

Short Stories for class 3

1. Value of Time:

Once, a king and a lazy man named Haria were very good friends. One morning, the king said, "Why don't you do work to earn some money?"

Haria said, "No one gives me job. My enemies told everyone that I never do any work in time."

The kind king said, "You can go into my treasury and collect as much wealth as you can, till sunset."

Haria rushed home to tell this to his wife. She said, "Go and get the gold coins and gems now."

"I cannot go now. Give me lunch first."

After lunch, he took a nap for an hour. Then in the late afternoon, he picked some bags and went to the palace. On the way, he felt hot so he sat under a tree to rest. Then, two hours later, he got up to go but saw a man showing some magic tricks. He stopped to watch for an hour again.

When he reached the palace it was already time for sunset. The palace gates had been shut. So Haria had lost a golden chance because he had not learnt the value of time.

Moral: Make full use of the opportunity which God gives you.

2. A Hole in The Fence:

There once was a little boy who had a bad temper. His Father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence.

The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence....

Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper.

The day passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone. The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, "You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one.

Moral: Angry words cause deeper wounds

3. Generosity:

Once Jesus and his disciples were in the Temple at Jerusalem for the festival. Jesus chose to sit near the offering box and started watching those people who had come for the festival and putting offering in the box. Many rich men were putting large sum of money in the box and they captured the attention of everyone. They also felt proud of themselves as they could contribute more money to God.

At that time an old poor widow got up from her seat. She was bent with age, her hair was grey and her clothes were in tatters. With all humility she came along the offering box and dropped two copper coins in the offering box. Many who were looking at the poor lady despised her in their heart.

Jesus called his disciples together and said to them, "I tell you that this poor widow put more in the offering box than all the others. For the others put in what they had to spare of their riches; but she, poor as she is, put in all she had—she gave all she had to live on."

That was very generous of her. What a great sacrifice she made.

Moral: It is not how much you give for God, but it is how much you have kept with you after giving to God.

4. Making A Difference:

One day an old man was walking down a deserted beach at sunset. As he walked along, he began to see a boy in the distance. As he grew nearer, he noticed that a boy kept leaning down, picking something up and throwing it out into the water. Time and again he kept hurling things out into the ocean.

As old man approached even closer, he noticed that the boy was picking up starfish that had washed up on the beach and one at a time, he was throwing them back into the water. My friend was puzzled. He approached the man and said, "Good evening, little boy. I was wondering what you are doing."

"I'm throwing these starfish back into the ocean. You see its lowtide right now and all of these starfish have been washed up onto the shore. If I don't throw them back into the sea, they'll die up here from lack of oxygen."

"I understand," my little boy, he replied, "but there must be thousands of starfish on this beach. You can't possibly get to all of them. There are simply too many. And don't you realize this is probably happening on hundreds of beaches all up and down this coast. Can't you see that you can't possibly make a difference?"

The boy smiled, bent down and picked up yet another starfish and as he threw it back into the sea, he replied, "Made a difference to that one!"

Moral: It could be a small act of kindness but it will surely make a difference in the world. So never giveup.

5. You are priceless to those who love you. :

A well-known speaker started off his seminar by holding up a 100 Rs note. In the room of 200, he asked, "Who would like this 100 Rs note?"

Hands started going up. He said, "I am going to give this 100 Rs to one of you but first, let me do this."

He proceeded to crumple up the 100 Rs note. He asked, "Who still wants it?"

Still hands were up in the air.

'Well, what if I do this?' He dropped it on the ground and started to grind it into the floor with his shoe. He picked it up, now crumpled and dirty and asked, "Who still wants it?"

Still hands went up into the air.

My friends, we have all learned a very valuable lesson. No matter what was done to the money, it was still wanted because it did not decrease in value. It was still worth 100 Rs. Many times in our lives, we are dropped, crumpled and ground into the dirt by the decisions we make and the circumstances that come our way. We may feel as though we are worthless. But no matter what has happened or will happen, we will never lose our value, we are still priceless to those who love us.

6. The lion and the rabbit

Long time ago there lived a cruel lion in the deep forest. It was a greedy lion and started killing all the animals in the forest. Seeing this, the animals gathered and decided to approach the lion with the offer of one animal of each species volunteering itself to be eaten by the lion every day. So every day it was the turn of one of the animals and in the end came the rabbits' turn. The rabbits chose an old rabbit among them. The rabbit old was wise. It decided to take its own sweet time to go to the Lion. The Lion was getting impatient on not seeing any animal come by and swore to kill all animals the next day.

The rabbit then went to the Lion by sunset. The Lion was angry at him. But the wise rabbit was calm and slowly told the Lion that it was not his fault. He told the Lion that a group of rabbits were coming to him for the day but on the way, an angry Lion attacked them all and ate all rabbits but himself. Somehow he escaped to reach safely, the rabbit said. He said that the other Lion was challenging the supremacy of the Lion. The Lion was naturally very enraged and asked to be taken to the location of the other Lion.

The wise rabbit agreed and led the Lion towards a deep well filled with water. Then he showed the Lion his reflection in the water of the well. The Lion was furious and started growling and naturally its image in the water, the other Lion, was also equally angry. Then the Lion jumped into the water to attack the other Lion and kill it but lost its life in the well. Thus the wise rabbit saved the forest and all animals from the proud Lion.

Moral: Intelligence wins over might.

7. Sands of Forgiveness :

Two friends were walking through the desert. During some point of the journey they had an argument and one friend slapped the other one in the face. The one who got slapped was hurt, but without saying anything, wrote in the sand....Today my best friend slapped me in the face.

They kept on walking until they found an oasis where they decided to take a bath. The one who had been slapped got stuck in the mire and started drowning. But the friend saved him. After he recovered from the near drowning, he wrote on a stone....Today my best friend saved my life.

The friend who had slapped and saved his best friend asked him....After I hurt you, you wrote in the sand and now, you write on a stone. Why?

The other friend replied....When someone hurts us we should write it down in sand where winds of forgiveness can erase it away. But when someone does something good for us, we must engrave it in stone where no wind can ever erase it.

8. The Ant and The Dove : (Easy one)

Once a dove lived in an oak tree by the side of a pond.

An ant was living under the oak tree. Both the dove and the ant were friends.

One day a strong wind was blowing across the tree.

The ant could not withstand and fell into the river. It could not get out.

The dove saw this and wanted to save his friend. So, it threw a leaf into the water.

The ant got on the leaf. It was saved.

One day a hunter came that way and tried to shoot the dove.

The ant saw the hunter and bit his foot. The hunter missed his aim.

He could not shoot the dove. The dove flew away. So the ant saved the dove.

It repaid the dove for the kind act.

9. A Merchant and His Donkey :

One beautiful spring morning, a merchant loaded his donkey with bags of salt to go to the market in order to sell them. The merchant and his donkey were walking along together.

They had not walked far when they reached a river on the road. Unfortunately, the donkey slipped and fell into the river and noticed that the bags of salt loaded on his back became lighter.

There was nothing the merchant could do, except return home where he loaded his donkey with more bags of salt. As they reached the slippery riverbank, now deliberately, the donkey fell into the river and wasted all the bags of salt on its back again.

The merchant quickly discovered the donkey's trick. He then returned home again but reloaded his donkey with bags of sponges.

The foolish, tricky donkey again set on its way. On reaching the river he again fell into the water. But instead of the load becoming lighter, it became heavier.

The merchant laughed at him and said: "You foolish donkey.... Your trick had been discovered, you should know that, those who are too clever sometimes over reap the consequence themselves."

10. The black dot

One day, a professor entered his classroom and asked his students to prepare for a surprise test. They all waited anxiously at their desks for the exam to begin.

The professor handed out the exams with the text facing down, as usual. Once he handed them all out, he asked the students to turn over the papers.

To everyone's surprise, there were no questions—just a black dot in the center of the paper. The professor, seeing the expression on everyone's faces, told them the following: "I want you to write about what you see there." The students, confused, got started on the inexplicable task.

At the end of the class, the professor took all the exams, and started reading each one of them out loud in front of all the students.

