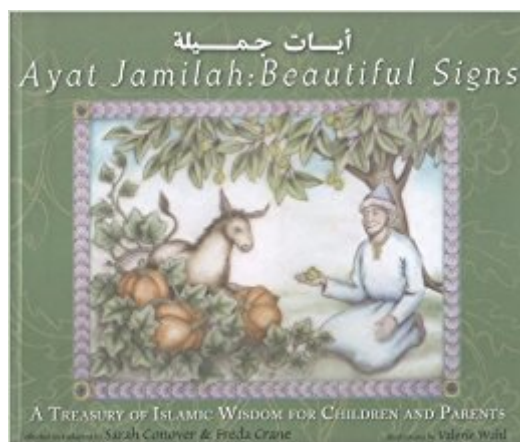




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# Ayat Jamilah: Beautiful Signs: A Treasury Of Islamic Wisdom For Children And Parents (This Little Light Of Mine)



## Synopsis

Winner of the 2004 Aesop Prize, *Ayat Jamilah/Beautiful Signs: a Treasury of Islamic Wisdom for Children and Parents* is the second book in Eastern Washington University Press' *This Little Light of Mine* series. A young adult/adult crossover anthology, it draws from not only the core of Islamic spirituality and ethics, the Qur'an, and the traditions (hadiths), but also from the mystical verse, folk tales, and exemplary figures of the Islamic narrative. Unlike any other collection of Islamic stories, *Beautiful Signs* gathers traditional stories from the farthest reaches of the Muslim world, which stretches from Morocco in the west to Indonesia in the east, and from China in the north to Tanzania in the south. This unique anthology, with its rich and thorough explanatory notes, will be invaluable to anyone wishing to understand, or to teach, geography, world history, or world religions. It will also be treasured by Muslim families and by all parents committed to broadening the lives and values of their children and themselves.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 25 customer reviews

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## Customer Reviews

Grade 9 Up  
This book aims to do for Islam what Conover's *Kindness* (EWU, 2000) did for Buddhism: reflect the ethos of the religion in a treasury of stories accessible to teens. Here, too, pithy sayings from the tradition are framed on full pages between the narratives, and 22 pages of notes and sources provide foundations and suggest further exploration. These stories from the Qur'an, from Muslim history, hadiths (oral tradition), and folktales originated in the Middle East, China, Indonesia, Africa, and even Muslim Spain; several are from Sufi teachings (e.g., Rumi's). Although many feature mullahs, women star in a couple of tales. Focusing on life lessons, even the stories identified as historical can have an idealized moral: a band of robbers converted by the

honesty of a youth, or a thief reformed by a lone woman's kindness. Calligraphy and frames surrounding illustrations reflect the astounding inventiveness of design in the Islamic tradition. Of the dozen line-and-color illustrations, most represent a scene and reflect the cultural diversity of the sources. Several are merely decorative. Islam today is undeniably important: a work as informative and entertaining as this one, that helps readers to understand its values, should be welcome.

Patricia D. Lothrop, St. George's School, Newport, RI Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Gr. 5-7. "Once there was and there was not" is the Arabic equivalent of "Once upon a time," and it begins many of the stories in this collection of folktales and stories from the Islamic world. One of the most popular folk characters is Mulla Nasruddin, a wise and witty spiritual guide. In one story, a woman comes to the Mulla's court and asks him to forbid her sweet-toothed son from eating candy, which the Mulla eventually does, but only after curing himself of his own sugar addiction. The book isn't only folktales; it also includes retellings of Qur'anic passages (including one about the infant Jesus), parables from the Hadiths, and stories from Islamic mystics like the great female saint Rabe'a al-Adiwiyyah. Though somewhat less kid-friendly than its predecessor in the This Little Light of Mine series, the collection of Buddhist stories Kindness (2001), many of the tales from Ayat Jamilah will make excellent read-alouds, and the adapters have done a magnificent job of collecting stories from throughout the Islamic world, from China to Africa to the Middle East. John Green

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Bought as a gift for my daughter Jamila, very informative for me and all my children Al-hamdulillah.

In the name of God the Merciful and the Benevolent... Thus opens every story in this book, a collection of Islamic stories for families and children. Drawn from across the Muslim world, this book collects together countless folk stories, sayings and proverbs. Excerpts from the Holy Qur'an, the Hadith and the life of Muhammad appear beside traditional Arab, Persian, Turkish, Mande, Swahili, Hausa, Pakistani and Asian fairy tales and proverbs. Historic accounts of great Muslims like Ali ibn Abu Talib, Uthman ibn Affan, Rabiah of Basra and al-Hakim stand next to the wit of Mullah Nasruddin Hodja and the poems of Sufi mystics like Saadi and Idries Shah. A huge range of cultures, countries and time periods are represented, from China and Indonesia to Al-Andalus and

Nigeria, from the early days of Islam in the 7th century to the Swahili city-states of the 16th century, but all are united by the common faith of Islam. This book is an invaluable resource for Muslim families wishing to pass on their culture and heritage to their children, but the morals and lessons contained within these stories carry a timeless wisdom that all peoples can benefit from regardless of faith. Non-Muslim families who want to teach about other cultures, or who want to show that Islam is not some evil monolithic force the media tries to portray it as, will also benefit from reading this. Stories of faith, honesty, kindness, charity, mercy and love are balanced out with humor. The beautiful artwork and Arabic calligraphy add to this book's appeal. Apparently, this book is part of a series detailing folk tales and proverbs from all of the world's great religions and there is at least one other book in the series published (this time focusing on Buddhism). I have yet to read it, but considering the outstanding quality of this book, I should like to get around to it eventually. All in all, this is a book well worth getting. Even adults will appreciate reading some of the stories in here. I certainly did, and if you approach this book with an open mind I honestly believe you and your children will appreciate this book as well regardless of your religious or cultural beliefs.

Though I bought this book for my young children, I am the one that is constantly pausing in the middle of my busy day to sit, read and absorb the wisdom in this book. I love it! It's so deep, so multi-faceted and spiritual. Many of my treasured memories of my grandmother's tales are in this book. Update more than 2 yrs after first buying this book: I still LOVE this book! (I will take it tomorrow and read a couple of stories to my kids' class, to commemorate Eid, in addition to reading Hena Khan's 'night of the moon'). A great gift book to cherish for years to come!

Very good

This is a great book. I bought it for my daughter who is 6 years old. She likes reading books and I thought she might like it despite the fact that the description states that age range is 9 and up. I am sure she will like this book when she grows up a bit. Just a small suggestion for the author: it would be great if you can work on its simplified version, that would be interesting for kids in the age range of 5-9. In any case, this book is really great! Many thanks for the great product!

My sons love the stories and the book arrived in mint condition on time. The stories are full of moral takes and life lessons with funny and interesting characters.

I read this whole book in one day I just could not put it down. Its a wonderful book for children who understand concept. The book uses teachings of mohammad (PBUH) and verses of the Quran and incorporates them into everyday life obstacles, it gives a profound understanding on how muslims are taught to handle situations according to the teachings of the Quran. If you have a child under 5 years old it may be hard for them to understand and put the two together but nevertheless I recommend it.

I purchased this book for my 5 year old niece. While the language is too advanced for her to read on her own, she loves having this book read to her. As she has grown familiar with the stories over the last year, she has also gotten better at trying to read them on her own. One of the nice things about this book is it includes stories and sayings from across many different countries and cultures, reflecting the diversity of people following the Islamic faith, which is also reflected in the artwork. It also provides a human face for Muslims around the world, given the stereotypes and prejudice abounding in the media. A great book for the children in your life.

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