

Story 920 (1981 Tape 8)

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The Dog, the Cat, and the Worst Loss

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There was once a man who had a dog and a cat. Inasmuch as this man knew the language of animals, he could understand both his dog and his cat.

One day the dog complained to the cat about the way he was treated. He said, "Hey, Cat, we both belong to the same master and are parts of the same household, but we are treated very differently. You eat very good food inside the house, while I am waiting outside without either food or water. Furthermore, when I do receive food, it is not very good. You ought to share some of your food with me."

The cat answered, "My friend, don't worry about that. Before very long our master's oxen will die. You and I will soon be eating our fill of ox meat."

Their master happened to overhear their conversation, and he was very alarmed by what he heard the cat say. The very next day he took all of his oxen to the local market and sold them

A few days after that, the dog cornered the cat and

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said to him, "What has become of all that ox meat that you and I were to have?"

The cat replied, "Well, what could I do about it? Our master sold the oxen that I thought you and I would eat do not be discouraged. As you know, our master has a fine black horse. That horse will die very soon, and then you and I shall be eating horse meat."

But their master had been observing them closely and again he overheard their conversation. When he heard the news about his horse, he took the animal and sold it immediately.

A day or two later the dog again cornered the cat and demanded, "Hey, Cat, what ever happened to all that horse meat we were to have?"

"Well, our master sold that horse, and there was nothing that I could do to prevent it. But it will not be very long now before our master's cows all die, and then we shall have plenty of cow meat.

As before, the master was listening to their conversation. When they had finished talking, he lost no time in taking his cows to market and there selling them

The poor hungry dog waited for the cows to die, but this never happened. This time he went directly to the cat in great anger and said, "Hey, Cat! Where is all that cow meat you and I were going to eat? What happened to it?"

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"It was not my fault that we did not get any of that meat. Our master sold all of his cows, and that was the end of that. But his herd of sheep will not live long, and so we shall be able to eat mutton."

Of course the master overheard this bad news too. He drove all his sheep to market on the following morning and there sold them

Once again after two days had passed, the dog found the cat and asked him, "Well, what happened to our mutton?"

"The loss of our meat was in no way my fault. We lost the meat because our master decided to sell his entire flock. But you must be patient. Our master has not long to live, and at the very least we shall eat well at the funeral meal

When our father told us this tale, he said, "The only really bad thing that can happen to you is a loss of health, not a loss of wealth."