ZAINABIA ACADEMY

BAB UL HAWAIJ

DEENIYAT

Level -10



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

ZAINABIA ACADEMY

BAB UL HAWAIJ



Full Name: _____

Students Contact No: _____

Teacher: _____

Teachers Contact no: _____



DATE	HOME WORK	PARENTS INITIALS

ZAINABIA ACADEMY

DEENIYAT LEVEL-10 TEACHING SCHEDULE

AQAID	FIQH	TARIKH	AKHLAQ

DATE	WEEK	CHAPTERS	PAGE #
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	2.	1. MUSTAḤAB PRAYERS	-158-
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	6.	14. GENDER INTERACTION 15. MARRIAGE IN ISLAM	-236- -238-
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	10.	3. THE NATURE OF RECOMPENSE & RETRIBUTION 7. INTOXICANTS	-141- -171
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ZAINABIA ACADEMY

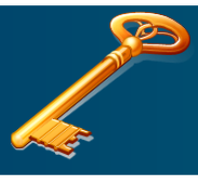
DEENIYAT LEVEL-10 TEACHING SCHEDULE

AQAID	FIQH	TARIKH	AKHLAQ

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KEY FEATURES OF THIS BOOK



The Madressa Syllabus has been divided by four key subjects, each colour coded for ease of reference:

ʿAQĀʾID - BELIEFS

FIQH - ISLAMIC LAW

AKHLĀQ - MORALS AND ETHICS

TĀRĪKH - HISTORY

For Classes 1-3, lessons are ordered to link to previous lessons and to provide a flow in learning.

For Classes 4-10, lessons in the manual have been categorised in 3 major categories; combining Akhlaq and Tarikh together as 'Morals, Ethics & History'. Here, lessons of Tarikh have been arranged linking to a subject in Akhlaq that shares a common theme or is a lesson from the Tarikh subject.

Within each lesson, you will see clear titles and subtitles as well as the use of symbols and colour coded boxes representing different features of the lesson. Below you will find a summary.

In some places you may also see 'Du'a boxes that highlight a key 'Du'a related to the lesson.

We have also easily identified Qur'anic verses and Hadith by the following symbols:

Qur'anic Verse

Hadith

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The learning objectives have been clearly identified at the beginning of every lesson.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Purple boxes at the beginning of the lesson indicate the learning objectives for the lesson

MY NOTES

MY NOTES

A section for notes has been provided where there is place, for students to jot down their own notes for the lesson.

DID YOU KNOW?

This box contains interesting facts related to the lesson.

DID YOU KNOW?

Each lesson will have a "Did you know' box prior to conclusion of the lesson stating related and interesting facts

KEY POINTS

At the end of every lesson, a summary of the key points helps with revision and summarising the lesson.

KEY POINTS

Every lesson has key points that are summarised at the end for students to review and remind themselves of what the highlights of the lesson were.

ACTIVITY

Every lesson has an activity which students can conduct in the classroom to make the lesson fun, exciting and memorable.

ACTIVITY

The activity helps students better understand the lesson and how to relate to the key points in the lesson.

IN SUMMARY

This box contains questions which enable the student work out how much of the lesson they have understood.

IN SUMMARY

Summary questions enable students to see how much of the lesson they have understood and which areas need revision.

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THEOLOGY (BELIEFS)
ʿAQĀʾID

What is ʿAqāʾid?

ʿAqāʾid (Theology) is a study of the roots of religion (Uṣūl al-Dīn). It is an extremely important subject because it deals with the very foundation of faith in Allāh (SWT) and Islam.

The Uṣūl al-Dīn comprise of 5 basic principles:

1) *Tawḥīd* (Divine Unity)
2) *ʿAdālah* (Divine Justice)
3) *Nubuwwah* (Prophethood)
4) *Imāmah* (Divine Leadership after the Prophet (S))
5) *Qiyāmah* (Resurrection)

Why Study ʿAqāʾid?

The study of ʿAqāʾid shapes our understanding of Allāh (SWT) and Islam. It addresses important issues such as the existence and nature of God, the need for religion and the purpose of our life. An in depth understanding of these issues is absolutely necessary, because without that, our actions would not have much significance.

Dear Lord,

Guide us in understanding the roots of our religion so that we may better understand Your existence, and understand the purpose of our religion and to live by its morals and values.

REFERENCES

5.1 RELIGION, SOCIETY & THE BELIEF IN GOD

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand that belief in God is a natural instinct
2. Study common reasons why some people might refuse to believe in God
3. Understand why some people commit evil deeds in the name of Islam

MY NOTES

BELIEF IN GOD IS A NATURAL INSTINCT

If we study the history of human beings we will realise that humans have always had faith in a Higher Power and a Creator. This is a part of our nature (fiṭrah) built into us, so much so that we can say that those who deny the existence of God hold an unnatural belief. Even when people don't know who God is, they worship the stars, the sun, the moon, animals, fire, trees, idols, other human beings, etc. This shows that as a natural instinct, people have a need to worship and submit to a Higher Power.

The Holy Prophet (S) said:

كُلُ مَولُودٍ يُولَدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ
ثُمَ أَبَوَاهُ يُهَودَانَهُ أَوْ يُنَصِرَانَهُ أَوْ يُمَجِسَانَهُ

"Every child is born on the natural instinct (fiṭrah i.e. to believe in One God only). Then it is the child's parents who make the child a Christian or a Jew or a Magian (and so on)."

It is this natural instinct to believe in One God - the concept of Tawḥīd – that the Qurʾān refers to when it says:

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا
فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا
لاَ تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ
ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ
وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ

So set your face upright to the religion as a people of pure faith, the fiṭrah of Allāh according to which He originated mankind. There is no altering Allāh's creation; that is the upright religion, but most people do not know. [30:30]

In other words, human beings will always instinctively want to believe in God because that is how Allāh (SWT) has created us. The belief in Tawḥīd is built into us as a natural instinct. Even when an atheist tries to argue using "science", you can see that they are forcing themselves to ignore the obvious signs all around them.

ACTIVITY

List 3 reasons why you believe in Allāh (SWT).

WHY DO SOME PEOPLE REFUSE TO BELIEVE IN ALLĀH (SWT)?

MY NOTES

There are many reasons why people refuse to believe in God. Below are three such reasons:



1) Some religions teach that God has a body or has a family. They may also believe in idols or physical objects as gods.

Such ideas do not make sense to many people, so they refuse to believe in God altogether. If people understood God the way the Holy Prophet (S) and the Ahl al-Bayt (A) have explained who God is, only the very evil people would reject to believe in God.

2) Some people also decide not to believe in God because they feel that this would take away their "freedom" to commit ḥarām acts. They would also be "forced" to perform wājib acts.

Allāh (SWT) is all-Powerful and Needless of anyone: He does not need our worship, nor has anything to gain from it.

He is our Creator and He is all-Knowing: He knows exactly what is beneficial for us and what is harmful for us, in a way that we do not know.

He is Wise and Merciful: He has made those things that are essential for our wellbeing wājib upon us and those things that are very harmful for us, as ḥarām.

If we realised these facts, we would never complain and always eagerly rush to follow what our Loving Lord has commanded us to do, because it is only to our benefit.

3) Many people do not want to believe in God, because they feel that religion causes most of the evil and wars in the world.

Although it is true that religious beliefs have been a motivation for some wars in history, it is incorrect to say that "religion" is the cause of most wars. In fact, according to the Encyclopaedia of Wars, religion has been the primary motivation for less than 7% of all wars and less than 2% of all people killed in warfare. For example, both of the great wars in history, World War 1 and World War 2, were not religious in nature or cause.

5.1 RELIGION, SOCIETY & THE BELIEF IN GOD

DID YOU KNOW?

The Arabic word fiṭrah also refers to a special type of zakāt that we give to the poor on the day of Eid al-Fiṭr.

Most scientists today believe that the universe began with the 'Big Bang', but they cannot answer what caused this 'Big Bang' to take place.

WHY DO MANY BAD PEOPLE TODAY USE THE NAME OF ISLAM TO DO THEIR EVIL WORK?

Some people today blame Islam for the terrorism that we often see around the world today. Evil very often uses the name of goodness and good people to reach its objectives. Bad people do not say, "I am an evil person, I am an oppressor, be on my side!" If they want to get support from people, they will say things that are attractive to these people.

In the Muslim majority countries, most of the people love Islam. Evil people take advantage of this and call others to their cause by claiming that this is what Allāh (SWT) wants from them. Such people use the name of our beautiful and peace-loving religion to achieve their own evil goals.

Another big reason that has helped these evil people gain support is because of the wars and daily killings of innocent people in Muslim countries. The anger and confusion that is caused by these wars have sadly made the call for revenge by opportunistic terrorists more appealing to certain small groups of naive Muslims.

Unfortunately, many non-Muslims, who are not aware of this reality, blame Islam for the evil deeds that these people do, while in reality Islam has nothing to do with it. There are about 1.6 billion Muslims in the world today. That means that roughly 1 in every 4 people in the world today is a Muslim. The number of these bad people who claim to be Muslims and use the name of Islam to do their evil deeds throughout the world is not even 1% of the global Muslim population. This also shows that Islam does not teach Muslims to do such evil deeds.



It is therefore very important that we Muslims, as ambassadors of our great faith, try to portray a true and positive image of Islam.

KEY POINTS

1. Our fiṭrah is our natural instinct. We are born with it. It guides us to believe in God.

2. Everyone is born with this pure fiṭrah, but as they grow up, they may decide to ignore it and pollute it, causing them not to believe in God.

3. Some people refuse to believe in God because of various misunderstandings they have about God.

4. A small number of evil people are using our beautiful religion as a cover for their evil deeds, which has caused non-Muslims to question Islam.

5. We have to be ambassadors for our faith and show people its true reality.

IN SUMMARY

1. What does the Arabic word fiṭrah mean?
2. Is belief in God a natural instinct?
3. Why do some people not believe in God?
4. Why do some people use the name of Islam to do their evil deeds?
5. How can we as Muslims guide others towards God?

ACTIVITY PAGE

Below are certain scenarios. Choose a partner to work with and write down the answers to the questions below. Then present these scenarios in a play format in front n of your class.

John is Ahmad's friend. John tells Ahmad that he does not believe in God because his freedom to do anything he wants will be taken away from him. What do you think Ahmad should tell John?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Victoria and Aminah are friends. Victoria tells Aminah that she does not believe in God because religions always cause war and bloodshed. What do you think Aminah should tell Victoria?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Rishi and Muhammad go to school together. Rishi tells Muhammad that his parents are Hindus and they believe in many gods. However, he doesn't believe in any god because it doesn't make sense to him. What do you think Muhammad should tell Rishi?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Matthew and Hasan play for the same football club. Matthew doesn't like Hasan because he thinks that Muslims are bad people. What do you think Hasan should say to him? What else can Hasan do to give Matthew a correct image of Islam and Muslims?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5.2 THE PROPHETS & MESSENGERS OF ALLĀH (SWT)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the basic difference between anbiyāʾ and rusul
3. Introduction to how Allāh (SWT) communicates with His prophets
4. Introduction to the ūlūʾl-ʿazm prophets

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

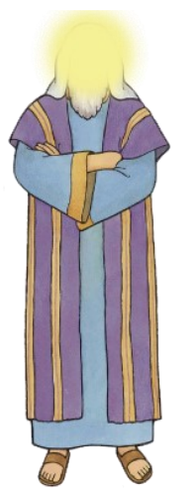
List the names of the Divine Books that have been mentioned in the Qurʾān and which *rasūl* each book was revealed to?

NUBUWWAH - AN INTRODUCTION

A prophet is called a nabī in Arabic and the plural of nabī is anbiyāʾ. A messenger is called a rasūl and the plural is rusul. The main difference between a nabī and a rasūl is that a rasūl is a nabī who has also been given a Book from Allāh (SWT). For example, Nabī Mūsā (A) was given the Tawrāt. Nabī ʿĪsā (A) was given the Injīl and our Holy Prophet (S) was given the Qurʾān. These anbiyāʾ were also rusul.

Singular	Plural
A Prophet (*Nabī*)	Prophets *(Anbiyāʾ)*
A Messenger (*Rasūl*)	Messengers *(Rusul)*

Allāh (SWT) sent 124,000 prophets to guide us. The first prophet was ʿĀdam (A) and the last one was Muḥammad (S).



The most important message of every nabī and rasūl was Tawḥīd – to have faith in only one God and to worship none but Him. Every time people began neglecting this reality and started worshipping idols, Allāh (SWT) sent another nabī to remind people that no one is worthy of being worshipped except Allāh (SWT).

Allāh (SWT) always chose His prophets and messengers from human beings, so that they could live among people and be role models for them. The anbiyāʾ would know what Allāh (SWT) wants them to do because they would receive communication from Allāh (SWT).

All the anbiyāʾ were protected by Allāh (SWT) from ever committing sins and therefore we say they are maʿṣūm. If a nabī was to make mistakes in his teachings then people would be confused and they would not know if the words and actions of the nabī at any given time are truly from Allāh (SWT) or if they are mistakes.

Apart from being maʿṣūm, the anbiyāʾ could also perform miracles with Allāh (SWT)'s permission, so that people would really believe that they have been sent by Allāh (SWT).

THE ŪLŪʾL-ʿAZM PROPHETS

MY NOTES

All of the 124,000 prophets were great people who called their communities to worship only Allāh (SWT) and believe in the Hereafter. However, there are different ranks among prophets, some of them were greater than other prophets. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

وَرَبُّكَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَلَقَدْ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَ النَّبِيِّينَ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ

And your Lord best knows those who are in the heavens and the earth; and certainly We have made some of the prophets to excel others...[17:55]

The greatest among the prophets were the 5 ūlūʾl-ʿazm prophets:

1. Nabī Nūḥ (A)
2. Nabī Ibrāhīm (A)
3. Nabī Mūsā (A)
4. Nabī ʿIsā (A)
5. Nabī Muḥammad (S)

One of the main characteristics of these prophets due to which they reached their lofty levels of closeness to Allāh (SWT), was their extreme patience and steadfastness in Allāh (SWT)'s way. In the Qurʾān, Allāh (SWT) instructs our Holy Prophet (S) to follow in the footsteps of the other 4 ūlūʾl-ʿazm prophets before him:

فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُو الْعَزْمِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ

Be steadfast [Oh Muḥammad], like those messengers of firm resolve (ūlūʾl-ʿazm)... [46:35]

HOW DOES ALLĀH (SWT) COMMUNICATE WITH THE ANBIYĀʾ?

Allāh (SWT) mentions in the Qurʾān how He speaks to His messengers (rusul) and prophets (anbiyāʾ):

وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُكَلِّمَهُ اللَّهُ إِلاَّ وَحْيًا أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ رَسُولاً فَيُوحِيَ بِإِذْنِهِ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّهُ عَلِيٌّ حَكِيمٌ

It is not [possible] for any human that Allāh should speak to him except through revelation or from behind a curtain, or send a messenger who reveals by His permission whatever He wishes. Indeed He is Most High, All-Wise. [42:51]

5.2 THE PROPHETS & MESSENGERS OF ALLĀH (SWT)

DID YOU KNOW?

Some anbiyāʾ are still alive until today. Some among them are:
1. Nabī ʿIsā (A)
2. Nabī Ilyās (A)
3. Nabī Idrīs (A)

MY NOTES

KEY POINTS

1. The Arabic word for prophet is nabī (plural: anbiyāʾ).

2. A nabī who receives a Book from Allāh (SWT) is also a rasūl (plural: rusul).

3. There are 5 ūlūʾl-ʿazm prophets: Nūḥ (A), Ibrāhīm (A), Mūsā (A), ʿIsā and Muḥammad (S).

4. Allāh (SWT) sometimes communicates with His anbiyāʾ through direct revelation (including instructions in dreams) or via an angel or from "behind a curtain".

This āyah shows that there are 3 ways in which Allāh (SWT) communicates with His prophets:

1. **Direct revelation** - Allāh (SWT) speaks directly to a prophet. One form of this is through **true meaningful dreams** that he knows for sure are messages from Allāh (SWT).

Q: Do you remember Prophet Ibrāhīm (A)'s dream about his son?

2. **Through a "curtain"** - Allāh (SWT) spoke to Prophet Mūsā (A) through a burning bush. Also, when the Holy Prophet (S) went for miʿrāj, he heard Allāh (SWT) speaking to him from behind a curtain of light (nūr).



Q: What did Allāh (SWT) say to Nabī Mūsā (A) through the burning bush?

3. **Through an angel** - Allāh (SWT) sent Angel Jibrāʾīl to the anbiyāʾ and rusul with His messages.

IN SUMMARY

1. Why do we need prophets?
2. What is the main difference between a nabī and a rasūl?
3. What are the three main ways in which Allāh (SWT) speaks to His prophets?
4. What are the names of the ūlūʾl-ʿazm prophets?

ACTIVITY PAGE

GUESS WHO?

Where relevant, please provide the Arabic names for each of the questions.

1) We are messengers sent by Allāh (SWT) and we are different from other prophets because each of us has also been given a Book by Allāh (SWT). Who are we?

_____

2) I am a rasūl who is still alive. Who am I?

_____

3) We are the five ūlūʾl-ʿazm prophets. Can you name us?

_____

_____

4) I am the angel who used to deliver Allāh (SWT)'s messages to the anbiyāʾ and rusul. Who am I?

_____

TRUE OR FALSE

Don't forget to correct the mistakes of the statements that are false!

1) The most important message of every nabī and rasūl was Tawḥīd.

_____

2) All the prophets were angels.

_____

3) The Ūlūʾl-ʿAzm prophets reached their lofty levels because of their wealth and fame.

_____

4) Allāh (SWT) spoke to Prophet Ibrāhīm (A) through a burning bush.

_____

5) Prophet ʿĀdam (A) was one of the Ūlūʾl-ʿAzm prophets.

_____

5.3 AHL AL-KISĀʾ (A): THE CHOSEN FIVE

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To become familiar with the "Event of the Cloak" and its importance.
2. To understand the special status of *Sayyidah* Fāṭimah (A)

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Can you think of three other titles of *Sayyidah* Fāṭimah (A)? What do they mean?

WHO ARE THE AHL AL-KISĀʾ?

Ahl al-Kisāʾ means "**The People of the Cloak**". A cloak is a large piece of cloth that looks like a blanket.

The Ahl al-Kisāʾ are the **Holy Prophet (S), Imām ʿAlī (A), Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A), Imām al-Ḥasan (A) and Imām al-Ḥusayn (A)**. They are known by this name because of a famous and important event in Muslim history, referred to as the **Ḥadīth al-Kisāʾ** (**The Story of the Cloak**).

The Ahl al-Kisāʾ are also sometimes known in other languages as the **Panjatan** - "The Five Special Ones".

WHAT IS ḤADĪTH AL-KISĀʾ?

Once the Holy Prophet (S) came to the house of Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A) and told her that he was feeling tired. He requested her to bring a specific large cloak and to cover him with it, so that he could get some rest.

After a while, Imām al-Ḥasan (A) returned home and immediately smelt the beautiful fragrance of his grandfather, the Holy Prophet (S). He went to where he was resting and asked him for his permission to sit near him and then joined him under the cloak.

After some more time, Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) arrived and also smelt the fragrance of his grandfather. After gaining the Holy Prophet (S)'s permission, he also joined them under the cloak. A little while later, Imām ʿAlī (A) returned to his house and in the same manner as his two sons, joined the Holy Prophet (S) and his two sons. Finally, Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A) also went and joined her family under the cloak.

At this point, the Holy Prophet (S) raised his hands and prayed to Allāh (SWT):

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ أَهْلُ بَيْتِي وَخَاصَّتِي وَحَامَّتِي

"O Allāh, these are the People of my Household (Ahl al-Bayt). They are my most beloved and my supporters.

لَحْمُهُمْ لَحْمِي وَدَمُهُمْ دَمِي

Their flesh is my flesh and their blood is my blood.

يُؤْلِمُنِي مَا يُؤْلِمُهُمْ

Whoever hurts them, hurts me too.

وَيَحْزُنُنِيْ مَا يَحْزُنُهُمْ

Whoever displeases them, displeased me too.

أَنَا حَرْبٌ لِّمَنْ حَارَبَهُمْ

I am at war with those at war with them.

وَسِلْمٌ لِّمَن سَالَمَهُمْ

I am at peace with those at peace with them.

وَعَدُوٌّ لِّمَنْ عَادَاهُمْ

I am the enemy of their enemies.

وَمُحِبٌّ لِّمَنْ أَحَبَّهُمْ

And I am the friend of their friends.

إِنَّهُم مِّنِّي وَأَنَا مِنْهُمْ

They are from me and I am from them.

فَاجْعَلْ صَلَوَاتِكَ وَبَرَكَاتِكَ وَرَحْمَتِكَ وَغُفْرَانِكَ وَرِضْوَانِكَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَيْهِمْ

وَأَذْهِبْ عَنْهُمُ الرِّجْسَ وَطَهِّرهُمْ تَطْهِيراً

O Allāh! Bestow Your Blessings, Benevolence, Forgiveness and Your pleasure upon me and upon them. And remove impurity from them and keep them thoroughly pure."

At this point, Allāh (SWT) sent the Angel Jibrāʾīl to reveal the following important verse to the Holy Prophet (S), which is well known as the Verse of Purity (Āyat al-Taṭhīr):

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

Allāh only desires to remove uncleanness from you, O members of the (Prophet's) household, and to purify you completely. [33:33]

This verse proves that the Ahl al-Bayt are all maʿṣūm (sinless). They are protected by Allāh (SWT) from all kinds of sins and evil ways and they never commit any wrong.

From that day onwards, this famous event became known as the **Ḥadīth al-Kisāʾ** and the Holy personalities involved as the **Ahl al-Kisāʾ**.

MY NOTES

REFERENCES

5.3 AHL AL-KISĀʾ (A): THE CHOSEN FIVE

DID YOU KNOW?

The Ahl al-Kisāʾ were also Allāh (SWT)'s chosen ones to represent the Muslims in the event of Mubāhilah, when Allāh (SWT) revealed:

فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنفُسَنَا وَأَنفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَل لَّعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ

Tell whoever disputes with you on this matter after true knowledge has come to you: 'Come! Let us summon our sons and your sons, and our women and your women, and ourselves and yourselves, and then let us pray together and invoke the curse of Allāh on those who lie.' [3:61]

KEY POINTS

1. The Ahl al-Kisāʾ are 5: Prophet Muḥammad (S), Imam ʿAlī (A), Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A), Imām al-Ḥasan (A) and Imām Ḥusayn (A).

2. In the "Event of the Cloak", Ḥadīth al-Kisāʾ, Allāh (SWT) revealed Āyat al-Taṭhīr, which shows that the Ahl al-Bayt (A) are maʿṣūm.

3. Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A) has a very special status. One of her titles is al-Muḥaddithah, because Angel Jibrāʾīl (A) used to speak to her.

THE SPECIAL STATUS OF SAYYIDAH FĀṬIMAH (A)

Although Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A) is not a prophet or an Imām, she has a very special status in the eyes of Allāh (SWT).

When Prophet Ādam (A) ate from the tree and was sent down to this world, he prayed to Allāh (SWT) to forgive him for the sake of Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A) and the rest of the Ahl al-Kisāʾ (A). Allāh (SWT) accepted his prayers and He was forgiven. The prayer he recited was:

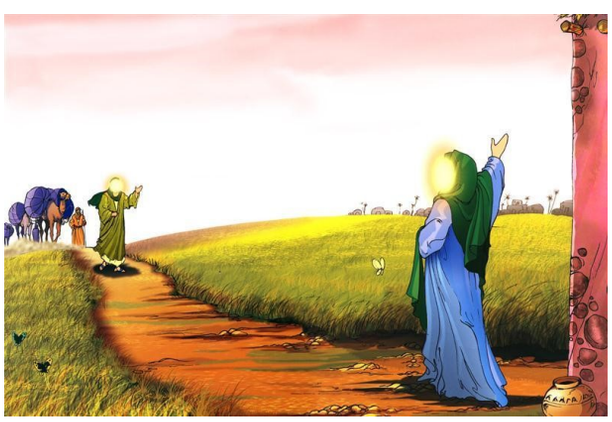
"Oh Allāh, for the sake of Muḥammad, ʿAlī, Fāṭimah, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, turn towards me (in forgiveness)."

Once someone asked Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) why Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A) was given the title **al-Zahrā**ʾ. He replied:

"Because when she stood for prayers in her prayer niche, her light would radiate for the dwellers of the skies just as the light of the stars radiates for the dwellers of the earth."

Describing her special status, the Holy Prophet (S) said:

"Fāṭimah is the chief lady of the women of Paradise."



In another ḥadīth, the Holy Prophet (S) said to Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A):

"Verily Allāh is angry at whatever angers you, and is pleased with whatever pleases you."

One of the titles of Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A) is **Muḥaddithah**, meaning "**the one who is spoken to (by angels)**". She is called this because after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (S), Angel Jibrāʾīl (A) used to often come down to her, console her and inform her about different secrets and future events relating to her pure offspring. She used to narrate what she was told by Angel Jibrāʾīl (A) to Imām ʿAlī (A) and he would compile everything in a book called Muṣḥaf Fāṭimah.

IN SUMMARY

1. Who are the Ahl al-Kisāʾ?
2. Why is the Event of the Cloak so important?
3. What are two of Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A)'s titles? Why was she given those titles?

ACTIVITY PAGE

Write down the sequence of event from Ḥadīth al-Kisāʾ. Include a summary of the prayer of the Holy Prophet (S) and mention the verse that was revealed in the end.

Who	**Where**
What happened...	

First	**Next**	**Last**

5.4 QIYĀMAH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the concept of Qiyāmah.
2. Understand why it is necessary to believe in Qiyāmah.
3. Become familiar with different names for Qiyāmah.

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Write down 3 important goals you would like to have in this life so that you are successful in the Hereafter. What steps will take to achieve these goals? Discuss your ideas with the rest of the class.

WHY QIYĀMAH?

After Tawḥīd, the most important foundation of Islam and the most emphasised subject in the Qurʾān is the belief in life after death.

After we have died, we will all be raised back to life and brought to account for our deeds in this world. This day is called Yawm al-Dīn (The Day of Judgement). Those who do good deeds in this world will be rewarded with Paradise, and those who do evil will be punished.

WHY WOULD LIFE HAVE NO PURPOSE OR MEANING IF THERE WAS NO QIYĀMAH?

It is because of belief in Qiyāmah that we decide to make good use of our short lives in this world. We prepare for the Hereafter by doing good deeds, such as worshipping Allāh (SWT), and helping others with our wealth, time and energy. We keep away from sins and avoid hurting others or disobeying Allāh (SWT), because we do not wish to be punished on the day of Qiyāmah.

People who do not believe in life after death have no overarching reason to be moral or good in this world. If committing a certain crime is to their benefit and if they won't be caught by the police, there is no external reason stopping such people from committing the crime. The same goes for moral vices. Can you imagine a world where people backbite and abuse each other, steal and do anything they like because they don't believe that they will be held accountable on the Day of Judgement?

As for believers in Allāh (SWT) and the Hereafter, even if they are by themselves, they are aware that Allāh (SWT) is watching them, which stops them from saying and doing anything bad. Can you imagine how nice and safe this world would be if everyone believed in Allāh (SWT) and the Hereafter?

Allāh (SWT) asks us in the Qurʾān:

أَفَمَن كَانَ مُؤْمِنًا كَمَن كَانَ فَاسِقًا ۚ لَّا يَسْتَوُونَ

What? Is he who has been a believer like unto him who has been ungodly? They are not equal.[32:18]

Belief in Qiyāmah is linked to the belief that the life of this world is a test for us. This life is a time for us to prepare for our eternal lives in the Hereafter. It is for this reason that we find strength to bear hardships and difficulties in this world. We know that these are all tests from Allāh (SWT). Those who bear the hardship with patience and do not forget or disobey Allāh (SWT) will be rewarded.

Imām ʿAlī (A) has said:
"This world is a place to leave behind and the Hereafter is the everlasting residence."

Imām ʿAlī (A) describes the Day of Qiyāmah in Nahj al-Balāghah (Sermon 182):

"You are still in a place to which those who were before you have been wishing to return. In this world, which is not your house, you are just a traveller in motion. You have been given the call to leave from here, and you have been ordered to collect supplies while you are here. You should know that this thin skin cannot tolerate the Fire (of Hell). So, have pity on yourselves…"

MY NOTES

QIYĀMAH IN THE QUR'ĀN

Many different words have been used in the Qur'ān to refer to the Day of Judgement. Some of these are:

Al-Ākhirah - The Hereafter:

وَهُوَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ لَهُ الْحَمْدُ فِي الْأُولَىٰ وَالْآخِرَةِ ۖ وَلَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

He is Allāh; there is no god but He. All praise is due to Him in this life and the **Hereafter**, and His is the Judgement, and to Him you shall be brought back. [28:70]

Yawm al-Qiyāmah - The Day of Resurrection:

فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

...So Allāh shall Judge between you on the **Day of Resurrection**. [4:141]

Yawm al-Ḥisāb - The Day of Reckoning:

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ إِنِّي عُذْتُ بِرَبِّي وَرَبِّكُم مِّن كُلِّ مُتَكَبِّرٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُ بِيَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ

And Mūsā said: Surely I take refuge with my Lord and your Lord from every proud one who does not believe in the **Day of Reckoning**. [40:27]

5.4 QIYĀMAH

DID YOU KNOW?

In his sermon welcoming the Holy month of Ramaḍān, the Holy Prophet (S) said to the people:

"Remember the hunger and thirst of the Day of Qiyāmah with your hunger and thirst (whilst fasting)."

Sūrat al-Qiyāmah is the 75th sūrah in the Holy Qurʾān.

Al-Sāʿah - The Hour:

وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ آتِيَةٌ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيهَا وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْعَثُ مَن فِي الْقُبُورِ

...And because the **Hour** is coming, there is no doubt about it; and because Allāh shall raise those who are in the graves. [22:7]

Al-Ḥāqqah - The Sure Reality:

الْحَاقَّةُ ، مَا الْحَاقَّةُ ، وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحَاقَّةُ

The **Sure Reality**! What is the Sure Reality? And what would make you realise what the Sure Reality is! [69:1-3]

All these names tell us that life in this world is not an end in itself. There is life Hereafter. All human beings will be resurrected (raised back to life) one day, and brought to account for their deeds. Those who do good in this world will go to Paradise, and those who do evil will be punished.



KEY POINTS

1. There are many different names in the Qurʾān used to refer to the Day of Judgment.

2. On the Day of Judgment, we will all be judged for our actions. Those who were good in this life will be rewarded and those who were evil will be punished.

3. If Allāh (SWT) did not judge us for our deeds, we would not feel the need to be good and avoid evil.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the meaning of *Qiyāmah*?

2. Why is it necessary to believe in *Qiyāmah*?

3. List any 3 names used in the Qurʾān to refer to the Day of Judgement, and give their meanings.

4. How can we prepare ourselves for the day of *Qiyāmah*?

ACTIVITY PAGE

1) Fill in the blank boxes:

Name	Meaning	Verses
Al-Ḥāqqah		
	The Day of Resurrection	
Al-Sāʿah		
		[40:27]
	The Hereafter	

2) Imām ʿAlī (A) describes Qiyāmah in Nahj al-Balāghah (Sermon 182). He advises us to prepare for that grand day by saying: "You have been ordered to collect supplies while you are here." What supplies do you think the Imām is talking about?

_____

_____

3) Pick an example from nature and explain through a drawing how Allāh (SWT) makes living things die and then brings them back to life:

5.5 NIYYAH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand what is meant by niyyah
2. Understand the importance of having the right niyyah before every action

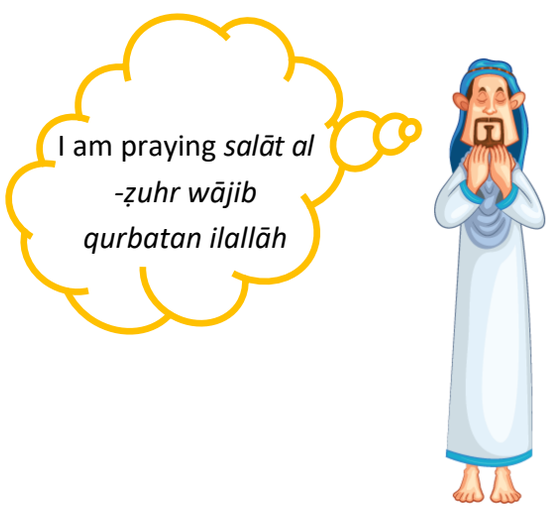
MY NOTES

WHAT IS NIYYAH?

