their seats, but they politely offered their own seats.



Taariq was glad to see the change in his schoolmates. He hoped to spread goodwill among the people of the world. He felt that there had to be talks about goodwill for people to learn to live in peace with their neighbors. He knew a mirror could not forever continue to get peace for the people. He planned to show the mirror to the ruler of his country. Then suddenly the thought flashed through his mind.

“The goodwill mirror will help me to stop wars in our countries. It will make me be the first Nobel Peace Prize winner of my country.” And with that thought there was a cracking sound in Taariq’s schoolbag. Taariq took out the mirror. It was cracked and the pieces were disappearing.

“Oh, *Allaah!* The mirror disappeared because of my selfish thought about winning the Nobel Peace Prize!” Taariq was sad and tears filled his eyes. He moaned, “My mirror, my goodwill mirror, my...”

“Taariq, Taariq, get up! You’re getting late for your evening prayer!” Taariq felt



his mother’s loving hand on his forehead. He opened his eyes and saw her standing near his bed. In a choked voice he said, “Mother, I lost my goodwill mirror.” His mother did not understand him. She asked, “You lost what? Taariq, what’s the matter with you? Are you alright, my son?”

“Yes, Mother, I’m OK,” he replied and told her about his dream. “I don’t understand one thing, Mother. How could a selfish thought break the goodwill mirror?”



His mother replied with a smile, “Because selfishness and goodwill cannot be together. One destroys the other. Remember one thing more, my very dear son: one does not work to bring about good in the world to win an award, but to try to find *Allaah*’s favours and blessing. Now off you go. If you don’t hurry, you’re going to be late.”

“Yes, Mother. Thank you, Mother.” With these words and saying *as salaamu alaykum*, Taariq left for the masjid to offer his evening prayers.



Strange Things Happen

When you wake up in the morning and fall off the bed,
When you walk to the door and bump your head,
When you get hurt in different ways,
Then you know that it's one of those days.

You spill your breakfast all over the floor,
And that's not the end, you know that there's more,
You go to the school and forget to take your books,
And the teacher gives you funny looks.

Such days come to test us how we fare
When things don't seem straight do we still care
To be pious and grateful
To Allaah the Most Merciful

Don't worry, strange things happen to everyone,
From such days you can't escape nor run.

Yasmin Koya