All of them, with no exception, defined the black dot, trying to explain its position in the center of the sheet. After all had been read, the classroom silent, the professor started to explain: "I'm not going to grade you on this, I just wanted to give you something to think about. No one wrote about the white part of the paper. Everyone focused on the black dot – and the same thing happens in our lives. However, we insist on focusing only on the black dot – the health issues that bother us, the lack of money, the complicated relationship with a family member, the disappointment with a friend. The dark spots are very small when compared to everything we have in our lives, but they are the ones that pollute our minds. Take your the eyes away from the black dots in your lives. Enjoy each one of your blessings, each moment that life gives you. Be happy and live a life filled with love!"

11. Butterfly and Cocoon :

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly. One day a small opening appeared. He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole. Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could and it could go no farther.

Then the man decided to help the butterfly, so he took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily. But it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings.

The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body which would contract in time.

Neither happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It never was able to fly.

What this man in his kindness and haste did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were nature's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our life. If nature allowed us to go through your life without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as what we could have been. And we could never fly....

12. You cannot please everyone

This is a short story to teach you that you cannot please everyone. A man and his son were once going with their Donkey to market. As they were walking along by its side a countryman passed them and said: "You fool, what a Donkey for but to ride is upon?"

So the Man put the Boy on the Donkey and they went on their way. But soon they passed a group of men. One of whom said: "See that lazy youngster. He lets his father walk while he rides."

So the Man ordered his Boy to get off and got on himself. But they hadn't gone far when they passed two women. One of whom said to the other: "Shame on that lazy lout to let his poor little son trudge along."

Well the Man did not know what to do. But at last he took his Boy up before him on the Donkey. By this time they had come to the town and the passers-by began to jeer and point at them. The Man stopped and asked what they were scoffing at. The men said:

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself for overloading that poor Donkey of yours - you and your hulking son?"

The man and Boy got off and tried to think what to do. They thought and they thought, till at last they cut down a pole, tied the Donkey's feet to it and raised the pole and the Donkey to their shoulders. They went along amid the laughter of all who met them till they came to Market Bridge when the Donkey, getting one of his feet loose, kicked out and caused the Boy to drop his end of the pole. In the struggle the Donkey fell over the bridge and his fore-feet being tied together, he was drowned.

"That will teach you," said an old man who had followed them:

Moral: You Can Not Please Everyone.

13. Love stays

A nurse took the tired, anxious serviceman to the bedside. "Your son is here," she said to the old man. She had to repeat the words several times before the patient's eyes opened. Heavily sedated because of the pain of his heart attack, he dimly saw the young uniformed marine standing outside the oxygen tent. He reached out his hand. The marine wrapped his toughened fingers around the old man's limp ones, squeezing a message of love and encouragement.

The nurse brought a chair so that the marine could sit beside the bed. All through the night, the young marine sat there in the poorly lighted ward, holding the old man's hand and offering him words of love and strength. Occasionally, the nurse suggested that the Marine move away and rest awhile. He refused. Whenever the nurse came into the ward, the marine was oblivious of her and of the night noises of the hospital – the clanking of the oxygen tank, the laughter of the night staff members exchanging greetings, the cries and moans of the other patients.

Now and then she heard him say a few gentle words. The dying man said nothing, only held tightly to his son all through the night. Along towards dawn, the old man died. The marine released the now lifeless hand he had been holding and went to tell the nurse. While she did what she had to do, he waited. Finally, she returned. She started to offer words of sympathy, but the Marine interrupted her.

"Who was that man?" he asked. The nurse was startled, "He was your father," she answered.

"No, he wasn't," the marine replied. "I never saw him before in my life."

"Then why didn't you say something when I took you to him?"

"I knew right away there had been a mistake, but I also knew he needed his son, and his son just wasn't here. When I realised that he was too sick to tell whether or not I was his son, knowing how much he needed me, I stayed."

The next time someone needs you ... just be there. Stay.

14. Lesson of The Camel:

A camel lived in a forest. He had a very bad habit of teasing or insulting other animals for their appearance. He would tease the elephant and say, "Oh! How fat and ugly you look. God has given two tails one in the back and one in the front."

To the rhinoceros, he would comment, "All animals have two horns and you are queer-looking with just one horn on your nose."

When he would meet the zebra, he would always comment, "Ah! Here you are with crooked black lines all over you. What is the use of them anyway?"

All the animals felt bad at this. One day, a frank monkey met the camel and said, "Oh! Mr. Camel! Where are you going with that ugly hunch on your back?"

Look at your long and crooked neck on such a small body. What do you do with such a long neck?"

The camel felt hurt at such words. He learnt a lesson. Now he knew how the others felt at his comments. So he stopped that bad habit from that day itself.

15. The Hospitality of the Pigeon

Once upon a time, there lived two pigeons. They were husband and wife. They spend their day looking for food. In the evening they would come and rest on their favourite tree in the forest.

One evening, the wife returned home early. As usual she was waiting for her husband, when suddenly it started raining. She started to worry. "Where are you, my dear? You never get so late," she whispered to herself.

Just then she saw a bird-catcher coming towards her. In a cage he had a pigeon. It was her husband. "OH no, what shall I do now" I wish I can help my husband," she said. She desperately tried to distract the bird-catcher by flapping her wings, but all in vain.

Soon, it stopped raining. "Brrr! It is so cold," said the bird-catcher. His clothes were wet. He decided to sit under the same tree where the two pigeons lived.

The poor wife sat by her husband's cage. And she started to cry. The husband said. "Do not feel sad, dear. We now have a guest. This man is shivering and hungry. He needs your help." Hearing this, the wife flew around getting dry twigs. She made a fire for the bird-catcher. Then she looked at the bird-catcher and said, "You are our guest, since I have no food to offer, I will jump into this fire. In few minutes I will become an edible item for you. You can eat me."

By now, the bird-catcher was overwhelmed by the hospitality of the humble pigeon couple. He at once stopped the wife jumping into the fire.

He opened the cage and set the husband free. "I have been cruel and selfish. I will never trap any bird in my net again," said the bird-catcher and went away. The two pigeons were happy to be reunited.

Moral: be kind to your enemies, you will be free from danger and teach them a lesson too.

16. The Man and The Little Cat

One day, an old man was having a stroll in the forest when he suddenly saw a little cat stuck in a hole. The poor animal was struggling to get out. So, he gave him his hand to get him out. But the cat scratched his hand with fear. The man pulled his hand screaming with pain. But he did not stop; he tried to give a hand to the cat again and again.

Another man was watching the scene, screamed with surprise, "For god sakes! Stop helping this cat! He's going to get himself out of there".

The other man did not care about him, he just continued saving that animal until he finally succeeded, And then he walked to that man and said, "Son, it is cat's Instincts that makes him scratch and to hurt, and it is my job to love and care".

Moral: Treat everyone around you with your ethics, not with theirs. Treat the people the way you want to be treated by them.

17. The Hospitality of the Pigeon

Once upon a time, there lived two pigeons. They were husband and wife. They spend their day looking for food. In the evening they would come and rest on their favourite tree in the forest.

One evening, the wife returned home early. As usual she was waiting for her husband, when suddenly it started raining. She started to worry. "Where are you, my dear? You never get so late," she whispered to herself.

Just then she saw a bird-catcher coming towards her. In a cage he had a pigeon. It was her husband. "OH no, what shall I do now" I wish I can help my husband," she said. She desperately tried to distract the bird-catcher by flapping her wings, but all in vain.

Soon, it stopped raining. "Brrr! It is so cold," said the bird-catcher. His clothes were wet. He decided to sit under the same tree where the two pigeons lived.

The poor wife sat by her husband's cage. And she started to cry. The husband said. "Do not feel sad, dear. We now have a guest. This man is shivering and hungry. He needs your help." Hearing this, the wife flew around getting dry twigs. She made a fire for the bird-catcher. Then she looked at the bird-catcher and said, "You are our guest, since I have no food to offer, I will jump into this fire. In few minutes I will become an edible item for you. You can eat me."

