

Story 1661 (1993 Tape 4)

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Evil Returned to Evildoer

There was once in a certain village an old man was very poor. Every day he stopped at every house in the village and asked for food for himself and his family. Everyone in the village except for one person would always give him at least a small amount of food. The person who refused was a mean-spirited and ignoble woman. Whenever the poor man would knock on her door that woman would always say to him, "Why do you keep knocking on my door time after time and bothering me in this way? May Allah your life and save us from such a nuisance!" Each time this happened, the poor man would apologize to the mean-spirited woman, but she continued to utter her harsh remarks against him.

Time passed, and one day when the poor man reached the home of that unpleasant woman, she opened her door and said to him, "Here! I am giving you a loaf of the bread that I just finished baking." Saying this, she handed him a loaf of bread.

## Story 1661

The poor man took the loaf of bread and said, "Thank you!" He then started back to where his own home was on the edge of the village. As he walked along, he felt very hungry, and so he decided to stop and eat something. Opening his bag, he looked at the fresh loaf of bread which the woman had given him, but he said to himself, "No, I shall not eat that fresh bread but shall save it for my children. I shall eat one of the old crusts at the bottom of my bag."

As he was eating a dry old crust, the poor man saw a young horseman approaching. The poor man called to the rider, "Hello, son From where have you come? You look very tired."

The horseman answered, "I am on leave from military service. I have come to see my mother. But because I have ridden for a long time, I am indeed tired and hungry."

The poor man responded, "Come, son! Come and eat some bread. We shall sit together and eat together." He then took out the fresh loaf that the woman had given him the loaf that he had been saving for his children, and handed it to the young horseman.

The young man began to eat that bread, but after a few minutes, he said, "I do not feel at all well. I think I am going to become ill. Immediately after saying that

## Story 1661

he fell to the ground and lay there motionless. The poor was shocked. He was even more shocked when he examined the young horseman and discovered that he was dead.

He rushed back to the center of the village and reported what had happened. He then said, "I do not know the young man is. Please come with me. Perhaps someone among you will recognize him

Several people went with the poor man. After he had them to the place where the horseman lay, one of them said, "Tell us exactly how this happened."

"Very well," answered the poor man. "This young man was tired and hungry after having ridden a great distance. I invited him to eat a fresh loaf of bread which such and such woman in this village had given me just a short while earlier. After he had eaten some of that bread, he became and fell to the ground."

"What a strange thing this is!" said one of the villagers. "This young man is the son of the woman who gave you that loaf of bread!"

Yes, the mean-spirited woman had put rat poison into that bread in order to kill both the poor man and his children. But that was not Allah's will. The unknowable intention of Allah works mysteriously. The mean-spirited

Story 1661

woman killed her own son instead of the poor man and his children.

The point of this story is that evildoers may bring evil upon themselves. It is a true story. I used to tell this story to my children when they were young. I told it to them in order to teach them a lesson.