# Story of Iblis and Sahabah

1) The Muslims of Madinah very generous and gave charity by donating dates generously every day. This meant that there was a mountain of dates, in the forecourt of the mosque of Madinah every night. These were distributed the following day to feed any poor people in the neighbourhood.

2) Making sure that this charity was distributed fairly was a big responsibility. Prophet Mohammad ﷺ used to ask his friends and companions (Ashabahs) to volunteer to guard the dates till morning when they could be given to the needy in the neighbourhood. One night Abu-Hurayrah volunteered to guard the dates till the morning.

3) Whilst Abu-Hurayrah was keeping watch a man snuck in and began taking handfuls of the dates. Abu-Hurayrah caught the man and said ‘By Allah (God), I will take you to Prophet Mohammad ﷺ’. The thief replied ‘Let me go, I have many people to feed in my family and am in great need’. Abu-Hurayrah felt sorry for the man and let him go.

4) The following morning Prophet Mohammad ﷺ asked Abu-Hurayrah about what had happened. Abu-Hurayrah told Prophet Mohammad ﷺ, ‘A man broke into the store and stole some food. When I caught him, he told me he was needy and had many people to feed in his family. I felt sorry for him and let him go.’ Prophet Mohammad ﷺ said ‘He has told you a lie and will come again’. Abu-Hurayrah felt sure that the man would come again as Prophet Mohammad ﷺ had told him this would happen.

5) The next night Abu-Hurayrah stood guard over the dates again and he watched out for the man. Just as Prophet Mohammad ﷺ had told him, the man came and began taking handfuls of the dates. Abu-Hurayrah caught hold of the man and said ‘I am going to take you to Prophet Mohammad ﷺ.’ The man replied ‘Let me go, for I am needy and have many people to feed in my family. I promise I will not come back again.’ Abu-Hurayrah felt sorry for the man and decided to let him go again.

6) The following day Prophet Mohammad ﷺ asked Abu-Hurayrah about what had happened. Abu-Hurayrah said ‘The man came back again. He told me he was in need and that he would not come back again. I felt sorry for him so I let him go.’ Prophet Mohammad ﷺ replied ‘He has told you a lie, he will come back.’

7) For the third night Abu-Hurayrah stood guard and watched for the man. When the man came again and started to steal the dates, Abu-Hurayrah caught him and said ‘I will take you to Prophet Mohammad ﷺ, this is the third time you have come and you promised that you would not come.’ This time the man said ‘Let me go and I will teach you some words that Allah (God) will give you benefit from.’ Abu-Hurayrah asked ‘What are they?’ The man replied ‘Before you go to sleep, recite Ayat Al-Kursi (the verse of the throne, Surah Al-Baqarah verse 255) and Allah (God) will appoint a guard over you who will stay with you, and keep you safe from all harm until morning.’ Abu-Hurayrah let the man go for a third time.

8) The next morning the Prophet Mohammad ﷺ asked Abu-Hurayrah about what had happened. Abu-Hurayrah said ‘The man came again. He said if I let him go he would teach me some words through which Allah would grant me some benefit.’ Prophet Mohammad ﷺ asked ‘What are these words?’ Abu-Hurayrah replied ‘Before going to sleep, recite Ayat Al-Kursi, the man said that if you do so Allah will appoint a guard over you who will stay with you, and keep you safe from harm until morning’. The Prophet Mohammad ﷺ said ‘He spoke the truth’.

9) Prophet Mohammad ﷺ asked Abu-Hurayrah, ‘do you know who you were talking to these three nights?’ Abu-Hurayrah replied ‘No’. Prophet Mohammad ﷺ said ‘It was Iblis’. Iblis is one of the most knowledgeable of the Jinns who disobeyed Allah (God) out of pride.

From Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 255.