By now, the bird-catcher was overwhelmed by the hospitality of the humble pigeon couple. He at once stopped the wife jumping into the fire.

He opened the cage and set the husband free. "I have been cruel and selfish. I will never trap any bird in my net again," said the bird-catcher and went away. The two pigeons were happy to be reunited.

Moral: be kind to your enemies, you will be free from danger and teach them a lesson too.

18.A Cartload of Almonds:

A squirrel joined the service of the King of the Forest, the lion.

He did whatever work was given him, quickly and well. The lion became fond of him and promised to give him a cart full of almonds as pension when he retired.

The squirrel envied the other squirrels in the forest because of their carefree life. He longed to run up and down trees and leap from branch to branch like them but he could not leave the king's side and even if he could he had to move with courtly dignity.

He consoled himself with the thought that at the end of his career, he would receive a cart full of almonds, a food that few squirrels got to taste in their lifetime.

"They will envy me then," he would tell himself.

The years passed. The squirrel became old and then it was time for him to retire.

The king gave a grand banquet in his honour and at the end of it, presented him with a cart full of almonds as he had promised.

The squirrel had waited so long for this day but when he saw the almonds, he was seized with sadness.

He realized they were of no use to him now. He had lost all his teeth.

Moral: Worrying about the future makes us lose the joy of today

19.The battle of the beetles

On the slope of Long's Peak in Colorado lies the ruin of a gigantic tree. Naturalists tell us that it stood for some four hundred years. It was a seedling when Columbus landed at San Salvador, and half grown when the pilgrims settled at Plymouth.

During the course of its long life it was struck by lightning fourteen times and the innumerable avalanches and storms of four centuries thundered past it. It survived them all. In the end, however, an army of beetles attacked the tree and leveled it to the ground. The insects ate their way through the bark and gradually destroyed the inner strength of the tree by their tiny but incessant attacks. A forest giant which age had not withered, nor lightning blasted, nor storms subdued, fell at last before beetles so small that a man could crush them between his forefinger and his thumb.

There is a parallel in this story which should serve as a warning to us. Most of us can survive times of crisis. We summon the strength of faith or resolve for most any battle that we face head on. Whether it is in our professional or personal lives, we often overcome great obstacles. It is the small things like jealousy, anger, resentment, pettiness and negativity that eat us from the inside, which often bring about our downfall. Unlike a giant tree, we can identify and fight those moral or ethical "beetles." We must, however, be constantly on guard.

20.A Town Mouse and A Country Mouse

A Town Mouse and a Country Mouse were friends. The Country Mouse one day invited his friend to come and see him at his home in the fields. The Town Mouse came and they sat down to a dinner of barleycorns and roots the latter of which had a distinctly earthy flavour. The flavour was not much to the taste of the guest and presently he broke out with "My poor dear friend, you live here no better than the ants. Now, you should just see how I fare! My larder is a regular horn of plenty. You must come and stay with me and I promise you shall live on the fat of the land."

So when he returned to town he took the Country Mouse with him and showed him into a larder containing flour and oatmeal and figs and honey and dates.

The Country Mouse had never seen anything like it and sat down to enjoy the luxuries his friend provided. But before they had well begun, the door of the larder opened and someone came in. The two Mice scampered off and hid themselves in a narrow and exceedingly uncomfortable hole. Presently, when all was quiet, they ventured out again. But someone else came in, and off they scuttled again. This was too much for the visitor. "Good bye," said he, "I'm off. You live in the lap of luxury, I can see, but you are surrounded by dangers whereas at home I can enjoy my simple dinner of roots and corn in peace."

Moral: Better to have a simple life with peace than a luxurious life in danger.

21. The Arrogant Swans

In a faraway kingdom, there was a river. This river was home to many golden swans. The swans spent most of their time on the banks of the river. Every six months, the swans would leave a golden feather as a fee for using the lake. The soldiers of the kingdom would collect the feathers and deposit them in the royal treasury.

One day, a homeless bird saw the river. "The water in this river seems so cool and soothing. I will make my home here," thought the bird.

As soon as the bird settled down near the river, the golden swans noticed her. They came shouting. "This river belongs to us. We pay a golden feather to the King to use this river. You cannot live here."

"I am homeless, brothers. I too will pay the rent. Please give me shelter," the bird pleaded. "How will you pay the rent? You do not have golden feathers," said the swans laughing. They further added, "Stop dreaming and leave once." The humble bird pleaded many times. But the arrogant swans drove the bird away.

"I will teach them a lesson!" decided the humiliated bird. She went to the King and said, "O King! The swans in your river are impolite and unkind. I begged for shelter but they said that they had purchased the river with golden feathers."

The King was angry with the arrogant swans for having insulted the homeless bird. He ordered his soldiers to bring the arrogant swans to his court. In no time, all the golden swans were brought to the King's court.

"Do you think the royal treasury depends upon your golden feathers? You cannot decide who lives by the river. Leave the river at once or you all will be beheaded!" shouted the King.

The swans shivered with fear on hearing the King. They flew away never to return. The bird built her home near the river and lived there happily forever. The bird gave shelter to all other birds in the river.

22. The cracked pot

A water bearer in China had two large pots, each hung on the ends of a pole which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water. At the end of the long walk from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full.

For a full two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to his house. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself, because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house."

The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you've watered them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house."

23. The Bonded Donkey

In a small village, there lived a potter. He had a donkey. Everyday his donkey would carry soil from the field to his house. Since the field was quite far off, the potter would rest under a tree midway, tying his donkey nearby.

One day, the potter forgot to take the rope with which he tied the donkey every day. When he reached the tree, he thought, "How do I tie this donkey today? He might run away if I sleep." The potter decided to tie down holding the donkey's ears so that the donkey would not run away.

But this way neither the donkey was comfortable nor the potter was able to take rest. A saint, who happened to be passing by, saw the potter holding on to the donkey's ears. Then the saint wanted to know what the problem of the potter was. When the potter told the saint what the problem was, the wise saint said, "Take the donkey to the place where you tie him every day. Pretend to tie him using an imaginary rope. I assure you he won't run away." The potter did what the saint had said.

He left the donkey and went to take a nap. When he woke up, to his surprise and relief, he found the donkey standing in the same place.

Soon the potter prepared to leave for home. But the donkey did not move. "What is wrong with this donkey!" exclaimed the potter in frustration.

Luckily, the potter saw the wise saint again. He ran up to the saint and told him about the donkey's strange behaviour. The saint said, "You tied up the donkey, but did you untie him?" Go and pretend to untie the rope with which you had tied the donkey." The potter followed the saint's advice.

Now the donkey was ready to leave for home. The potter understood that donkey was the bonded donkey. The potter thanked the wise saint and went home happily with his donkey.

24. The Wise Old Man

A wealthy man requested an old scholar to wean his son away from his bad habits. The scholar took the youth for a stroll through a garden. Stopping suddenly he asked the boy to pull out a tiny plant growing there.

The youth held the plant between his thumb and forefinger and pulled it out. The old man then asked him to pull out a slightly bigger plant. The youth pulled hard and the plant came out, roots and all. "Now pull out that one," said the old man pointing to a bush. The boy had to use all his strength to pull it out.

"Now take this one out," said the old man, indicating a guava tree. The youth grasped the trunk and tried to pull it out. But it would not budge. "It's impossible," said the boy, panting with the effort.

"So it is with bad habits," said the sage. "When they are young it is easy to pull them out but when they take hold they cannot be uprooted."

The session with the old man changed the boy's life.

Moral: Don't wait for Bad Habits to grow in you, drop them while you have control over it else they will get control over you.

25. The Bone in Throat

Once upon a time, there was a lazy wolf living in a jungle. Near his house was a pond. Many animals came to the pond to drink water. The wolf was always in search of food.

One day, he was sitting near the pond hoping to get something to eat. When suddenly he spotted a dead bull. "Aha! What a luck! Now I can eat all I want," he thought and his mouth started watering.

He began to eat the bull. A thought struck him, "if another beast comes this way he will ask for a share. I had better eat fast." 'Grub! Grub! Grub! Grub!' he chewed, faster and faster.

