



মহাশিক্ষা বিভাগ (সংস্কৃত)
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (S)

Government of Manipur

LESSON 18 THE WISE JUDGE

NOTES:

Summary

The Wise Judge is a short play written by R.M. Seaforth. It displays how Mustapha, the Caliph of Baghdad went on to test the wisdom of the best judge in his land disguised as private person. The scene takes place in a street of Baghdad. The play is divided into V(five) scenes.

In Scene I, Ali, a lame beggar begs alms to Mustapha. After taking the alms from Mustapha, the beggar requested to save him by giving him ride to the market. Mustapha happily agreed and they went to the market. When they reached market, the beggar refused to get down from the horse and claimed that the horse belongs to him. Mustapha was shocked hearing this and refused to give him the horse. So, the beggar insisted that they should take the case to the court. Mustapha thought of it as chance for the purpose of his visit and agreed to it.

In Scene II, the play opens in the Judge's court. In this scene, three cases were brought before the judge. The case between a writer and a farmer, a butcher and an oil merchant and the case of Mustapha.

The case between the writer and the farmer was regarding a slave. Both claims to be the master of the slave. The slave boy was deaf and dumb and cannot speak for either. The Judge asked them to leave the slave and to come back tomorrow.

The case between the butcher and the oil merchant was regarding money. The oil merchant was calling the butcher, a robber and the butcher claimed he was innocent and the money belongs to him. The Judge asked them to leave the money and to come back tomorrow.

The case between Mustapha and Ali was regarding a fine Arab horse and both claimed to be the rightful owner of the horse. The Judge asked them to leave the horse and to come back tomorrow.

In Scene III, the play opens at the Judge's courtroom. It was the day of the judgement and all has arrived to hear the verdict of the Judge.

In case of the writer and the farmer, the Judge gives verdict that the writer was the rightful master of the slave. The farmer was given fifty blows for stealing and lying about it.

In the case of the butcher and the oil merchant, the Judge ruled out that the money belongs to butcher. The oil merchant was given two score lashes as punishment.

In case of Mustapha and Ali, the Judge asked each of them to follow him to the stables to recognize the horse.

In Scene IV, the play opens in the stables, both Mustapha and Ali point out the right horse. All of them return to the courtroom.

In Scene V, the play again opens in the courtroom. The Judge announced his verdict that Mustapha was the owner of the horse. The Judge gave Ali a punishment of fifty lashes. The Judge asked Mustapha whether he is not happy with the judgement as everyone has gone except him. Then, Mustapha introduced who he was and the purpose of his visit. Mustapha asked how he could arrive at his decisions. The judge replied by saying that in case of the slave, he tests by giving the boy a task as a slave of a writer and as a farmer's slave. The boy could easily do the task as a slave of a writer then as a farmer.

In case of the oil merchant and the butcher, he put the money in a vessel filled with water overnight. There was no oil in the surface of the water. If it was merchant's money, the money would be greasy from the touch of his hands.

Mustapha further asked the judge how he found out the truth about his case. To that, the Judge replied that he brought both of them to the stables not to let them recognize the horse but to let the horse recognize them instead. The horse turns towards him with affection but when Ali touched, he laid back his ears. Then, he knew that he was the true owner.

Mustapha was very happy with the judge's wisdom in judgement and announced that he should be the highest office in Baghdad next after him.

Word Meaning

- *Grasping* : *holding tight*
- *Two score* : *forty*
- *Promptly* : *immediately*
- *Greasy* : *oily*
- *Bestowed* : *given*



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