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# Bahlool's Decisive and Silencing Reply

It is said that an Indian businessman was bringing wealth and goods from India and selling in Baghdad. His caravan stayed at the inn one night and he asked for dinner. The cook brought him a roasted chicken and a few eggs. When the businessman woke up, the caravan had departed. The cook had gone out of the inn on some errand. The businessman kept calling him, but the cook was not present to give the dinner bill.

Since the caravan had left, the businessman could not repay the cost. Coincidentally, a year later the same caravan passed by the inn. The same person again asked for dinner. Like the previous year, the cook brought a roasted chicken and a few eggs. When morning came, he called the cook and said, “Since last year I am indebted to you for a chicken and some eggs. Tomorrow bill me for last year along with last night's dinner so I can pay you.”

The cook carefully calculated for some minutes and then demanded 1,000 dinars from the businessman, saying that he had been very generous in his calculations and there were no mistakes that would make him indebted. When the businessman heard that the cost of the two meals was 1,000 dinars he got furious and said, “I think that you are crazy that you demand 1,000 dinars for two chickens and a few eggs.”

The cook replied, “This statement is beyond the justice of the reason I applied and didn't want to exceed the limits in your right. You call me insane.”

“I am thankful to you but tell me what costs 1,000 dinars and why do I owe this amount?”

“Think carefully for a moment. If I would have said it without calculating, then you are right. The cost I am demanding is in respect of last year when you ate a chicken and six eggs here. If this chicken had been alive, then I would have put those eggs under it; they would have hatched and chicks would have come out. Then each of these would have had the same number of eggs and these eggs would hatch chicks also; therefore, by now I would own thousands of chickens and eggs. For this reason, I have given up all this profit just to fill your stomach. Now from this entire account and last night's meal the total I demand is 1,000 dinars and you call me crazy.”

The quarrel between the cook and the businessman soon drew the attention of all the caravan travelers. Every minute they tried to settle the dispute, but it was impossible. At last it was decided to appeal to the dignitary of the place for justice.

When the chief came and was told the case, he decided in the cook's favor and said to the businessman, “You must give the cook 1,000 dinars.

The poor businessman was very perturbed and worried. He didn't know what to do. Among the travelers was a person who was friends with Bahlool. He knew that only Bahlool could solve this problem. He addressed the travelers, “There is not a lot of distance between here and Baghdad. I'll go and bring Baghdad's judge so that whatever decision he makes will be acted upon.”

Everyone agreed and that person rode a fast, speedy mule in search of Bahlool. He found him in a mosque and narrated the whole story.

Bahlool rode toward the caravan inn with the man. When they reached near the inn, Bahlool got down and said to him, “Quickly go to the people that are waiting and tell them to wait half an hour more. The judge promises that he is coming.”

The man did so. Everyone started counting the minutes. The judge did not come half an hour later. They again waited. One-and-a-half hours later Bahlool's cap was seen. When he came near the people, everyone got up from their seats out of respect to the judge. Then Bahlool sat on the floor and got acquainted with everyone.

He said, “I have heard about the cook's and the businessman's dispute. I apologize to you that my said half hour became one-and-a-half hours, but my delay was correct in this respect that besides being a judge, I also know farming at the same time. When I was coming here to do justice, a farmer came for some grains of wheat. I have heard that if the wheat grain is boiled first, then its growth is very good. That is why, in the extra time I took, I was busy boiling wheat. I apologize to you in this regard.”

The chief and the others said, “What a strange, crazy judge that boils wheat grains!”

Bahlool replied, “In this city where roasted chickens hatch chicks, it isn't strange that boiled wheat can also be green.”

Everyone was astonished at Bahlool's silencing answer.

The chief addressed the cook, “This judge decided correctly. Roasted chickens do not hatch chicks.”

Thus the people gave the cook a small amount for the two meals that the businessman had eaten. In this way, the two made peace and hugged each other.

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