In his haste, a piece of bone got stuck in his throat. "Ohh! Errk!" cried the wolf. He tried to bring it out of his mouth. He tried to cough it out but in vain. Next, he tried to swallow it down but he failed.

"Ooh, the bone in throat hurts. What shall I do now?" thought the wolf. Suddenly he remembered that a crane lived on the nearby riverbank.

The wolf went to the crane and pleaded, "My dear Crane! I have got a bone stuck in my throat. I will give you a present, if you pull it out of my throat with your long beak."

The crane took pity on the wolf. He asked the wolf to look up with his mouth open. The crane then put its head into the wolf's mouth and pulled out the bone.

"Oh! What a relief!" the wolf sighed.

"Now where is my present?" asked the crane.

"What present?" the wolf replied, pretending not aware of its promise.

"You said that you would give me a present if I remove the bone from your throat," said the crane humbly.

"Hah! Is it not a present that you put your head into my mouth and got out alive? I could have easily crushed your head while your beak was inside my mouth," said the ungrateful wolf and went away.

Moral: Keep your vow and be grateful to those who help you in time of need.

26. The Foolish Fish

In a huge pond, there lived many fish. They were arrogant and never listened to anyone. In this pond, there also lived a kind-hearted crocodile.

He advised the fish, "It does not pay to be arrogant and overconfident. It could be your downfall." But the fish never listened to him. "There is that crocodile, advising us again," they would say.

One afternoon, the crocodile was resting beside a stone near the pond, when two fishermen stopped there to drink water.

The fishermen noticed that the pond had many fish. "Look! This pond is full of fish. Let's come here tomorrow with our fishing net," said one of them. "I am surprised we have not seen this place before!" exclaimed the other.

The crocodile heard all this. When the fishermen left, he slowly slipped into the pond and went straight to the fish. "You all had better leave this pond before dawn. Early morning those two fishermen are going to come to this pond with their net," warned the crocodile.

But the fish just laughed and said, "There have been many fishermen who have tried to catch us. These two are not going to catch us either. Do not you worry about us, Mr. Crocodile," they said in a mocking voice.

The next morning, the fishermen came and threw their net in the pond. The nets were big and strong. Very soon all the fish were caught. "If only we had listened to Mr. Crocodile. He had only wanted to help. For our arrogance we have to pay with our lives," said the fish.

The fishermen took the foolish fish to the market and sold them for a good profit.

27. The folly of clinging

The little boy walked slowly into the room where his mother was sitting at her desk writing. She glanced down at him and saw that he was carrying a very precious vase that her grandmother had given her. Almost absentmindedly she said to him, "Robert, go put the vase down before you drop it and break it."

"I can't," he replied, "I can't get my hand out."

"Of course you can," she said, "you got it down there."

He said, "I know, mom, but it won't come out." The neck of the vase was very narrow and his hand had fit it neatly inside and it was now up to his wrist. He continued to insist that he could not get it out. Growing a little concerned, his mother called out to his dad.

Dad calmly took control and began gently pulling the arm trying to extract the hand from the vase. He tried loosening it up with soapy water. Still nothing. He then got some vegetable oil from the kitchen and poured it around the wrist and let it seep into the vase. He wiggled it some. It still did not budge.

"I give up," the dad said in desperation. "I'd give a dollar right now to know how to get it out."

"Really?" little Robert exclaimed. Then they heard a clinking sound and his hand slid right out of the vase. They turned the vase upside down and a penny plopped out. "What's this?" they said in unison.

"Oh, that's the penny I put inside. I wanted to get it out so I was clutching it in my hand. But when I heard Dad say he would give a dollar to have the vase free, I let go."

How often do we cling to things when they are nothing in comparison to what could be ours?

28. Friends Forever.

A mouse and a frog were friends. Every morning the frog would hop out of his pond and go to visit his friend who lived in a hole in the side of a tree. He would return home at noon.

The mouse delighted in his friend's company unaware that the friend was slowly turning into an enemy. The reason? The frog felt slighted because though he visited the mouse everyday, the mouse on his part, had never made an attempt to visit him.

One day he felt he had been humiliated enough. When it was time for him to take leave of the mouse, he tied one end of a string around his own leg, tied the other end to the mouse's tail, and hopped away, dragging the hapless mouse behind him.

The frog dived deep into the pond. The mouse tried to free himself but couldn't, and soon drowned. His bloated body floated to the top.

A hawk saw the mouse floating on the pond's surface. He swooped down, and grabbing the mouse in his talons, flew to the branch of a nearby tree. The frog, of course, was hauled out of the water too. He desperately tried to free himself, but couldn't and the hawk soon put an end to his struggles.

Moral: 'Don't dig too deep a pit for your enemy, you may fall into it yourself'.

29. The Iron Box

Mohan Das was the son of a rich businessman. When his father died, Mohan Das was left with an iron box with valuables in it. One day, Mohan Das had to go to the city on some work. So, he took the iron box and handed it over to his moneylender friend. His name was Ram.

"Please keep this box. My father gave it to me. I will return from city after few days and collect it from you," said Mohan Das to Ram.

"You do not have to worry. I will keep this box safely," said Ram.

Mohan Das started off his journey happily. He knew that his valuable iron box was safe with Ram. A few days later he returned. He went to his friend Ram and asked for the iron box. Ram pretended to look a little surprised, "Oh, the iron box! The rats ate it up. I just could not stop them," he said.

Mohan Das realized that his friend had become greedy and dishonest. Ram was trying to cheat him. Being an intelligent man, he kept quiet. "I must figure out a way to get my iron box back from Ram," thought Mohan Das.

Next day, Mohan Das went to Ram and said, "Friend! Can you send your son with me? I need someone to look after my property."

Ram thought for a while. He brooded. "Mohan Das seems to be a fool. May be he will reward my son for looking after his property," thought Ram. Then, immediately he agreed and sent his son with Mohan Das.

Next morning, Mohan Das came running to Ram and said, "Dear friend, a terrible thing has happened. A hawk has carried your son away."

Ram was furious and demanded, "How can a hawk carry off my son?"

"In the same way as the rats can eat up the iron box," answered Mohan Das.

"I am sorry, my friend. I realize my mistake," Ram said with a bit of concern in his voice. He felt ashamed of having tried to cheat his friend. He gave the box back to his friend.

Both of them were happy and remained good friends forever.

30. The Judge Monkey

Once upon a time, two cats were passing through a street. Suddenly they spotted a loaf of bread lying beneath a tree. Both pounced upon it and caught the loaf at the same time. "It is mine. I saw it first," claimed one cat. While the other said, "I pounced upon it first and so it belongs to me." After having fought for a while, one cat said, "Let us divide it into two and take one piece each." "Indeed, a good idea," said the other cat. "But how do we divide it now?"

A monkey sitting on the branch of the tree had watched all that happened between the two cats. "That loaf of bread looks good. I could do with it myself," he thought. Slowly he came down from the tree and walked up to the confused cats.

"Yes, my dear friends! Can I help you?" asked the monkey. The cats told the monkey what the problem was and said, "Why do not you be the judge between us?" When the monkey nodded, the cats said, "Please divide this loaf for us."

The clever monkey smilingly broke the bread into two pieces. But one piece was a little bigger than the other. "OH no! I will take a little bite of this bigger piece to make both equal," said the monkey, slyly. He took a bite from the bigger piece. But, he had taken a big bite. "Uh oh! Now it has become smaller than the other piece. I will just have to take a little bite from this piece now," said the clever monkey.

The Judge Monkey took another bite. The two cats sat in front of the monkey, seeing the loaf of bread they had found getting smaller and smaller. When the whole loaf was eaten by the monkey, the monkey said, "I am sorry. I was really difficult to divide that loaf. I must be going now." And the monkey jumped onto the tree and was gone. "If only we had not quarrelled among ourselves, we would have remained united and we need not have to go to the monkey and to become hungry now," said the two cats.

31. The Tailless Dassie.

Long ago, the Lion was the only animal with a tail. One day he decided that all animals should have a tail like him and got tails made for all the animals in his kingdom.

