



The Famous Donkey Story

Mullah Joha and his son set out for the market with their donkey following behind them. As they passed some men outside a shop drinking tea, they overheard a whispered, "Look at that man! How can he be so mean as to make his child walk to the market when he has a donkey?"

Joha was so embarrassed he picked up his son and put him on the donkey's back. They continued this way for a while, until they passed several women also on their way to the market. "For shame," Joha heard one woman say to another. "Look at that child, riding the donkey while he makes his poor father walk. Doesn't he have any respect for his elders?"

Shaking his head, Joha took his son from the donkey and climbed up himself. Sure enough, they hadn't travelled far, when yet another person criticised Joha for selfishness, riding on the donkey while his son must walk.

Groaning, Joha placed his son on the saddle before him. They would share the ride!

Alas, a little further along they passed an old man with his friend who cried, "How cruel to overload the donkey like that!"

There is only one thing to do, thought Joha in despair. He and his son dismounted and with great difficulty, heaved the donkey upon his own back and staggered on with their journey. As they went down the road, everyone began to laugh: what a stupid man carrying his donkey instead of riding it!

Shamefaced, Joha put down the donkey, and they continued to the market exactly as they had started, all three walking.

Later, Joha looked at his son: "So you see," he said with a wise nod, "it is clearly not possible to please all people. It is better to do what you know is right and please God."