

STORIES FROM THE QURAN

Sabbath

Activities
Included

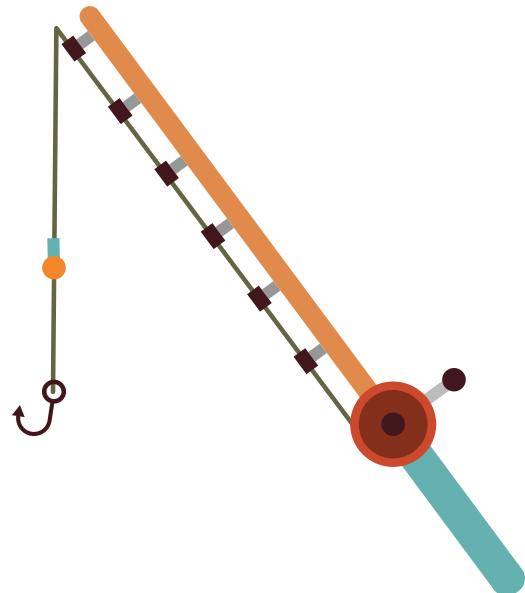
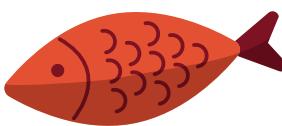


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“And ask them about the town that was by the sea - when they transgressed in [the matter of] the sabbath - when their fish came to them openly on their sabbath day, and the day they had no sabbath they did not come to them. Thus did We give them trial because they were defiantly disobedient.” (Al-'Araf: 163)

This story relates to a small fishing community of Bani Israel.

During this time, because of their continuous disobedience and stubbornness, Allah decreed many rules against them as a punishment for their rebellious behaviour but also as a means to forgive their sins if they followed it..



One of these rules was the observance of the Sabbath (Saturday), where Bani Israel was completely prohibited from doing any work. For this fishing village, it meant that they were not allowed to fish on Saturdays.

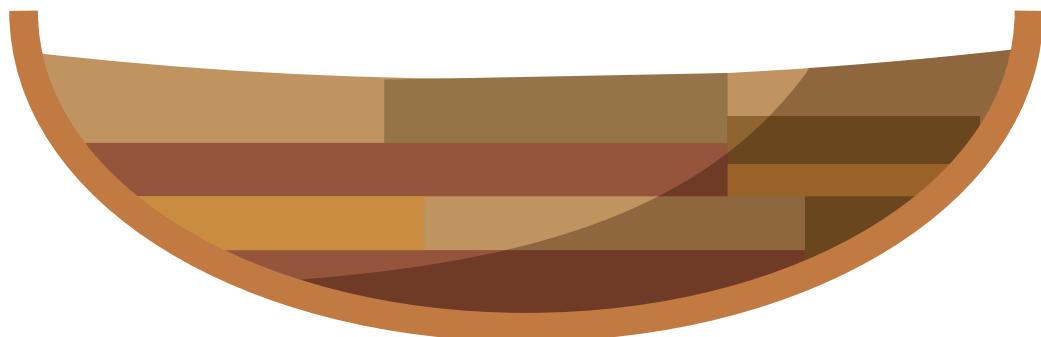


This rule was particularly difficult to obey, because by the power of Allah, the seas in which they fished did not show any fish for six days of the week, but on every Saturday, all types of fish would appear in the same sea, and were so many that they could even be seen playing at the surface. On all other days, the same fish would vanish and the fishermen would come back empty handed. The appearance of the plentiful fish was a trial from Allah to test their faith, obedience and patience.

This greatly frustrated the fishermen. They could not be patient with the Sabbath any longer, but at the same time, did not want to completely disobey Allah. Therefore, they came up with a plan to fool around Allah's order.

They would lay out their fishing traps on Fridays, and the fish that visited on Saturdays were caught in the traps. On Sundays, the fishermen would collect the fish. In doing so, they deliberately disobeyed Allah – even if they did not go out to do fishing on Saturdays, the fish in fact were still caught on Saturdays because of their trickery. They knew that they were disobeying Allah. Allah tried them this test so He could forgive them their sins if they obeyed Him regarding Sabbath. However, they were impatient and failed the test.