When the tails were ready he summoned all his subjects to his cave palace so that he could hand out the appendages.

All the animals went except the dassie. The dassie felt too lazy to go and asked a monkey going by to fetch his tail for him.

The Lion had selected a small furry tail for the dassie. When the monkey explained that the dassie could not come and had asked him to bring the tail, the Lion gave it to him.

The monkey had been given a nice long tail but as he was going home it occurred to him that the tail would look better if it were a bit furry towards the end. So he attached the dassie's tail to it.

The dassie was very disappointed when he learnt that the monkey had kept his tail for himself.

But he was too lazy to pursue the monkey to try to get his tail back and that is why he remains tailless to this day.

32. Controlling temper

There once was a little boy who had a bad temper. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the fence.

The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily, gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence. Finally, the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pulls out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper.

The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone. The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said "you have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one."

Moral: You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say I'm sorry, the wound is still there. Make sure you control your temper the next time you are tempted to say something you will regret later.

33. The Monkey and The Juggler

In a mango orchard outside a village there lived a mischievous monkey. The whole day, he would jump from one tree to another. Thus the monkey kept on eating the ripe mangoes. The orchard-keeper tried to trap the monkey. But every time the monkey escaped the trap.

One day, the monkey wandered out to the nearby town. "The town people are so busy. There is so much crowd here," the monkey thought. Soon the monkey was sneaking into houses and running away with eatables. By evening, he had made life difficult for the town people. "The town is more fun than the orchard. I will live here," he thought.

Days went by and the monkey was looked upon by the town people with terror. "Here he comes again," they screamed when they saw the monkey.

One day, a juggler came to the town. The people of the town approached him. "We want you to help us get rid of that mischievous monkey," they said to the juggler. The juggler said in return, "Do not worry. Get me some jars with narrow necks,"

When the jars of the size were brought to him, he put peanuts into the jars and placed them out on a field.

The monkey became curious when he saw the jars. When he went and peeped inside the jars, he saw peanuts. "Yummy! Let me quickly grab the peanuts and run," he thought. He put his hand inside the jar and grabbed a big handful.

But he could not pull out his fist full of peanuts, as the neck of the jar was so narrow. If the monkey dropped some peanuts back into the jar, he could have pulled his hand out. But he was greedy. So he did not drop some peanuts into the jar.

The town people trapped the monkey with his hand inside the jar. They got hold of the rope and tied him in a post. Then the monkey was sold to a zoo. That was the end of the greedy monkey.

34.A SPIDER'S WEB (Author Unknown)

A young soldier found himself in a terrible battle during the Scottish Reformation. The enemy was soundly defeating this young man's army. He and his comrades found themselves hastily retreating from the battle field in defeat, running away in fear of their very lives. The enemy gave chase. This young man ran hard and fast, full of fear and desperation, soon found himself cut off from his comrades in arms.

He eventually came upon a rocky ledge containing a cave. Knowing the enemy was close behind, and that he was exhausted from the chase, chose to hide there. After he crawled in, he fell to his face in the darkness, desperately crying to God to save him and protect him from his enemies. He also made a bargain with God. He promised that if God saved him, he would serve Him for the remainder of his days.

When he looked up from his despairing plea for help, he saw a spider beginning to weave its web at the entrance to the cave. As he watched the delicate threads being slowly drawn across the mouth of the cave, the young soldier pondered its irony. He thought, "I asked God for protection and deliverance, and he sent me a spider instead. How can a spider save me?"

His heart was hardened, knowing the enemy would soon discover his hiding place and kill him.

And soon he did hear the sound of his enemies, who were now scouring the area looking for those in hiding. One soldier with a gun slowly walked up to the cave's entrance. As the young man crouched in the darkness, hoping to surprise the enemy in a last-minute desperate attempt to save his own life, he felt his heart pounding wildly out of control.

As the enemy cautiously moved forward to enter the cave, he came upon the spider's web, which by now was completely strung across the opening. He backed away and called out to a comrade, "There can't be anyone in here. They would have had to break this spider's web to enter the cave. Let's move on."

Years later, this young man, who made good his promise by becoming a preacher and evangelist, wrote about that ordeal. He wrote:

"Where God is, a spider's web is as a stone wall. Where God is not, a stone wall is as a spider's web."

35.What love is all about

It was a busy morning, approximately 8:30 am, when an elderly gentleman, in his 80s arrived to have stitches removed from his thumb. He stated that he was in a hurry and that he had an appointment at 9:00 am. I took his vital signs, and had him take a seat, knowing it would be over an hour before someone would be able to see him. I saw him looking at his watch and decided, since I was not busy with another patient, I would evaluate his wound.

On exam it was well healed, so I talked to one of the doctors, got the needed supplies to remove his sutures and redressed his wound. While taking care of him, we began to engage in conversation. I asked him if he had a doctor's appointment this morning, as he was in such a hurry. The gentleman told me no, that he needed to go to the nursing home to eat breakfast with his wife. I then inquired as to her health. He told me that she had been there for awhile and was a victim of Alzheimer's Disease.

As we talked and I finished dressing his wound, I asked if she would be worried if he was a bit late. He replied that she no longer knew who he was, and hadn't recognized him in five years. I was surprised, and asked him, "And you still go every morning, even though she doesn't know who you are?" He smiled and patted my hand and said, "She doesn't know me, but I still know who she is."

36. The Palace and The Hut

King Vikramaditya was known for his justice and kindness. His people loved him and were proud of him.

Once, Vikramaditya decided to build a palace on the riverbank. He ordered his ministers to survey the site and start the work. The labourers were put to work and in a few days the palace was ready. Before bringing the King to show the palace, the minister decided to take a final look.

"Splendid!" the minister exclaimed, looking at the palace. Then suddenly his eyes fell on something and he shouted, "What is that? I did not see that before." All the labourers and the soldiers turned around. There was a hut just a few steps away from the palace gate. "What is this hut doing here?" shouted the minister and added, "And whom does it belong to?"

"Sir, it belongs to an old woman. She has been living here for a long time," replied a soldier.

The minister walked up to the hut and spoke to the old lady. "I want to buy your hut. Ask for anything," he said.

"I am sorry, Sir. I cannot accept your offer. My hut is dearer to me than my life. I have lived in it with my late husband and I want to die in it," the old lady said.

The minister tried to tell her that her hut would spoil the charm of the newly constructed palace. She refused to sell her hut to the King. The matter was then taken to the King.

The wise and generous king thought for a while, and then said, "Let the old lady have her hut where it is. It will only add to the beauty of the new palace." Then turning to the minister, the King said, "Let us not forget that what seems ugly to us may be precious to someone else."

The people then realized why their king was so highly respected by all the people and by all other neighbouring kingdoms.

37. Birbal Identifies Thief.

One fine morning, a minister from Emperor Akbar's court had gathered in the assembly hall.

He informed the Emperor that all his valuables had been stolen by a thief the previous night.

Akbar was shocked to hear this because the place where that minister lived was the safest place in the kingdom.

He invited Birbal to solve the mystery. Akbar said "It is definitely not possible for an outsider to enter into the minister's house and steal the valuables. This blunder is definitely committed only by another minister of that court." Saying so, he arranged for a donkey to be tied to a pillar. He ordered all the courtiers to lift the donkey's tail and say "I have not stolen."

Birbal added "Only then we can judge the culprit." After everyone had finished, he asked the courtiers to show their palm to him. All the courtiers except Alim Khan had a black patch of paint on their palm. Birbal had actually painted the donkey's tail with a black coat of paint. In the fright, the guilty minister did not touch the donkey's tail at all. Thus Birbal once again proved his intelligence and was rewarded by the king with 1000 gold coins.

38. The Perfect Palace

Thousands of years ago, there lived a King. His people loved him since he looked after their needs well. At the end of every month, he would invite some noble men of his Kingdom to analyse his work and advised him.

The King built many things. Every year he would rebuild his palace and every time it looked better than before. "Marvellous! Unmatched!!" the couriers would praise and the King would feel elated.