Whatever we do in life, we do it for a reason. This reason is called our “intention" or “**niyyah**” in Arabic. For example, we sleep because we are tired and our intention is to rest. When we watch TV, it is because we enjoy watching a programme, so our intention is to enjoy ourselves.

Similarly, when we perform any Islamic act like wuḍūʾ, ṣalāh or ṣawm, we must have the correct niyyah. The niyyah, or intention, for all Islamic acts of worship is one and the same: **qurbatan ilallāh**, meaning **"to gain proximity to Allāh (SWT)"**.

For example, if we are praying a wājib ṣalāh, like ṣalāh al-ẓuhr, we say:



Once we become bāligh and we fast in the month of Ramaḍān, our niyyah is:
“I am fasting for the month of Ramaḍān, wājib **qurbatan ilallāh**.”

When we perform wuḍūʾ, our niyyah is:
“I am performing wuḍūʾ, **qurbatan ilallāh**.”

Even when we give charity, our niyyah has to be:
“I am giving some money to the poor, **qurbatan ilallāh**.”

Islam teaches us to perform all our actions for the sake of Allāh (SWT).

ACTIVITY

A person is standing ready to start his ṣalāh. Using a speech bubble, write down what you think should be going through this person’s mind just before they start praying.

Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) says:

Anyone who performs a small act for the sake of Allāh , Allāh will make the deed greater than the person had intended. And anyone who performs a great act for the sake of people, Allāh will make it trivial in the sight of others.

QURBATAN ILALLĀH

MY NOTES

How do we get closer to Allāh (SWT)?



By doing everything we do for the sake of Allāh only, and to please Him alone.

In a beautiful ḥadīth, Imam al-Ṣādiq (A) says:

أَلْقَلْبُ حَرَمُ اللهِ وَ لاَ تُسْكِنُوا حَرَمَ اللهِ غَيْرَ الله

The heart is the sanctuary of Allāh; so do not allow anyone to dwell in the sanctuary of Allāh except Allāh.

Allāh (SWT) does not accept our good actions unless they are done only for His sake and to get closer to Him. If we perform any wājib or mustaḥab act without the correct niyyah of wanting to come closer to Allāh (SWT), then it is not accepted.



For example, if a person does wuḍūʾ only because he is feeling hot and he wants to cool himself, then his wuḍūʾ is not accepted and he cannot pray until he does wuḍūʾ again with the proper niyyah.

Similarly if a person prays ṣalāh to show off to others or fasts in the month of Ramaḍān to go on a diet and lose weight, then Allāh (SWT) does not accept his/her ṣalāh and ṣawm and it is as if he/she has not prayed or fasted at all!

5.5 NIYYAH

DID YOU KNOW?

The Holy Prophet (s) said:

إِنَّمَا الْاَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَاتِ

"Verily, actions are judged by the intention behind them."

MY NOTES

Allāh (SWT) tells us in the Qur'ān that on the Day of Judgement, for every good deed we bring with us from this world, He will reward us 10 times its worth:

مَن جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا ۖ وَمَن جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَىٰ إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

Whoever **brings** a good deed, he shall have ten like it, and whoever brings an evil deed, he shall be recompensed only with the like of it, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly. [6:160]

We often perform good deeds with the right intention. However, the second part of our duty, as per the verse above, is to protect our good deeds after we have performed them, so that we can **bring** them with us to the Hereafter and be rewarded for them.

Sometimes we perform good deeds, but after performing them, we show off about them to others. At this point, our intention has changed and those deeds are no longer counted as having been performed solely for the sake of Allāh (SWT). Hence, such deeds are no longer counted among our good deeds on the Day of Judgement!

Once a boy was praying in the mosque sincerely for the sake of Allāh (SWT). After some time, while he was still praying, he heard some footsteps behind him and realised that someone was watching him. He started praying very slowly and recited his prayers loudly and in a beautiful tone.

After finally finishing his prayers, he turned around to see a dog sitting near the door of the mosque. He then realised that he had just wasted his prayer. He had prayed to show off to a dog instead of praying sincerely to Allāh (SWT)!

KEY POINTS

1. Niyyah means intention.

2. The niyyah is the most important step before every action.

3. The niyyah for all acts of worship should be "qurbatan ilallāh", which means that we are performing the act to get closer to Allāh (SWT).

4. Any act which is not done with the intention of getting closer to Allāh (SWT) is not accepted.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the meaning of the word "*niyyah*"?
2. Why is the *niyyah* very important before any act?
3. What does the phrase *"qurbatan ilallāh"* mean?
4. What *niyyah* should we have before performing *ǒalāh*?
5. How do we bring our good deeds with us to the Hereafter?

ACTIVITY PAGE

FILL IN THE BLANKS

A word bank has been given to you below.

1. Intention in Arabic is called _____.

2. When we perform any Islamic act like _____, _____ or ṣawm, we must have an intention.

3. Once we become _____ , fasting is obligatory upon us in the month of _____.

4. Our intention should be "qurbatan _____".

5. The _____ is the sanctuary of Allāh (SWT).

6. If we perform any _____ or _____ act without the correct intention, then it is not accepted.

7. Anyone who performs a small act for the sake of Allāh (SWT), He will make the deed _____ than its worth.

8. Qurbatan ilallāh means to gain proximity to _____.

9. The Holy Prophet has said "Verily, _____ are judged by the _____ behind them."

heart	intentions	Allāh (SWT)	ṣalāh	wājib	mustaḥab	wuḍūʾ	Ramaḍān	
ilallāh	bāligh	niyyah	greater	actions				

UNSCRAMBLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS:

1. **yahyni** - _ _ _ _ _ _

2. **jiwāb** - _ _ _ _ _

3. **libagh** - _ _ _ _ _ _

4. **aṣmw** - _ _ _ _

6.1 ʿADĀLAH: THE JUSTICE OF GOD

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To be introduced to the notion of Allāh (SWT)'s complex system of justice
2. To evaluate in a rational way why Allāh (SWT) is never unjust

MY NOTES

IS ALLĀH (SWT) EVER UNJUST TO HIS CREATURES?

Muslims believe that Allāh (SWT) is always fair and just. Allāh (SWT) never does any wrong to anyone. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لاَ يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ وَإِنْ تَكُنْ حَسَنَةً يُضَاعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

Indeed Allāh does not wrong (anyone) (even to the extent of) an atom's weight, and if it be a good deed He doubles it, and gives from Himself a great reward. [4:40]

Usually when people are unjust or unfair to others, it is because:

1) they needs something they cannot get and try to take it by force.
2) they are weak and someone is forcing them to be unjust.
3) they are greedy for more power or money or there is something else that they want.
4) they are not aware that what they are doing is unfair and wrong.

None of the above reasons apply to Allāh (SWT): He has no need to wrong anyone, because He is all-Powerful. Allāh (SWT) cannot be forced by anyone to do anything and He doesn't need anything from anyone. No one can threaten Allāh (SWT) and He is all-Wise and knows what is fair or unfair more than anyone else.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

وَمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا لِلْعالَمِينَ وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الأَرْضِ...

And Allāh does not desire any wrong for the creatures. To Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. [3:108-109]

Since everything belongs to Allāh (SWT) anyway, He has no reason to be unjust or unfair to anyone. Sometimes we see some people suffering in this world and ask, "Why is Allāh (SWT) allowing this person to be ill or to die or to be poor?" Everything takes place for a reason, but we cannot know everything that Allāh (SWT) knows. Sometimes Allāh (SWT) is testing a person or wants a person to be patient so that he or she can become a better person and go to Paradise (Jannah).



GROUP ACTIVITY

In pairs, come up with a complex scenario like the story of the jeweller and the thief where the Justice of Allāh (SWT) plays a role. You can also mention an example from your own personal experiences.

THE COMPLEX SYSTEM OF ALLĀH (SWT)'S JUSTICE

Once upon a time, there lived a jeweller and a thief in the same town. One day, the thief decided he would rob the jeweller. On that day, it snowed heavily. The thief decided not to go to the jeweller, because it would be harder to escape with all the snow. The jeweller however had no customers that day because of the snow and he was very upset. Of course, if the thief had showed up, it would be very easy to rob the jeweller because he was all alone.

The next day, the jeweller was going to work when his car broke down. The thief had set out to rob him but when he got there, the place was shut so he went back home.

On the third day, the thief fell ill and he had to go to a doctor. The thief began thinking perhaps Allāh (SWT) was trying to tell him something. So he decided he would not steal again.

In the meantime, the jeweller had no customers for 3 days and kept wondering why Allāh (SWT) is not helping him earn his livelihood.

From their individual, human perspective, each person was upset because they couldn't get the profit they wanted. But only Allāh (SWT) knew how they were affecting each other's lives and how, if they knew the reality, they would actually be very grateful to Allāh (SWT).



DID YOU KNOW?

There are many reasons why we suffer from difficulty, natural disasters, illnesses and so on. A lot of human suffering is caused by humans themselves. Suffering also builds character and brings out the best qualities in people, such as compassion and helping others. Another reason for suffering is that it may be a test from Allāh (SWT). Allāh (SWT) tests us to strengthen our faith and bring us closer to Him.

KEY POINTS

1. ʿAdālah refers to the Justice of Allāh (SWT).

2. Allāh (SWT) is all-Powerful and owns everything in the heavens and the earth. He has no reason to be unjust to anyone.

3. Difficulties we sometimes face can be positive at times as it strengthens our character and brings us closer to Allāh (SWT).

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the meaning of ʿAdālah?

2. Why is Allāh (SWT) never unjust?

3. If Allāh (SWT) is Just, why is there so much injustice and suffering in the world?

ACTIVITY PAGE

FILL IN THE CORRECT ANSWER IN THE BOX AND FIND THE MYSTERY WORD

1. Allāh (SWT) is _____ . In other words, He is not dependent on anyone or anything.

	E					S	

2. Allāh (SWT) is not _____ and hence cannot be forced to be unjust.

W			

3. Allāh (SWT) is not _____ for anything.

	R				Y

4. Allāh (SWT) is _____ . Hence, He is not unfair on anyone or anything due to any ignorance.

	L		K						G

5. *'Indeed Allāh does not wrong (anyone) (even to the extent of) an atom's _____ …'*

	E				

6. Everything takes place for a _____ .

				O	

Note down all the letters in the red boxes: _____

UNSCRAMBLE THESE LETTERS TO REVEAL THE MYSTERY WORD:

THE ROLE & NECESSITY OF PROPHETHOOD 6.2

WHY DO WE NEED ANBIYĀʾ?

Nubuwwah is one of the 5 Uṣūl al-Dīn (Roots of Religion). It refers to the belief in prophethood. Allāh (SWT) sent prophets (anbiyāʾ) to guide people to the right path.

Some people say that we don't need prophets to guide us as we already know what is good and bad through our intellects. However, the intellect only informs us regarding the basic truths, such as the idea that justice is good and lying is bad. Also, what we perceive as good or bad is not always correct. People often understand good and bad depending on where they are born and the culture they are raised in. For instance, what some people might believe to be good in China, might be regarded as bad in Brazil and vice versa.

Secondly, let us take an example of a very intelligent person who wishes to become a doctor. Even though she may be very intelligent, it would take her a very long time to realise and learn everything on her own. However with a teacher, she can quickly learn everything she needs to know, and then teach others as well.

Similarly, even if we are "good at heart", the teachings of a nabī guide us along the shortest and fastest path to success so that we don't have to learn by constantly making mistakes. Referring to the Qurʾān - the guidance that has been sent for us through the Holy Prophet (S) - Allāh (SWT) says that it guides us along the best and most upright path:

إِنَّ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا

Surely this Quran guides to that which is most upright and gives good news to the believers who do good that they shall have a great reward. [17:9]



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To briefly understand why we need prophets
2. To understand via the Qurʾān the different roles of a prophet
3. To be introduced to the timeless miracle of the Holy Prophet (S)

MY NOTES

6.2 THE ROLE & NECESSITY OF PROPHETHOOD

MY NOTES

Furthermore, there are matters related to the Hereafter, such as the Day of Judgement, Paradise and Hell, as well as other matters relating to the unseen realm (ghayb) that we cannot see or know about unless a nabī, who has been given special knowledge by Allāh (SWT), teaches us about them.

The anbiyāʾ are our role models. That is why they are humans and not angels. They lived and grew up within their communities, so we can take them as our role models and strive to follow their teachings.

WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES OF A NABĪ?

Even though the anbiyāʾ were human, they were also special in many ways:

* A nabī is chosen by Allāh (SWT)
* A nabī can receive revelation – called waḥy in Arabic - from Allāh (SWT)
* A nabī is maʿṣūm, meaning he does not commit sins
* A nabī is able to perform miracles to prove his nubuwwah

THE ROLE OF A NABĪ

According to the Qur'an, a nabī performs the following functions:

1. To call people towards Tawḥīd and to turn away from all false gods:

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ

And certainly We raised in every nation an messenger proclaiming: "Serve Allāh and shun false gods.[16:36]

2. To communicate Allāh (SWT)'s revelation to mankind, to purify them, to teach them religious laws and the wisdom behind them:

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ

It is He who has raised up from among the common people a Messenger from among them, to recite His signs to them and to purify them, and to teach them the Book and the Wisdom, though before that they were in manifest error.
[62:2]



3. To establish justice in human society:

MY NOTES

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ

Indeed We sent Our Messengers with Clear Signs, and sent down with them the Book and the Balance that people may uphold justice. [57:25]

4. To judge between people when they disagree so as to guide them:

كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ وَأَنزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِيمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ

Mankind were a single community; then Allāh sent the prophets as bearers of good news and warners, and He sent down with them the Book with the truth, that it may judge between the people concerning that about which they differed… [2:213]



5. So human beings are not able to make an excuse that they were not guided by Allāh (SWT):

رُّسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

These Messengers were sent as bearers of glad tidings and as warners so that after sending the Messengers people may have no argument against Allāh. Allāh is All-Mighty, All-Wise. [4:165]

6.2 THE ROLE & NECESSITY OF PROPHETHOOD

MY NOTES

6. To give people good news of Jannah and to warn them about Jahannam:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ، وَدَاعِيًا إِلَى اللَّهِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَسِرَاجًا مُّنِيرًا

O Prophet! Indeed We have sent you as a witness, as a bearer of good news and as a warner, and as one inviting to Allāh by His permission, and as a light-giving torch. [33:45-6]

7. To teach and guide people so that they come out of darkness (falsehood) into light (truth):

الر ۚ كِتَابٌ أَنزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ

Alif, Lām, Rā. [This is] a Book We have sent down to you that you may bring mankind out from darkness into light, by the command of their Lord, to the path of the All-mighty, the Praiseworthy. [14:1]



THE TIMELESS MIRACLE OF THE HOLY PROPHET (S)

As you know, one of the characteristics of a prophet is his ability to perform miracles. The Holy Prophet (S) performed many different types of miracles during his life which have been recorded in the books of history. However, his greatest miracle was the Holy Qurʾān.

Our Holy Prophet (S) was the last of 124,000 prophets. Hence, one of his titles is **Khātam al-Anbiyāʾ**, meaning "**The Seal of the Prophets**". His standout miracle had to be one that could be witnessed by mankind until the end of this world, unlike the miracles of previous prophets, which were only witnessed by the people of their time. The Holy Qurʾān is that living miracle.

During the time of the Holy Prophet (S), the Arabs were very proud of their language. They would compose poetry of a very high standard without any previous preparation. They called non-Arabs ʿajam which literally meant "those who spoke in an un uncultured manner". They thought that non-Arabs were less worthy in comparison to themselves because they could not speak as eloquently as the Arabs. Poets were held in very high esteem. The Holy Qurʾān was revealed to the Holy Prophet (S) and it challenged anyone in the world till the end of the world to produce anything like it in eloquence and wisdom:

قُل لَّئِنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَن يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا

Say, 'Should all humans and jinn rally to bring the like of this Quran, they will not bring its like, even if they assisted one another.' [17:88]

One famous poet from the idolaters of Makkah at the time of the Holy Prophet (S), Walīd b. Mughīrah, heard the Holy Prophet (S) reciting the Qurʾān and became amazed by it. He admitted:

"By God, I have just heard something from Muḥammad that is unlike the speech of man or the speech of jinn. It is a speech with its own unique sweetness and beauty. The branches of its words are laden with fruit, its roots are full of blessings; it is a surpassing discourse, than which no more distinguished speech exists. Indeed, nothing can begin to rival its excellence."

DID YOU KNOW?

The Holy Prophet (S) summarised the complete mission for which he was sent to mankind in the following line:

"Verily I was sent to complete the lofty moral traits."

KEY POINTS

1. *Nubuwwah* refers to prophethood. A *nabī* is a prophet. The plural of *nabī* is *anbiyāʾ*.

2. *Anbiyāʾ* acted as role models. They were the most knowledgeable people of their time. Allāh (SWT) sent revelation to them, and gave them special miracles (*muʿjizah*) as a proof of their divine appointment. The *muʿjizah* of our Holy Prophet (S) was the Holy Qurʾān.

3. Prophets are necessary because they guide us along the fastest and shortest path to Allāh (SWT).

4. The Qurʾān informs us about many of the responsibilities of a prophet.

IN SUMMARY

1. Why do we need a prophet to guide us? Can't we decide for ourselves what is good and what is bad?

2. What is a *muǧizah*?

3. What are the functions of a *nabī*?

4. Why did the miracle of the Holy Prophet (S) have to be accessible to mankind till the end of the world?

ACTIVITY PAGE

ROLE PLAY:

In pairs, prepare a script for a short play in the form of a TV interview based on the questions below. One of you can be the interviewer and the other can be the interviewee. Then present your plays in front of the class.

1) I am an intelligent person. I know right from wrong, so why do I need to follow or listen to a prophet?

_____
_____
_____
_____

2) Prophets are Allāh (SWT)'s chosen servants. They are sinless. However, we are just normal people and we can never become like them, so they cannot be our role models.

_____
_____
_____
_____

3) What are the characteristics of a nabī?

_____
_____
_____
_____

4) Can you summarise the mission of the final prophet, Prophet Muḥammad (S)?

_____
_____
_____
_____

THE QUALITIES & NECESSITY OF IMĀMAH 6.3

The word "Imām" in Arabic means "Leader". For this reason, the person who leads others in ṣalāh is called the imām al-ṣalāh - "the leader of the prayer". The station of Imāmate is a very lofty one that only a few servants of Allāh (SWT) reached. Even from among the prophets and messengers, only a very few reached this level. One of them was Prophet Ibrāhīm (A) who achieved this station after passing a series of very difficult tests from Allāh (SWT), many years after he became a prophet. Our Holy Prophet (S), apart from being a prophet and a messenger, was also an Imām.

Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) said:

"Verily Allāh, Blessed and most High, took Ibrāhīm as a slave (ʿabd) before He took Him as a prophet, and verily Allāh took him as a prophet (nabī) before He took him as a messenger (rasūl), and verily Allāh took him as a messenger before He took him as a friend (khalīl). And verily Allāh took him as a friend before He made him an Imām. And when all these ranks came together in him, He said, 'I am making you the Imām of mankind.'"

We believe that the Holy Prophet (S) was the greatest human being ever created. Following him, Imām ʿAlī (A) and the rest of the 12 Divinely guided Imāms (A), are the next best in creation and closeness to Allāh (SWT). Their station is even greater than all of the prophets and messengers, apart from the Holy Prophet (S).



WHAT IS THE NECESSITY OF HAVING IMĀMS AFTER THE HOLY PROPHET (S)?

All of the 124,000 prophets that were sent down by Allāh (SWT) taught mankind the same message. However, with the passing of time and the progression of mankind intellectually, the message of the prophets became more and more detailed and mankind became better acquainted with what Allāh (SWT) wants from them.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To be introduced to the notion of Allāh (SWT)'s complex system of justice
2. To evaluate in a rational way why Allāh (SWT) is never unjust

MY NOTES

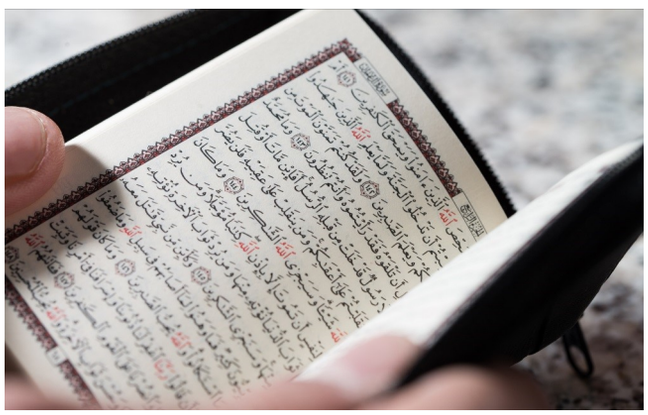
GROUP ACTIVITY

Read verses 21:73 and 32:24. What characteristics and responsibilities of an Imām have been mentioned?

6.3 THE QUALITIES & NECESSITY OF IMĀMAH

MY NOTES

Finally, the Divine message was perfected and completed with the final message brought by the Holy Prophet (S), in the form of the religion of Islam. There would no longer be any Divine revelation sent down to mankind.



However, Muslims still needed leaders who were guided by Allāh (SWT) to teach them the correct interpretation of the Qurʾān and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (S) after his passing away. The Holy Prophet (S) had spent 23 years as a prophet among idolaters, to establish the religion of Islam and the Qurʾān as the truthful word of God. Following him, there would be a need for guides who were also familiar with the true meanings of the Qurʾān and its correct interpretation, otherwise people would take the wrong meanings from the Qurʾān and the message of the Qurʾān would become corrupted like the previous Heavenly Books.

That's why the Holy Prophet (S), referring to Imām ʿAlī (A), famously said:

"There is one among you who will fight to establish the (correct) interpretation (taʿwīl) of this Qurʾān, just like I fought to establish its revelation (as true)."

It is also for the same reason that before passing away, the Holy Prophet (S) reminded people on multiple occasions of the importance of holding on to his Ahl al-Bayt (A) for guidance after him:

"I leave behind me two weighty things, the Book of Allāh, which is a string stretched from the heaven to the earth; and my progeny, my Ahl al-Bayt. Verily Allāh, the Merciful, the Aware, has informed me that these two will never be separated from each other until they meet me at the Fountain of Abundance (the Ḥawḍ of Kawthar, a spring in Heaven)."

THE SPIRITUAL NECESSITY OF THE IMĀM

An Imām during his Imāmate is the Proof (ḥujjah) of Allāh (SWT) upon His creation. He is the intermediary of Divine Grace and Provisions that come to the rest of His creation. The position of the Imām to mankind is like the position of the heart to the rest of the human body. As long as the heart functions, the rest of the body is provided with blood which nourishes and sustains the different organs. If the heart stops functioning, the rest of the human body too stops working. For this reason, there can never be a moment in time since Prophet Ādam (A) was placed on earth, that there isn't a ḥujjah of Allāh (SWT) among the rest of mankind.

NECESSARY QUALITIES OF AN IMĀM

MY NOTES

1. **Knowledge and Wisdom:** An Imām during his Imāmate is the most knowledgeable person alive. He is able to answer all the questions posed to him regarding Islam. He knows the Qurʾān in its entirety. In fact, he is the walking talking manifestation of the Qurʾān. He has the greatest maʿrifah of Allāh (SWT).

2. ʿ**Iṣmah:** The Imām is maʿṣūm, i.e. he does not commit sins or make mistakes in his guidance to people. Through his insight, he knows the reality and ugliness of sins and disobedience to Allāh (SWT). This awareness stops the Imām from coming anywhere near sins. It is due to the Imām's ʿiṣmah that the rest of mankind can trust what he has to say and believe that it is truly from Allāh (SWT) and not due any mistake on his part.

3. **Lofty Ethics**: The Imām possesses the loftiest moral traits and is superior to everyone else during his Imāmate in his time in all matters of virtue, such as God-consciousness (taqwā), courage, generosity and justice. He is free from the love of the world and its attractions and has complete control over his desires.

4. **Divinely Appointed:** The Imām must be appointed by Allāh (SWT). This appointment is made clear to the people by an explicit designation, called nass, directly by the Holy Prophet (S) or by the preceding Imām.



6.3 THE QUALITIES & NECESSITY OF IMĀMAH

DID YOU KNOW?

Imām ʿAlī (A) said:
"Certainly Allāh has made me an Imām for His creation, so He has made it mandatory upon me to take into consideration myself, my food, my drink, and my clothing like that of the weak people [of the community], so that the poor may follow me in my poverty and the wealth of the rich does not embolden them to intimidation."

KEY POINTS

1. The 12 Imāms, as the successors to the Holy Prophet (S), have a greater station of closeness to Allāh (SWT) than all of the prophets and messengers, apart from the Holy Prophet (S).

2. With the passing away of Holy Prophet (S), revelation came to a complete end. Apart from this, the Imāms continued to fulfill all the other responsibilities of the Holy Prophet (S).

3. An Imām during his *Imāmate*, is the spiritual connection between Allāh (SWT) and His creation. Divine grace and provisions are sent down to the world through the means of the Imām.

4. The Imām must possess certain characteristics: a) He is the most knowledge human being and has complete understanding of the Qurʾān in all its depths; b) he is *maʕṣūm*; c) he is Divinely appointed; d) he has the loftiest ethics and is free from the love of the world.

THE NARRATIONS REGARDING THE NUMBER OF IMĀMS AFTER THE HOLY PROPHET (S)

Both Sunnī and Shīʿah Muslims believe in the numerous aḥādīth of the Holy Prophet (S) that there will be 12 leaders after him. For the Shīʿahs who believe in the 12 Imāms from the Ahl al-Bayt (A), it is very easy to explain who these aḥādīth are referring to. For the Sunnī Muslims, it has always been a problem explaining these traditions!

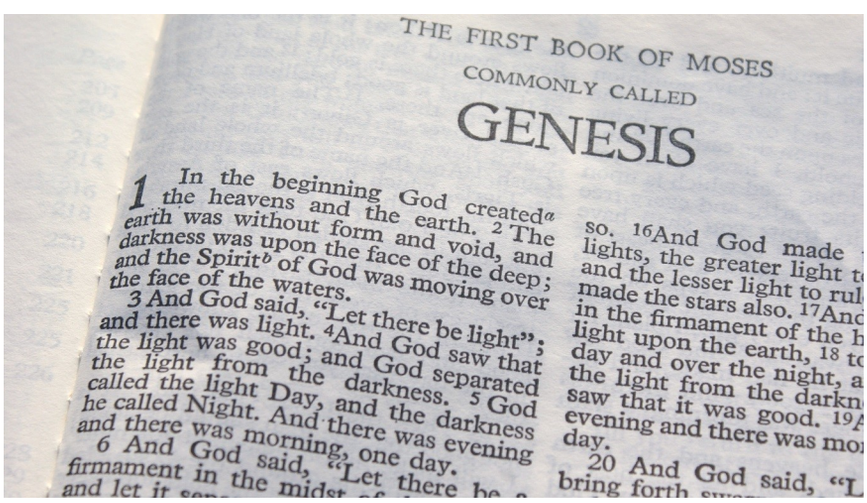
The Holy Prophet (S):

"The (Islamic) religion will continue until the Hour (the Day of Judgment), having twelve caliphs for you, all of them will be from Quraysh."

"The affairs of the people will continue to be conducted (well) as long as they are governed by the twelve men, all of them from Quraysh."

"This religion remains standing until there are twelve vicegerents over you, all of them agreeable to the nation, all of them from Quraysh.

Even in the Old Testament of the Bible, the coming of 12 leaders is foretold:
"**And as for Ismāʿīl, I have blessed him, and I have made him fruitful. And I have truly multiplied him, he will beget twelve leaders and I will provide for him a large nation.**" [Genesis, 17-18:20]


THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES
COMMONLY CALLED
GENESIS

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.
3 And God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.
6 And God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst

so. 16 And God made two lights, the greater light to rule and the lesser light to rule made the stars also. 17 And God in the firmament of the heavens light upon the earth, 18 to rule day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And saw that it was good. 19 And evening and there was morning day.
20 And God said, "Let bring forth swarms

IN SUMMARY

1. Why must there always be a ḥujjah of Allāh (SWT) present amongst mankind?

2. What are the similarities and differences of the responsibilities of the Holy Prophet (S) and the Imāms after him?

3. Name and explain three necessary characteristics of an Imām.

ACTIVITY PAGE

GUESS WHO?

1) I became Imam at the age of 5. One of my titles is the Awaited One. I am:

_____

2) I am buried in Madīnah. My younger brother is an Imām too. I am:

_____

3) I was imprisoned in the smallest and darkest of prisons. My name is also the name of one of the Ūlūʾl-ʿAzm prophet. I am:

_____

4) I was taken as a prisoner and travelled from Kūfā to Shām. I am known for my beautiful collection of supplications and my book 'The Treaties of Rights'. I am:

_____

5) I am known as the one who 'split open knowledge'. I am buried next to my father in Jannat al-Baqī. I am:

_____

6) I was under house-arrest for many years. I am buried in Sāmarrah next to my father. I am:

_____

7) I was killed at the age of 25. I am buried in Baghdād next to my grandfather. I am:

_____

8) I was 8 years old when I became the Imām. My mother's name is Sayyidah Sumānah. I am:

_____

9) I am known as the 'Stranger of Tūs'. I was poisoned by the ʿAbbāsid caliph Maʾmūn. I am:

_____

10) I am the one who was given the Dhuʾl-Fiqār. I was struck with a poisoned sword in while in sajdah.

_____

11) I am known as the 'Chief of Martyrs'. I am:

_____

12) I was able to spread the knowledge of many different sciences and I had thousands of students. I am:

_____

6.4 THE WORLD OF THE ANGELS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1.To become familiar with the Qurʾānic presentation of angels.
2. To become familiar with the various duties of angels relating to human beings.

3. To understand how human beings can become greater than angels or worse than animals.

MY NOTES

Allāh (SWT) is the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth. All His creations, in their countless numbers and diversity, are manifestations of His Beautiful Names. Even in today's modern world, we have not been able to account for all of the different creatures in our very own tiny blue planet, let alone anywhere else in the vast universe and in the spiritual realms of creation. Allāh (SWT) informs us of this reality in the Qurʾān:

وَالْخَيْلَ وَالْبِغَالَ وَالْحَمِيرَ لِتَرْكَبُوهَا وَزِينَةً ۚ وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

And He created horses and mules and donkeys for you to ride, and also as an adornment. **And He has created (other) things of which you have no knowledge.** [16:8]

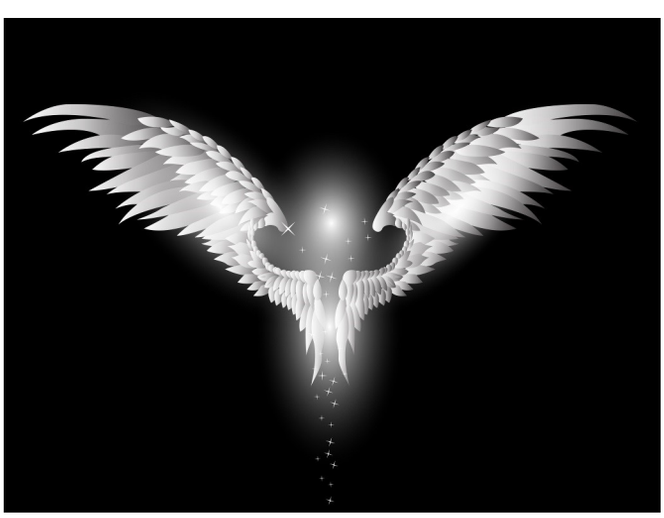
Other than the human being, from among the different intelligent creatures that the Qurʾān has informed us about are the angels, regarding whom we will be studying in more detail in this lesson.

THE REALITY OF THE ANGELS

1) The Holy Qurʾān has dedicated a good number of verses in explaining to us the attributes, characteristics and responsibilities of the angels. In fact, belief in the existence of these heavenly creatures is among the necessities of faith:

آمَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِن رَّبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۚ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّن رُّسُلِهِ ۚ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۖ غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ

The messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers; they all believe in Allāh and His angels and His books and His messengers; "We make no difference between any of His messengers." And they say: "We hear and obey, our Lord! Your forgiveness (we crave), and to You is the eventual course. [2:285]



GROUP ACTIVITY

In verses 11:69-76 of the Holy Qurʾān, we are told the story of when certain angels visited Prophet Ibrāhīm (A). Read the passage and discuss the story as a class.

