

The Eyelash

On Judgment Day, a man was brought before Allah. He had been a decent man in life. He believed in God, and said his prayers, and was kind to others. Sometimes, when he would think about God or read certain verses of the Qur'ān or pray, a tear would rise from within him and trickle down his cheek like a drop of dew that trickles down a blade of grass on a cool morning.

But like so many people, this man had also made great mistakes. He had sometimes gotten angry and lost his temper. He had sometimes said bad things that a good person ought not to say. He had sometimes twisted the truth just a little to save face. He had sometimes hurt people who did not deserve to be hurt.

As he stood before God, he trembled with fear. His mouth was sealed shut, for this was the day about which God had warned, "On this day we shall seal their mouths, and their hands shall speak, and their legs shall testify to what they used to earn" (Qur'ān 36:65).

He saw before him in his book of deeds the long list of foul acts of which he was guilty. He longed to defend himself, to remind God of his good acts too. But he could say nothing, and he knew that his few good acts would not counterbalance his many evils deeds.

One by one, his limbs testified against him. His hands told God how he had hit a man once, how he had cheated a customer once, how he had pointed at another man once and laughed. His tongue told God how he had said a bad word once, how he had been disrespectful to his mother once, how he had talked badly about someone once. And with each limb's testimony, the man felt more and more hopeless.

Then, a strange thing happened.

A tiny little eyelash flew from his lower eyelid, landed on the ground before him, and asked ever so humbly if it could speak before God Almighty. God, in his justice, demanded to hear every piece of evidence before judging a person, so he told the eyelash, "Speak."

The eyelash said, "Once, this man was sitting on his prayer mat after Maghrib prayers. He remembered one of his bad deeds, and he felt terribly sorry for what he had done. He knew that one day he would have to stand before you, and he was scared. He was so scared that he cried from the bottom of his heart. And a single tear welled up in his eyes. I was blessed to be the one who caught that tear and gently pulled it out of his eyes and led it to tumble safely down his cheek. I hereby, on this day testify, that this man wept out of fear of you, O God!"

Upon hearing this, God, the Merciful, said, "Then I forgive him for all the bad that he did, and I free him from the ranks of those bound for hell, and I grant him a place in paradise with those who lived in my fear. He and they shall fear me no more."*

*This story was adapted from a tradition narrated by al-Shaykh al-Bahā'ī in his book *al-Arba'ūn ḥadīthān* p.139.