One day the King thought, "This year, I will build the perfect palace, with all comforts. It should be praised not only within my kingdom, but also by the people of the neighbouring states."

The next day, the King worked out a perfect design for his perfect palace. After finalizing it, he handed it over to the builders and masons. In about a month, the perfect palace of the King's dream was ready. The King invited noblemen of his kingdom, as well as the neighbouring states, to get their opinions about the palace.

"Unbelievable! Indeed, it is a perfect palace," cheered the noblemen in unison. But a saint standing in the corner was silent.

The King wondered why the saint was silent, when everyone was praising his palace. He walked up to the saint and said, "Please tell, O Saint, why you are silent. Is not my palace perfect?"

The Saint replied in a calm voice, "Dear King! Your palace is strong and will last forever. It is beautiful but not perfect, since the people living in it are mortals. They are not permanent. Your palace will live forever but not the people in it. That is why I am silent. Man is born with empty hands and so does he die."

The King thanked the saint for his wise words and never tried to build a perfect palace again.

39. The Rightful Owner

One day, the cow fell ill and stopped giving milk. Thinking she would never recover, Gopal drove her out of his house. "Now my owner does not need me. I will never return to him," thought the sad cow and ran away.

On the way, the hungry cow fell unconscious. Dharma, a kind-hearted farmer noticed her and brought her to his house.

After a few days the cow recovered. Dharma thought, "I wonder who this cow belongs to." But he was unable to find the owner. Soon, the cow gave birth to a calf and started giving milk again. Dharma fed her well and looked after the calf, too. By selling the cow's milk, Dharma became a wealthy man. Everyone wanted to buy Dharma's cow's milk. The cow's fame spread everywhere.

Gopal too came to know about this event. "I wonder if that cow is the same one I had driven away," thought Gopal. When Gopal went to Dharma's house, he found that it was indeed his cow. "That cow belongs to me," said Gopal. But Dharma refused to return the cow. So they decided to go to a judge.

So the cow was placed between Dharma and Gopal. The cow was asked by the judge to with the person whom she wanted to live with. The cow walked away from Gopal and started licking Dharma's hand. She knew the difference between Gopal's selfishness and Dharma's kindness. The judge handed over the cow to the rightful owner, Dharma.

Moral: Keep showing love even if the other person is unable to give anything back

40. The Faithful Mongoose :

Indu and Lav were a young Indian couple and they had a beautiful baby boy. One day, Indu said to her husband: 'You must look after the baby, while I go down to the river.' Lav sat down beside the pram and the baby fell asleep at once. A short time later, a messenger arrived from the royal palace and ordered Lav to follow him there to speak on behalf of a friend. Lav had to entrust the baby to the pet mongoose which the young couple kept in the house. In India, people keep mongoose rather than cats. But where cats hunt mice, a mongoose does not hesitate to confront a snake. What is more, mongooses are more loyal than cats. The mongoose at once sat down to guard the baby. When a huge python entered by the window and approached the pram, the mongoose was ready for it and killed the python.

When Lav came back and found the mongoose, mouth and paws dripping with blood, he immediately thought the worst and beat the faithful animal. How surprised he was when he went into the house and found the baby sleeping peacefully and a huge python dead on the floor by the pram.

From that day on, the young couple loved the courageous mongoose even more and Indu learnt that he should never doubt a faithful friend.

41. The other side of the wall

There was a young woman who took great pride in the growth and care of the flowers in her flower garden. She had been raised by her grandmother who taught her to love and care for flowers as she herself had done. So, like her grandmother, her flower garden was second to none.

One day while looking through a flower catalogue she often ordered from, a picture of a plant immediately caught her eye. She had never seen blooms on a flower like that before. "I have to have it," she said to herself, and she immediately ordered it.

When it arrived, she already had a place prepared to plant it. She planted it at the base of a stone wall at the back of her yard. It grew vigorously, with beautiful green leaves all over it, but there were no blooms. Day after day she continued to cultivate it, water it, feed it, and she even talked to it attempting to coax it to bloom. But, it was to no avail.

One morning weeks later, as she stood before the vine, she contemplated how disappointed she was that her plant had not bloomed. She was giving considerable thought to cutting it down and planting something else in its place.

It was at this point that her invalid neighbor, whose lot joined hers, called over to her.

"Thank you so much! You can't imagine how much I have enjoyed the blooms of that vine you planted." The young woman walked through the gate into her neighbor's yard, and sure enough, she saw that on the other side of the wall the vine was filled with blooms.

There were indeed the most beautiful blooms she had ever seen. The vine had crept through the crevices and it had not flowered on her side of the fence, it had flowered luxuriantly on the other side.

Just because you cannot see the good result of your labour does not mean that it bore no fruit.

42. The Ugly Tree

Long, long ago, in a dense forest there were thousands of tall and beautiful trees. They were happy, but proud of themselves. Among them there also an ugly tree whose branches were badly twisted. Its roots had uneven curves. All the trees made fun of that ugly tree.

"How are you, hunchback?" the other trees always shouted and their laughter made the ugly tree feel sad. But, he never raised a voice against them. The ugly tree thought, "I wish I were as beautiful as the other trees. Why did God do this to me? Neither can I provide shade to the travellers nor can the birds make their nests on me. Nobody needs me."

One day, a woodcutter came to the forest. He took a look at the trees and said, "These trees are lovely. I must cut them." As soon as he picked up his axe the trees became frightened.

'Chop, Chop, Chop' went the woodcutter's axe and one by one the trees started to fall. "None of us is going to be spared," screamed one of the beautiful trees. Soon that tree too was brought to ground by the woodcutter's axe.

By now, the woodcutter had come near to the ugly tree. He had just raised his axe when suddenly he noticed how crooked the ugly tree was. "Hmm! This crooked tree seems to be useless for me. I cannot make long straight logs of this ugly tree," he thought. And he moved towards another beautiful tree. The ugly tree heaved a huge sigh of relief. He realized that by making him ugly, God had actually given him a boon.

From that day the ugly tree never complained. He was happy with his crooked branches. He never forgot how he was spared from the woodcutter's axe, only because he was crooked and ugly.

43. The Ungrateful Lion

In a dense forest, lived a fierce lion. He was very cruel. One day the lion was caught in a hunter's trap. One by one many animals passed by. "Please help me!" pleaded the lion. But none of the animals listened to his plea.

After a while, a man happened to come into the forest. He saw the lion. The lion said, "I will die of hunger and suffocation. Please help me out, O! Kind man." The man was thoughtful. "I assure you I will never harm you. Please help me now. The hunter will be anytime now," said the lion.

The man felt sorry for the lion and set the beast free. As soon as the lion was free, he let out a fierce roar. "I have been trapped in the cage for a long time. I am hungry. I will have to eat you," said the lion, looking at the man. "But you promised that you would not harm me," said the man, in a meek tone. "Yes, I said that. But only to convince you to free me. Now, I am terribly hungry," said the lion.

The terrified man thought quickly. He said, "Alright, you can eat me. But let a judge decide if you are right in eating the person who has rescued you."

The lion agreed. He was sure that no animal would speak against him. Just then a jackal came that way and the lion asked the jackal to be the judge. He addressed the lion, "Sir, would you please show me how it all happened?" The lion was only too willing. He entered the cage and closed the cage door. The jackal immediately bolted the cage from outside.

"Now the lion is trapped again. Run away, you foolish man!" said the jackal. The frightened man ran for his life. And the ungrateful lion was trapped in the cage again. The hunter came and took the lion away to his circus.

44. The Selfish Crows

Once upon a time, there was a very big forest. There on a huge banyan tree lived many crows. They were selfish and arrogant. They always quarreled with other birds. This behavior irritated other birds. They had no friends, as no one liked them.

When the rainy season came, dark clouds gathered in the sky. A small mynah was returning to her nest. When she was passing by the banyan tree, it started raining. "I will stay here for a while until it stops raining," thought the little mynah. And she took rest on the banyan tree for a while.