MY NOTES

Belief in the angels is part of the belief in the unseen (ghayb), which is an essential characteristic of the God-conscious servants of Allāh (SWT). We have not seen the angels, yet we believe in them:

الم ، ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ ۛ فِيهِ ۛ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ، الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ

Alif Lām Mīm. This Book, regarding which there is no doubt, is a guidance to the God-conscious: Those who believe in the unseen and keep up prayer and spend out of what We have given them. [2:1-3]

2) In the world around us, we see everything run by the system of cause and effect. However, the Qurʾān informs us that behind the scenes, in the spiritual realm, our world is run and managed by the angels:

فَالْمُدَبِّرَاتِ أَمْرًا

(I swear by) those (angels) who regulate the affairs (of the world) [79:5]

The Throne (ʿarsh) is a symbol used in the Qurʾān to represent the Power and Authority of Allāh (SWT) over creation. The angels are described as those who uphold this Throne, i.e. the mediators through whom Allāh (SWT) governs His Kingdom:

3) The angels exist in far greater in number than human beings. Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) was once asked about the number of angels that exist, to which he replied: **"By Allāh, in Whose grasp is my soul! The angels of Allāh that are present in the heavens are more than the particles of sand present on the earth. In the heavens there does not exist a place to put one's foot except that there is an angel there, engaged in glorifying and sanctifying Allāh."**

4) There exists a hierarchy in the Angelic Kingdom in terms of knowledge, authority and responsibilities, just as there exists hierarchy among our prophets. In the verse below, Allāh (SWT) uses the number of wings an angel possesses as an indicator to the rank of that angel:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ جَاعِلِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا أُولِي أَجْنِحَةٍ مَّثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ ۚ يَزِيدُ فِي الْخَلْقِ مَا يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Praise be to Allāh, Creator of the heavens and earth, who made angels messengers with two, three, four (pairs of) wings. He adds to creation as He will: God has power over everything. [35:1]

6.4 THE WORLD OF THE ANGELS

MY NOTES

Each angel has been assigned particular duties that it carries out throughout its live. Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) once said:

"Allāh (SWT) possesses certain angels, who are in (a state of) rukūʿ (and shall continue to remain so) until the Day of Judgment, and certain angels, who are in (a state of) sajdah, (and shall continue to remain so) until the Day of Judgment."

Referring to this reality, the Qurʾān quotes the angels describing themselves in the following manner:

وَمَا مِنَّا إِلَّا لَهُ مَقَامٌ مَّعْلُومٌ ، وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الصَّافُّونَ ، وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الْمُسَبِّحُونَ

(The angels say), 'Every single one of us has his appointed place: we are ranged in ranks. We glorify God.' [37:164-166]



5) The greatest among the angels is **Jibrāʾīl** (A), who was the messenger of revelation (waḥy) to our Holy Prophet (S). He is described in the Qurʾān as the Faithful Spirit (al-rūḥ al-amīn):

وَإِنَّهُ لَتَنزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ، نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ ، عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ

And most surely this is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds. The Faithful Spirit has descended with it, Upon your heart that you may be of the warners [26:192-4]

MY NOTES

The other archangels include:

* **Isrāfīl** - the angel who will blow the trumpet to signal the end of the world, causing everyone to die.
* **ʿIzrāʾīl** - also known as the Angel of Death (Malak al-Mawt), who has countless angels working under him responsible for taking the souls of human beings at the time of death.
* **Mikāʾīl** - the angel responsible for providing sustenance to the physical world.

6) Among the different duties of the angels mentioned in the Qur'ān in relation to human beings are the following:

1) Keeping account of the deeds of human beings:

وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَافِظِينَ ، كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ ، يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ

And most surely there are keepers over you, Honourable recorders, They know what you do. [82:10-12]



2) Protecting humans beings from death until their destined time:

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ ۖ وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفَظَةً حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُونَ

And He is the Supreme, above His servants, and He sends keepers over you; until when death comes to one of you, Our apostles cause him to die, and they are not remiss. [6:61]

6.4 THE WORLD OF THE ANGELS

MY NOTES

3) Taking the souls of human beings at the time when death is decreed for them:

فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ يَنَالُهُمْ نَصِيبُهُم مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا يَتَوَفَّوْنَهُمْ قَالُوا أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ ۖ قَالُوا ضَلُّوا عَنَّا وَشَهِدُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَافِرِينَ

Who is more wrong than the person who invents lies against God or rejects His revelations? Such people will have their preordained share [in this world], but then, when Our angels arrive to take them back, saying, 'Where are those you used to call on beside God?' they will say, 'They have deserted us.' They will confess that they were disbelievers [7:37]

7) Despite their lofty spiritual status and closeness to Allāh (SWT), Allāh (SWT) commanded the angels to humble themselves before Ādam (A). This shows that human beings have the potential to reach greater levels of perfection and closeness to Allāh (SWT) than even the angels:

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ

When We told the angels, 'Bow down before Ādam', they all bowed. But not Iblīs, who refused and was arrogant: he was one of the disobedient. [2:34]

On the other hand, Allāh (SWT) also says that human beings have the potential to be worse than animals:

أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ ۚ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَنْعَامِ ۖ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا

Do you think that most of them hear or understand? They are only like the cattle; no, even worse than the cattle. [25:44]

THE STATION OF THE HUMAN BEING

Angels have been granted the intellect, but they do not have desires that tempt them to disobey Allāh (SWT).

Animals have been granted desires, but they do not have the intellect.

Human beings have been granted both the intellect and desires.







By controlling their desires and following their intellect, human beings can reach greater stations than angels. This is because they use their free will to overcome their desires and worship Allāh (SWT), while angels do not have any reason to disobey Allāh (SWT).

On the flip side, if human beings ignore their intellect and become controlled by their desires, then they lower themselves to a level even below the animals. This is because animals do not have the intellect and do not know any better than to follow their desires, but human beings have been given the intellect, yet they cannot be distinguished from the animals.

DID YOU KNOW?

Some angels have sometimes come down to this world in human forms. An angel came to Sayyidah Maryam (A) to inform her that she was going to give birth to Prophet ʿĪsā (A). They also came down to Prophet Ibrāhīm (A) and Prophet Lūṭ (A).

Angel Jibrāʾīl (A) would sometimes appear before the Holy Prophet (S) in the form of a handsome human being named Daḥyah al-Kalbī, referred to as the Holy Prophet (S)'s milk-brother.

KEY POINTS

1. There are many different creations of Allāh (SWT) that we have no knowledge about.

2. Belief in the existence of angels is from the necessities of our faith.

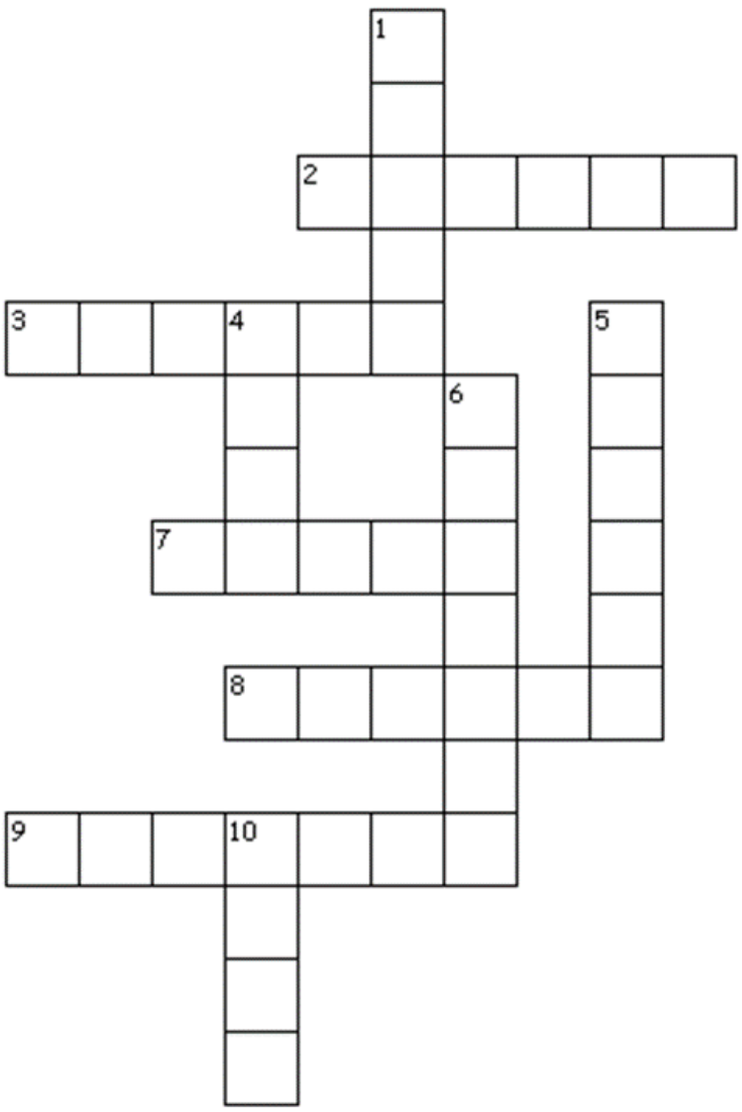
3. Among the greatest angels are Jibrāʾīl, Mikāʾīl, Isrāfīl and ʿIzrāʾīl.

4,. Human beings have the potential to become even greater than angels or worse than animals.

IN SUMMARY

1. 1. Describe three duties of the angels relating to human beings.
2. 2. How can human beings raise themselves to levels higher than angels?
3. 3. How can human beings become worse than animals?

ACTIVITY PAGE



Across

2. Our world is run and managed by _____.
3. There are many more angels than _____.
7. Belief in the angels is part of the belief in the _____.
8. The Angel of Death (Malak al-Mawt) is _____ .
9. The angel who will blow the trumpet to signal the end of the world is _____.

Down

1. Allāh (SWT) uses the number of _____ an angel possesses as an indicator to the rank of that angel.
4. The _____ is a symbol used in the Qurʾān to represent the Power of Allāh (SWT) over creation.
5. The angel responsible for providing sustenance to the physical world is _____.
6. The greatest among the angels is _____.
10. Allāh (SWT) commanded the angels to humble themselves before _____.

THE REALITY OF SINS 6.5

CONCEPT OF SIN

A sin is any act of disobedience to Allāh (SWT). In Arabic this is called dhanb and the plural is dhunūb. Committing a dhanb is ḥarām, meaning forbidden. Keeping away from dhunūb is wājib, meaning obligatory.

The reason why Allāh (SWT) forbids us to do certain things and calls them dhunūb is because they are harmful for our bodies and souls. When we commit dhunūb, we harm ourselves. It makes no difference to Allāh (SWT), but it reduces our chances of making it to Jannah, unless we repent and ask Allāh (SWT) to forgive us. That is why Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

فَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ

So it was not Allāh who wronged them, but it was they who used to wrong themselves. [9:70]

This means that Allāh (SWT) does not harm us or treat us badly. We do it to ourselves through our wrong actions.

Sins are divided into 2 types: **major sins** (al-dhunūb al-kabīrah) and **minor sins** (al-dhunūb al-ṣaghīrah).



A major sin is a sin for which the punishment has been mentioned in the Qurʾān to be the fire of Hell. All other sins for which the punishment has not been mentioned in the Qurʾān, or is mentioned but it's not the fire of Hell, are considered to be minor sins.

We must remember that committing a minor sin repeatedly is a major sin. Therefore, we should not take minor sins lightly. Usually, committing minor sins leads us to commit major sins.

The Holy Prophet (S):
"Do not look at the pettiness of the sin, rather look at who it is you have dared to defy."

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1.1. To understand what constitutes a sin and its difference to a mistake

2.2. To understand the difference between major and minor sins

3.3. To be introduced to the reality of *Shaypān*

MY NOTES

GROUP ACTIVITY

Make a list of all sins you know of as a class. Do you know which ones are major and which are minor?

6.5 THE REALITY OF SINS

MY NOTES

Imām ʿAlī (A):

"The worst of sins in the sight of Allāh is the sin which its perpetrator deems insignificant."

Imām ʿAlī (A):

"Even if Allāh had not fixed punishments and threats for acts of disobedience to Him, we would still be obliged not to disobey Him, simply by way of gratitude to Him for His bounties."

Some actions are not ḥarām but they are still harmful. They may be makrūh (disliked by Allāh (SWT)).

Whenever we sin, we should immediately ask Allāh (SWT) to forgive us, and promise Him that we will not repeat that sin again. Allāh (SWT) is most Forgiving and Merciful, and loves those who turn to Him for forgiveness. He does not like people who are too proud to ask for forgiveness and those who take sins lightly and ignore the consequences.

Imām al-Ṣādiq (A):

"When a person commits a sin, a black spot appears on his heart. If he repents, it is effaced, but if he continues committing it, the spot increases and grows until it engulfs the whole heart, and he can never again prosper."



SHAYṬĀN - THE HUMAN BEING'S SWORN ENEMY

Shayṭān is our enemy and wants us to commit sins so that we can all end up in the Hellfire with him. Although even he confesses that he has no effect upon Allāh (SWT)'s special servants, like prophets and the Maʿṣūmīn (A):

قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ، إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلَصِينَ

(Iblīs) said: "By Your glory, I shall mislead them all, Except Your servants from among them, the purified ones. [38:82-3]

Allāh (SWT) tells us in the Qurʾān to beware of Shayṭān and to not let him deceive us like he did to our great-grandparents, Prophet Ādam (A) and Sayyidah Ḥawwā:

يَابَنِي آدَمَ لاَ يَفْتِنَنَّكُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ كَمَا أَخْرَجَ أَبَوَيْكُمْ مِنْ الْجَنَّةِ ... إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ لِلَّذِينَ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ

Oh Children of Ādam! Do not let Shayṭān tempt you, like he expelled your parents (Nabī Ādam and Sayyidah Ḥawwā) from paradise ... We have indeed made the devils friends of those who have no faith. [7:27]

Many Muslims believe that it is Shayṭān who makes us do evil and commit sins. Is that really true? The Qurʾān clarifies that Shayṭān cannot force us to commit sins. He only whispers ideas of sins in our hearts. If we remember Allāh (SWT) all the time, we will not pay attention to Shayṭān's whispers and temptations. However, if we forget Allāh (SWT), we will listen to Shayṭān and commit sins.

On the Day of Judgement, when we blame Shayṭān for our sins, he will say:

وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعْدَ الْحَقِّ وَوَعَدْتُكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُكُمْ وَمَا كَانَ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِلاَّ أَنْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي فَلاَ تَلُومُونِي وَلُومُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ ...

When the matter is all over, Shayṭān will say, 'Indeed Allāh made you a promise that was true and I [too] made you a promise, but I lied to you. I had no control over you, except that I called you and you responded to me. So do not blame me, but blame yourselves. [14:22]

DID YOU KNOW?

Losing hope in the mercy and forgiveness of Allāh (SWT) is a major sin. We must never lose hope in Allāh (SWT). He is the most Kind and the most Merciful. He loves and forgives those who repent sincerely.

KEY POINTS

1, Dhanb is the Arabic word for sin. It refers to any act that is a disobedience to Allāh (SWT).

2. Sins are divided into two types: major and minor.

3. Major sins are those for which the Qurʾān clearly mentions Hellfire as the punishment. All other sins are referred to as minor sins.

4. However, we should not be fooled into committing a sin because it is a minor sin. All sins are grave because of the One against whom we are sinning, Allāh (SWT).

5. Shayṭān is our manifest enemy. His goal is to take us to Hell along with him.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the meaning of dhanb?
2. What is the difference between major sins and minor sins?
3. Who is Shayṭān? How does he take us to the wrong path?
4. What will Shayṭān say on the Day of Judgement when people blame him for their sins?

ACTIVITY PAGE

UNSCRAMBLE THE SENTENCES!

1. " look not do sin pettiness at the of the, defy look at rather it is who you dared have to."

_____

_____

2. " Allāh sight which sin worst of the in the perpetrator of its insignificant is sins deems the."

_____

_____

3. disobedience is a any sin act of to Allāh (SWT), dhanb is called Arabic in this.

_____

_____

4. force cannot us commit to sins Shayṭān, he only ideas whisper can of sins hearts our in.

_____

_____

5. Day Judgement of will we accountable on the be for actions our and cannot we blame Shayṭān.

_____

_____

6. Manifest our enemy is Shayṭān. goal take us to along his Hell with him.

_____

_____

NOTES PAGE

7.1 THE CONCEPTS OF TAWḤĪD & SHIRK

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To understand reasons for our belief in One God
2. An introduction to the two types of *shirk*
3. To become familiar with examples of hidden *shirk*

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Discuss three possible scenarios where you might fall into the trap of hidden *shirk* and what you could do to avoid falling into it.

CAN THERE BE MORE THAN ONE GOD?

As Muslims, we believe that Allāh (SWT) is the one and only source of all creation. For this reason, a Muslim is also known as a **monotheist** (**muwaḥḥid**), i.e. a believer in one God. Regarding this, the Holy Qur'ān says:

قُلِ اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ

Say: Allāh is the Creator of all things, and He is the One, the Almighty. [13:16]



Someone who believes in and worships more than one God is known as a **polytheist** (**mushrik**). Such a person suffers from "**manifest polytheism**" (**al-shirk al-jalī**).

When we look at the creation around us and the order and harmony with which everything functions, we know that this universe can have only one Intelligent Designer. The whole universe is governed by the same laws of nature. The same gravity that keeps us on the Earth, is the same gravity that keeps the Earth orbiting around the Sun, which is the same gravity that keeps the Sun in the Milky Way.

Look at all the organisms around you in this world. They have all been created with the same coding system, called DNA, which determines whether something ends up becoming a tree or a lizard, a mosquito or a human being. Had there been more than one God, each of the Gods would have had their own way of designing and creating, but we not see this.

Pointing to this reality, the Holy Qur'ān states:

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ

Had there been any gods in the heavens and the earth apart from Allāh, the order of both the heavens and the earth would have gone to ruins. Allāh, Lord of the Throne, is far above what they attribute to Him. [21:22]

When we look at all the prophets that have come in the past, all of them called people to worship the same one God. Hence we see so much similarity between Islam, Christianity and Judaism. Had there been more than one God, each of the Gods would have sent their own messengers and representatives, but once again, we do not see this.

MY NOTES

وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ

We sent to you [Muḥammad] the Scripture with the truth, confirming the Scriptures that came before it, and with final authority over them. [5:48]

In reality, there is no true rational reason to believe in the existence of more than one God.

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ۖ هَلْ مِن شُرَكَائِكُم مَّن يَفْعَلُ مِن ذَٰلِكُم مِّن شَيْءٍ ۚ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

It is Allāh who created you and provided for you, who will cause you to die and then give you life again. Which of your 'partners' can do any one of these things? Glory be to Allāh, and exalted be He above the partners they attribute to Him. [30:40]

THE HIDDEN SHIRK

1) Although we, as Muslims, claim to believe in and worship only one God, the Qur'ān still refers to most of us as **polytheists** (**mushrikūn**):

وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُم بِاللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُم مُّشْرِكُونَ

And most of them do not believe in Allāh without associating others (with Him)
[12:106]

2) The shirk that is being referred to in the verse above is called "**hidden polytheism**" (**al-shirk al-khafiyy**). It is a hidden form of shirk because it is not easily noticed by us and others that we are suffering from this shirk. This is because this type of shirk originates from incorrect intentions for our actions.

A common example of **al-shirk al-khafiyy** is when someone prays, fasts, behaves and talks nicely, but does this to **show off to others**. In other words, **his/her intention is for the sake of other than Allāh (SWT)**.



3) The Holy Prophet (S) often warned us about the seriousness of committing this type of shirk.

He was once asked: "How could one obtain the salvation of the Day of Judgement?"

7.1 THE CONCEPTS OF TAWḤĪD & SHIRK

MY NOTES

He answered: "**Salvation is that you should not try to deceive Allāh; in case He should return your deception to you; for anyone who tries to cheat Allāh, will cheated by Him and He will take faith away from him. In this case the human being ends up deceiving his/her own self, but does not know.**"

He was then asked: "How does a person try to deceive Allāh?"

He answered: "**A person performs what Allāh has ordered him/her, but he/she is concerned about other than Him.**"

4) Someone once came to the Holy Prophet (S) asking for the interpretation of the following verse of the Qurʾān:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا

Say: I am only a mortal like you; it is revealed to me that your god is one Allāh, therefore whoever hopes to meet his Lord, he should do good deeds, and not join anyone in the service of his Lord. [18:110]

The Holy Prophet (S) replied that this refers to physically worshipping Allāh (SWT), yet with the intention to show off to others:

"Anyone who prays to show off is a mushrik (someone who associates partners with Allāh, i.e. a polytheist); anyone who gives alms to show off is a mushrik; anyone who fasts to show off is a mushrik; anyone who sets out for Ḥajj (pilgrimage) to show off is a mushrik; anyone who performs any duty which Allāh has commanded to show off is a mushrik; and Allāh will never accept the work of him/her who shows off."



5) Another very common cause of hidden shirk is when we obey or follow someone despite knowing that doing so will result in disobeying Allāh (SWT). In other words, we give preference to what someone wants us to do over what Allāh (SWT) wants from us.

For example, some of our friends are going to a ḥarām gathering like a night club and they tell us to join them. We know that Allāh (SWT) does not want us to go to such places, but we still end up going. In this example, we have given preference to what our friends want us to do over what Allāh (SWT) want from us!

MY NOTES

6) In fact, when we consciously commit any sin, we are also committing shirk. This is because we are giving preference to our own desires over the command of Allāh (SWT). Sometimes when we are alone and we think that no one is watching us, we do things we are not supposed to do or look at things are not allowed to look at. In all such cases, we have given preference to our own wants and desires over Allāh (SWT). **In reality, we have made our desires our God and we are worshipping our own desires instead of Allāh (SWT)**:

أَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَٰهَهُ هَوَاهُ

Have you seen him who takes his low desires for his god? [25:43]

7) A third common form of hidden shirk is when we consider anyone other than Allāh (SWT) as the cause of good things coming to us. Explaining this type of shirk, Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) says:

"It is about him who says: If such and such were not there, I or my family would have perished or afflicted by misfortune. As you can see, he creates a partner for Allāh who provides for him and protects him."

The system of cause and effect has been created by Allāh (SWT). He works through this system when interacting with His creation. Allāh (SWT) is the one who provides us with food and clothes through the means of our parents. He is the one who cures us when we are sick through the means of medicine. However, we often forget that He is the original source of all these favours and more. Instead, we often only acknowledge the immediate causes for the blessings that come to us, while in reality they are only the means through which Allāh (SWT) provides for us.

8) Prophet Ibrāhīm (A) reached a very lofty level of proximity to Allāh (SWT) even compared to other prophets, such that he was given the title khalīl Allāh, meaning "The Close Friend of Allāh". One of the reasons why he reached such a high level is because he always acknowledged Allāh (SWT) as the true cause for all his blessings. The Holy Qurʾān quotes a beautiful conversation he had with his people, who were idol worshippers:

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ، إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ، قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ أَصْنَامًا فَنَظَلُّ لَهَا عَاكِفِينَ

And recount to them the story of Ibrāhīm: when he asked his father and his people: "What do you worship?" They said: "We worship idols, and are ever devoted unto them."

7.1 THE CONCEPTS OF TAWḤĪD & SHIRK

MY NOTES

قَالَ هَلْ يَسْمَعُونَكُمْ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ ، أَوْ يَنفَعُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَضُرُّونَ ، قَالُوا بَلْ وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا كَذَٰلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ، قَالَ أَفَرَأَيْتُم مَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ ، أَنتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمُ الْأَقْدَمُونَ ، فَإِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِّي إِلَّا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ

He asked: "Do they hear you when you call them or do they cause you any benefit or harm?" They answered: "No; but we found our forefathers doing so." Thereupon, Ibrāhīm said: "Have you seen (with your eyes) those whom you have been worshipping, you and your fathers before you? They are all enemies to me; all, except the Lord of the Universe.

الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ ، وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِينِ ، وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ ، وَالَّذِي يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ ، وَالَّذِي أَطْمَعُ أَن يَغْفِرَ لِي خَطِيئَتِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ

The One who created me and who guides me; who gives me food and drink, and who, when I am ill, heals me; who will cause me to die and then will again restore me to life; who, I hope, will forgive me my sins on the Day of Judgment." [26:69-86]

9) Imām Jaʿfar Al-Ṣādiq (A) was once sitting with his companions and eating some grapes placed before them. A beggar appeared and asked for alms. The Imām (A) took some grapes to give him, but the beggar refused to accept it and asked for money instead. Imām (A) told him to excuse him as he did not have money at this time.



Soon after, another beggar appeared. The Imām (A) again took some grapes and offered them to him. The beggar accepted it and said, "I am thankful to the Lord of universe who provided me with sustenance."

On hearing these words, the Imām (A) told this beggar to wait and gave him two more handfuls of grapes. The beggar once again thanked Allāh (SWT). The Imām

(A) once again told him to wait and then turning to one of his companions and asked him to loan him some money. The man searched his pockets and produced nearly twenty Dirham. The Imām (A) then gave this to the beggar. The beggar thanking God for the third time said, "Thanks are exclusive to God. O God! You are the Giver of the good, and You have no partner."

On hearing these words, the Imām (A) took off his garment and gave it to the beggar. Now, the beggar changed his tone and started thanking the Imām (A) himself, without thanking Allāh (SWT) as well. Then the Imām (A) did not give him anything more and the beggar went away.

The Imām (A)'s companions who were present mentioned that they thought that **had the beggar continued thanking God in the same manner as before, the Imām (A) would have continued giving him more and more. But when he changed his words and started praising and thanking the Imām (A) instead of Allāh (SWT), the Imām (A) did not continue his assistance.**

10) We should always show our appreciation and be thankful to the people who benefit us, because they are the agents through whom Allāh (SWT) has provided us.

The 4th Holy Imām (A) has said:

"Allāh will ask His servant on the Day of Resurrection: 'Did you thank so and so?' The servant will reply: 'No, but I thanked You instead, O Lord.' Allāh (SWT) will say: 'You have not thanked Me as long as you have not thanked him/her.'

However, when thanking someone for something, we should always keep in mind that the true source of the blessing is Allāh (SWT). In the above mentioned story, when the beggar acknowledged Allāh (SWT) as the source of blessings, the Imām (A) kept giving more. However, when the beggar forgot Allāh (SWT) and saw the Imām (A) as the source, the Imām (A) stopped giving him anything more.

IN SUMMARY

1. Why can there not be more than one God?
2. What are the names of the two types of *shirk* and what are the differences between the two?
3. Gives three examples of hidden *shirk*.

DID YOU KNOW?

When we look at Hinduism, which is known today as a polytheistic religion, we see that their most ancient texts affirm the existence of the One True God, who is the source of all creation and that this One God has no physical form. Hinduism became polytheistic much later in its history.

KEY POINTS

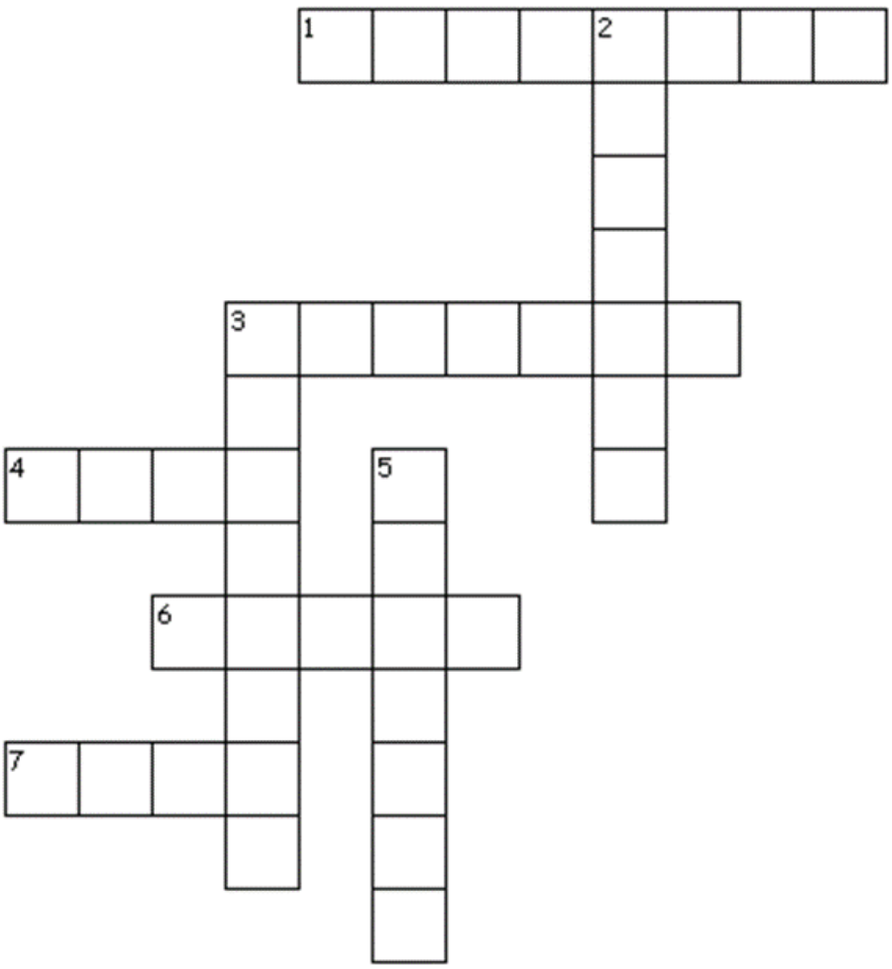
1. A Muslim is known as a **monotheist** (**muwaḥḥid**), i.e. a believer in one God.

2. When we look at the creation around us and the order and harmony with which everything functions, we know that this universe can have only one intelligent Designer.

3. Although we, as Muslims, claim to believe in and worship only one God, we can still suffer from **hidden polytheism** (**al-shirk al-khafiyy**).

4. Three common examples of hidden shirk are: 1) worshipping Allāh (SWT), but in order to show off to others; 2) purposely committing sins; 3) regarding anyone or anything other than Allāh (SWT) as the source of any blessings.

ACTIVITY PAGE



ACROSS

1. We should always be _____ to people who have helped us. However, we should always remember that Allāh (SWT) is the true Provider.
3. A Polytheist in Arabic is a _____.
4. Anyone who prays to _____ off to others is committing hidden shirk.
6. Considering anyone other than Allāh (SWT) as the cause of good things is a form of _____.
7. Manifest polytheism in Arabic is al-shirk al-_____.

DOWN

2. Hidden polytheism in Arabic is al-shirk al- _____.
3. A believer in one God is a _____ .
5. "…and do not join anyone in the _____ of his Lord." [18:110]

GOING FOR THE ZIYĀRAH OF THE AHL AL-BAYT (A)

7.2

Going for ziyārah refers to visiting the burial place of the Holy Prophet (S) and his blessed family and progeny (A), be it in modern day Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Syria or elsewhere. The Maʿṣūmīn (A) have placed great emphasis in the importance of going for ziyārah and the reward one gains as a result.

WHY DO WE GO FOR THE ZIYĀRAH OF THE AHL AL-BAYT (A)?

1) Through going for ziyārah, we aim to pay our respects to these special servants of Allāh (SWT) and renew our pledges with them of being their sincere followers. We reflect upon their lives, their teachings and their sacrifices for the sake of Allāh (SWT) and try to implement these in our own lives back at home.

2) Going to ziyārah provides us with a much needed time out from our busy lives in order to build ourselves spirituality in the proximity of the holy personalities, such that we can return home spiritually charged and more able to face the many tests that await us.

As is described in the following verse, by undertaking this journey, we are fleeing to Allāh (SWT) and His Messenger (S):

وَمَن يَخْرُجْ مِن بَيْتِهِ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا

and whoever goes forth from his house fleeing to Allāh and His Apostle, and then death overtakes him, his reward is indeed with Allāh and Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful. [4:100]



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1.Why do we go for the ziyārah of the Ahl al-Bayt (A)?

2.What do we do when on ziyārah?

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

In pairs, discuss your experiences from your last journey for ziyārah. If you have not been, discuss why you would like to go.

7.2 GOING FOR THE ZIYĀRAH OF THE AHL AL-BAYT (A)

MY NOTES

3) The shrines of these holy personalities are very special places. In our aḥādīth, we are told that thousands of angels are continuously descending to these places and then ascending back to the heavens. When we ask for our prayers from these holy places, they are accepted much faster.

In the Qurʾān, we also learn the effects of praying from these special places. Prophet Zakariyyah (A) really wanted a child, but he had reached an old age and his wife was not able to have children. When he saw the special favours that Allāh (SWT) gave Sayyidah Maryam (A) at her prayer place, he used this special location in order to make his own prayers for a child. His prayers were immediately answered:

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا ۖ كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِندَهَا رِزْقًا ۖ قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّىٰ لَكِ هَٰذَا ۖ قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَن يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

Her Lord graciously accepted her and made her grown in goodness, and entrusted her to the charge of Zakariyyah. Whenever Zakariyyah went in to see her in her sanctuary, he found her supplied with provisions. He said, "Mary, how is it you have these provisions? and she said, "They are from God: God provides limitlessly for whoever He will."

هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ ۖ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِن لَّدُنكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ

There Zakariyyah prayer to his Lord, saying, "Lord, from Your grace grant me virtuous offspring: You hear every prayer."

فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

The angels called out to him, while stood praying in the sanctuary, "God gives you news of Yahya, confirming a Word from God. He will be noble and chaste, a prophet, one of the righteous." [3:37-9]

4) Just because these holy personalities are not physically alive anymore, doesn't mean they can't hear us and know our situation. The Qurʾān is very clear that those who die in the way of Allāh (SWT) are alive and sustained by Him:

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ

Think not of those slain in the way of Allāh as dead. Indeed they are living, (and) are provided sustenance from their Lord [3:169]

When we go for the ziyārah of the Ahl al-Bayt (A), we are required to seek permission to enter their shrines by reciting the idhn al-dukhūl (permission to enter). One of the things we say in this is the following:

أَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعْتَقِدُ حُرْمَةَ صَاحِبِ هَذَا الْمَشْهَدِ الشَّرِيفِ فِي غَيْبَتِهِ كَمَا أَعْتَقِدُهَا فِي حَضْرَتِهِ ، وَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ رَسُولَكَ وَخُلَفَآءَكَ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلامُ أَحْيَآءٌ ، عِنْدَكَ يُرْزَقُونَ ، يَرَوْنَ مَقامي ، وَيَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامي ، وَيَرُدُّونَ سَلَامي ، وَأَنَّكَ حَجَبْتَ عَنْ سَمْعِي كَلَامَهُمْ ، وَفَتَحْتَ بَابَ فَهْمِي بِلَذِيذِ مُنَاجَاتِهِمْ

O Allāh, I hold (as an article of faith) this honoured place of pilgrimage as sacred, despite his (i.e. the Holy Prophet or Imām) physical absence, just as I was certain of his sanctity while he was physically alive. I know that Your messenger and Your representatives (peace be upon them) are alive, receiving sustenance from You. They see my current position, hear my words and answer my Salām. Although You have made me unable to hear their speech, you have opened the door of my understanding, such that I may hold intimate conversations with them.

DID YOU KNOW?

On the day of ʿArafah, the angels descend to the Shrine of Imam al-Ḥusayn (AS) and listens to the prayers of the zuwwār before they go to the plains of ʿArafah to hear the prayers of the ḥujjāj.



KEY POINTS

1. Through going for ziyārah, we pay our respects and renew our allegiance to the Maʿṣumīn (A). We reflect on their lives and try to implement their teachings in our life. We get to work on ourselves spiritually while we are away from our busy lives.

2. At these special places, prayers are accepted much faster due to their physical proximity to the most beloved personalities to Allāh (SWT).

3. The holy personalities are spiritually alive and can hear us. This is why we ask permission to enter into their presence and send them our salām.

IN SUMMARY

1. What should we pray for when we go to ziyārah?
2. Why is it important to go for ziyārah?
3. Why would our prayers be accepted much faster during ziyārah?

ACTIVITY PAGE

Guess the place and the name of all the holy personalities that are buried in each of the images below. There may be more than one personality associated with each imagine.



1:_____



2:_____

3:_____



4:_____



5:_____



6:_____

7:_____



8:_____

9:_____



10:_____

11:_____

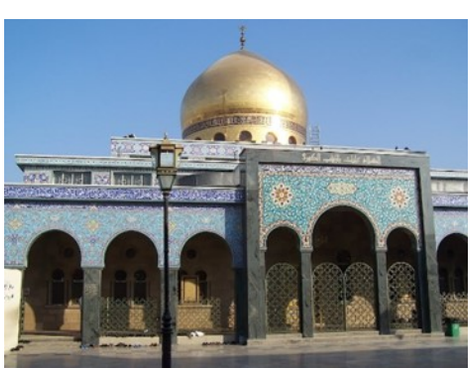
12:_____

13:_____

14:_____



15:_____



16:_____

TAWASSUL & SHAFĀʿAH

7.3

The words Tawassul and Shafāʿah are both often translated into English as "intercession". This concept refers to asking any of Maʿṣūmīn (A) to pray on our behalf to Allāh (SWT) to forgive our sins or to grant us our needs. When we ask for intercession in this world, it is referred to as Tawassul and the intercessor is our wasīlah. if we ask for intercession in the Hereafter, it is called Shafāʿah and the intercessor is our Shafīʿ.

TAWASSUL

Some people at times question why we perform Tawassul. Why should we need to ask for our needs through the Maʿṣūmīn (A)? Should we not be asking from Allāh (SWT) directly?

1) It is **not** the case that we cannot or should not ask from Allāh (SWT) directly. We certainly can. In fact, we should be in the remembrance of Allāh (SWT) continuously throughout the day and we should be speaking to Him as much as possible. Allāh (SWT) is the closest to us and asks us to call Him:

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ

And when My servants ask you concerning Me, then surely I am very near; I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me, so they should answer My call and believe in Me that they may walk in the right way. [2:186]

Similarly, in many of the supplications taught to us by the Maʿṣūmīn (A), such as Duʿāʾ Kumayl, we speak and pray directly to Allāh (SWT).



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the difference between Tawassul and Shafāʿah.
2. Understand the role and importance of Tawassul and Shafāʿah.
3. Be acquainted with various Qurʾānic verses relating to Tawassul and Shafāʿah.

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Using verse 4:64, can you think of one reason why people go for the ziyārah of the Holy Prophet (S) and the Ahl al-Bayt (A)?

7.3 TAWASSUL & SHAFĀʿAH

MY NOTES

2) However, Allāh (SWT) has also taught us another way to reach Him and to get our prayers answered:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

O you who believe! be careful of (your duty to) Allāh and seek means of nearness (wasīlah) to Him and strive hard in His way that you may be successful. [5:35]

3) The first to use wasīlah was Allāh (SWT) Himself. Allāh (SWT) decided to guide us through the means (wasīlah) of the Maʿṣūmīn (A). By performing Tawassul, we are using this very means to get back to Him. The Holy Prophet (S) and the Ahl al-Bayt (A) are the closest and most beloved of all creatures to Allāh (SWT). By requesting them to pray to Allāh (SWT) on our behalf, Allāh (SWT) accepts our prayers faster, for their sake.

In our everyday lives, we also often use Tawassul to get what we want. For example, when we do something wrong and our dad is angry with us, he is likely to forgive us faster if we go through our mum and ask her to request dad to forgive us.



MY NOTES

4) In fact, in the Qurʾān, Allāh (SWT) tells us that if we sought forgiveness from Allāh (SWT) and then also requested the Holy Prophet (S) to pray for forgiveness on our behalf, Allāh (SWT) will then forgive us:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذ ظَّلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيمًا

And We did not send any apostle but that he should be obeyed by Allāh's permission; and had they, when they were unjust to themselves, come to you and asked forgiveness of Allāh and the Apostle had (also) asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allāh Oft-returning (to mercy), Merciful. [4:64]

5) Even if the Holy Prophet (S) and the Imāms (A) have physically passed away, they are spiritually alive. They can still see our deeds and hear our supplications, in the same way as when they were physically alive. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ

And reckon not those who are killed in Allāh's way as dead; nay, they are alive (and) are provided sustenance from their Lord [3:169]

6) A good example of requesting the Maʿṣūmīn (A) to be our wasāʾil (plural of wasīlah) to Allāh (SWT) is Duʿāʾ al-Tawassul, which is recommended to be recited on Tuesday nights.



7.3 TAWASSUL & SHAFĀʿAH

DID YOU KNOW?

For the Maʿṣūmīn (A) to be able to do Shafāʿah for us on the Day of Judgment, there are certain conditions that we must fulfill. According to a ḥadīth of Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A), those of us who do not give importance to our ṣalāh, will not be able to benefit from the Shafāʿah of the Maʿṣūmīn (A) on the day we will need it the most!

SHAFĀʿAH

1) The Qurʾān tells us that the Day of Judgement will be a very difficult time for those who disobeyed Allāh (SWT) in this world. For this reason, we often hope and pray for the Maʿṣūmīn (A) to do Shafāʿah for us on the Day of Judgement so that we may enter Jannah.

2) The idolaters of Makkah used to also believe that the idols they worshipped would do Shafāʿah for them on the Day of Judgement. The Qurʾān clearly rejects this idea in many places. For example:

وَلَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا فُرَادَىٰ كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَتَرَكْتُم مَّا خَوَّلْنَاكُمْ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِكُمْ ۖ وَمَا نَرَىٰ مَعَكُمْ شُفَعَاءَكُمُ الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّهُمْ فِيكُمْ شُرَكَاءُ ۚ لَقَد تَّقَطَّعَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَضَلَّ عَنكُم مَّا كُنتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ

And certainly you have come to Us alone as We created you at first, and you have left behind your backs the things which We gave you, and We do not see with you your intercessors about whom you asserted that they were (Allāh's) associates in respect to you; certainly the ties between you are now cut off and what you asserted is gone from you. [6:94]

3) Being able to intercede for others on the Day of Judgement is a very special position that Allāh (SWT) grants to only those who are close to Him, such as the Maʿṣūmīn (A). Not everyone has this privilege:

لَّا يَمْلِكُونَ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلَّا مَنِ اتَّخَذَ عِندَ الرَّحْمَٰنِ عَهْدًا

On that Day none will have the power to intercede for them except those who received a sanction from the Most Compassionate Lord. [19:87]

KEY POINTS

1. Tawassul refers to asking any of Maʿṣūmīn (A) to pray on our behalf to Allāh (SWT) to forgive our sins or to grant us our needs.

2. Shafāʿah refers to the Maʿṣūmīn (A) interceding on our behalf on the Day of Judgment such that we may enter Jannah.

3. Allāh (SWT) tells us in the Qurʾān to use wasīlah to reach Him.

4. Only certain special servants of Allāh (SWT) will have the authority to do Shafāʿah for others on the Day of Judgment.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the difference between Tawassul and Shafāʿah?
2. Why do we use the Maʿṣūmīn (A) as our intercessors with Allāh (SWT)?
3. Apart from our 12th Holy Imām (A), how can the rest of the Maʿṣūmīn (A) help us since they are no longer physically alive?
4. What is one of the conditions for us to be able to benefit from Shafāʿah?

ACTIVITY PAGE

T N E M E G D U J F O Y A D S
U R O K Z B U M P S U T X H S
D S J I Y G B J Q H Y A A J E
Y A L T S Z D L U A D N H C N
T A W A S S U L B F N P A S E
K H D I W F E L L A G W R M V
U N Y S G V A C J A J F A Q I
H L E U E L D S R H X S Y N G
S A L A H U G U O E U Y I Y R
P A K A R C T T A M T B Z D O
S N B J P N O W I F N N V P F
W E Y Z S X E N G W S A I U A
H A L I S A W S G V P C V V I
W R Z D X T M O S C V M D X F
K S L Y F L D L C U K B J W R

WORD BANK

AHLALBAYT
DAYOFJUDGEMENT
DUA
FORGIVENESS
INTERCESSION
JANNAH
MASUMIN
NEARNESS
SALAH
SHAFAAH
TAWASSUL
TUESDAY
WASILAH
ZIYARAH

7.4 THE NECESSITY OF THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT & THE HEREAFTER

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To understand that this world is temporary and everyone will be accountable for their deeds.
2. To realise that belief in the Hereafter is an innate concept.

MY NOTES

1- THE HEREAFTER GIVES MEANING TO THIS LIFE



When we look around us, we see that everything in this world, from the biggest mountains to the smallest insects, have been created for a purpose. The sun provides us with light and warmth that we need in order to live. The air around us provides us with the oxygen we need to breathe. Even when we look at our own body parts, our mouth, ears and nose, all carry out their own functions. All this shows us that we have a very Wise Lord, who always creates everything for a reason. How then is it possible for this Wise Lord to create His best creation - the human being - without any reason, such that we live in this world without having to achieve anything? Allāh (SWT) asks us in the Qurʾān:

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ

What! Did you then think that We had created you in vain and that you shall not be returned to Us? [23:115]

Our belief regarding the Day of Judgement and our life in the Hereafter, gives meaning to our current life in this world. We understand that this world is a test for us from Allāh (SWT) and that we have to use our short time in this world to prepare for our true life in the Hereafter. The more good deeds we do in this world, the greater our reward we be in the Hereafter and the more sins we commit, the greater our punishment will be. Allāh (SWT) tell us regarding this in the Qurʾān:

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصْدُرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِيُرَوْا أَعْمَالَهُمْ

On that day mankind will come forth in scattered groups to be shown their deeds

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ

Then anyone who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ

And anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it [99:6-8]

ACTIVITY

Allāh (SWT) says to us in the Qurʾān: **"Look then at the signs of Allāh's mercy, how He gives life to the earth after its death, most surely He will raise the dead to life; and He has power over all things."** [30:50]
How does reflecting upon the life cycle of trees in this world remind us of the resurrection?

2- DIVINE JUSTICE

MY NOTES



When we look at the world around us, we often see a lot of injustice and imbalance. In many places around the world, millions of people are suffering and go to sleep hungry. Many of those people whom Allāh (SWT) has given a lot of money, do not want to share their wealth with poor people. Every day we also hear about innocent people being killed throughout the world. When we see all of this, we immediately realise that this world is often not a very just place. However, we also know that Allāh (SWT) is most Just. He has created this world as a test for all humans, so everyone is free to make their own choices. Some people use their free will to worship Allāh (SWT), serve His creation and prepare for the Hereafter. Others choose to abuse their free will and commit evil in this world.

However, it is on the Day of Judgement that Allāh (SWT) will show His great Justice and everyone will be held accountable for their deeds. Allāh (SWT) says in the Holy Qurʾān:

أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَالْمُفْسِدِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الْمُتَّقِينَ كَالْفُجَّارِ

Shall We treat those who believe and do good works as those who spread corruption in the earth; or shall We treat the pious as the wicked? [38:28]

إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا ۖ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقًّا ۚ إِنَّهُ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ شَرَابٌ مِنْ حَمِيمٍ وَعَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ

It is to Him you shall all return—that is a true promise from God. It was He who created [you] in the first place, and He will do so again, so that He may justly reward those who believe and do good deeds. But the disbelievers will have a drink of scalding water, and agonizing torment, because they persistently disbelieved. [10:4]

7.4 THE NECESSITY OF THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT & THE HEREAFTER

DID YOU KNOW?

The Holy Prophet (S) said: **"Increase the remembrance of the demolisher of desires."** He was asked, **"O Messenger of Allāh, what is the demolisher of desires?"** He said, **"Death, for the greatest of believers are those who remember death the most and are the most prepared for it."**

3- BELIEF IN THE HEREAFTER IS INBUILT IN THE FIṬRAH

When the human being looks within and reflects on the nature of life, he or she will find a deep yearning and want to live forever. It is very difficult for us to accept the idea that after death we will simply perish and no longer exist. This yearning for eternal life exists within us, because Allāh (SWT) has created human beings to live forever in our true home in the Hereafter and He has made this want inbuilt into the fiṭrah of every human being.

Do you remember a very happy moment in your life which you really wished would stay forever? This internal want exists deep within us because it is part of our fiṭrah and will become a reality for the righteous servants of Allāh (SWT) in Jannah, where happiness will truly stay forever.

Very interestingly, Shayṭān also knew about this want to live forever that is inbuilt inside every human being. For this reason, when he was trying to make our great-grandfather, Ādam (A), disobey Allāh (SWT), he exploited this same want inside Ādam (A)'s fiṭrah, in order to make him to eat from the forbidden tree:

فَوَسْوَسَ إِلَيْهِ الشَّيْطَانُ قَالَ يَا آدَمُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَىٰ شَجَرَةِ الْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لَا يَبْلَىٰ

But Satan whispered to Ādam, saying, "Ādam, shall I show you the tree of immortality and power that never decays?" [20:120]

فَوَسْوَسَ لَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ لِيُبْدِيَ لَهُمَا مَا وُورِيَ عَنْهُمَا مِنْ سَوْآتِهِمَا وَقَالَ مَا نَهَاكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ هَٰذِهِ الشَّجَرَةِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَا مَلَكَيْنِ أَوْ تَكُونَا مِنَ الْخَالِدِينَ

Satan whispered to them so as to expose to them what had been hidden from them of their evil inclinations: he said, "Your Lord only forbade you this tree to prevent you becoming angels or immortals," and swore to them, "I am giving you sincere advice" - he lured them with lies… [7:20]

KEY POINTS

1. It is not possible for Allāh (SWT) to create everything around us for a Wise purpose, yet create the best of His creation, the human being, without a purpose.

2. Belief in the Hereafter gives meaning to this life. We will be held accountable for our deeds.

3. Allāh (SWT) has given us free will in this world. On the Day of Judgement, He will manifest His Justice and those who were wronged in this world will be recompensed for their suffering.

4. It is ingrained in man's fiṭrah to want to live forever. This will be materialised in the Hereafter.

IN SUMMARY

1. How does belief in the Hereafter give meaning to this life?
2. Why is the Hereafter necessary to establish Divine Justice?
3. How is the belief in the Hereafter ingrained in our fiṭrah?

ACTIVITY PAGE

1) Go through the passage below and fill in the blank spaces using the words in the bubbles below.

2) Write down the numbers under each of the words in the bubbles below in the order they appear in the passage and use the table to guess the mystery word!

Allāh (SWT) created everything in this _____ (world) for a purpose. Therefore, every _____ (human being) has also been created for a purpose. Believing in _____ (Day of Judgement) gives meaning to our _____ (life) in this world. Allāh (SWT) has given us free will in this world. On the Day of Judgement, His _____ (Divine Justice) will be manifested and people will be judged based on what they did in this world. Belief in the Hereafter is in-built within the God given _____ (nature) within each of us.

Numbers in order of the answers:

Yawm al-Qiyāmah
(4)

Fiṭrah
(5)

Mystery word:

Hayāt
(5)

Dunyā
(4)

Insān
(9)

ʿAdālah
(5)

Alphabets and their corresponding numbers								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	-

7.5 THE EXPERIENCE OF DEATH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To become familiar with the Qur'ānic portrayal of the experience of death
2. To understand what takes places immediately after death

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Imām al-Ṣādiq (A): **"Allāh has not created certainty devoid of doubt more similar to a doubt devoid of certainty like death."** What do you understand from this ḥadīth?

DEATH: THE FIRST STAGE OF QIYĀMAH

The belief in the resurrection (Qiyāmah) is given a lot of importance in the Holy Qur'ān. In fact, around one-third of the whole Qur'ān is dedicated to this subject alone. Allāh (SWT) continuously reminds us of the Hereafter so that we can prepare for what is to come. From the time we were born, our return journey to Allāh (SWT) has already started. With each breath we take, we move one step closer to our death.

In the Holy Qur'ān, Allāh (SWT) makes it clear to us that each one of us will definitely die one day:

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ

Every soul shall taste of death; then unto Us you shall be returned. [29:57]

It is not possible to run away from death. Through whichever route the human being may attempt to escape death, it will meet him/her head on from that very direction:

قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلَاقِيكُمْ ۖ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

Say: (As for) the death from which you flee, that will surely encounter you, then you shall be sent back to the Knower of the Unseen and the Visible, and He will inform you of that which you did. [62:8]



The Holy Prophet (S): **"When any of you die, his Resurrection has started; and he sees what good and bad he has [accumulated]."**

MY NOTES

"Life" is often confused to be the opposite of death. In reality, "birth" is the opposite of death. Just like birth is the gate through which we enter into this physical world, death is the gate through which we exit it and enter into the next phase of our existence. Although our physical bodies are cast away when we die, our souls become freer and stronger. We have been created to live for eternity, not just for our short time in this world.

Imām ʿAlī (A): **"O people! You and I have been created to live for eternity, not to perish. Rather, we are just transferred from one abode to the next."**

THE EXPERIENCE OF DEATH

1) Death only takes place by the leave of Allāh (SWT). All the different reasons due to which people die, like diseases, accidents and natural disasters, are all tools in the Hands of Allāh (SWT) to bring about death when it is decreed to take place. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَن تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ كِتَابًا مُّؤَجَّلًا ۗ وَمَن يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَن يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الْآخِرَةِ نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا ۚ وَسَنَجْزِي الشَّاكِرِينَ

And a soul will not die but with the permission of Allāh the term is fixed; and whoever desires the reward of this world, I shall give him of it, and whoever desires the reward of the Hereafter I shall give him of it, and I will reward the grateful. [3:145]



7.5 THE EXPERIENCE OF DEATH

MY NOTES

2) Each of us have been assigned an angel who has been given the duty to take our souls at the time death has been decreed for us:

قُلْ يَتَوَفَّاكُم مَّلَكُ الْمَوْتِ الَّذِي وُكِّلَ بِكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ

Say: The angel of death who is given charge of you shall cause you to die, then to your Lord you shall be brought back. [32:11]



3) When we die and our souls are freed from the limitations of our bodies, we are all able to witness the deeper realities of creation and the truth of Allāh (SWT)'s existence becomes very apparent. Even those who did not believe in Allāh (SWT) in this world now have access to this knowledge. The test we were going through in this world is now finished and the opportunity to ask for repentance for our sins is now over:

وَلَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّي تُبْتُ الْآنَ وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

And repentance is not for those who go on doing evil deeds, until when death comes to one of them, he says: Surely now I repent; nor (for) those who die while they are unbelievers. These are they for whom We have prepared a painful chastisement. [4:18]

The famous example of this in the Qurʾān is that of Firʿawn, who's prayer for repentance at the time of death was of no help to him:

وَجَاوَزْنَا بِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْبَحْرَ فَأَتْبَعَهُمْ فِرْعَوْنُ وَجُنُودُهُ بَغْيًا وَعَدْوًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَدْرَكَهُ الْغَرَقُ قَالَ آمَنتُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا الَّذِي آمَنَتْ بِهِ بَنُو إِسْرَائِيلَ وَأَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

And We made the children of Israel to pass through the sea, then Firʿawn and his hosts followed them for oppression and tyranny; until when drowning overtook

him, he said: I believe that there is no god but He in Whom the children of Israel believe and I am of those who submit.

آلْآنَ وَقَدْ عَصَيْتَ قَبْلُ وَكُنتَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

What! now! and indeed you disobeyed before and you were of the mischief-makers.

فَالْيَوْمَ نُنَجِّيكَ بِبَدَنِكَ لِتَكُونَ لِمَنْ خَلْفَكَ آيَةً ۚ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا لَغَافِلُونَ

But We will this day deliver you with your body that you may be a sign to those after you, and most surely the majority of the people are heedless to Our communications. [10:90-92]

4) The Angel of Death who comes to take our soul is like a mirror to our soul. If our soul is beautiful and pure, our meeting with the angel is very pleasant. However, if our soul is ugly and impure, death is a very painful experience.

THE DEATH OF A BELIEVER:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ

(As for) those who say: Our Lord is Allāh, then continue in the right way, the angels descend upon them, saying: Fear not, nor be grieved, and receive good news of the garden which you were promised.

نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَاؤُكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ ۖ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِي أَنفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدَّعُونَ

We are your guardians in this world's life and in the Hereafter, and you shall have therein what your souls desire and you shall have therein what you ask for:

نُزُلًا مِّنْ غَفُورٍ رَّحِيمٍ

A provision from the Forgiving, the Merciful. [41:30-32]

الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ ۙ يَقُولُونَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمُ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

Those whom the angels cause to die in a good state, saying: Peace be on you: enter the garden for what you did. [16:32]

MY NOTES

7.5 THE EXPERIENCE OF DEATH

DID YOU KNOW?

Imām ʿAlī (A) has said that **"people's lives are extended by giving charity."**

THE DEATH OF A DISBELIEVER:

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الظَّالِمُونَ فِي غَمَرَاتِ الْمَوْتِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَاسِطُو أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرِجُوا أَنفُسَكُمُ ۖ الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَكُنتُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِهِ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ

and if you had seen when the unjust shall be in the agonies of death and the angels shall spread forth their hands: Give up your souls; today shall you be recompensed with an ignominious chastisement because you spoke against Allāh other than the truth and (because) you showed pride against His communications. [6:93]

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۙ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ

And had you seen when the angels will cause to die those who disbelieve, beating their faces and their backs, and (saying): Taste the punishment of burning. [8:50]



KEY POINTS

1. Death leads to the transition of the soul from the physical body to another realm. It does not mean the end of our existence.

2. The Angel of Death is like a mirror to our soul. If our soul is beautiful, the experience of death is pleasant. If our soul is ugly, the experience of death is very painful.

3. No one can die except with the permission of Allāh (SWT). Old age and diseases are just tools in the Hands of Allāh (SWT) to bring death to someone.

IN SUMMARY

1. Briefly explain what happens to our souls when we die.
2. Explain the nature of the death of a believer.
3. Explain the nature of the death of a disbeliever.

ACTIVITY PAGE

According to the various Qurʾānic verses mentioned in this lesson, draw a picture to show what you think the Angel of Death would look like to a disbeliever at the time of his/her death.

According to the various Qurʾānic verses mentioned in this lesson, draw a picture to show what you think the Angel of Death would look like to a believer at the time of his/her death.

8.1 THE CLASSICAL SCHOOLS OF ISLAMIC THEOLOGY

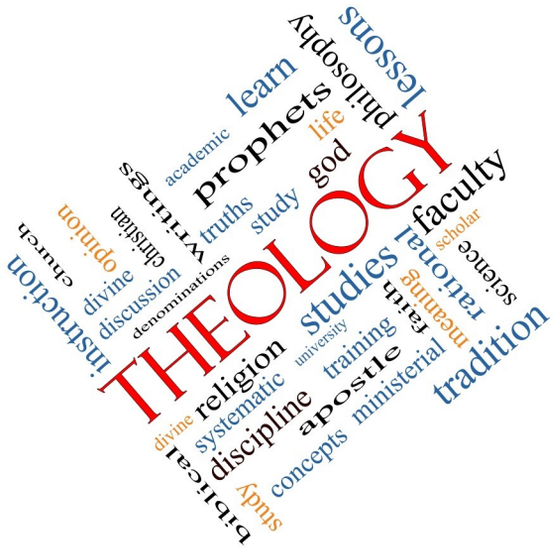
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the origins and main differences between the classical schools of theology.
2. Introduction to the famous debates between the theological schools.
3. Introduction to the main divisions between the various Shīʿah sects.

MY NOTES

INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASSICAL SCHOOLS OF THEOLOGY

Scholars have divided Islamic teachings into three main categories - Doctrines (ʿAqāʿid), Morals (Akhlāq) and Law (Aḥkām).



ʿAqāʿid constitutes the issues that must be understood and believed in, such as the Unity of God, Prophethood, Imāmate and the Resurrection. Theology is the science that discusses and debates all matters of beliefs. In Islam, it is called ʿ**ilm al-kalām**. The major cause of Muslim division into sects originates from the differing views regarding beliefs that are discussed in ʿilm al-kalām.

Rational argumentation and explanation of Islamic doctrines originated in the Holy Qurʾān itself, followed by the teachings of the Holy Prophet (S). However, the first systematic school of kalām started about 100 years after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (S) from a circle of traditional scholars of Qurʾān and Ḥadīth who came to be known as the **Muʿtazilah**, the followers **Muʿtazilī** school. Their rival group were called the **Ashāʿirah**, the followers of the **Ashʿarī** school of thought. They took their name from the founder of this group, **Abūʾl-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī**.

THE MUʿTAZILAH VS THE ASHĀʿIRAH: THE FAMOUS THEOLOGICAL DEBATES

One of the earliest debates that took place during this time was on the subject of **predestination** (jabr) versus **free will** (ikhtiyār). Do we human beings have complete free will to do as we wish or has Allāh (SWT) already predestined all our actions? The Muʿtazilah believed that we have total free will to do whatever we wish in this world, while the Ashāʿirah sided with the opinion that our actions are predetermined by Allāh (SWT).

Another important debate that took place was regarding the Justice of Allāh (SWT). The Muʿtazilah argued good and evil can be understood by our reason. Allāh (SWT) in Just in the sense that he **must** do good and reward the good people. He **must** also not do evil and must punish the evil people. He **cannot** do otherwise. However, the Ashāʿirah believed that because Allāh (SWT) is the Creator and Owner of everything, He is not bound by any rules of justice. The rules of justice apply to human beings only. As for Allāh (SWT), whatever He does is just, even if it is considered unjust by human beings. For example, if Allāh (SWT) throws all the good people into Hell and places all the evil people in Paradise, then that would

CLASS ACTIVITY

Discuss as a class what you understand by the 6th Holy Imām (A)'s statement:

"There is no complete predestination and no complete free will, but the reality is between the two."

Can you think of examples about matters which are predestined for us? In which areas do we have free will in our lives?

still be just and fair. This is because if we believe Allāh (SWT) **must** reward the good and **must** punish the evil people, as per the Muʿtazilī view, then we are limiting Allāh (SWT)'s power to do as He pleases.

THE SHĪʿĪ SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Unlike Sunnī Muslims, who believe that the Holy Prophet (S) was the last guide to mankind appointed by Allāh (SWT), Shīʿah Muslims followed Imām ʿAlī (A) as the continuation of Divine guidance. Prophethood ended with the Holy Prophet (S), but Divine guidance continued through Imāmah. Hence, when the Holy Prophet (S) passed away, the Shīʿah turned to the Imāms (A) to guide them in all matters of religion, including that of theology. Imām ʿAlī (A) continued where the Holy Prophet (S) left off in rationally explaining to us our different beliefs. Many of these teachings of the Imām (A) can still be found in the famous collection of his sermons and sayings, Nahj al-Balāghah. The major theological debates were taking place around the times of Imām al-Bāqir (A) and Imām al-Ṣādiq (A), so we find a lot of teachings from these two Imāms (A) on various matters of theology.

When the 6th Holy Imām (A) was asked whether our actions are predestined or if we have complete free will, he replied: **"There is no complete predestination and no complete free will, but the reality is between the two."** Certain matters in life that are predestined for us, such as who our parents are, where we are born, where we will die. However, in matter of actions, we have a choice. For example, when we are tempted to sin, we have a free choice to act or to stop out of fear of Allāh (SWT).

One day, Abū Ḥanīfah came to see Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A). While he waiting outside to be admitted, he saw Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A) outdoors. Imām al-Kāẓim (A) was only 5 years old.

Abū Ḥanīfah asked the young boy, "**Tell me, are we responsible for what we do or does Allāh makes us do everything?**"

The Imām (A) replied:

"There are only three possibilities. Either Allāh forces us to act, or we and Allāh are both responsible for our actions, or we are free to act ourselves.

If we say Allāh forces us to do everything, then it does not make sense why Allāh should judge us on the Day of Judgement for actions



DID YOU KNOW?

One day, Bahlūl heard Abū Ḥanīfah saying to his students that Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) was wrong to say that we are free in our actions. Abū Ḥanīfah believed that Allāh (SWT) makes us do everything.
Bahlūl therefore threw a stone at Abū Ḥanīfah and injured him. When Abū Ḥanīfah complained to the Muslim Judge, Bahlūl defended himself by saying:
"According to the belief of Abū Ḥanīfah, it was Allāh who made me do it, so he should complain against Allāh!"

MY NOTES

8.1 THE CLASSICAL SCHOOLS OF ISLAMIC THEOLOGY

KEY POINTS

1. Scholars of Islam generally divide Islamic teachings into three group: Doctrines, Morals and Law.

2. Theology is the science that discusses and debates all matters of beliefs. In Islam, it is called ʿ**ilm al-kalām**.

3. One of the earliest debates that took place in kalām was on the subject of free will versus predestination between two camps which later become known as the Muʿtazilah and the Ashāʿirah respectively.

4. When Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) was asked about his position, he famously said: "There is no complete predestination and no complete free will, but the reality is between the two."

5. On the subject of Divine Justice, the Imām (A) taught that although it is true that Allāh (SWT) has the power and freedom to do as He pleases, this does not mean He will act in a manner that is considered unfair just because He can do so.

that He had committed Himself.
And if we say Allāh and humans are partners in committing sins then it is not fair that the stronger partner should punish the weaker partner on the Day of Judgement. So the only possibility is that we are free to act and we are responsible for our actions. That is why Allāh can judge us and reward or punish us!"

Based on the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt (A), we disagree with the Ashʿarī and Muʿtazilī views regarding the Justice of Allāh (SWT). There is a big difference between what Allāh (SWT) **can** do and what Allāh (SWT) **will** do. It is true that Allāh (SWT) has the power and freedom to do as He pleases, but it does not mean He will act in a manner that is considered unfair just because He can do so. Allāh (SWT) has the power to do whatever He wills, but His actions are based on Wisdom. He will reward those who do good and punish the evil ones because He has promised to act justly with everyone.

