

## The Shepherd's Treasure

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Once there lived a poor and illiterate shepherd in a village in Iran. He hadn't been to school because there were very few schools in those days. However, he had a high common sense. He had also a friendly and helpful nature. Many people came to him for advice. They were able to get rid of their Sorrows and troubles.

One day, the king visited the shepherd. He rode on his mule and reached the wise shepherd's cave. The shepherd welcomed the king in a shepherd's disguise) warmly. They remained busy in wise conversation and stayed together at night.

Next morning, the king thanked the shepherd for his kind hospitality. The shepherd looked straight into the traveller's eyes. He addressed him as 'Your Majesty'. The king was surprised and pleased at his wisdom. Just then, the king appointed the shepherd the governor of a small district.

The new governor (shepherd) won people's love. He became famous as a fair and wise governor. The governors of other provinces became jealous of him. They could not tolerate his popularity among the people. They were also jealous of the importance the king gave him. They reported that he kept a part of the tax collected into an iron chest. He carried it (the iron chest) with him all the time.

At first the king ignored these reports. But he could not do so for long One thing was certain. It was that the new governor always carried an iron chest with him. So one day the king called the new governor to the palace.

The new governor came to the king's court. The iron chest was even then fastened behind him on the camel's back. Everyone was delighted to see it. They thought there were jewels in the chest. So they hoped that the new governor would be proved to be a thief on the opening of the chest. The king asked the new governor what was there in his iron chest. The new governor got the chest opened. It contained an old blanket. The shepherd called it his only treasure and the oldest friend. He carried the blanket all the time because this alone was his real wealth. Everything else belonged to the king.

It was an example of the shepherd's humility and wisdom. The king realized his wisdom. He made him the governor of a much bigger district as a reward.