The selfish crows saw her perching on the tree. One of them shouted, "Get off the tree. This tree belongs to us." The mynah humbly pleaded, "The weather is bad and my nest is far off from this forest. Please let me take a rest for a while on this tree, brother. As soon as it stops raining, I will return to my nest."

"Leave this banyan tree at once. Or we will peck you," said the other crows. The merciless tendency of the selfish crows scared the mynah. The mynah found no other way except to fly off. Then immediately the mynah flew off to a nearby tree, where luckily she found a hollow in a broken branch. She took her shelter there.

Shortly after, the rain became heavy followed by thunderstorm. The wind was in high speed. Even the leaves and branches were not enough to give shelter to the crows. Many of the branches of many tree in which the crows had taken shelter were damaged and hurt by the hailstones. But the mynah was safe inside the hollow place in the tree.

One of the crows said, "Look at the mynah! How comfortable she is. Let us go there." Another crow said, "I do not think she will let us share the hollow. We did not have sympathy for her when she was in need of this tree." Then another crow said, "We should not have been so rude. We forgot that we may need help someday."

Suddenly the mynah called out, "Come! My friends! Come to this hollow. Or you will get hurt. The rain is not going to stop soon. It seems that it may rain for a long time"

The crows flew down to the hollow. They thanked the mynah. "We are sorry for having unkind, dear friend! Now we will never be so selfish."

Then the crows took shelter in the hollow place of the tree in which the mynah had taken her shelter. After some time, it stopped raining. All the birds flew to their respective nests happily as new friends.

45. Good Samaritan

There was once a man who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, the road was long and lonely. Suddenly robbers attacked him, stripped him, and beat him up, leaving him half dead.

It so happened that a priest was going down that road: but when he saw the man, he walked on by on the other side. In the same way a Levite also came there, went over and looked at the man, and then walked on by on the other side.

But a Samaritan who was traveling that way came upon the man, and when he saw his heart was filled with pity. He went over to him poured oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them; then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him.

The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Take care of him,' he told the innkeeper, 'and when I come back this way, I will pay you whatever else you spend on him.' "

46. The two pebbles

Many years ago in a small Italian town, a merchant had the misfortune of owing a large sum of money to the moneylender. The moneylender, who was old and ugly, fancied the merchant's beautiful daughter, so he proposed a bargain. He said he would forgo the merchant's debt if he could marry the daughter. Both the merchant and his daughter were horrified by the proposal. The moneylender told them that he would put a black pebble and a white pebble into an empty bag. The girl would then have to pick one pebble from the bag. If she picked the black pebble, she would become the moneylender's wife and her father's debt would be forgiven. If she picked the white pebble, she need not marry him and her father's debt would still be forgiven. But, if she refused to pick a pebble, her father would be thrown into jail.

They were standing on a pebble-strewn path in the merchant's garden. As they talked, the moneylender bent over to pick up two pebbles. As he picked them up, the sharp-eyed girl noticed that he had picked up two black pebbles and put them into the bag. He then asked the girl to pick her pebble from the bag.

The girl put her hand into the bag and drew out a pebble. Without looking at it, she fumbled and let it fall onto the pebble-strewn path where it immediately became lost among all the other pebbles. "Oh, how clumsy of me," she said. "But never mind, if you look into the bag for the one that is left, you will be able to tell which pebble I picked."

Sometimes it is necessary to think out of the box or, in this case, out of the bag.

47. The Stag and His Reflection

There once lived a proud stag. While wandering in the forest, he came upon a pond. He stopped there to drink water in order to quench his thirst. As he bent down, he saw his own reflection in the water. "How beautiful are my (horns) antlers!" he thought, admiring its long curves.

As the stag was admiring his antlers, he suddenly noticed his legs. "Oh! Look at my skinny legs. I cannot believe God has given me both beautiful antlers and such ugly legs," he thought. The proud stag now felt ashamed of his legs. His pride vanished. "These ugly legs are no match for my beautiful antlers," he thought.

Just then the stag heard the roar of a lion. When he turned around he saw a lion charging at him. "Oh no!," screamed the stag and ran as fast as he could.

The stag felt the lion's breath close to him, "I must get into the densest part of the forest where there are many branches. The lion will not be able to catch me in that part of the forest," thought the stag.

So, with this thought in mind, the stag ran into an area where there were many bushes and branches. Soon the stag had left the lion far behind.

"Ah, I outsmarted the lion," thought the stag proudly. But all of a sudden his antlers got entangled between the trunks of two trees standing close to each other. "Aaarghh!" cried the stag, as he had to stop at once.

The more he tried to free himself, the more difficult it became. As the stag was struggling to get free, the lion came nearer and nearer.

"How I praised my horns and cursed my legs. Now I know the real value of my legs which almost took me to safety," wailed the stag.

The lion pounced on the stag and killed him. That was the end of the proud stag.

48. Magic of Flute :

Mohanpur was ruled by king Madho Singh. He had a daughter named Mohini whom he loved like his own life.

Once Mohini fell ill. The royal physician's treatment was failing to work. She had become so weak that she could not talk or eat. She would just lie like a skeleton. No one ever saw smile on her face. The king announced rewards for anyone who could get the smile back on the face of Mohini. It was said that the smile would begin the process of her recovery from the mysterious illness.

One day, soft flute music waves wafted into the palace. Then Mohini was sleeping. The tune was mesmerizing. The sound of the flute tune gradually rose filling the air with melody. Mohini opened her eyes and spoke after months, "Who's playing that?"

The news of Mohini speaking again brought king and queen to her chamber. They saw a faint smile on the face of Mohini. The king wanted the soldiers to bring the flute players to the palace. Mohini objected to it. She didn't want the music interrupted. All of them walked towards the direction music was coming from. Far away from the palace they found a boy sitting under a tree lost in playing on his flute. Some wild creatures were around him frozen in the trance of his music.

The sound of footsteps woke up the boy from his musical dream. He opened his eyes and found the king and soldiers around. He looked frightened. The flute fell off his hands.

The king said, "Don't panic boy. We are very pleased with you. Your flute music has cured our princess. Who are you? We want to reward you?"

The boy said, "My name is Chandu. I am an orphan. I need some job and want to study."

The king brought Chandu to the palace. Everyday he played on his flute for the princess who regained her health fast. The king arranged tutors for Chandu who later became an advisor to the king after getting education.

49. Noah's ark

Once there was an old man his name was Noah. God told him that the world would be drowned by a flood because of the wickedness of the people, and told him to build a great ark to float upon the waters. In this ark God promised to preserve alive Noah and his family; and also two each of every living thing on the earth --- animals, birds, and creeping things. All the rest were to die.

Noah built the ark as God asked him to do. It took him a hundred and twenty years, during which time the people were warned to leave their wicked ways and turn to God, but they did not do so.

At last the ark was finished, and Noah, with his wife, and his sons with their wives, and the animals, birds, and creeping things, two by two, as God had commanded, all entered into it. What a long procession it must have been! Then God shut them in, and they dwelt in safety while the rain came down, and the waters rose up and covered the earth. All were drowned except those in the ark.

A year afterwards, when the waters were dried up, Noah, and all that had been with him, left the ark. Then Noah built an altar, and offered sacrifices to God, in thankfulness for God's goodness to him and his family.

50.SHIP WRECKED (Author Unknown)

A voyaging ship was wrecked during a storm at sea and only two of the men on it were able to swim to a small, desert-like island. The two survivors, not knowing what else to do, agreed that they had no other recourse but to pray to God. However, to find out whose prayer was more powerful, they agreed to Divide the territory between them and stay on opposite sides of the island.

The first thing they prayed for was food. The next morning, the first man saw a fruit-bearing tree on his side of the land, and he was able to eat its fruit. The other man's parcel of land remained barren.

After a week, the first man was lonely and he decided to pray for a wife. The next day, another ship was wrecked, and the only survivor was a woman who swam to his side of the island. On the other side of the island, the second man has nothing.

Soon the first man prayed for a house, clothes, and more food. The next day, like a miracle, all of these were given to him. The second man still had nothing.