SHĪʿAH SECTS

The Shīʿahs believe in Imāmah and follow Imām ʿAlī (A) and his descendants as the successors of the Holy Prophet (S). However, the term **'Shīʿah'** is not used exclusively for the followers of the twelve Imāms of the Ahl al-Bayt (A).

Those who follow the Imāms up to Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (A) and then follow his son, Zayd bin ʿAlī, as the 5th Imām are known as the **Zaydī Shīʿahs**. They believe that Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn's son Zayd was the Imām after him, and not Muḥammad al-Bāqir (A).

The **Ismāʿīlī Shīʿahs** believe that Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq's eldest son Ismāʿīl is the 7th Imām, whereas we - the **Ithnā ʿAsharī Shīʿahs** - believe that Ismāʿīl's younger brother Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A) was the 7th Imām. The Ismāʿīlīs are further divided into the Mustaʿalī Ismāʿīlīs (majority of whom are the Dawūdī Buhrahs) and the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs (or Agā Khānī Ismāʿīlīs).

The **Shīʿah Ithnā ʿAsharī** follow the twelve Imāms and believe that the final Imām is the Mahdī (A) who is in ghaybah. The phrase **Ithnā ʿAshar** means **twelve** in Arabic. We follow the 12 Imāms (A) and are therefore referred to as the **Shīʿah Ithnā ʿAsharī**.

IN SUMMARY

1. What was the position of the Muʿtazilah regarding free will and predestination?
2. What was the position of the Ashāʿirah regarding free will and predestination?
3. What is the Shīʿah position regarding free will and predestination?
4. What are the positions of the three groups regarding Divine Justice?
5. Name the main Shīʿah sects and explain the difference between each.

ACTIVITY PAGE

Z T D B D Q P E J P E R S G H F A M L T
C C S S H I A H H O W N J D A V K P V I
W Y V U U G E F R N T O A N R T H F D Y
I U V E N X J G O S H W B W I V L Y E R
N O I T A N I T S E D E R P A J A Q C D
M E Y S Q K I G J T B K R K H Z Q H M Q
J H C H M C J Q P O W M K V S W K W L J
G M M D R A D N H R B E A J A S Q Y W A
L A I J T V I S V S U K H K W D F M Q B
Y L C V U H Z L O K A L X P H J L D T P
W A S U M Q R J I O L F S H Z A O A X B
H K U W W Q S I C I L B I M Q X D U D P
Q A A N S P F T W M B A G P I A Q J P J
O S L P K L I E D I A Q A I L X H G J R
U M P I M A E I K H T I Y A R X C S H T
E E F A Z R J O G N I R H G S H G J G H
V F J H F A A E V U A F B M C O H K W Z
G C D D A F T Q G B F P Y O I S K Z Z K
U X E D W D I U H V B F A Q B J L C O J
E V X X Y X Y M M O C G Y F I H V T F H

WORD BANK

ADALAH
AHKAM
AKHLAQ
AQAID
ASHAIRAH
FREEWILL
IKHTIYAR
ISMAILI
JABR
KALAM
MUTAZILAH
PREDESTINATION
SHIAH
SUNNI
ZAYDI

8.2 THE PRINCIPLES OF IMĀMAH IN THE QURʾĀN

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Become familiar with important Qurʾanic verses relating to Imāmah

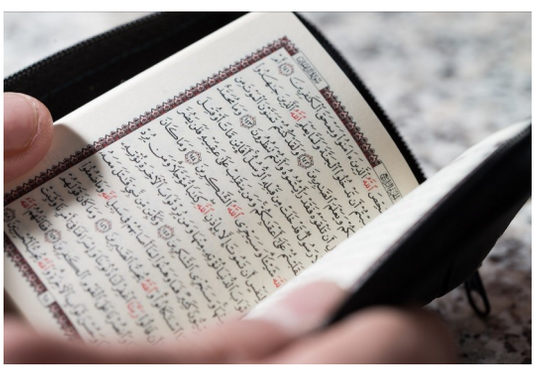
2. Understand that only Allāh (SWT) has the right to choose His representatives

3. Understand that one of the essential attributes of an Imām is ʿiṣmah

MY NOTES

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ ۗ مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ ۚ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

Your Lord creates what He will and chooses (for His tasks) whomsoever He will. It is not for them to make the choice. Glory be to Allāh. He is exalted far above their associating others in His Divinity. [28:68]



Just as Allāh (SWT) created all beings, it is He Himself that appoints His representatives on earth. Human beings cannot choose their leaders themselves.

Before the creation of the first human being, Ādam (A), Allāh (SWT) informed the angels that He was going to appoint a vicegerent on Earth. Upon hearing this, the angels questioned this decision. Allāh (SWT) brushed aside their question, telling them that they do not have full knowledge regarding this matter:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ۖ قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

And when your Lord said to the angels, I am going to place in the earth a vicegerent, they said: “Are you going to appoint in it someone who will cause corruption in it and shed blood, and we celebrate Your praise and extol Your holiness?” He said: “Surely I know what you do not know.” [2:30]

If the great angels, who are error-free (maʿṣūm), were given no say in the appointment of His caliph on Earth, how can fallible human beings expect to take appointing the leaders of the Muslims after the Holy Prophet (S) into their own hands?

In every case in the Qurʾān, Allāh (SWT) attributes the appointment of a caliph or Imām to Himself. Prophet Dāwūd (A) is another example:

يَا دَاوُودُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاكَ خَلِيفَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ

Oh Dāwūd! Surely We have appointed you a vicegerent on earth… [38:26]

CLASS ACTIVITY

Discuss why it is important for an Imām to be maʿṣūm.

When Prophet Mūsā (A) was entrusted with his mission to rescue the Banū Isrā'īl, he wanted to have the his brother, Hārūn, as his helper and deputy. However, even though he was a prophet, he could not and did not select Hārūn for this role by himself. He had to seek Allāh (SWT)'s permission:



MY NOTES

اذْهَبْ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَىٰ ، قَالَ رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي ، وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي ، وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِّن لِّسَانِي ، يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي ، وَاجْعَل لِّي وَزِيرًا مِّنْ أَهْلِي ، هَارُونَ أَخِي ، اشْدُدْ بِهِ أَزْرِي ، وَأَشْرِكْهُ فِي أَمْرِي ، كَيْ نُسَبِّحَكَ كَثِيرًا ، وَنَذْكُرَكَ كَثِيرًا ، إِنَّكَ كُنتَ بِنَا بَصِيرًا ، قَالَ قَدْ أُوتِيتَ سُؤْلَكَ يَا مُوسَىٰ

He said: "O my Lord! Expand my chest for me, And ease my task for me, And loosen the knot from my tongue, (that) they may understand my speech; and appoint for me, from my household, someone who will help me bear my burden: Hārūn, my brother, Strengthen me through him, And let him share my task, So that we may glorify You much, And remember You abundantly. Surely, You have always watched over us." He said: "You are indeed granted your petition, O Mūsā." [20:24-36]

Prophet Ibrāhīm (A) went through a number of very difficult tests in his life. With each test that he passed, he was raised to a higher position with Allāh (SWT). He was appointed a prophet, then a special Friend of Allāh (SWT) (Khalīl Allāh) and then finally, in his old age he was appointed as an Imām.

He prayed to Allāh (SWT) requesting the great blessing of being an Imām to be granted to his progeny after him. Allāh (SWT) replied that those among his progeny who have ever been even the slightest bit unjust cannot receive this lofty position:

وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا ۖ قَالَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِي ۖ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ

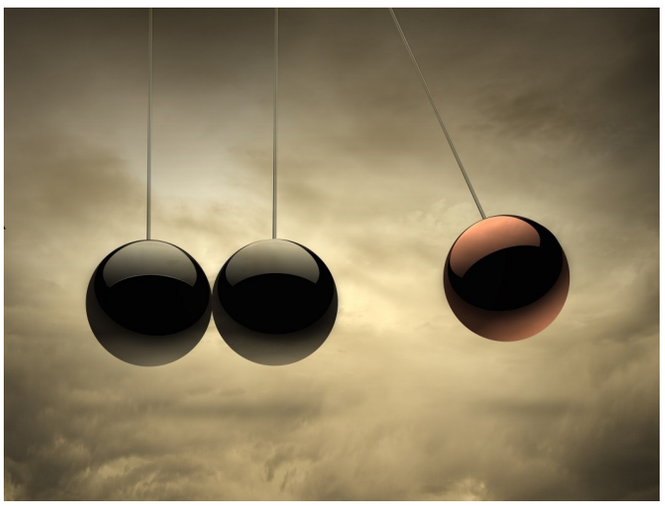
And remember that Ibrāhīm was tested by his Lord with certain commands, which he fulfilled. He said: "I will make you an Imām to the Nations." He pleaded: "Does this promise apply to my descendants also?" He answered: "My promise shall not reach the unjust." [2:124]

8.2 THE PRINCIPLES OF IMĀMAH IN THE QURʾĀN

DID YOU KNOW?

After the event of Ghadīr Khumm, the following verse was revealed: **"This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion."** This shows that the appointment of Imām ʿAlī (A) marks the completion of the Holy Prophet (S)'s mission.

From the above verse, we can learn many things, most importantly:



1- Allāh (SWT) tells Prophet Ibrāhīm (A), **"I will make you an Imām to the Nations"**, showing that Imāmah is a Divinely-appointed status.

2- Although Allāh (SWT) granted Prophet Ibrāhīm (A)'s wish for Imāmah in his lineage, He makes it clear that an unjust person cannot be given this position. Thus:

a) the Imām has to be a person who has never worshipped idols (even before Islam), as that would amount to being unjust to oneself. Imām ʿAlī (A) was the only one from among the first four caliphs to fulfil this criterion.

b) anyone who has ever been unjust himself or others by committing sins cannot become an Imām. In other words, the Imām has to be sinless (maʿṣūm). Once again, none of the first four caliphs ever claimed to be maʿṣūm other than Imām ʿAlī (A).

The sinlessness (ʿiṣmah) of Imām ʿAlī (A) as one of the Ahl al-Bayt (A) is clear from the following important verse in the Qurʾān. According to this verse, Allāh (SWT) has taken upon Himself to keep away from the Holy Ahl al-Bayt (A) any sort of spiritual impurity that would arise as a result of sinning:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا...

...Allāh only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House and to purify you a (thorough) purifying. [33:33]

KEY POINTS

1. Just as Allāh (SWT) has created all beings, it is He Himself who appoints His representatives on Earth.

2. Imāmah cannot be granted to a person who has worshipped idols or to someone who has been unjust to himself or others.

3. Therefore, the Imāms have to be sinless and Allāh (SWT) has taken upon Himself to make sure the Holy Ahl al-Bayt (A) are kept away from any sort of spiritual impurity.

IN SUMMARY

1. Explain why Muslims cannot take the appointing of a leader after the Holy Prophet (S) into their own hands?
2. Who amongst the progeny of Prophet Ibrāhīm (A) are the ones who will not be granted Imāmah?
3. What is ʿiṣmah? Why does the Imām have to be maʿṣūm?

ACTIVITY PAGE

For each of the verses below, state: a) who is speaking; b) who is being spoken to; c) when it took place.

"Surely I know what you do not know"

_____

"Does this promise apply to my descendants also?"

_____

"Are you going to appoint in it (the earth) someone who will cause corruption in it and shed blood…"

_____

"Surely We have appointed you a vicegerent on earth..."

_____

"I will make you an Imām to the Nations"

_____

"…Expand my chest for me, And ease my task for me, And loosen the knot from my tongue…"

_____

DECODE THE FOLLOWING!

9414:

83415 259571:

_____

41134:

_____

739967:

_____

91418:

_____

Alphabets and their corresponding numbers								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	-

8.3 THE APPOINTMENT OF IMĀM ʿALĪ (A)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Become familiar with the Qurʾānic verses and aḥādīth relating to the appointment of Imām ʿAlī (A)

2. Be able to understand and explain the Shīʿī standpoint for the succession of Imām ʿAlī (A)

MY NOTES

The argument for the necessity of maʿṣūm Imāms to succeed the Holy Prophet (S) is similar to the argument for the necessity of prophethood itself. Human beings required prophets to convey and explain to them Allāh (SWT)'s message, as well as live among the people and guide them in their day to day lives. This same requirement is also necessary following the end of prophethood.

Historically, during the 23 years of the Holy Prophet (S)'s prophetic mission, he had to deal with many difficult problems in establishing and protecting the Islamic state, which afforded him very limited time in order to explain all religious teachings in their depths. In the beginning of his mission, the Holy Prophet (S) and the small group of Muslims faced great persecution from the idolaters of Quraysh simply for choosing to become Muslims. Some Muslims even had to emigrate to Abyssinia in order to survive.

The Muslims were then socially and financially boycotted and had to live in confinement in the small valley of Abū Ṭālib for three years. With the death of Abū Ṭālib (A), the Holy Prophet (S)'s life was now also in danger and the Muslim were forced to migrate from Makkah to Madīnah. In the 10 years of the Holy Prophet (S)'s life in Madīnah, the Muslims were occupied with multiple battles, including the battles of Badr, Uḥud, Khandaq, Khaybar and Ḥunayn.

Analysing the 23 years of the prophetic mission of our Holy Prophet (S), it is very clear that the majority of his time went in struggling to establish and defend the religion of Islam, as well as convey the entire revelation in the form of the Qurʾān. He was not afforded enough time to explain the depths and correct interpretation of the whole revelation. However, this was not a problem, because this would be the duty of the Imāms who would succeed him, starting from Imām ʿAlī (A). For this reason, both Sunnī and Shīʿah Muslims report that the Holy Prophet (S) said regarding Imām ʿAlī (A):

إِنَّ مِنْكُمْ مَن يُقَاتِلُ عَلَى تَأْوِيلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ كَمَا قَاتَلْتُ عَلَى تَنْزِيلِهِ

There is one among you who will fight to establish the (correct) interpretation (taʿwīl) of this Qurʾān, just like I fought to establish it as a true revelation.



CLASS ACTIVITY

Can you think of any other occasion (not mentioned in this lesson) when Allāh (SWT) showed the Muslims the special status of Imām ʿAlī (A)?

THE APPOINTMENT OF IMĀM ʿALĪ (A) IN THE QURʾĀN & AḤĀDĪTH

MY NOTES

Given the importance of the issue, the Holy Prophet (S) made it clear and reminded the Muslims throughout his prophethood that Imām ʿAlī (A) will be his successor. In the first open declaration of his prophethood, known as the Daʿwat Dhūʾl-ʿAshīrah, he explicitly declared Imām ʿAlī (A) as his successor. In his farewell Ḥajj, towards the end of his life, he also explicitly appointed him. Throughout his blessed life, he also reminded people of the special position of ʿAlī (A). All of these incidents are available in both Sunnī and Shīʿa sources.

DAʿWAT DHŪʾL-ʿASHĪRAH

In the first three years of his mission, the Holy Prophet (S) preached Islam secretly to small groups of Muslims. Following this period, the following verse was revealed instructing the Holy Prophet (S) to make his mission public by first inviting his close family members to the new religion:

وَأَنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ

And warn your nearest relations [26:214]



The Holy Prophet (S) invited the sons of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib home for a feast, so that he can convey to them his message. After they finished eating, the Holy Prophet (S) addressed them saying:

"O sons of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, I have brought for you the goods of this world and the next, and I have been appointed by the Lord to call you unto Him. Therefore, who amongst you will administer this cause for me and by my brother, my successor and my caliph?"

8.3 THE APPOINTMENT OF IMĀM ʿALĪ (A)

MY NOTES

No one responded to the Holy Prophet (S) except ʿAlī (A) who was the youngest in the congregation. The Holy Prophet (S) asked the same question twice more and both times only ʿAlī (A) responded positively. At this point, the Holy Prophet (S) said:

"Oh my people! This ʿAlī is my brother, my successor and my caliph amongst you. Listen to him and obey him.

THE VERSE OF WILĀYAH

Various Qurʾānic verses were revealed to remind people of the importance and special position of Imām ʿAlī (A) amongst the Muslims as their master (walī). One of the most important verses is the following:

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ

Your master is only Allāh, His Messenger, and those who believe and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate while they are (in the state of) bowing. [5:55]

Once a beggar came to the mosque of the Holy Prophet (S) and asked for financial help. No one responded to him. The beggar raised his hands towards the sky and said: **"Oh Allāh, be a witness that I came to Your Prophet's mosque and no one gave me anything!"** During this time, Imām ʿAlī (A) was in rukūʿ. Whilst in this position, he stretched out his little finger which had a ring, hinting at the beggar to take his ring. The beggar came and took the ring.

At this point, Angel Jibrāʿīl (A) brought down the above mentioned verse. The verse clearly stipulates that believers have three masters, Allāh (SWT), the Holy Prophet (S) and Imām ʿAlī (A). The incident also highlights the station of the Imāms as the intermediaries between Allāh (SWT) and His creation - whilst being completely absorbed in the remembrance of Allāh (SWT), they are still conscious of their responsibilities towards His creation.

THE HADĪTH OF THAQALAYN

"It is probable that I will be called soon, and I will respond (i.e. the call of death). So I leave behind me two weighty things, the Book of Allāh, which is a string stretched from the heaven to the earth; and my progeny, my Ahl al-Bayt. Verily Allāh, the Merciful, the Aware, has informed me that these two will never be separated from each other until they meet me at the Fountain of Abundance (the Ḥawḍ of Kawthar, a spring in Heaven). Therefore, be careful of how you treat these two in my absence."

In this very important ḥadīth, the Holy Prophet (S) pairs the Holy Qurʾān and his Ahl al-Bayt (A) together. Given the status of the Qurʾān, we understand the greatness of the Ahl al-Bayt for being paired with it. These are the two sources

that the Holy Prophet (S) has left behind for our guidance after him.

The Holy Prophet (S) says that these two weighty things will never separate until the Hereafter. This tells us that the Ahl al-Bayt (A) would never do anything that is in the slightest way against the teachings of the Qurʾān. From this we can derive the sinlessness (ʿiṣmah) of the Ahl al-Bayt (A).

Finally, from this ḥadīth we understand that the Ahl al-Bayt (A) are the perfect interpreters of the Holy Book, because they are in complete harmony with its message. Anyone who follows what they say is in fact following the Qurʾān and anyone who disobeys what they say is in fact disobeying the Qurʾān.

Given that Imām ʿAlī (A) is not only part of the Ahl al-Bayt (A), but the head of the Ahl al-Bayt (A), we can easily derive from this ḥadīth that he is the most qualified person to guide the Muslim Ummah after the Holy Prophet (S)

THE DECLARATION AT GHADĪR KHUMM

On the 18th Dhūʾl-Ḥijjah 10 AH, when the Holy Prophet (S) was on his way home from his farewell Ḥajj, angel Jibrāʾīl (A) descended to the him with the following verse from Allāh (SWT):

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ ۖ وَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ

Oh Messenger! Deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord; and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message, and Allāh will protect you from the people; surely Allāh will not guide the unbelieving people. [5:67]



MY NOTES

8.3 THE APPOINTMENT OF IMĀM ʿALĪ (A)

MY NOTES

The Holy Prophet (S) immediately stopped and called for the Muslims who had moved ahead or were lagging behind to gather near him. In the extreme heat of the day, a crowd of over 100,000 Muslims gathered around the Holy Prophet (S) and a pulpit was set up for him to give his sermon from. The Holy Prophet (S) gave a lengthy sermon in which he asked the audience three times:

أَلَسْتُ أَوْلَى بِالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ؟

Do I not have more authority (awlāʾ) over the believers than they have over themselves?

Each time, the crowd replied: **"Yes, of course you do, oh messenger of Allāh".** The Holy Prophet (S) then raised up Imām ʿAlī (A)'s hand, who was 33 years old at this time, and declared:

مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَهَذَا عَلِيٌّ مَوْلَاهُ

Whosoever's master (mawlāʾ) I am, this ʿAlī is also his master

Then the Holy Prophet (S) raised his hands and prayed:

اَللّٰهُمَّ وَالِ مَنْ وَالَاهُ وَعَادِ مَنْ عَادَاهُ وَأَحِبّ مَنْ اَحَبَّهُ وَابْغِضْ مَنْ اَبْغَضَهُ وَانْصُرْ مَنْ نَصَرَهُ وَاخْذُلْ مَنْ خَذَلَهُ وَأَدِرِ الْحَقَّ مَعَهُ حَيْثُ دَارَ

Oh Allāh, love the one who loves ʿAlī, and be the enemy of the one who is an enemy to him, and detest the one who detests him, and help the one who helps him, and forsake the one who forsakes him, and make the truth turn with him wherever he turns.

It is reported that after this sermon, the companions of the Holy Prophet (S) started lining up to congratulate Imām ʿAlī (A). The following Qurʾānic verse was also revealed to the Holy Prophet (S) at this point:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour on you and chosen for you Islam as your religion [5:3]

This ḥadīth of Ghadīr is among the most authentic aḥādīth in both Sunnī and Shīʿah books. The word "mawlāʾ" that the Holy Prophet (S) used to describe Imām ʿAlī (A) has many different meanings in Arabic, including "master", "leader" and "friend". Many Sunnī Muslims claim that on this occasion, the Holy Prophet (S) was declaring Imām ʿAlī (A) as the friend of the believers, not master. However, this is not correct for the following reasons:

1) Before referring to the Imām as the mawlāʾ of the believers, the Holy

Prophet (S) asked the Muslims if he had more authority over them than they did over themselves. When asking this question, he used the word awlāʾ, referring to "authority". From this, in the Arabic language, we understand that the word mawlāʾ too must carry a meaning of authority and hence, in this context, it cannot have simply meant "friend".

2) From the nature of the prayer the Holy Prophet (S) makes after declaring the Imām as the mawlāʾ of the believers, we understand that the Imām must have been entrusted with a great responsibility, which will result in many people becoming his enemy. In carrying out this responsibility, he will need helpers and supporters.

3) This was a very joyous occasion and the companions of the Holy Prophet (S) all came to congratulate Imām ʿAlī (A). If the Holy Prophet (S) was just declaring him as the friend of the believers, there would be no need for congratulations, as the Imām was already a friend to the believers.



4) It doesn't make sense for the Holy Prophet (S) to call back over 100,000 people in the burning afternoon heat of the desert and give a long sermon, just to announce: "Whosoever's friend I am, this ʿAlī is also his friend!"

5) Returning from the Holy Prophet (S)'s Farewell Ḥajj, it was known among the Muslims that the Holy Prophet (S) only had a little time left in this world. Whatever he would have announced in this sermon needed to be of the most importance, in order to offer guidance to the Muslims regarding their affairs after him.

IN SUMMARY

1. Why is it important to have maʿṣūm Imāms after the Holy Prophet (S)?
2. Explain at least two occasions during the life of the Holy Prophet (S) where he indicated that Imām ʿAlī (A) would be his successor.
3. What is the significance of the event of Ghadīr Khumm?

DID YOU KNOW?

Amongst the first ones to congratulate Imām ʿAlī (A) on the day of Ghadīr were Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, the first and second caliphs. ʿUmar has been reported to have said:

"Congratulations, congratulations to you, Oh ʿAlī; you have become my mawlāʾ and the mawlāʾ of every faithful Muslim."

KEY POINTS

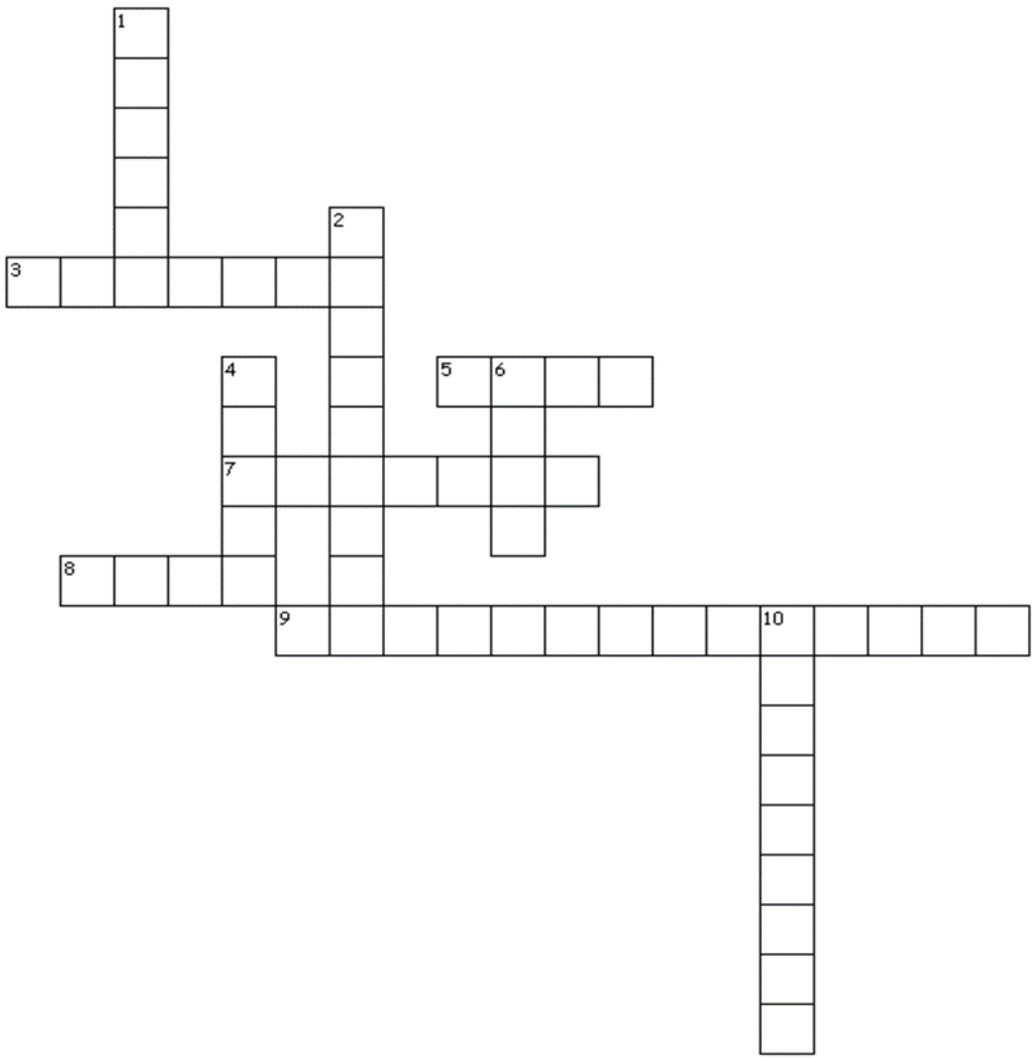
1. The necessity of having maʿṣūm Imāms to succeed the Holy Prophet (S) is as important as the necessity of prophethood itself, in order to preserve the message after him.

2. There were many occasions where the Holy Prophet (S) indicated to the people around him who his successor would be, such as Daʿwat Dhūʾl-ʿAshīrah, the Ḥadīth of Thaqalayn and the declaration at Ghadīr Khumm.

3. The ḥadīth of Ghadīr Khumm is among the most authentic aḥādīth in both Sunnī and Shīʿah books.

4. The event of Ghadīr Khumm was an important event as the Holy Prophet (S) called back over 100,000 people to make the announcement.

ACTIVITY PAGE



Across

3. Muslims faced persecution from this group in Makkah.
5. The position during ṣalāh in which Imām ʿAlī (A) gave charity.
7. One of the most important verses in the Qurʾān stating that Imām ʿAlī (A) was the master of the Muslims is known as the Verse of _____.
8. Imām ʿAlī (A) was to the Holy Prophet (S) like Prophet Hārūn was to _____.
9. The Holy Prophet (S) fought to establish the Qurʾān as a true revelation, while Imām ʿAlī (A) fought for its correct _____.

Down

1. This ḥadīth of _____ is amongst the most authentic aḥādīth in both Sunnī and Shīʿah books.
2. This is the ḥadīth in which the Holy Prophet (S) mentions that he is leaving two weighty things after him.
4. Whosoever's (_____) I am, this ʿAlī is also his master.
6. He was the one who congratulated Imām ʿAlī (A) on the Day of Ghadīr by saying "Congratulations, congratulations to you, Oh ʿAlī; you have become my mawlāʾ and the mawlāʾ of every faithful Muslim."
10. The first place some of the Muslims emigrated to in order to escape persecution.

THE REALM OF BARZAKH

8.4

A boundary which separates two things is called barzakh in Arabic. For this reason, the intermediate realm that separates the temporary life of this world from the eternal life of the Hereafter is called the realm of Barzakh. It is the hidden dimension of this world.

1. When we die, our souls enter Barzakh. In fact, we enter Barzakh every night. When we go to sleep, our souls temporarily leaves the bodies and enters the realm of Barzakh. However, unlike when we die, the soul is still loosely connected to the body such that if someone tried to wake us up, the soul returns to the body and we wake up. Regarding this reality, the Qurʾān says:

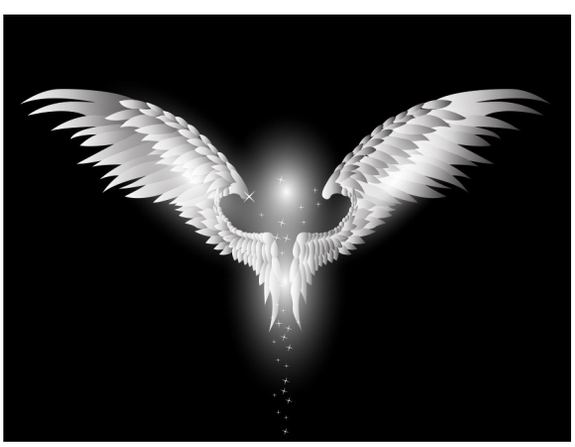


اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا ۖ فَيُمْسِكُ الَّتِي قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا الْمَوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ الْأُخْرَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

Allāh takes the souls of the dead and the souls of the living while they sleep—He keeps hold of those whose death He has ordained and sends the others back until their appointed time—there truly are signs in this for those who reflect. [39:42]

2. After we are buried, two angels named Nākir and Nakīr will come to question us about our core beliefs: **"Who is your Lord? Who is your prophet? What is your Book? Who are your Imāms?"** These questions may seem easy to answer right now, but they won't be during this time. Our physical bodies are no longer there, so the answers won't come from our brains based on the answers we memorised in Madressa!

Rather, it is our souls that will answer based upon what we truly believed in and lived by in our lives. If we lived our lives keeping a football player as our role model, followed everything he said and copied everything he did, then in our graves we will name this football player as our Imām! If we hardly ever approached the Qurʾān for guidance, then in our graves, we won't be able to say that the Qurʾān is our Book!



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Introduction to the realm of Barzakh

2. To become familiar with Qurʾānic verses regarding Barzakh

MY NOTES

CLASS ACTIVITY

Discuss what we can do to help our relatives who have left this physical world and are now in Barzakh.

8.4 THE REALM OF BARZAKH

MY NOTES

Those people who are able to answer these questions correctly will be greatly rewarded, while those people who are not able to answer these questions will be severely punished.

3. Once we die and enter Barzakh, there is no turning back to correct the wrongs we have done, no matter how much we may want to:

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ

When death comes to one of them, he cries, "My Lord, let me return

لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ ۚ كَلَّا ۚ إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا ۖ وَمِن وَرَائِهِم بَرْزَخٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

so as to make amends for the things I neglected." Never! This will not go beyond his words: a barrier (barzakh) stands behind such people until the very Day they are resurrected. [23:99-100]

4. The really pious people will reside in a special paradise for the people of Barzakh. They will enjoy living there as they wait for the Day of Judgment, where they will gain even greater rewards and the ultimate Jannah:

الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ ۙ يَقُولُونَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمُ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

Those whom the angels cause to die in a good state, saying: Peace be on you: enter the garden for what you did. [16:32]



5. The really evil people will reside in the Hell for the people of Barzakh. They will face continuous punishment there as they wait for the Day of Judgment, where they will receive even worse punishments:

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الظَّالِمُونَ فِي غَمَرَاتِ الْمَوْتِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَاسِطُو أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرِجُوا أَنفُسَكُمُ ۖ الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَكُنتُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِهِ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ

And if you had seen when the unjust shall be in the agonies of death and the angels shall spread forth their hands: Give up your souls; today shall you be recompensed with an ignominious chastisement because you spoke against Allāh other than the truth and (because) you showed pride against His communications.



