

Story of Thief



There was a young man Rohinikumar born into the family of thieves. As he grew up he joined his father's tradition.



Whenever they robbed the town or rich person, not only they kept some money for themselves but they spent the rest of the money with poor and needy people.



One day his father told this young Rohinikumar that whenever you are on the road or for that matter any place do not listen to this naked monk (Mahavira). Father was afraid that if his young son listens to Mahavira, Rohini may change and not carry on his tradition. He did not want his tradition to die.



So, on his deathbed, Rohini promised his father that he would not listen to what Mahavira is preaching.



Rohini carried on his profession so well, no one could catch him. Abhaykumar, the prince and son of King Shrenik kept trying to trick him but they could not succeed.



One day, on very short notice, he was supposed to go for a big theft. His co-workers told him that if they take a shorter route then it would be better but Mahavira was preaching on that route. And, if they take another longer route then that would leave them a very short time to finish the theft and that may put them in danger of getting caught.



There was a dilemma for Rohini about what he should do. If he went on the path where Mahavira was there then he had to break his promise to his father and if he selected the second path then he would risk his life. At last, he decided that he would go on the path where Mahavira was but he would cover his ears with his hands so that he would not hear Mahavira's words. He started on his way.



Everything was going the way he thought, but as he was crossing in front of Mahavira his foot got stuck with the splinter. He was in the puzzle that if he took the splinter out then he would have to take his hands off his ears and in that case, Mahavira's words may fall on his ears.



He decided that he would just keep walking and ignore the splinter. He kept on walking with a splinter for a while, but the pain got unbearable and he could not go any further. He told himself that it would take only a few seconds to get the splinter out and how much difference it can make for listening to a few words.



He took his hands off his ears and took out the splinter and put them back. While doing so he heard Mahavira describing the celestial abode. He heard Mahavira saying that

"Celestial beings do not have shadows and they do not walk on the ground that means their feet do not touch the ground and their flower necklace does not droop."

Rohini smiled and said to himself.

"Is this what Mahavira is teaching? There was no reason for me to suffer from pain."



He reached the town. While in the process of theft he got caught this time. He was taken to Jail. He was asked many questions about himself but he would not tell them who he was. So Abhaykumar decided to trick him.



Abhaykumar got him drunk and he passed out. Before Rohini can wake up Abhaykumar puts him in the bed in a very nice, big, and decorated hall like a celestial hall. There were many pretty young girls dressed like goddesses waiting on him.



When he was waking up from intoxication, these goddesses asked him, hey Lord, what kind of good deeds did you do that you were born among us? They wanted him to trick him so that he might say I had not done any good deeds but on the contrary, I had done bad work as a thief. He was puzzled and could not believe where he was. Did he ask these goddesses where they were? They replied that he was born in a celestial abode and he would have nothing but fun now. All his wishes would be fulfilled. He started wondering that this must be a dream.



Then suddenly he remembered the words of Mahavira that there is no shadow of people in the celestial abode and they do not walk on the ground and the flowers in their necklace do not wither. But here all of these things were just the opposite. He immediately got alert and realized that this was a trap. So now he started to fake. He started telling how good he had done and he was not surprised to have all these. Abhaykumar could not get him to confess his bad deeds. Abhaykumar had to let him go.



So this way a few words from Mahavira saved his life. Rohini, now, was amazed and started thinking that if a few words could save his life what would happen if heard him more. He went where Mahavira was and very patiently listened to his sermon. He was so impressed that he expressed his desire to renounce this worldly life and to become a monk. But he told Mahavira that he has one unfinished business which he had to finish. As soon as he finished that he would come back and accept Diksha.



Rohini went to King Shreniks's court. He stood up and asked permission to talk. He described what all he had done so far. Abhaykumar and King Shrenik were surprised to hear this. His soldiers rushed to catch him.



He said wait let me finish first. He told whole his experience about Mahavira and he also told him that he was renouncing his worldly life and he came just to confess his acts.



King Shrenik and Abhaykumar felt very proud of him and the king pardoned him for all his crimes. And, when he became monk they bowed down to him. He carried out austerity for the rest of his life and went to heaven.



Things to think: Here we will think of Rohini as a robber and would accumulate pap 9 bad karmas) and therefore will suffer for it. But we should not forget that at the same time he was helping needy people so even though he was accumulated bad karmas they will lead him to a good cause and it did. So because of his bad karma, he got caught but the good karma saved him from going to Jail and led him to Mahavira. This kind of pap is called punyanubandhi pap where there would be sufferings but it would also bring something good to happen, including going on the right path.