The rest of the villagers, who did not participate in disobedience to Allah, were divided into two groups. The first group tried to stop the actions and warned the sinning people to correct their ways before the punishment Allah fell upon them. The second remained silent while others were doing evil. They did nothing to stop the wrongdoers. They allowed the disobedience to continue, even though they did not participate in such wrongdoing. They also disapproved of the first group's actions, the ones that tried to stop the wrong, asking: "Why do you preach to a people whom Allah is about to destroy or to punish with a severe torment?" meaning, why bother correcting these people as Allah will punish them anyway?



The first group knew that if they did not try to stop the wrong that were openly doing, then the punishment of Allah would come upon the whole community and not just on the wrongdoers. They wanted to clearly turn themselves away from the disobedient actions of the others, and realized that seeing evil and not doing anything about it would not be enough to save them from the punishment of Allah.

Week after week, the disobedient fishermen continued to disobey Allah's orders, bringing with them abundant fish from the sea. Allah finally punished them with a unique punishment by turning them into monkeys!

**"So when they exceeded the limits of what they were prohibited,
We said to them: "Be you monkeys, despised and rejected"**

(Al Quran 7:166- 7:163)

Comprehension questions

★ Why do you think that plenty of fish would appear on Saturdays and not other days?

★ How were the Bani Isra'eel trying to trick Allah? And why?

★ Why should Muslims never trick Allah or other people?

★ Why can Allah be never tricked? Think of some of His Names!

★ What should a Muslim do when obeying Allah becomes difficult?

The Prophet Muhammed (sal-Allahu alayhi wa sallam) said: "Whoever sees an evil must change it with his hand. If he is not able to do so, then [he must change it] with his tongue. And if he is not able to do so, then [he must change it] with his heart (by hating the evil in his heart). And that is the slightest [effect of] faith." (Recorded in Muslim)

★ What should Muslims do when they see others disobeying Allah openly?

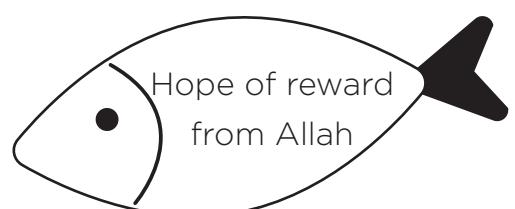
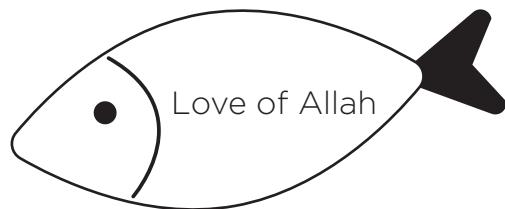
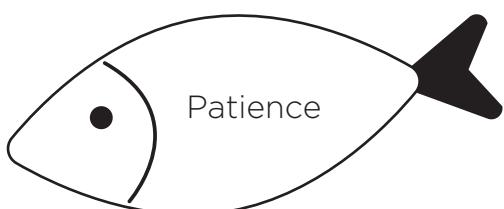
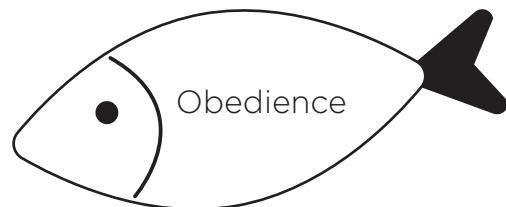
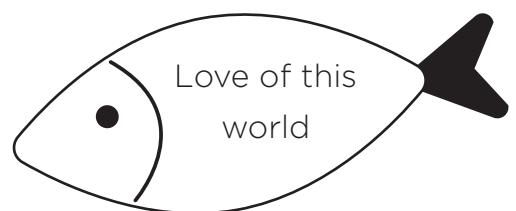
★ Why is stopping others from evil important?

★ Discuss some examples of situations where you can stop someone from being disobedient to Allah.

★ Can you make connections from the text to your self? Does the story of Sabbath remind you of something?

Activity

Colour all the fish which have the qualities Bani Isra'eel needed to save themselves from the punishment of Allah.



frame

Sail Through Life With Patience...

Be patient in obeying Allah

Be patient in not disobeying Allah

Be patient in tough times



Acknowledgement

All praise and thanks are for Allah Alone

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