[6:93]

6. The rest of the people, who were neither very good or very bad, will eventually enter into a long sleep until they are resurrected on the Day of Judgement:

قَالُوا يَا وَيْلَنَا مَن بَعَثَنَا مِن مَّرْقَدِنَا ۜ هَٰذَا مَا وَعَدَ الرَّحْمَٰنُ وَصَدَقَ الْمُرْسَلُونَ

IN SUMMARY

1. Why is the realm after this physical world called Barzakh?
2. What happens to people immediately after they die and enter the realm of Barzakh?
3. Where will all the different people reside in Barzakh and for how long?

DID YOU KNOW?

Imām al-Ṣādiq (AS) said, **"By Allāh! I fear for you the Barzakh!"** He was asked, "What is the Barzakh?" He replied, **"The grave, from the day one dies until the Day of Judgement."**

KEY POINTS

1. A barzakh is a boundary that separates two things. The realm of Barzakh is known by its name, because it separates the life of this world from the life of the Hereafter.

2. We enter the realm of Barzakh every night when we go to sleep.

3. Once we die and enter Barzakh, we cannot come back in this world to correct our mistakes.

4. The really pious people will reside in a special Paradise in Barzakh. The evil people will reside in the Hell of Barzakh. The rest of the people will go into a long sleep till the Day of Judgement.

ACTIVITY PAGE

1) True or False? Correct the false statements.

1) Barzakh is a boundary that separates two things.

_____

2) We can only enter Barzakh once we have died.

_____

3) Two angels called Shākir and Shakīr will ask us questions in our grave.

_____

4) Everyone will go to sleep in Barzakh, even the really bad people.

_____

5) People will not want to go back and fix their mistakes because they will not regret their actions.

_____

6) People will live in Barzakh forever.

_____

2) Can you find the nine letter snake word hidden in this table? The nine letters word is formed from a continuous line passing through each cell once without crossing over itself.

S	N	E
I	D	M
O	N	I

THE ADVENT OF THE RESURRECTION 8.5

SIGNS OF THE LAST DAY

Allāh (SWT) has created this world in a perfect manner to sustain life on earth. The sun provides us with the necessary light and heat, the mountains provide the earth with stability as it spins on its axis, the clouds provide us with rain which allows vegetation to grow, and so forth. These are all necessary for life on this planet as we know it. However, when the decreed time for the end of this world arrives, all of these natural systems that we are used to seeing will collapse, signalling the coming of the resurrection.

Imagine life on this world to be like a theatre play. The sun, the stars, the mountains, and so on, are the props necessary for this play to take place. Once the play is over, all of these props are put away:

إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ

When the sun shall be folded up,

وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انكَدَرَتْ

when the stars shall scatter away,

وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ

when the mountains shall be set in motion...[81:1-3]



THE 2 BLOWINGS OF THE TRUMPET

1. At the decreed time for the end of this world, Allāh (SWT) will command an angel named Isrāfīl to blow on the Trumpet. This will cause every living creation in the Heavens and the Earth to die once and for all, with the exception of a select few. Then the Trumpet will be blown again and every creature will become alive once again, marking the start of the Day of Resurrection:

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَصَعِقَ مَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَن فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَن شَاءَ اللَّهُ ۖ ثُمَّ نُفِخَ فِيهِ أُخْرَىٰ فَإِذَا هُمْ قِيَامٌ يَنظُرُونَ

And the Trumpet shall be blown and all who are in the heavens and the earth shall fall down dead save those whom Allāh wills. Then the Trumpet shall be blown again, and lo! all of them will be standing and looking on. [39:68]

2. No one knows how long the time between the 2 blowings of the Trumpet will be. However, during this time, the world will undergo a great transformation and new world will arise with different natural laws:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn about the various signs of the Last Day
2. Learn about the 2 blowings of the trumpet
3. Learn about our Book of Deeds

MY NOTES

CLASS ACTIVITY

Recite sūrah no. 101 (al-Qāriʿah) and read its translation. What is Allāh (SWT) telling us in this sūrah?

8.5 THE ADVENT OF THE RESURRECTION

MY NOTES

يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ الْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ ۖ وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ

On the day when the earth shall be changed into a different earth, and the heavens (as well), and they shall come forth before Allāh, the One, the Supreme. [14:48]

3. Everyone will be so worried about their own deeds and saving themselves on that day, that no one will want to help anyone else:

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ

Then when the Trumpet is blown, there will be no more relationships between them that Day, nor will they ask of each other! [23:101]

يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبِيهِ وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَبَنِيهِ لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ

The day on which a man shall fly from his brother, And his mother and his father, And his spouse and his children. Every man of them shall on that day have an affair which will occupy him. [80:34-37]

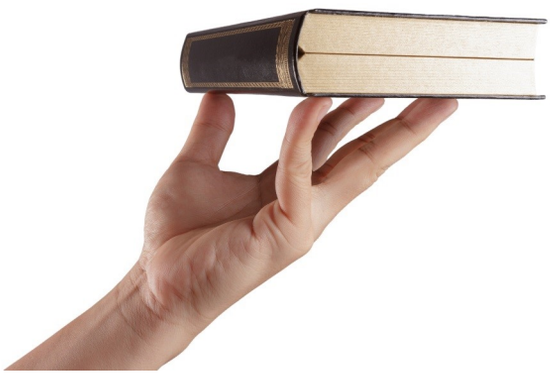
OUR BOOK OF DEEDS

1. Raqīb and ʿ**Atīd** are the two angels that are writing our Book of Deeds every day. They record everything we say and do. One of them records our good deeds and the other records our bad deeds. These angels rush to write our good deeds, but hesitate to write our sins, in the hope that we may repent and seek forgiveness from Allāh (SWT). This book will be shown to us on the Day of Judgment.



2. The Book of Deeds is amazing. When this book is shown to us, it won't be like reading a book or watching a movie. It will be like going back in time and reliving the past. No one will be able to deny anything recorded in it.

3. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān that on the Day of Judgment, those who are good will receive their Book of Deeds in their right hands, whereas the evil ones will receive theirs in their left hands or hanging from their necks:



فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَيَقُولُ هَاؤُمْ اقْرَءُوا كِتَابِيَهْ إِنِّي ظَنَنتُ أَنِّي مُلَاق�ٍ حِسَابِيَهْ. فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَاضِيَةٍ

As for him who is given his book in his right hand, he will say, 'Here, take and read my book! Indeed I knew that I shall encounter my account.' So he will have a pleasant life. [69:19-21]

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِشِمَالِهِ فَيَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أُوتَ كِتَابِيَهْ وَلَمْ أَدْرِ مَا حِسَابِيَهْ يَا لَيْتَهَا كَانَتِ الْقَاضِيَةَ مَا أَغْنَى عَنِّي مَالِيَهْ هَلَكَ عَنِّي سُلْطَانِيَهْ خُذُوهُ فَغُلُّوهُ ثُمَّ الْجَحِيمَ صَلُّوهُ

But as for him who is given his book in his left hand, he will say, 'I wish I had not been given my book, nor had I ever known what my account is! I wish death had been the end of it all! My wealth did not avail me. My authority has departed from me.' The angels will be told: 'Seize him! Then put him in hell'. [69:25-31]

IN SUMMARY

1. What are some of the events that will take place before the blowing of the Trumpet?
2. What will happen when the Trumpet is blown for the first and second time?
3. Which angels record our deeds every day?
4. What will be presented to us on the Day of Judgment?

DID YOU KNOW?

The Holy Prophet (S) taught us to live our lives as if we have two very pious people walking on our right and left side all the time. When we want to commit a sin, we should feel ashamed that two honourable, noble angels are watching us.

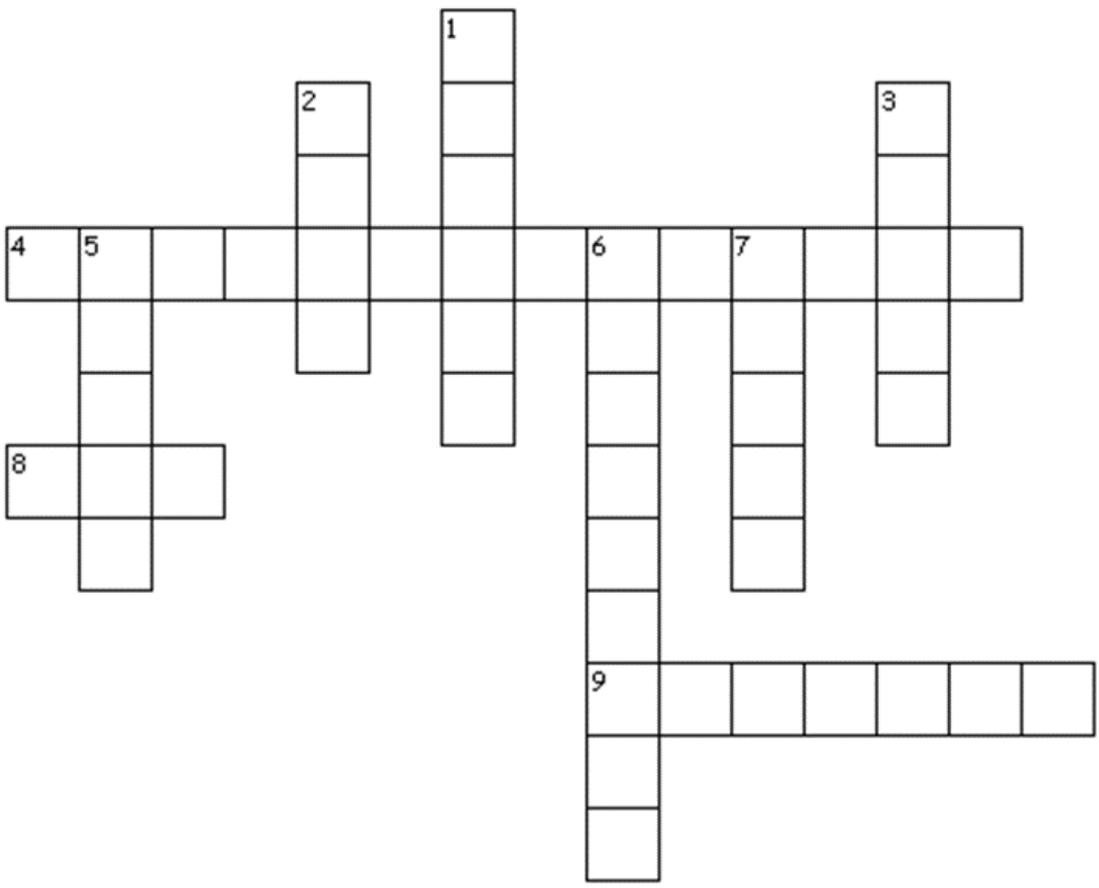
KEY POINTS

1. Just before **Qiyāmah**, Angel **Isrāfīl** will blow a Trumpet and everyone will die, with the exception of a select few. The trumpet will then be blown again and everyone will come back to life.

2. Everyone will be worried about their own accounting on the Day of Judgment and will not have time to worry about anyone else.

3. We have angels specifically assigned to write down all our deeds. This will then be presented to us on the Day of Judgment.

ACTIVITY PAGE



Across

4. Between the blowings of the Trumpet, the world will go through a great _____.

8. When the first time the Trumpet blows, everyone will _____, except for those who Allāh (SWT) wills otherwise.

9. The angel who will blow the Trumpet is named _____ .

Down

1. On the Day of Judgement, no one will help _____ else. It will be a day of worry and fear.

2. When we look at our Book of Deeds, it will feel like we are reliving the _____.

3. The sun, the moon and the stars are just _____ in the "play" of this world.

5. One of the angels that are noting down our deeds every day is called _____.

6. "When the _____ shall be set in motion" [81:3]

7. The trumpet will be blown _____.

NOTES PAGE

9.1 KNOWING ALLĀH (SWT)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Introduction to the Names and Attributes of Allāh (SWT)
2. Introduction to the various ways and levels of knowing Allāh (SWT)

MY NOTES

THE NAMES AND ATTRIBUTES OF ALLĀH (SWT)

Al-Asmāʾ al-Ḥusnā refers to the Beautiful Names of Allāh (SWT). Whenever we mention Allāh , we should say:

سُبْحَانَهُ وَ تَعَالَى

Glory be to Him, the Most High

We can also say:

عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ

The Mighty and Glorious

Allāh (SWT) tells us in the Qurʾān that when we pray to Him, we can call Him by any of His Beautiful Names:

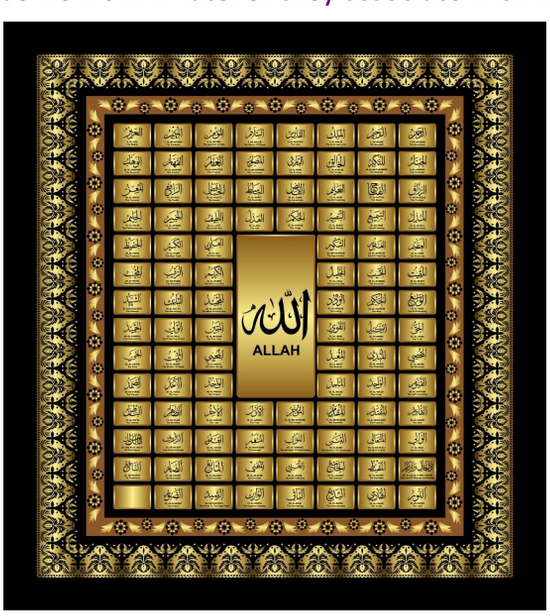
قُلْ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَانَ أَيًّامَّا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى

Say, 'Call "Allāh" or call "the Rahman (Merciful)". Whichever [of His Names] you may call, to Him belong the most beautiful Names.' [17:110]

Allāh (SWT)'s names refer to His attributes. They tell us about Him, and help us understand Him. In other words, we can know Allāh (SWT) through His attributes. In the Qurʾān and through the aḥādīth of the Holy Prophet (S), Allāh (SWT) has informed us of many of His Names. For example:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۚ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

He is Allāh: there is no god but He: the King, the Holy, the All-Peace, the Giver of security, the Overseer, the Most Mighty, the Overpowering, the All-Great. Exalted be He from whatever they associate with Him.



ACTIVITY

Memorise 10 Names of Allāh (SWT) that you didn't know by heart before along with their meanings.

هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ ۖ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

He is Allāh, the Planner, Executer and Fashioner of creation. His are the names most beautiful. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth extols His Glory. He is the Most Mighty, the Most Wise. [59:23-4]

MY NOTES

The Names of Allāh (SWT) are countless. In the beautiful Duʿāʾ Jawshan al-Kabīr taught to us by the Holy Prophet (S), we call out to Allāh (SWT) through 1000 of His Names and Attributes. However, we commonly refer to and memorise the famous 99 Names of Allāh (SWT).

Everything in creation reflects and manifests these different Names of Allāh (SWT). When we see the love and affection of our parents towards us, we are reminded of the Names of Allāh (SWT) **al-Raḥmān** - The All-Merciful and **al-Wadūd** - The Loving. When we eat food and earn money, we know that it is **al-Razzāq** - The Provider of Sustenance, who has blessed us with food and wealth. The deeper reality behind everything we see around us, from the great stars and planets to the small flowers and plants, are the Names of Allāh (SWT). We can hear and see through our ears and eyes, but in reality it is Allāh (SWT) who is **al-Samīʿ** - the All-Listening and **al-Baṣīr** - the All-Seeing. Our hearing and vision are just manifestations of these Names. For this reason, in Duʿāʾ Kumayl, we call out to Allāh (SWT) by His Names and refer to them as the following:

اَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ... بِأَسْمَائِكَ الَّتِي مَلَأَتْ أَرْكَانَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

O Allāh, I ask You...by Your Names, which have filled the foundations of all things;

THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ATTRIBUTES OF ALLĀH (SWT)

Al-Ṣifāt al-Thubutiyyah are the qualities of Allāh (SWT) that are true regarding Allāh (SWT). They are sometimes referred to as the "Positive Attributes" of Allāh (SWT). The opposite of this are al-Ṣifāt al-Salbiyyah, which are attributes that are not true regarding Allāh (SWT), or "Negative Attributes".

Among the Positive Attributes of Allāh (SWT) are:

1. **al-Qadīm** - He is Eternal. He has no beginning and no end. He wasn't born and won't die.
2. **al-Qādir** - He is all-Powerful. He has the power to do what He wishes.
3. **al-ʿAlīm** - He is all-Knowing. Nothing is hidden from Him.
4. **al-Ḥayy** - He is Ever-Living. He will never die.
5. **al-Murīd** - He does as He pleases. However, what He does is based on wisdom and reason.

9.1 KNOWING ALLĀH (SWT)

MY NOTES

Among the Negative Attributes of Allāh (SWT) are that:

1. Allāh (SWT) has **no** partners and **no** family. He has **no** sons or daughters.
2. Allāh (SWT) is **not** made up of anything.
3. Allāh (SWT) does **not** live in any specific place. He is everywhere.
4. Allāh (SWT) **cannot** enter anything (e.g. the body of a human). He **cannot** come in human form.
5. Allāh (SWT) does **not** change (e.g. He doesn't grow old, or become happy or sad)

HOW CAN WE KNOW ALLĀH (SWT)?

In one of his sermons, Imām ʿAlī (A) described Allāh (SWT) as follows:

"Praise is due to Allāh whose praise cannot be achieved by speakers, whose bounties cannot be counted by those who count, and whose right cannot be fulfilled even by those who strive to do so. He, whom the highest of intellectual efforts cannot comprehend and the deepest diving of understanding cannot grasp. He, for whose attributes there is no limits; no eulogy of praise exists, no time is ordained and no duration is fixed."

According to this passage, it is clear that Allāh (SWT) is so great that it is not possible for us to fully comprehend Him. However, this does not mean we cannot know Him at all. There are various ways and levels to which we can understand and get to know Allāh (SWT). Some of these are the following:



1) The Fiṭrah: The belief in God has been hard-wired within every human being and hence it's something that comes naturally to us. For this reason, from the beginning of human life on earth, there has been record of the belief in the existence of some sort of God. We do not require to read books or to formally educate ourselves in order to access fiṭrī knowledge. Even the person who lives in the middle of the Amazon jungle is able to reach the conclusion that Allāh (SWT) exists without being exposed to any religions.

It is like a light that is within all of us, providing us with knowledge about basic truths. However, years of sinning and spiritually polluting ourselves dims the brightness of the light of our fiṭrah. Religious teaching in the form of the revelation and prophetic guidance adds to the basic knowledge base already available to us from the fiṭrah.

2. The external signs of Allāh (SWT): Allāh (SWT) is recognised through His signs present in the world around us. When we see the beautiful and intricate creation around us and the harmony with which everything in nature works, we know that all these things could not have come by chance and that they require a Wise Creator. In the Qurʾān, Allāh (SWT) commands us in many places to ponder over His creation:

MY NOTES

الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا ۖ مَّا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ مِن تَفَاوُتٍ ۖ فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ

Who created the seven heavens one above another; you see no incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent Allāh; then look again, can you see any disorder?

ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَهُوَ حَسِيرٌ

Then turn back the eye again and again; your look shall come back to you confused while it is fatigued. [67:3-4]

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ

Most surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day there are signs for men who understand. [3:190]



In the profound Duʿāʾ ʿArafah, Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) mentions that he realises that all the life experiences that Allāh (SWT) makes us go through, all the good and the difficult times, were all His way of introducing Himself to us:

9.1 KNOWING ALLĀH (SWT)

MY NOTES

إِلٰهِي عَلِمْتُ بِٱخْتِلَافِ ٱلْآثَارِ

O my God, I have known, through variety of signs

وَتَنَقُّلَاتِ ٱلْأَطْوَارِ

and changes of phases,

أَنَّ مُرَادَكَ مِنِّي أَنْ تَتَعَرَّفَ إِلَيَّ فِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

that what You want from me is that You introduce Yourself to me in all things

حَتَّىٰ لَا أَجْهَلَكَ فِي شَيْءٍ

so that I will not ignore You in anything.

Hence Allāh (SWT) commands us to reflect upon the countless blessings He has bestowed upon us:

يَاأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ هَلْ مِنْخَالِقٍ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنْ السَّمَاءِ وَالأَرْضِ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ هُوَ فَأَنَّى تُؤْفَكُونَ

O mankind! Remember Allāh's blessing upon you! Is there any creator other than Allāh who provides for you from the sky and the earth? There is no god except Him. So where do you stray? [35:3]

3. The Qurʾān: The creation around us forms the external signs of Allāh (SWT). The Qurʾān features the written signs of Allāh (SWT). It was the miracle of our Holy Prophet (S). It is so powerful that it even managed to shake the hearts of those who used to bury their baby girls alive without any hesitation.

إِنَّ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا

Surely this Quran guides to that which is most upright and gives good news to the believers who do good that they shall have a great reward. [17:9]

4. Self-Purification: In multiple verses, aḥādīth and aḥādīth qudsīyyah, Allāh (SWT) tells us that the human **spiritual heart** is the source of truly attaining deep knowledge of Allāh (SWT).

مَا وَسِعَنِي سَمَاوَاتِي وَلَا أَرْضِي ، وَلَكِنْ وَسِعَنِي قَلْبُ عَبْدِيَ الْمُؤْمِنِ

My heavens and my earth could not contain Me, but the heart of My believing servant contains Me.



The main purpose of our life is to "know" Allāh (SWT). This knowing, however, is not a rational or intellectual knowing that is often called ʿ**ilm** (knowledge). Rather, it is **maʿrifah**, which is better translated as "realisation". ʿ**Irfān** (the science of "realising" God), is derived from the word **maʿrifah**.

There are numerous verses in the Qurʾān that encourage people to embark on a journey of self-discovery and the maʿrifah of Allāh (SWT). Similarly, there are numerous aḥādīth that encourage us to understand Tawḥīd deeply and realise who Allāh (SWT) is (i.e. gain maʿrifah), not just through the mind and its logical deductions and philosophical arguments, but through purifying the heart and making this purification process a "journey" towards Allāh (SWT), so that He is known directly through personal experience.

IN SUMMARY

1. What do the names of Allāh (SWT) tell us about Him?
2. Explain what al-Ṣifāt al-Thubutiyyah are and give three examples.
3. Explain what al-Ṣifāt al-Salbiyyah are and give three examples.
4. Explain in detail at least two ways in which one can try to know Allāh (SWT).

DID YOU KNOW?

The name of God, Allāh, encompasses all the other names of God. This is why we call Him by the name Allāh more than any other Name.

KEY POINTS

1. **Al-Asmāʾ al-Ḥusnā** refer to the Beautiful Names of Allāh (SWT). Allāh (SWT) tells us in the Qurʾān that when we pray to Him, we can call Him by any of His Beautiful Names. The Names of Allāh (SWT) are countless.

2. Allāh (SWT)'s names refer to His attributes. Everything in creation reflects and manifests these different Names of Allāh (SWT).

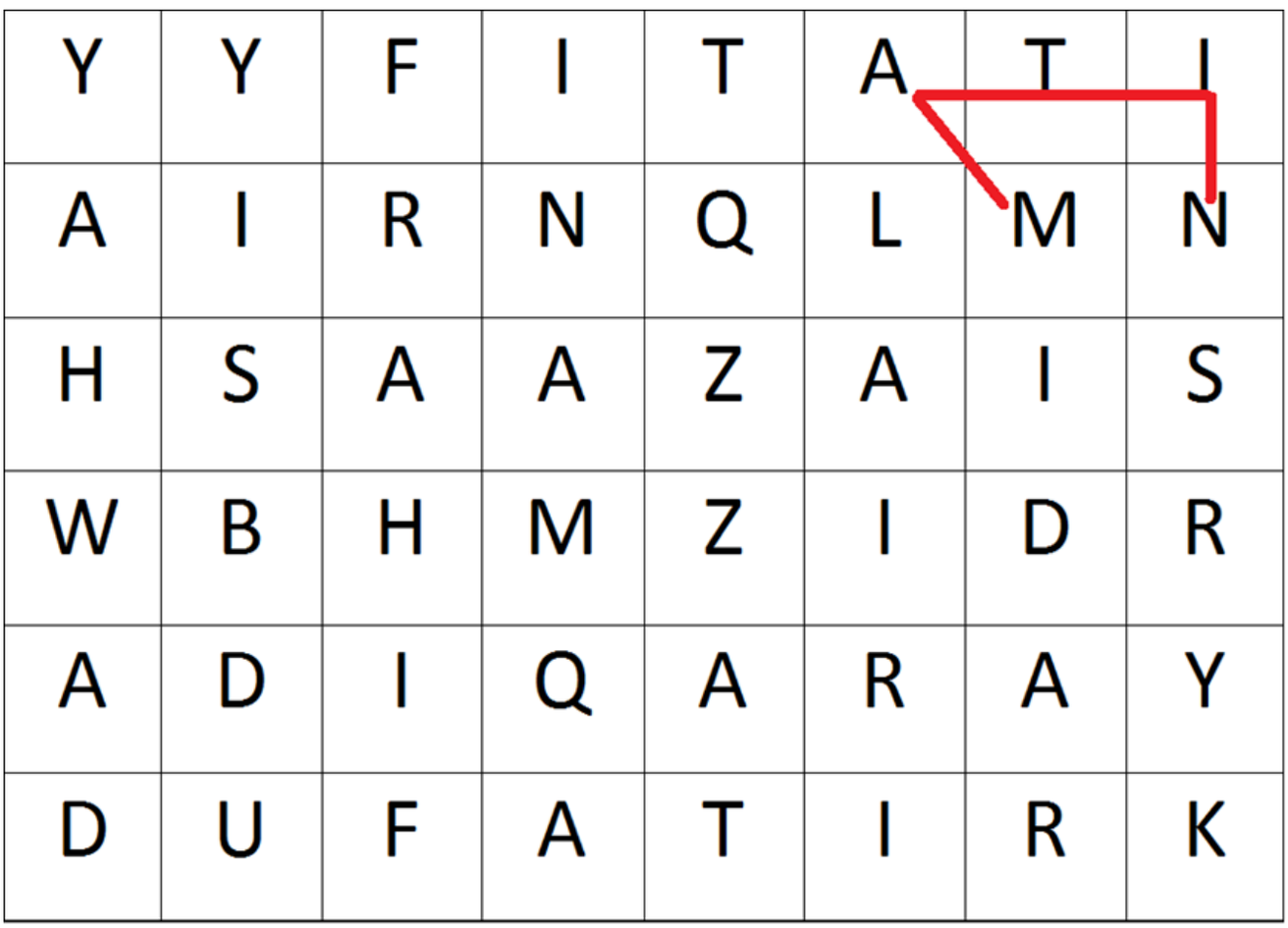
3. Al-Ṣifāt al-Thubutiyyah are the qualities of Allāh (SWT) that are true regarding Him. The opposite of this are al-Ṣifāt al-Salbiyyah, which are attributes that are not true regarding Allāh (SWT).

4. It is not possible to fully understand Allāh (SWT). However, we can try to know Him to our capacities through different ways, such as our fiṭrah, the external signs of Allāh (SWT), the Qurʿān and self-purification.

ACTIVITY PAGE

Find the Names of Allāh (SWT) mentioned in the word bank below. Although all the letters of each word are connected together, most words are not going to be horizontal or vertical in a straight line. You will have to think outside the box!

One has been done for you – The Name of Allāh (SWT) (AL-)MATIN.



Y	Y	F	I	T	A	T	I
A	I	R	N	Q	L	M	N
H	S	A	A	Z	A	I	S
W	B	H	M	Z	I	D	R
A	D	I	Q	A	R	A	Y
D	U	F	A	T	I	R	K

WORD BANK

WADUD
RAHIM
RAHMAN
RAZZAQ
HAMID
KARIM
ALIM
QADIR
QADIM
SAMI
BASIR
LATIF
ALI
HAYY
FATIR
MATIN

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 1) 9.2

All Muslims are united in their belief in the core doctrines of Islam, namely Tawḥīd, Nubuwwah and Qiyāmah. Beyond these three core doctrines, Shīʿah Muslims also place great emphasis on two other doctrines – the ʿAdālah of Allāh (SWT) and Imāmah.

Allāh (SWT) has many different attributes (ṣifāt); however, we give special importance to Divine Justice (ʿAdālah) for two key reasons:

1. To clarify the Twelver Shīʿī position on Divine Justice as compared to other schools of thought in Islam, such as the Ashāʿirah and the Muʿtazilah.

2. To clarify the Twelver Shīʿah position on Divine Justice in opposition to those who challenge the Justice of God, such as atheists.

Last year, in Class 9, you were introduced to some of the differences between the Twelver Shīʿī school of thought, as compared to the Ashʿarī and Muʿtazilī schools, with regards to Divine Justice. In today's lesson, we will study the challenge often raised by atheists regarding the belief in Divine Justice in the face of apparent "evil" in the world.

Scientifically, it is not possible to disprove the existence of God, because God is beyond science. The famous scientist and philosopher, Francis Bacon, once remarked:

"A little knowledge of science makes man an atheist, but an in-depth study of science makes him a believer in God."

For this reason, atheists usually resort to a second line of argument to try to disprove the existence of God – the existence of evil in the world, which we will study in this lesson and the next lesson.

ARE NATURAL DISASTERS EVIL?

A conversation between an atheist and a believer about "natural evil":



ATHEIST: Tsunamis are evil. How can a Merciful God allow such things to take place?

BELIEVER: It is incorrect to call natural disasters "evil". You are basing your understanding on a **wrong definition of evil**. It is often due to such misunderstandings that people make wrong assumptions about God and end up rejecting God.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the correct definition of "evil"
2. Understand Divine Justice in relation to the occurrence of natural disasters

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Carefully read through the points raised in the conversation between the atheist and believer. Can you think of any other reasons why Allāh (SWT) allows natural disasters to take place?

9.2 THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 1)

MY NOTES

ATHEIST: Why are natural disasters not evil? What is the correct definition of evil?

BELIEVER: The correct definition of evil is "**the willful rejection of good**". In other words, when someone who has **free will** to choose to either do good or reject good decides to reject good, evil is brought about. Anything else cannot be called "evil".

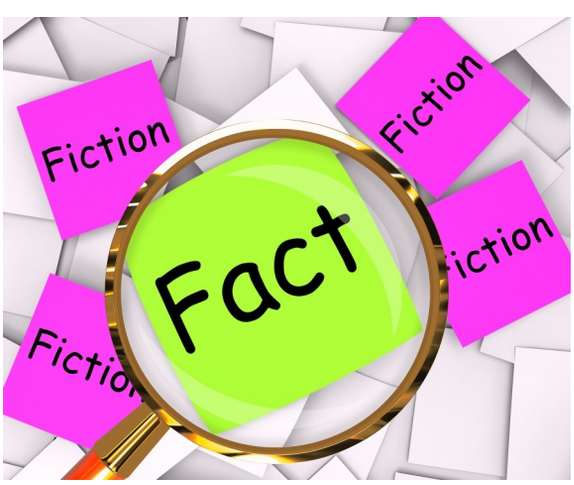
ATHEIST: Can you please explain further.

BELIEVER: If a person is killed by another person, but there was **no intent** to kill, we call it an **accident**, no evil has taken place. Although the result of the accident was death and someone was killed, we cannot call such an incident "evil". It may be a sad event, but it is not evil.

Notice that **evil is directly connected to free will**, in that someone chooses to do something bad. If you take free-will out of the equation, there is no evil left.

Therefore, when natural disasters such as a tsunami takes place, such an event cannot be called evil, because there is no notion of choice there. It is just a physical reality taking place, where water moves in a specific direction to fill a certain space which it is supposed to fill based on the laws of physics.

ATHEIST: Ok fair enough. Natural disasters are not evil in themselves, but what about when people die as a result of such events? If you had the ability and power to save someone from a tsunami, would you not save him or her?



BELIEVER: Yes, of course I would.

ATHEIST: Then how can God, whom you believe to be all-Powerful and all-Merciful, allow innocent children to die from tsunamis?

BELIEVER: Good question. However, in your argument, you have made certain incorrect assumptions, which have led you to wrong conclusions about God.

ATHEIST: Which incorrect assumptions have I made?

BELIEVER: First of all, you have assumed that death is a bad thing and that it is wrong for a child to die. Your conclusions are also based on the assumption that

this life is the be all and end all. However, if you were to now understand death as the **end of the trials and difficulties of this world** and simply as a portal to a new phase of existence, which is our real and permanent home and for which were created in the first place, then death is no longer seen as a bad thing.



In fact, for good-doers, death is a joyful time, because they are going to a much better place, where they will be rewarded for their efforts in this world! Also, the innocent children who die from natural disasters will be recompensed in the Hereafter and will be given a place they will be very happy with.

ATHEIST: You're right, in my argument, I had assumed death as a bad thing. Viewing death from this perspective truly does change the whole argument.