Finally, the first man prayed for a ship, so that he and his wife could leave the island. In the morning a ship docked at his side on the island. He boarded the ship with his wife and decided to leave the second man on the island. He considered the other man unworthy to receive God's blessings, since none of his prayers had been answered.

As the ship was about to leave, the first man heard a voice from heaven booming: "Why are you leaving your companion on the island?"

"My blessings are mine alone, since I was the one who prayed for them, the first man answered. "His prayers were all unanswered and so he does not deserve anything."

"You are mistaken!" the voice rebuked him. "He had only one prayer, which I answered. If not for that, you would not have received any of my blessings."

"Tell me," the first man asked the voice, "what did he pray for that I should owe him anything?" "He prayed that all your prayers be answered."

51.Birbal Is Brief.

One day Akbar asked his courtiers if they could tell him the difference between truth and falsehood in three words or less.

The courtiers looked at one another in bewilderment.

"What about you, Birbal?" asked the emperor. "I'm surprised that you too are silent."

"I'm silent because I want to give others a chance to speak," said Birbal.

"Nobody else has the answer," said the emperor. "So go ahead and tell me what the difference between truth and falsehood is — in three words or less."

"Four fingers" said Birbal

"Four fingers?" asked the emperor, perplexed.

"That's the difference between truth and falsehood, your Majesty," said Birbal. "That which you see with your own eyes is the truth. That which you have only heard about might not be true. More often than not, it's likely to be false."

"That is right," said Akbar. "But what did you mean by saying the difference is four fingers?"

"The distance between one's eyes and one's ears is the width of four fingers, Your Majesty," said Birbal, grinning.

52.The story of two sons:

There was once a man who had two sons. The younger one said to him, 'Father, give me my share of property now.' So the man divided his property between his two sons.

After a few days the younger son sold his part of the property and left home with the money. He went to a country far away, where he wasted his money in reckless living. He spent everything he had. Then a severe famine spread over that country, and he was left without a thing.

So he went to work for one of the citizens of that country, who sent him out to his farm to take care of the pigs. He wished he could fill himself with the bean pods the pigs ate.

At last he came to his senses and said, 'All my father's hired workers have more than they can eat, and here I am about to starve! I will get up and go to my father and said, "Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son: treat me as one of your hired workers." ' So he got up and started back to his father.

"He was still a long way from home when his father saw him; his heart was filled with pity, and he ran, threw his arms around his son, and kissed him. 'Father,' the son said, 'I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son.' But the father called to his servants. 'Hurry!' he said. 'Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet. Then go and get the prize calf and kill it, and let us celebrate with a feast! For this son of mine was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found.' And so the feasting began.

53.Changing our vision

There was a very wealthy man who was bothered by severe eye pain. He consulted many physicians and was being treated by several. He did not stop consulting a galaxy of medical experts; he consumed heavy loads of drugs and underwent hundreds of injections. But the ache persisted with more vigour than before.

At last, a monk who was supposed to be an expert in treating such patients was called for by the suffering man. The monk understood his problem and said that for sometime he should concentrate only on green colours and not to let his eyes fall on any other colours. It was a strange prescription, but he was desperate and decided to try it.

The millionaire got together a group of painters and purchased barrels of green paint and directed that every object his eye was likely to fall to be painted green just as the monk had directed. When the monk came to visit him after few days, the millionaire's servants ran with buckets of green paint and poured it on him since he was in red dress, lest their master see any other colour and his eye ache would come back.

Hearing this, the monk laughed and said "If only you had purchased a pair of green spectacles, worth just a few dollars, you could have saved these walls and trees and pots and all other articles and also could have saved a large share of his fortune. You cannot paint the world green."

Let us change our vision and the world will appear accordingly. It is foolish to shape the world, let us shape ourselves first.

54.EYESORE

The lot was filled with weeds, rocks, and broken glass. More than a few people had dumped their trash in the old abandoned lot. To make matters worse, a dilapidated house sat right in the middle of the grounds. The windows had been broken out years ago. Rumor had it that the house was filled with rats and mice and other creepy things. People went out of their way to avoid this spot. It was hopeless. The only thing that could fix this lot was a bulldozer

One beautiful spring morning, a lady known as "The Gardener" walked by the old lot. The weeds were now waist high and flies were buzzing around the trash. The poor house looked sadder than it ever had. The woman paused, then began to walk around the outside of the lot. A few of the townsfolk watched as she took down several pages of notes, then quickly walked away. The Gardener had seen enough.

Word spread quickly throughout the town that the woman was going to demand the city clean up the lot, bulldoze the house to the ground, and plow it under. Why, how could anyone be upset with her? After all, the lot gave the whole town a bad reputation. It didn't matter if it would be very costly to clean it up, the city would just have to find the money. "It just wasn't right having an eyesore like that in our town," the people would say. "Someone had to do something!"

Several days later the Gardener walked into City Hall. The clerk behind the desk braced himself for a fight. The clerk knew the city didn't have the money that it would take to clean up the lot.

The Gardener walked up to the desk, pulled out her notes and said something the clerk would never forget. She asked, "How much is the abandoned house and lot at 371 Beacon street? I'd like to buy it."

The rumors going through the town couldn't have been further from the truth. The Gardener didn't want to destroy the lot, she wanted to buy it.

The clerk found the few records there were for the property and looked carefully at them. "There are a lot of back taxes due. It would be quite costly to buy it, let alone the expense to clean it up."

"Never you mind that, is the property for sale or not?" the Gardener replied.

The Clerk scratched his head. "Yes Ma'am, the lot is for sale." Hearing that, the Gardener bought the worthless eyesore right then and there.

All summer long, she and her husband worked extra hard. They cleared weeds, removed trash, and made major repairs to the house. Then, they trimmed the trees and bushes, and planted many kinds of beautiful flowers. They even added a cobblestone walkway leading up to the front door. Out back, behind the house, they added a small pond with a fountain. The lot that was once such an eyesore had now become a beautiful showplace. Love, time and a little work had transformed the lot. Now, people went out of their way just to walk by and take a look at the beautiful view of the property.

What the Gardener did next also surprised the whole town. She she hung a sign out front that read

55. DON'T JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER!

A lady in a faded gingham dress and her husband, dressed in a homespun threadbare suit, stepped off the train in Boston and walk timidly without an appointment into the Harvard University President's outer office.

The secretary could tell in a moment that such backwoods, country hicks had no business at Harvard and probably didn't even deserve to be in Cambridge.

"We want to see the president," the man said softly.

"He'll be busy all day," the secretary snapped.

"We'll wait," the lady replied.

For hours the secretary ignored them, hoping that the couple would finally become discouraged and go away. They didn't and the secretary grew frustrated and finally decided to disturb the president, even though it was a chore she always regretted.

"Maybe if you see them for a few minutes, they'll leave," she said to him.

He sighed in exasperation and nodded. Someone of his importance obviously didn't have the time to spend with them, but he detested gingham dresses and homespun suits cluttering up his outer office.

The president, stern faced and with dignity, strutted toward the couple.

The lady told him, "We had a son who attended Harvard for one year. He loved Harvard. He was happy here. But about a year ago, he was accidentally killed. My husband and I would like to erect a memorial to him, somewhere on campus."

The president wasn't touched.... He was shocked.

"Madam," he said, gruffly, "we can't put up a statue for every person who attended Harvard and died. If we did, this place would look like a cemetery."

"Oh, no," the lady explained quickly. "We don't want to erect a statue. We thought we would like to give a building to Harvard."

The president rolled his eyes. He glanced at the gingham dress and homespun suit, and then exclaimed, "A building! Do you have any earthly idea how much a building costs? We have over seven and a half million dollars in the physical buildings here at Harvard."

For a moment the lady was silent.

The president was pleased. Maybe he could get rid of them now.

The lady turned to her husband and said quietly, "Is that all it costs to start a university? Why don't we just start our own?" Her husband nodded.

The president's face wilted in confusion and bewilderment. Mr. and Mrs. Leland Stanford got up and walked away, traveling to Palo Alto, California where they established the University that bears their name, Stanford University, a memorial to a son that Harvard no longer cared about.