BELIEVER: Another assumption that you made in your argument is that it is wrong for children to die from such incidents, because they have their entire lives ahead of them. However, this is a wrong thing to say, because the exact age that those children are meant to die in is already decreed by God from before, so there is no room to assume that "they had their entire lives ahead of them"!

Besides, who's property are those children anyways? Do they belong to their parents or do they belong to God? When an owner leaves his possession with you and then one day comes to take it back. Would you call this evil?

ATHEIST: No, of course it's not evil.

BELIEVER: Then by the same logic, when God decides to take back His property, it cannot be called evil!

In the Qurʾān, we are told that in the past, God has decided to destroy entire communities, such as the people of ʿĀd and Thamūd. Just like God created you and I in the first place and placed us in this world, He can also take us back whenever He wishes. We all belong to Him and He can decide to bring us back to Himself whenever He wishes. There is no evil here. Our job is to believe in Him, make best use of our short time in this world and prepare for death, whenever it is destined for us.

ATHEIST: Yes, you are right. God has the right to take back His property whenever He wishes. This cannot be called evil.

DID YOU KNOW?

Many events that we normally refer to as "natural disasters" are actually very good in and off themselves. For example, one of the benefits of earthquakes is that they allow the planet to constantly recycle itself in order to maintain a life sustaining balance.

Earthquakes also bring minerals and metal rich deposits to the surface and make fossil fuels easier to access.

MY NOTES

9.2 THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 1)

KEY POINTS

1. The correct definition of "evil" is the "willful rejection of God", i.e. evil is directly connected to free will.

2. Natural disasters cannot be called "evil", because there is no free will associated with such events.

3. If we correctly understand death as the end of the difficulties and trials in this world and as the gateway to our true life, then it is no longer seen as a "bad" thing in itself.

4. Allāh (SWT) allows people to die from natural disasters because of a greater mercy and wisdom. It is only through witnessing such incidents that we appreciate the good.

5. Trials and difficulties in this world give meaning to this life. They are part of the system Allāh (SWT) has created to give us the opportunity to grow as human beings.

BELIEVER: And even beyond all of this, although we question what kind of God can see people die in natural disasters, especially innocent children, there is actually great mercy and wisdom associated with such occasions…

ATHEIST: Really? How so?

BELIEVER: How could you and I understand the value of human life if we didn't see it go away? How could we understand the fragility of the human race if we didn't experience such events? How could we appreciate the value of the stable earth if it didn't shake during an earthquake?

We can only understand, appreciate and become thankful for good things in this life when we experience the opposite of these things. For example, if we never become ill, we would not appreciate good health. If we never experience hunger, we would never appreciate food.

ATHEIST: Yes, you are totally right. I never thought of it in this way. You have totally changed my perspective on this. Thank you very much!

DID YOU KNOW?

Allāh (SWT) informs us in many places in the Holy Qur'ān that we will face trials and difficulties in this world. That is part of the system of this world, which He has created. These trials give meaning to this life and allow us to grow as human beings.

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُم بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ

We will surely test you with a measure of **fear** and **hunger** and a **loss of wealth**, **lives**, and **fruits**; and give good news to the patient -

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

those who, when an affliction visits them, say, **'Indeed we belong to Allāh and to Him do we indeed return.'** [2:155-6]

IN SUMMARY

1. 1. What is the true definition of "evil"?
2. 2. Why can we not call natural disasters evil?
3. 3. How can a Merciful God allow children to die through natural disasters?

ACTIVITY PAGE

CIRCLE THE CORRECT ANSWER

1) Death is a joyous occasion for:

Children

Disbelievers

Good-doers

2) Is it true that natural disasters are evil?

True, because they cause massive destruction.

True, because they cause death intentionally.

False, because the statement is based on a wrong assumption about “evil”.

3) Evil comes about when:

A person chooses to do good.

A person chooses to do bad intentionally.

A person does bad unintentionally.

4) Is it evil for Allāh (SWT) to allow children to die from natural disasters?

Yes, because they had their entire lives ahead of them.

No, because we all belong to Allāh (SWT) and He can take us away from this world whenever He wishes.

Yes, because children are innocent.

5) There is Wisdom and Mercy associated with natural disasters.

Yes, because they teach us the value of life.

No, because people lose their valuables.

Yes, because people need to be punished.

9.3 THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 2)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand Divine Justice in relation to the occurrence of "man-made evil"
2. Understand why believers go through trials and difficulties in this world

MY NOTES

CLASS ACTIVITY

Apart from the reasons already mentioned in this lesson, what are the other reasons why human beings face trials and difficulties in this world?

WHY DOES GOD NOT STOP HUMAN BEINGS FROM COMMITTING EVIL?

ATHEIST: In our last discussion, you explained to me that it is incorrect to refer to natural disasters as "evil", because the correct definition of evil is **"the wilful rejection of good"**. You also explained to me some of the benefits and wisdom behind the occurrence of natural disasters in this world and you raised good points. However, what about when human beings are responsible for murders and countless other crimes? Would you not call such actions "evil"?

BELIEVER: Yes, such actions are evil, because human beings use their free will to do them.

ATHEIST: When the bombings took place in London on 07/07/2005, if you were there and had the ability and power to stop it from taking place, would you have stopped it?

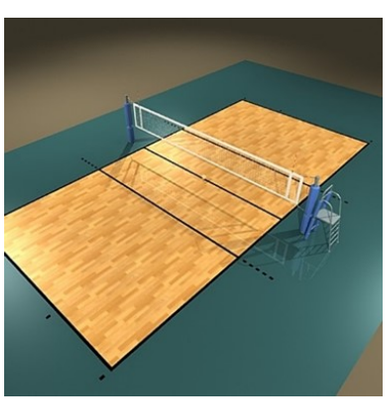
BELIEVER: Yes, of course I would have.

ATHEIST: So if God is all-Merciful and all-Powerful, like you claim, then why does He allow human beings to commit these evil deeds? Why doesn't He stop them?

BELIEVER: If you think about it, what you are really asking is for **God to intervene and take away the free will of human beings to choose to commit good or evil deeds**. This would reduce human beings to being mere robots. It would defeat the whole purpose of this life as a test for us.

ATHEIST: Can you please explain further.

BELIEVER: Imagine you are in a gymnasium playing volleyball. Notice how the volleyball court has a line marked out around its perimeter. This line can be regarded as the barrier between "good" and "evil": When you play the game, as long as you keep the ball on the correct side of the line (i.e. inside the court), you're doing "good". However, as soon as you hit the ball outside of the line, you lose the point - you've committed "evil".



Why don't we just get rid of this line so that no one can lose a point and this "evil" cannot take place? And while we're at it, we should also remove the net in the middle of the court. This way, we can't go wrong!

ATHEIST: No way! If you remove the line and the net, you will destroy the game! Good volleyball players know how to keep the ball inside the line and they are good at it. That's the whole point!

BELIEVER: Do you play golf?

ATHEIST: Yes…

BELIEVER: I like playing golf too, but I'm not good. I don't like the bunkers in the field. They are big distractions. My golf ball keeps going inside them and it is very difficult to get it out! I think we should get rid of bunkers! Or even better, why don't people put some sort of chip inside their golf balls, such that whenever they hit a ball, they can use a machine to control it and make sure it always lands straight inside the hole! I'll become as good as Tiger Woods!



ATHEIST: No, that's not how it works! Once again, you are making the whole game pointless! You need the bunkers to stay there for the game to be fun and for you to become a better player…

BELIEVER: But they're evil! They stop me from winning easily!

ATHEIST: That's the whole point! The more bunkers you have in the field and the more you can avoid them, the better you become!

BELIEVER: Exactly! Now you've hit the nail on the head! The same is true about the existence of evil in this life. The more choice there is between doing good and evil and the more you choose to do good and reject evil, the better a human being you become!

In the Qur'ān, God says:

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ

Say, "I seek the protection of the Lord of the daybreak

مِن شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ

from the **evil** of what He has created" [113:1-2]

MY NOTES

9.3 THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 2)

MY NOTES

In the above verses, the "evil" being referred to is the potential for human beings to use their free will to bring about evil. God does not say that there is no evil in this world. He acknowledges that because of the free will of human beings, evil will also be there.

This evil needs to be there. **It is a necessary component of the trial**. This is what allows human beings to achieve their potential as the greatest of God's creation, by freely choosing to do good and rejecting evil. In this way, we become even better than angels. **The important point is that we must avoid evil!** That is what makes evil a "good thing" – when we avoid it! Just like the net in volleyball or the bunkers in golf, the more we can avoid them, the better we become.

Reflect on the following verse of the Qurʾān:

كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ

You are the best of the nations raised up for (the benefit of) men; you enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong and believe in Allāh…[3:110]

Notice how God once again acknowledges that evil does exist in this world, but says that our objective as God's representatives on earth is to rise up and pro-actively stop **evil** from being committed, by promoting good and forbidding evil in society.

God could easily have placed us straight into Paradise or Hell based upon His Knowledge of the choices we would make in this life. However, out of His Mercy, He has given us the opportunity to partake in the test of this world, so that we can **value Paradise** when we eventually go there. Likewise, those who are evil in this world will not have an excuse in the Hereafter when they enter Hell, because it is the result of their own actions in this world.

ATHEIST: Wow, that is quite profound… you have once again changed my whole perspective on life and the evil that we see happening around us. Thank you!

BELIEVER: You are most welcome!

THE TRIALS OF A BELIEVER

One of the main reasons why Allāh (SWT) subjects believers to trials in this world, is so that they can become even closer in station to Him after passing the trials. If a child is given a PhD certificate, he/she won't understand its worth and it will not hold any value for him/her. However, if that same child, after years of struggle, goes through primary and secondary school, then completes his/her Bachelor's and Master's Degrees and then finally completes his/her PhD, that same PhD

certificate will now hold enormous weight in his/her eyes. The same is true for a believer when he/she enters Paradise after years of trials and difficulties in this world.

MY NOTES

Imām al-Bāqir (A):

"Paradise is surrounded by trials and patience. So whoever endures trials in this world will enter Paradise. Hell is surrounded by pleasures and desires. Thus, whoever allows himself its pleasures and desires (of the world) will enter the Fire."

Imām al-Bāqir (A):

"Verily, the believer is tested according to the level of his faith."

Imām al-Ṣādiq (A):

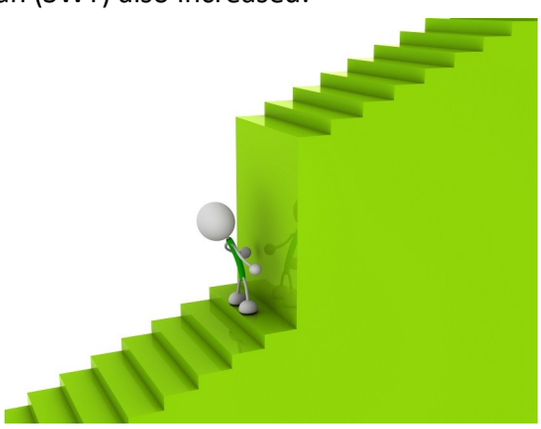
"Among what Allāh, the Exalted, revealed to Prophet Mūsā (A): 'I have not created anything as dear to Me as My believing servant, so when I try him, I do so for his own good, and I make him prosper for his own good, and I shield him for his own good. And I know best what improves My servant, so let him endure My trial and be thankful for My favours, and be content with My decree, and I will record him among the righteous."

The life of Prophet Ibrāhīm (A) is a very good example. He went through many extremely difficult trials:

* Everyone in his community was against him and he was thrown into a huge fire.
* He didn't have any children until a very old age. When he was finally granted a child, he was commanded by Allāh (SWT) to abandon this baby and its mother in a faraway desert.
* After many years, when he returned to the desert to once again meet his child, he was now commanded to slaughter this child as a sacrifice to Allāh (SWT).

Prophet Ibrāhīm (A) passed each one of these difficult trials and each time he passed a trial, his station in front of Allāh (SWT) also increased:

* He was first made a **nabī**
* Then he became a **rasūl**
* Then he became the special Friend of Allāh (SWT) (**khalīl Allāh**)
* Then finally, he became an **Imām**



9.3 THE PROBLEM OF EVIL (PART 2)

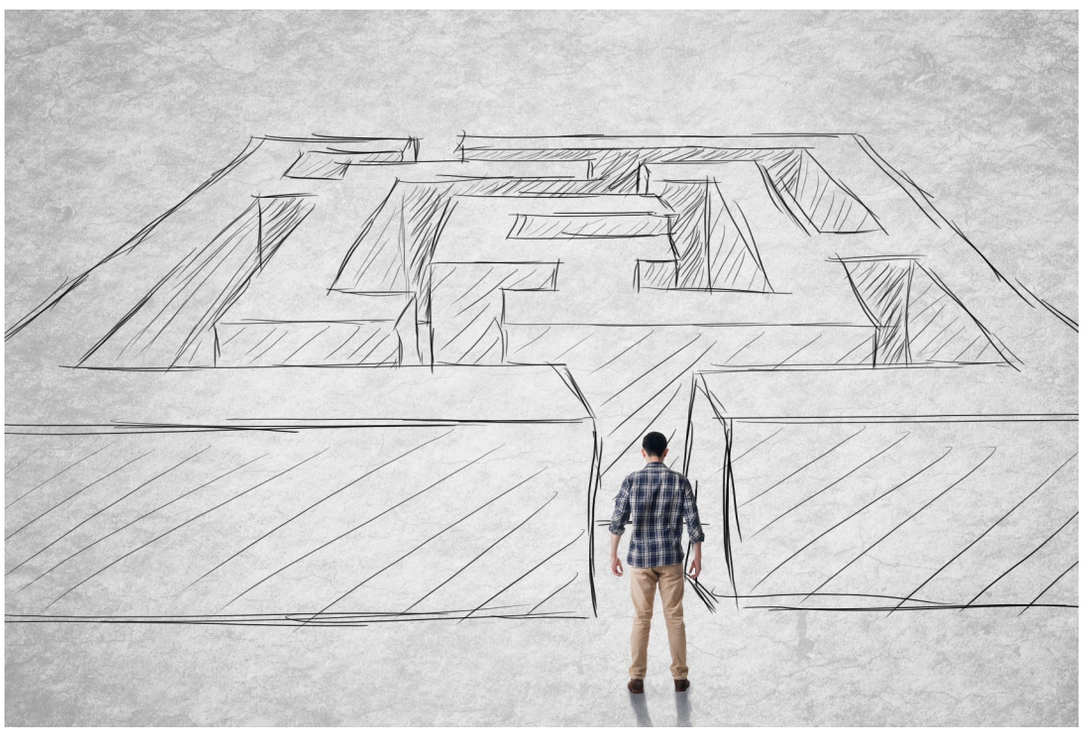
DID YOU KNOW?

Before Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) departed from Madīnah, he saw the Holy Prophet (S) in a dream, who told him:

"Oh my beloved Ḥusayn, it is as if I see you covered in your blood...Allāh has a special status reserved for you which you cannot attain, except through martyrdom (shahādah)."

Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) went through great difficulties, but as a result, he attained a very special status with Allāh (SWT).

When Allāh (SWT) informed the angels that He was going to appoint a human being as His vicegerent on earth, the angels were surprised because they only saw the potential of human beings to commit evil through their free will. However, they did not realise that by using their free will to do good and reject evil, human beings can become even greater than them!



KEY POINTS

1. Evil is the outcome of human beings using their free will to reject good.

2. If Allāh (SWT) stops people from committing evil, it will mean that human beings no longer have free will.

3. Just as the line surrounding a volleyball court and the net are necessary to play volleyball, evil is also a necessary component to this world. The objective is to avoid it.

4. Going through trials allow human beings to grow and earn *Jannah*.

5. The greater a person in Allāh (SWT)'s eyes, the greater his/her trials.

IN SUMMARY

1. Why does Allāh (SWT) not stop human beings from doing evil?
2. Why is evil an essential component in the system of this world?
3. Why does Allāh (SWT) test believers with trials?
4. Why do trials become more difficult the closer we get to Allāh (SWT)?

ACTIVITY PAGE

GUESS THE PHRASE!

There is an alphabet bank under each table. Each letter in the bank can be used multiple times.

		C			O		E			O	O			-					
				B		C			E		B		T			R			

Alphabet bank [E, O, H, S, G, D, M]

			I			I				H					L	F			
			J			T			N			F			O				

Alphabet bank [I, S, V, D, T, W, G, U, L, R, C, O, E]

					O				O					E					
							A				E	A							

Alphabet bank [D, R, F, L, H, T, B, K, Y]

9.4 REVELATION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What are the different forms of guidance from Allāh (SWT)?
2. What is the difference between waḥy and ilhām?
3. How does Allāh (SWT) communicate with His prophets and messengers?

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Can you name some of the personalities in the Qurʾān who received ilhām?

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF GUIDANCE FROM ALLĀH (SWT)?

In the Qurʾān, Allāh (SWT) tells us that He has provided guidance to every single thing in creation:

قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَىٰ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ

He said, 'Our Lord is He who gave everything its creation, then guided it.'

There are two different forms of guidance that are referred to in the Qurʾān. The first type is called "**intuitive guidance**" (**al-hidāyah al-takwiniyyah**). This type of guidance has been provided to the whole of creation and includes the laws of nature that govern non-living objects and also the natural instinct of living beings. Below are three examples of this in the Qurʾān:

1. Guidance to the Earth:

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا

On that day she shall relate all her news,

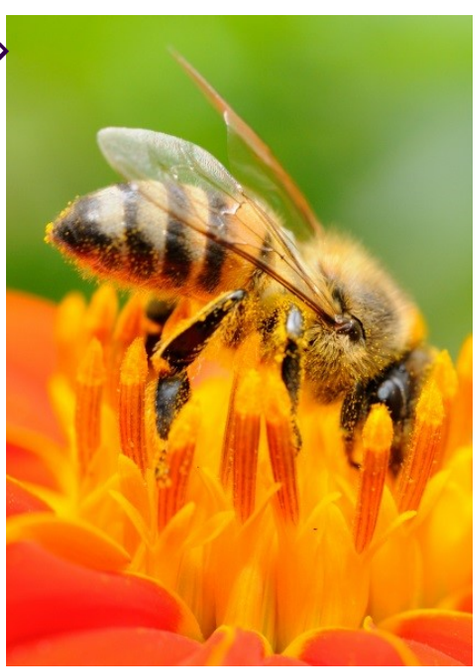
بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحَىٰ لَهَا

for your Lord will have inspired her (to do so). [99:4-5]

2. Guidance to the bee:

وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنِ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ

And your Lord revealed to the bee saying: Make hives in the mountains and in the trees and in what they build:



ثُمَّ كُلِي مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلًا ۚ يَخْرُجُ مِن بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِّلنَّاسِ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

Then eat of all the fruits and walk in the ways of your Lord submissively. There comes forth from within it a beverage of many colours, in which there is healing for men; most surely there is a sign in this for a people who reflect. [16:68-9]

3. Guidance to mankind:

MY NOTES

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا ۚ فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

Then set your face single-mindedly to the true faith and adhere to the true nature on which Allāh has created human beings. The mould fashioned by Allāh cannot be altered. That is the true, straight faith, although most people do not know. [30:30]

This last verse above refers to the natural disposition of all human beings, called the fiṭrah, through which we can intuitively know and understand certain basic truths, such as the existence of Allāh (SWT).

The second form of guidance from Allāh (SWT) is known as "**legislative guidance**" (**al-hidāyah al-tashriʿiyyah**)**.** This is a special form of guidance reserved for beings with a greater sense of understanding and intelligence, like human beings and the Jinn. Although humans have been guided to basic truths through the fiṭrah, we are still in need of more detailed guidance regarding the way to live our lives and what Allāh (SWT) expects from us.

This second form of guidance can be split into two types - **revelation** (**waḥy**) and **inspiration** (**ilhām**).

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WAḤY AND ILHĀM?



In the Qurʾān, when Divine guidance is referred to in general, both of these forms have been referred to in general as waḥy. However, there are many important differences between the two forms. Some of these are as follows:

1. Waḥy is a form of Divine revelation that is exclusive to prophets. However, all human beings have the potential to receive ilhām. The Imāms (A) and Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A) frequently received Divine guidance in the form of ilhām.

9.4 REVELATION

MY NOTES

2. When someone receives ilhām, the content of this inspiration is a private matter. It has no authority over anyone else, so it cannot be imposed upon others. However, when prophets receive waḥy, it is an authority over all human beings and it is part of Divine communication to all human beings via the respective prophet. This was the role of our Holy Prophet (S):

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا

O Prophet, We have sent you forth as a witness, a bearer of good news, and a warner,

وَدَاعِيًا إِلَى اللَّهِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَسِرَاجًا مُّنِيرًا

as one who calls people to Allāh by His permission, and as a light-giving torch. [33:35-6]

3. The source of the waḥy is clear to the prophet receiving the revelation. He is able to receive the revelations without any mistakes and confusion.



However, the exact source of inspiration, ilhām, is often not known to the person receiving it.

HOW DOES ALLĀH (SWT) COMMUNICATE WITH HIS PROPHETS & MESSENGERS?

The following verse highlights the various methods through which Allāh (SWT) communicates with His prophets and messengers:

وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَن يُكَلِّمَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِن وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا فَيُوحِيَ بِإِذْنِهِ مَا يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّهُ عَلِيٌّ حَكِيمٌ

It is not possible for any human being that God should speak to him unless it is by inspiration, or from behind a veil, or [that] He send a messenger to reveal what He wills by His permission. Verily, He is the Most High, Most Wise. [42:51]

According to the this verse, Allāh (SWT) communicates with prophets in three different ways:

1. **Direct revelation:** God reveals
2. to the prophet without any intermediary. An example of this type of revelation is mentioned in the following verse:

إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا

We will infuse you with a weighty Word. [73:5]

2. <u>From behind a curtain</u>: God reveals directly to the prophet, but the message is heard from an intermediary object. An example of this is the way Allāh (SWT) communicated with Prophet Mūsā (A) from the burning bush:

فَلَمَّا أَتَاهَا نُودِيَ مِن شَاطِئِ الْوَادِ الْأَيْمَنِ فِي الْبُقْعَةِ الْمُبَارَكَةِ مِنَ الشَّجَرَةِ أَن يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ



And when he came to it, a voice was uttered from the right side of the valley in the blessed sport of the bush, saying: O Mūsā! Surely I am Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds. [28:30]

3. <u>Through a messenger</u>: God communicates to the prophet through an intermediary, like angel Jibrāʿīl (A):

وَإِنَّهُ لَتَنزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

And most surely this is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds.

نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ

The Faithful Spirit has descended with it,

عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ

Upon your heart that you may be of the warners [26-192-4]

IN SUMMARY

1. What are the different forms of guidance?
2. What are the key differences between waḥy and ilhām?
3. Describe the ways in which Allāh (SWT) communicates with His prophets.

DID YOU KNOW?

Dreams of the prophets are also forms of communication from Allāh (SWT), like the dream instructing Prophet Ibrāhīm (A) to sacrifice his son, Prophet Ismāʿīl (A).

KEY POINTS

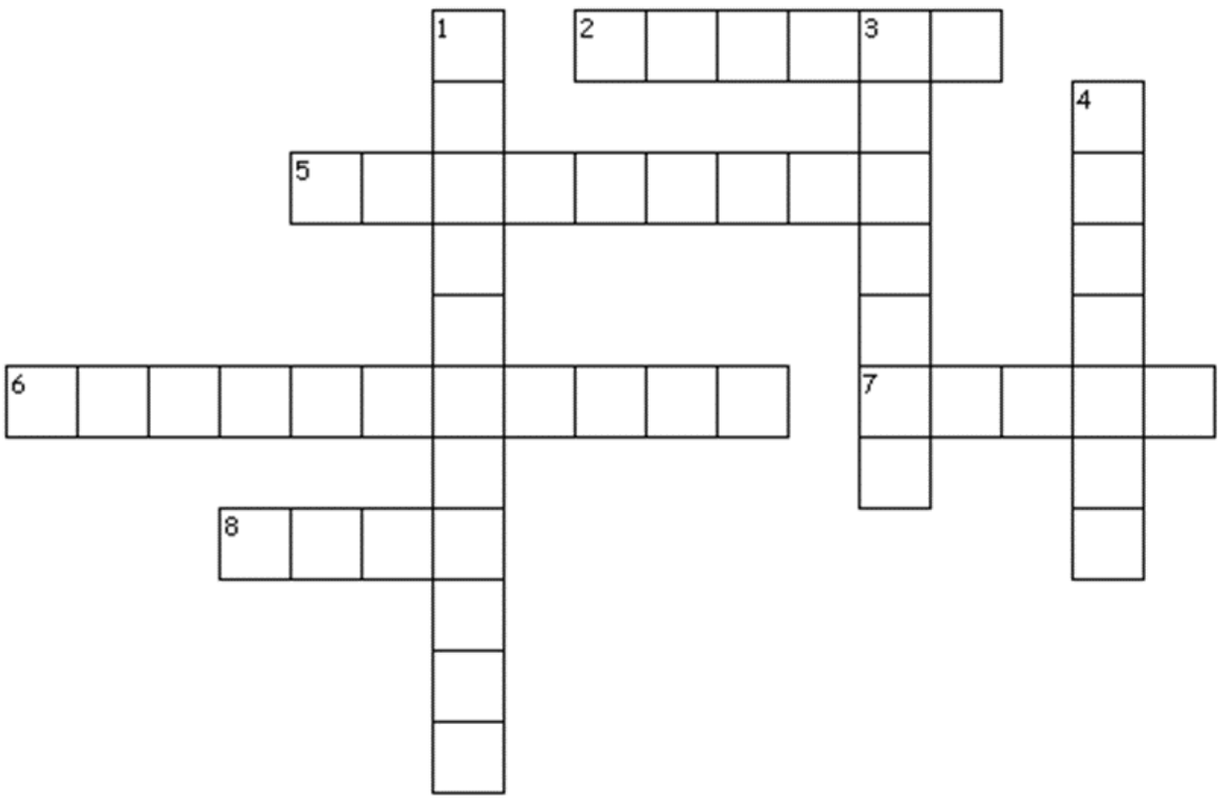
1. The "intuitive guidance" (**al-hidāyah al-takwiniyyah**) is a form of guidance that Allāh (SWT) provides to every creation in this world.

2/ The "legislative guidance" (**al-hidāyah al-tashriʿiyyah**)is a form of guidance provided to intelligent beings like human beings and the Jinn. This form guidance is further divided into two types: revelation (**waḥy**) and inspiration (**ilhām**).

3. Waḥy is a form of Divine revelation that is exclusive to prophets. It is a commandment from Allāh (SWT) and whichever prophet receives it should convey it to the people. On the other hand, ilhām can be received by anyone. Unlike waḥy, it is a private matter and cannot be enforced upon others.

4. Allāh (SWT) communicates with His prophets in three different ways: direct revelation, from behind a curtain and through a messenger, such as angel Jibrāʿīl (A).

ACTIVITY PAGE



Across

2. The form of revelation where no intermediary is used is called "_____ revelation".

5. Revelations brought by angels is referred to as revelation through an _____.

6. A form of guidance that is provided to every creation on this earth is called al-hidāyah al-_____.

7. The type of revelation that is a private matter and cannot be enforced upon others is called _____.

8. The type of revelation that is exclusive to prophets is called _____.

Down

1. A form of guidance that is provided to intelligent beings like human beings and the Jinn is called al-hidāyah al-_____.

3. Allāh (SWT) sometimes communicates with His prophets through intermediary objects. This form of revelation is known as revelation from behind a _____.

4. The angel who brought revelation to the Holy Prophet (S) is _____.

IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE GHAYBAH (PART 1)

9.5

THE TITLES OF THE 12TH HOLY IMĀM (A)

The name of our living Imām (A) is Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan. However, out of respect for our Imām, we do not usually refer to him by his own name. Instead, we refer to him by his many titles. Some of these are:

1. **al-Mahdi** - The Guided One
2. **al-Qāʾim** - The One Who Will Rise Up
3. **Ṣāḥib al-ʿAṣr wa al-Zamān** - The Master of the Age and Time
4. **al-Muntaẓar** - The Awaited One
5. **al-Ḥujjah** - The Proof of Allāh (SWT)
6. **Baqiyyat Allāh** - The Remnant of Allāh (SWT)

WHY DID OUR IMĀM (A) GO INTO GHAYBAH?

In order to understand some of the most important reasons for the ghaybah of our Imām (A), we need to recap what took place to the other Imāms (A) before him:

After the passing away of the Holy Prophet (S), the companions eventually pledged their allegiance to Abū Bakr, followed by ʿUmar and ʿUthmān. Imām ʿAlī (A) was sidelined from his rightful position.



When Imām ʿAlī (A) finally became the caliph, his enemies were not happy and kept him engaged in battles throughout most of his caliphate. He fought in the battles of Jamal, Ṣiffīn and Nahrawān. His caliphate came to an end very prematurely when he was assassinated by one of the Khawārij while praying in Masjid al-Kūfah.

Imām al-Ḥasan (A) succeeded his father as caliph, but Muʿāwiyah did not allow him to lead the Muslim Ummah in peace and he was eventually poisoned by the latter.

Muʿāwiyah took over as caliph. After his death, he appointed his son, Yazīd, as caliph despite agreeing in his peace treaty with Imām al-Ḥasan (A) that he would not. Yazīd went a step ahead of his father and publicly disregarded the laws of Islam. Under his leadership, Islam was going to become completely distorted and corrupted.

Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) could not allow this to happen and rose up to defend the religion of Islam. Along with his family and close companions, Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) was tragically massacred on the plains of Karbalāʾ.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To become familiar with some of the titles of the 12th Imām (A)
2. To understand why the Imām (A) went into ghaybah

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Write a letter to Imām al-Mahdī (A). Speaking from your heart, inform him about the problems in this world, as well as your personal problems in life and ask him to help you and those suffering around the world.

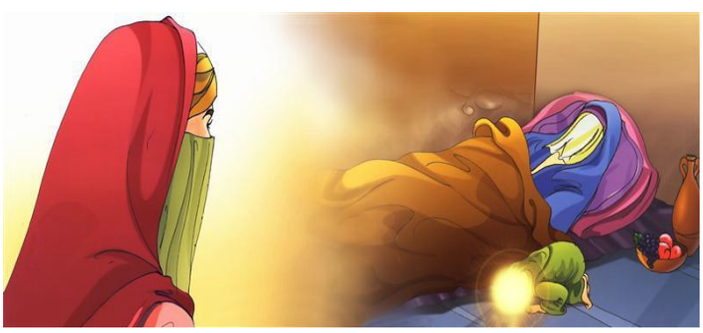
9.5 IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE *GHAYBAH* (PART 1)

MY NOTES

After him, the Holy Imāms, one after another, strove to protect and teach the true message of Islam and purify their followers. However, each of the Imāms were harassed by the oppressive rulers of their times and eventually killed.

The largest threat to the oppressors was the Divine promise of the coming of the Imām al-Mahdī (A), which they knew about. They were so fearful that they went to the extent of putting Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A) under constant surveillance, so as to monitor the potential birth of any sons and have him killed. The 11th Imām (A) was also killed while he was very young for this same reason, but the oppressors could not stop the Divine Will of the birth of the 12th Imām, Imām al-Mahdī (A).

When the 11th Holy Imām (A) was killed, our 12th Holy Imām (A) was only 5 years old. For his protection, his birth was kept a secret and only the very close companions of the 11th Imām (A) were allowed to see him.



After the passing away of the 11th Imām (A), Imām al-Mahdī (A) went into the Minor Occultation (al-Ghaybah al-Ṣughrā). He was hidden from the public eye and the general public did not know of his whereabouts. He communicated with his Shīʿahs through four successive deputies (nuwāb). When the last of them died, the Major Occultation (al-Ghaybah al-Kubrā) of the 12th Holy Imām (A) started. Keeping the above context in mind, below are some of the reasons why our Imām (A) is in ghaybah:

1. For the protection of the 12th Imām (A): Each of our Imāms (A) were killed at the hands of the oppressors. Allāh (SWT) in His Wisdom willed that there would be 12 Imāms after the Holy Prophet (S). Imām al-Mahdī (A) is the last of them and until the appropriate time comes for him to establish the promised just government on earth, he needs to be protected from being unjustly killed like his forefathers.

2. Due to the lack of appreciation by the Muslims: The presence of an Imām is a grace from Allāh (SWT). However, ungratefulness towards this grace and the evil actions of the people can become the cause of the deprivation of this Divine grace. The ghaybah of the Imām (A) will continue until the time people realise the dire need for a Divinely appointed leader to rule over them and until he has enough sincere and worthy followers who will support him. In some aḥādīth, we have been told that the Imām (A) will reappear when he has 313 devoted followers. It is a very shameful truth, that despite the large number of Shīʿahs in the world, the Imām is still waiting for as little as 313 true Shīʿahs.

THE FAMOUS STORY OF SAHL B. AL-HASAN IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE NECESSARY LEVEL OF FAITH OF THE TRUE FOLLOWERS OF THE IMĀM (A):

MY NOTES

Sahl b. al-Ḥasan al-Khurasānī, who was one of the Shīʿahs in Khurāsān (a province in Iran), once came to Madīnah to meet Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A). Sahl asked the Imām: "O son of the Messenger of Allāh, you are of the Imāms of the Ahl al-Bayt. What prevents you from claiming your right (to rule) while you have more than one hundred thousand Shīʿahs who are ready to fight for you?"

The Imām (A) asked him to sit down and requested someone to turn on the oven that was in the house. After the oven became very hot and turned red, the Imām (A) told Sahl to go and enter inside the oven. Sahl became scared and said: "My master, O son of the Messenger of Allāh! Do not punish me by fire and make it easy for me."



At this time, Hārūn al-Makkī, a close companion of the Imām, entered the room and after the greetings exchanged, without providing any explanation, the Imām (A) told him to enter inside the oven. Without asking any questions, he immediately did so. The Imam (A) turned back to Sahl and started talking to him about Khurāsān as if nothing had happened. Sahl became very confused. After some time, the Imām (A) told Sahl to stand up and go and look inside the oven. Sahl looked inside the oven and to his surprise, saw Hārūn sitting cross-legged inside the fire. Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) asked Hārūn to come out of oven and he came out healthy with no burns or injury. At this time, the Imām (A) asked Sahl how many of the Shīʿahs he was speaking about believed in the Imām like Hārūn did. Sahl replied: "By Allāh, not even one."

3. As a test for the believers: The Holy Prophet (S) used to tell his some of his companions that the believers who would live at the end of the times will have a greater status than them. This is because they would believe in Allāh (SWT), His messenger (S) and the Imāms (A) without even seeing them. The ghaybah of our Imām (A) is a great test for us. Many people have failed in this test. However, for those of us who work ourselves and prepare for the coming of the Imām (A) by becoming God-conscious servants of Allāh (SWT), we have been given this great opportunity to pass this test and raise our status in the eyes of Allāh (SWT).

9.5 IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE GHAYBAH (PART 1)

DID YOU KNOW?

When Imām al-Mahdī (A) reappears, the true followers of the Imām who passed away during his ghaybah will be brought back to life to be with the 12th Holy Imām (A) and help him in his mission. This belief is known as the Rajʿa, meaning "The Return".



KEY POINTS

1. The 12th Holy Imām (A) has many titles. One of them is al-Mahdī, meaning "The Guided One".

2. Many reasons have been given for his ghaybah. Among them include his safety, the lack of appreciation for Allāh (SWT)'s chosen guides and as a test for the believers.

3. However, we cannot fully understand all the reasons for the ghaybah because it is from among the Divine mysteries. It is only when the Imām (A) will reappear that we will truly understand the Wisdom behind his ghaybah.

Allāh (SWT) questions us in the Qurʾān:

أَحَسِبَ النَّاسُ أَن يُتْرَكُوا أَن يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ، وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۖ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِينَ

Do people think that they will be let go merely by saying: “We believe,” and that they will not be tested? And certainly We tried those before them, so Allāh will certainly know those who are true and He will certainly know the liars. [29:2-3]

4. To prove that the Imām (A) is the only solution: Imām al-Mahdī (A) will reappear once all types of ideologies will have been tested and failed. At that time people will understand that they do not have any more solutions and they will be more willing to accept the solution presented by the Imām (A).

5. Divine Wisdom: Although many explanations have been put forward for the ghaybah of our Imām (A), Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) has informed us that we will only truly understand the Divine Wisdom behind it after the Imām (A) reappears and we see it for ourselves. He compared the ghaybah to the story of Prophet Mūsā (A) and Khiḍr (A) in the Qurʾān.

In the story, Khiḍr (A) told Prophet Mūsā (A) that he can stay with him and learn from him as long as he does not ask him any questions regarding his actions until he himself informs Mūsā (A) regarding them. However, when he performed those actions, Prophet Mūsā (A) could not understand them and found them very questionable. He kept losing patience with Khiḍr (A) until he was finally told the Divine Wisdom behind those actions and then it all made complete sense for Prophet Mūsā (A).

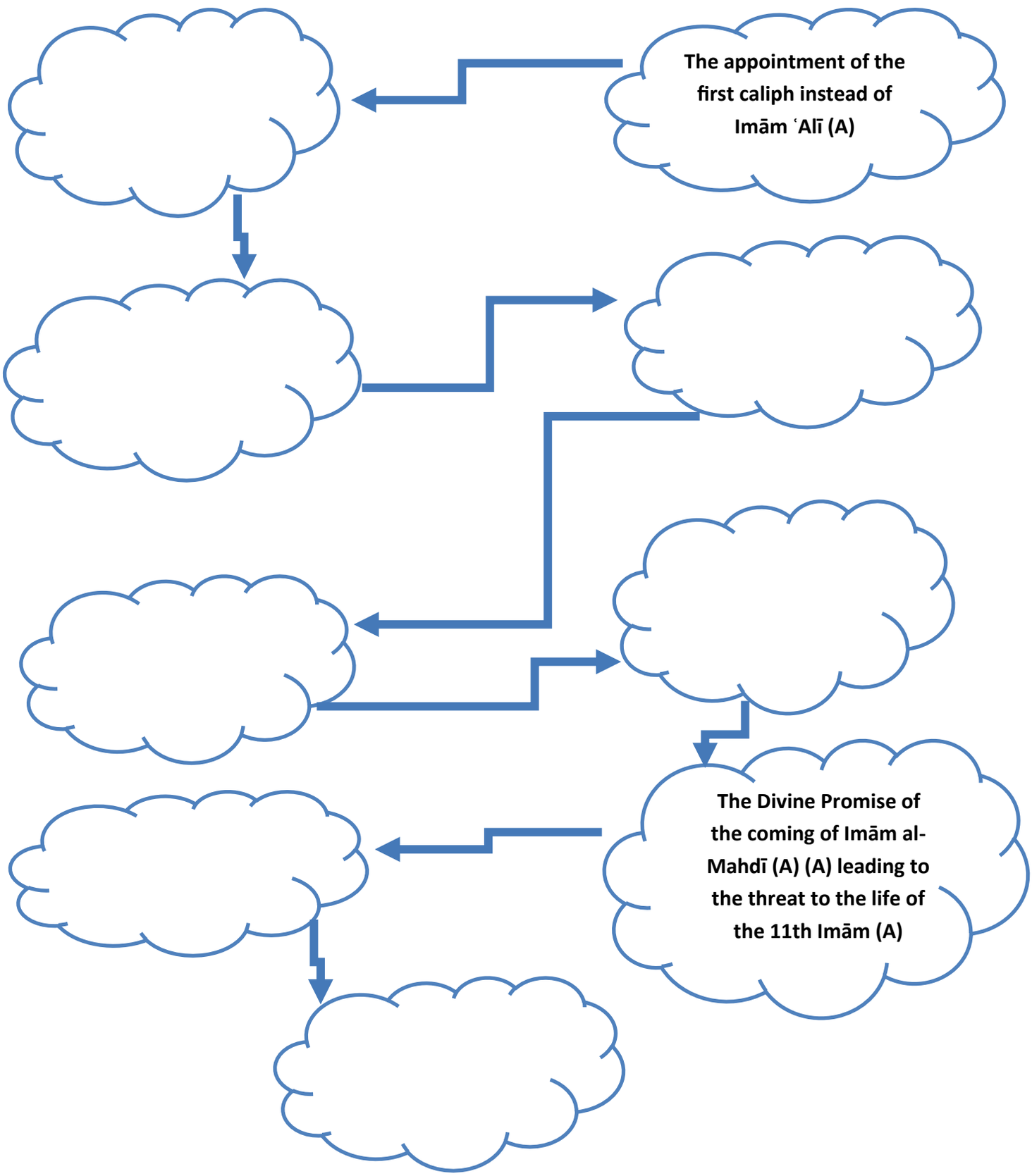
In other words, the Imām (A) is telling us that we must be patient and not arrogantly assume that we are able to understand all of the Divine mysteries. We must not lose faith in the existence of our Imām (A) and use this time to prepare ourselves for his coming. When he reappears, he will inform us of the reasons for his ghaybah and it will make perfect sense at that time, just like it eventually made perfect sense to Mūsā (A).

IN SUMMARY

1. List three titles of the 12th Holy Imām (A) along with their meanings.
2. How did the Muslims treat all of the Imāms prior to the 12th Holy Imām (A)?
3. List three reasons why the Imām (A) is in ghaybah and provide an explanation for each.
4. Why can we not fully understand all the reasons for the ghaybah? Which example did Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) use to explain this?

ACTIVITY PAGE

SUMMARISE THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT THAT LEAD TO THE *GHAYBAH* OF IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A)



9.6 IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE GHAYBAH (PART 2)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the major difference between the Sunnī and Shīʿah belief regarding Imām al-Mahdī (A)
2. To understand whether it is possible for the 12th Imām (A) to live such a long life
3. To understand how we benefit from the 12th Imām (A) while he is in ghaybah

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Think of three things you can do to prepare yourself for the reappearance of the 12 Imām (A). Discuss these with the rest of your class.

SHĪʿAH AND SUNNĪ BELIEF IN IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A)

Both Sunnī and Shīʿah Muslims believe in the coming of Imām al-Mahdī (A) to establish a universal government. Both sect also believe that he will be a descendant of Imām ʿAlī (A) and Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A) and that his name will be the same as the name of the Holy Prophet (S). The major difference between the two sects is that Shīʿahs believe that the Imām (A) is already born and will reappear one day, while the Sunnīs believe that he is yet to be born.

IS IT POSSIBLE FOR IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A) TO LIVE SUCH A LONG LIFE?

Imām al-Mahdi (A) is now over 1180 years old. Some people question how it is possible for a human being to live this long. It is true that every human being is a mortal and has to die one day, including Imām al-Mahdī (A). However, there is no maximum time that a human being can live for. That is down to the will of Allāh (SWT). There are many examples in the Qurʾān and ḥadīth about people who have lived for a very long time, so it should not be a surprise for us that the Imām (A) is also able to be alive for so long.

According to the Qurʾān, Prophet Nūḥ (A) preached to his people for 950 years and according to some aḥādīth of the Maʿṣūmīn (A), he lived for 2500 years!

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ فَلَبِثَ فِيهِمْ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ إِلَّا خَمْسِينَ عَامًا فَأَخَذَهُمُ الطُّوفَانُ وَهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ

We did indeed send Noah to his people and he lived among them a thousand years save fifty. Eventually the Flood overtook them while they were engaged in wrongdoing. [29:14]

In fact, all Muslims believe that some prophet are still alive even today. For example, we all believe that Prophet ʿĪsā (A) was not crucified. He ascended to the heavens and one day, he will return to the earth and pray behind Imām al-Mahdī (A).

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَٰكِن شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا لَهُم بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا

And they said, 'We have killed the Messiah, ʿĪsā, son of Maryam, the Messenger of God.' They did not kill him, nor did they crucify him, though in was made to appear like that to them; those that disagreed about him are full of doubt, with no knowledge to follow, only supposition they certainly did not kill him.m[4:157]

Other prophets that are still alive include Prophet Idrīs (A), Prophet Khiḍr (A) and Prophet Īlyās (A). Each of them are much older than our 12th Holy Imām (A)! In the beautiful words of a poet:

Almighty God who does with ease
the whole wide world sustain,
Can with His Might, should He so please,
His proof on earth maintain.



MY NOTES

HOW CAN WE BENEFIT FROM THE IMĀM (A) IF HE IS IN GHAYBAH?

Many people often ask this question because they believe that the Imām (A)'s only purpose is to answer the questions of the people and guide them in their daily lives. However, in reality, the Imām (A)'s role is much greater than that. The Imām is Allāh (SWT)'s chosen representative and His proof (ḥujjah) in the world. It is through the Imām that Allāh (SWT) sends down His blessings to His creation and it is because of the physical existence of the Imām (A) on earth that life as we know it continues.

The Holy Prophet (S) said:

"My Ahl al-Bayt are security for the inhabitants of the earth. If my Ahl al-Bayt are not there, the inhabitants of the earth would be destroyed."

He also said:

"This religion shall always be upright till there are 12 chiefs from Quraysh. When they pass away, the earth will swallow all its inhabitants."

9.6 IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE GHAYBAH (PART 2)

DID YOU KNOW?

We are told in aḥādīth that despite his old age, when Imām al-Mahdī (A) reappears, he will look like a handsome 40 years old man.

Imām ʿAlī (A) said:

"I swear by Allāh that from the day Ādam (A) died, He has not left the earth without an Imām who guided people to Allāh, being His proof over His creation. The earth will never remain without an Imām as the proof of Allāh over His servants."

Our 12th Holy Imām himself has explained to us how we derive benefit from him while he is in ghaybah. He said:

"The way that people benefit from me during my occultation is as they benefit from the sun when the clouds cover it from the sights. I am indeed a (source) of security for the dwellers of the earth."



This is a very profound example from which we can learn a lot:

* Denying the existence of the Imām while he is in ghaybah is like denying the existence of the sun while it is hidden behind the clouds.
* Despite being hidden behind the clouds, we still benefit from the light and heat of the sun.
* If the sun was not there, we would not be able to survive. In the same way, if our Imām, as the proof of Allāh (SWT) on earth, was to no longer be there, the world would cease to exist.

KEY POINTS

1. It is not a surprise for the Imām al-Mahdī (A) to live such a long life. Many prophets have also lived long lives in the past. Some prophets are still alive today.

2. We benefit from the 12th Imām (A) while he is ghaybah like we benefit from the sun while it is hidden behind the clouds.

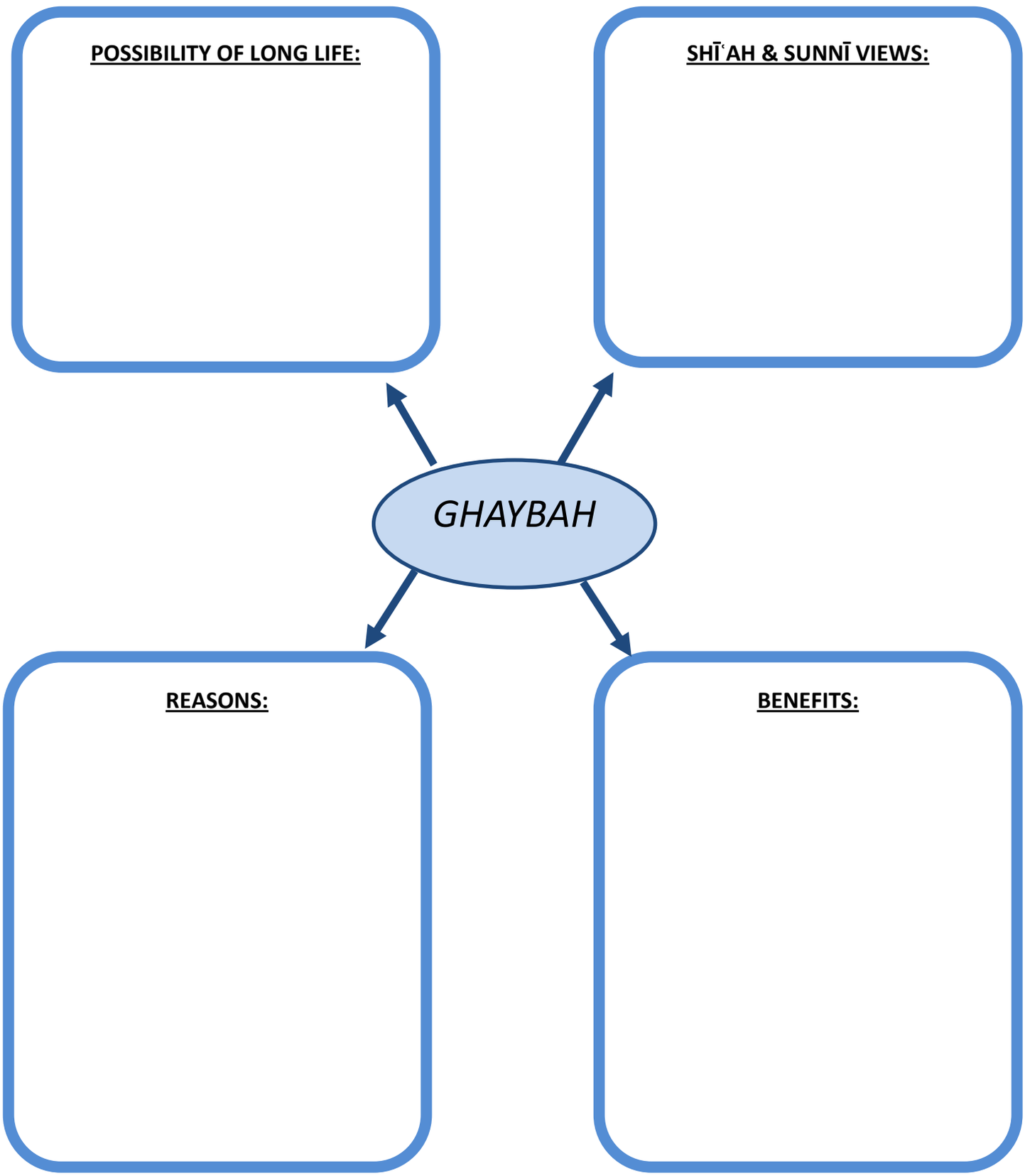
3. From the time of Prophet Ādam (A), there has not been a moment in this world, but that there has been a ḥujjah of Allāh (SWT) present. Without the presence of a ḥujjah of Allāh (SWT), the world cannot continue.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the exact age of Imām al-Mahdī (A) today?
2. Which other prophets lived long lives?
3. How do we benefit from the Imām (A) while he is in ghaybah?
4. What important example does the 12 Holy Imām (A) give to explain how we benefit from his ghaybah?
5. What are three lessons we can learn from this example?

ACTIVITY PAGE

SUMMARISE THE IMPORTANT POINTS THAT HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED IN THE LAST TWO LESSONS.



01 FORMAL ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To understand how the Big Bang Theory compares to the Qurʾānic description of the creation of the universe.

2. To be introduced to two presentations of the Cosmological Argument for the existence of God

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

In pairs, create a script for a role play between an atheist and a Muslim about the existence of God. Try to present the cosmological argument.

THE ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE



Through the development of science and technology, scientists have been able to gather a lot of evidence and information about the beginning of the universe. They have used their findings to develop a theory known as the **Big Bang Theory**.

This theory explains that about 13.7 billions years ago, all the matter that makes up the universe today was concentrated into a single tiny point of unimaginable density. Following a huge explosion - or a 'big bang' - all the matter in this single entity began to expand into the huge universe we have today and it is still continuously expanding exponentially.

The Qurʾānic description of the start of the universe is in harmony with the Big Bang Theory. Allāh (SWT) says that everything in creation was once a single entity and was “torn apart” by Allāh (SWT):

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا ۖ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ ۖ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

Did the unbelievers not realise that the heavens and the earth used to be joined together and that We ripped them apart, and that We made every living thing from water? Will they not believe? [21:30]

THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

The Argument from an Uncaused Cause

The basic structure of the argument:

1. Everything has a cause
2. Every cause itself has a cause
3. **But** you cannot have an infinite number of causes
4. **Therefore,** there must be an uncaused cause which causes everything to happen without being itself caused by anything
5. Such an uncaused cause is what people understand as God

The argument in detail:
Scientists are not able to explain what caused the Big Bang, because it was only after the Big Bang took place that time and all the laws of science came about. Hence, it is not possible to scientifically understand or explain what took place before the explosion.

We are only able to speak philosophically, i.e. present rational arguments for the possible cause of the Big Bang. It is not possible for any physical entity to come into being without a cause. In fact, the validity of science itself is reliant on the acceptance of the law of cause and effect. If you see smoke, you know that there must be something that caused the smoke to appear.

Similarly, if you see a building, you know that there must have been a builder who created the building. The builder himself is the effect of his parents, who are the cause of his existence. The parents too are the effects of their parents. **If you keep going back in this chain of cause and effect, there must have been a first cause that itself did not require a cause.** Otherwise, the cause and effect chain would continue for infinity and nothing would have come about in the first place! Due to the fact that we exist and the universe exists, we know for sure that the chain is not infinite.

That **First Cause** (also referred to as the **Uncaused Cause**) is **Allāh (SWT)**. We know from science that both time and space came into existence after the Big Bang. Therefore, whatever caused the Big Bang must not be bound by these, i.e. must be outside of space and time. This is another reason why it is illogical to ask what "caused" or created Allāh (SWT). He is not bound by time such that something can be there "before" Him in order to create Him!

The above argument proposed for the existence of God is called the **Cosmological Argument**. Below is another version of the Cosmological Argument.

THE ARGUMENT FROM POSSIBILITY AND NECESSITY

The basic structure of the argument:
1. Individual things come into existence and then cease to exit
2. Therefore, at one time none of them were in existence
3. **But,** something comes into existence only as a result of something else that already exists
4. **Therefore**, there must be a being whose existence is necessary - that is God.

The argument in detail:
Think about a sweetened cup of tea. Sugar is something that can be described as "sweet" and sweetened tea can also be referred to as something "sweet". However, there is an important difference between the sweetness of sugar and the sweetness of the sweetened tea. If we remove the sweetness from the tea, it

DID YOU KNOW?

Sir Fred Hoyle, a renowned mathematician, remarks in his book that the chance that higher life forms might have emerged by "chance" is comparable with the chance that a tornado sweeping through a junk-yard might assemble a Boeing 747 from the materials therein.

MY NOTES

01 FORMAL ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

KEY POINTS

1. The Qurʾānic description of the creation of the universe is in harmony with the Big Bang Theory.

2. There are many ways of presenting the Cosmological Argument for the existence of God. Two famous ways of presenting this argument are: a) from an uncaused cause, and b) from possibility and necessity.

3. The argument from an uncaused cause: a) everything has a cause; b) every cause itself has a cause; c) **but** you cannot have an infinite number of causes; d) **therefore,** there must be an uncaused cause which causes everything to happen without being itself caused by anything; e) such an uncaused cause is what people understand as God.

4. The argument from possibility and necessity: a) individual things come into existence and then cease to exit; b) therefore, at one time none of them were in existence; c) **But**, something comes into existence only as a result of something else that already exists; d) **Therefore**, there must a being whose existence in necessary - that is God.

will still be called tea. Bitter tea is still just as much tea as sweetened tea.
The same cannot be said of sugar. Sugar minus its sweetness is not sugar. This is because sweetness is a **necessary** attribute of sugar and hence the two cannot be separated, while sweetness is not a necessary attribute of tea. The sweetness of tea, is **dependent** upon sugar being added to the tea.



A similar example can be used to understand the relationship between different **beings** and **existence**. If the relationship between a particular being and existence is **necessary**, then that being must necessarily exist. We can call such a being a "**necessary being**". Just as the relation between sweetness and sugar in a necessary one, so too the relation between a necessary being and existence is a necessary relation. It is impossible for there to ever be a time when the necessary being does not exist.

In the same way, if the relationship between a particular being and existence is **not** necessary, we can call such a being a "**dependant being**". Just as the relation between tea and sweetness is dependant rather than necessary, so too the relation between a dependant being and existence: a dependant being may or may not exist.

Human beings and all other beings in this universe are examples of dependant beings. At one point in time we did not exist. Currently, we are living in this world and we exist. The fact that we currently exist proves that a Being external to us gave us existence. This Being must be a necessary being, from which all other causes and effects - the whole chain of contingent beings - comes from. **That necessary being is Allāh (SWT) upon Whom we are totally dependent for our existence at each moment in our lives.**

IN SUMMARY

1. Explain the Big Bang Theory for the creation of the universe. How does it compare with the Qurʾānic version for the creation of the universe?
2. Why is it impossible for science to explain as a fact what took place before the Big Bang?
3. If everything in existence requires a cause for its existence, why does God not a have a cause?

ACTIVITY

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U O Q L Z C R M N F V S B L
X K J T C E F F E I V N M R
N O M U Y R A S S E C E N R
D E S U A C N U V X E M I T
C R U W Y B H G X Q R S E I
N M V T N E D N E P E D O F

WORD BANK:

Bigbang	Cause	Uncaused	Cosmological
Dependent	Effect	Necessary	Possibility
Existence	Time	Space	Creator

02 RELIGION & THE CHALLENGE OF ATHEISM

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To understand why the universe could not have come about through chance

2. To be introduced to Islam's position in relation to the Theory of Evolution

MY NOTES

THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION

We know today that the Earth is roughly 4.54 billion years old. Scientists also estimate that living creatures existed on this planet at least 3.5 billion years ago. However, when life first started on Earth, human beings did not exist to record exactly how life began.

Charles Darwin was an English naturalist who studied variation in plants and animals during a five-year voyage around the world in the 19th century. He explained his findings in 1859 in a book called "On the Origins of Species", where he famously formulated **the theory of evolution**.

This theory states that all different species on earth originated from a common ancestry and over the course of more than 3 billion years, evolved from simple single cell life forms to the great variety of species that we have present in the world today, including human beings.

In other words, the theory proposes that fishes, lions, parrots, mosquitoes and all other living beings, including humans are all inter-related and share a common ancestor billions of years ago.

MICRO-EVOLUTION VS MACRO-EVOLUTION

The theory of evolution can be divided into two parts - **micro-evolution** and **macro -evolution**.

Micro-evolution is evolution on a small scale - **within** a single species. The theory of evolution states that evolution happens by **natural selection**:

* individuals in a species show a wide range of variation
* this variation is because of differences in their genes
* individuals with characteristics most suited to the environment are most likely to survive and reproduce
* the genes that allow these individuals to be successful are passed to their offspring
* Individuals that are poorly adapted to their environment are less likely to survive and reproduce. Given enough time, a species will gradually evolve.

The results of natural selection **within** a particular species has been witnessed. Similarly, through artificial selection, human beings have also been able to produce new varieties of characteristics within a particular species.

ACTIVITY

In pairs, create a script for a dialogue between an atheist and a Muslim discussing the extent of the validity of the theory of evolution and Islam's position on it.

For example, the following different varieties of dogs have been produced through artificial selection:

MY NOTES



Micro-evolution is a very natural process and is explainable and verifiable through science. There is no problem is accepting this idea. However, many atheists have tried to use micro-evolution as a way to "prove" **macro-evolution**. This is the idea that over millions of years, the combined effect of natural selection, environmental changes and mutations, can sometimes produce changes in organisms that are so great that **totally new species** are produced. Macro-evolution is thus proposed as the process by which all the different species have come into existence, from simple single cell beings to complex creatures like human beings.

The problem lies in the fact that macro-evolution is just a theory, which has **no** concrete evidence to prove it and it also contains numerous shortcomings. Most importantly, there is **no fossil evidence** for the theory of evolution. Darwin himself admitted that for his theory to be acceptable, there would need to have been countless creatures which were half-fish half-amphibian or half-amphibian half-bird and so on, whom he referred to as "**transitional forms**". This is why he dedicated a special chapter in his book to ask such problematic questions.

"Why if species have descended from other species by fine gradations, do we **not** everywhere see **innumerable transitional forms**? But, as by this theory innumerable transitional forms must have existed, why do we not find them embedded in countless numbers in the crust of the earth?"
(Charles Darwin, The Origins of Species, 1st ed. p. 172)

Darwin proposed that such transitional forms would be discovered when the fossil record is inspected more carefully. It has been now been over 150 years since his book was published and despite a lot of effort to unearth evidence throughout the world, we are yet to see any evidence of any transitional forms! A famous British evolutionist, Derek Ager, thus admits:

MY NOTES

"The point emerges that if we examine the fossil record in detail, whether at the level of orders or of species, we find - over and over again - **not gradual evolution, but the sudden explosion of one group at the expense of another.**"
(Derek Ager Proceedings of the British Geological Association, vol. 87, p. 133)

"If numerous species belonging to the same genera or families, have really started into life all at once, the fact would be fatal to the theory of descent with slow modification through natural selection."
(Charles Darwin, The Origin of Species, 1st ed. p. 302)



ISLAM'S POSITION ON EVOLUTION

The current scientific understanding of evolution is very minimal, especially macro -evolution, because such evolution is proposed to take place over millions of years and hence, it cannot be replicated in a laboratory, nor is there any evidence of any transitional creatures available. However, just as we cannot categorically accept this theory due to the lack of evidence available, we cannot categorically reject it either.

Evolution, as a theory, aims to describe the process through which life - **after it originated in this world** - evolved from its very basic forms, to the great variety that we have today. It does **not** explain to us how life itself began, it just provides us with a theory of how life, **after** it came on earth, diversified and evolved over time. **Evolution is not a substitute for God.**

To use an example, Isaac Newton's laws of motion may explain why and how a snooker ball moves across a snooker table. However, for the ball to actually start moving, a person is still required to hit the ball in the first place. The laws of motion are not substitutes for the player! In the same way, evolution, if proven true, might explain the process through which life evolved in this world; however, God is still required to set this process into motion.

Over time, atheists have been working hard to use Darwin's theory to "prove" that God does not exist and to show that we do not need to believe in God in order to explain how all living beings in the world came about. Those people, including countless scientists, who **do** believe in the existence of God, have been labelled as "**Creationists**" and are made to appear as choosing "religious beliefs" over "science". This has unfortunately been part of a widespread **propaganda mission** by staunch atheists to present religion as being incompatible with science. This cannot be any further from the truth. Unfortunately, such wrong ideas have now crept into the material being taught in our schools and universities.

Theoretically, Islam does not have any problems accepting that all animal life on this planet originated from a common ancestry through evolution, as this would simply be an explanation of the **process** through which God created the countless creatures we have today.

However, according to the mainstream interpretation of Qurʾānic verses discussing the creation of Prophet Ādam (A), Muslims generally reject the idea that **human beings** are also the products of evolution and that human beings evolved from apes. We believe that the first human being was a special creation of Allāh (SWT), who was individually created and placed on this planet, i.e. not through the process of evolution.



DID YOU KNOW?

Colin Patterson, a renowned palaeontologist and evolutionist, once remarked: "No one has ever produced a species by mechanisms of natural selection. No one has ever got near it and most of the current argument in neo-Darwinism is about this question."

KEY POINTS

1. The theory of evolution states that all life on earth originated from a common ancestry.

2. This theory can be divided into micro-evolution and macro-evolution.

3. There is no problem in accepting micro-evolution. However, there is no evidence available to prove macro-evolution. It is just a theory.

4. The theory of evolution does not challenge the existence of God. It just proposes an explanation for the process used by God to create diversity.

5. Muslims reject the idea that human beings evolved from apes.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the theory of evolution?
2. What is the difference between micro-evolution and macro-evolution?
3. What is Islam's position on evolution?

ACTIVITY

PLACE THE TILES IN THE RIGHT ORDER TO REVEAL A MESSAGE

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THE NATURE OF RECOMPENSE & RETRIBUTION

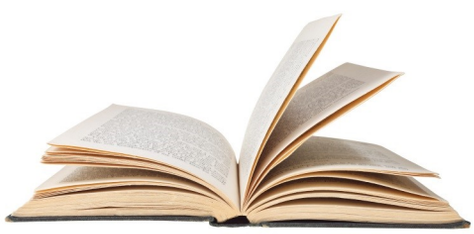
03

We are often under the impression that if we are good in this world, Allāh (SWT) will repay us in the Hereafter in the form of rewards, just like the way our parents reward us for getting good results at school by buying us gifts. Likewise, if we are bad in this world, Allāh (SWT) will punish us for our disobedience in Hell. This too is understood in a similar way to a judge passing a sentence for a criminal for committing a certain crime. In other words, although there is a relationship between our actions and the recompense, the two are not one and the same.

However, when we closely examine the Qurʾānic verses and aḥādīth of the Maʿṣūmīn (A) regarding the nature of reward and punishment in the Hereafter, we realise that the truth is much deeper. **In reality, not only is there a relationship between our actions and the recompense, the two are in fact one and the same.**

As human beings act in this world, they are also creating a reality for themselves in the Hereafter. We can therefore think of the Hereafter as a parallel world that exists even now but in a different plane of existence. The inner forms of our actions in this world are the outer, physical realities in the Hereafter.

A good way to understand this reality is with the example of a book. A book has two covers with hundreds of pages in between. When the book is closed, we can see and read the information on the covers, but cannot see the information contained within the book. When the book is opened, we can see the writing on an inner page, but cannot see the information on the covers.



Now think of the actions in this life as information contained in the covers of our book. When we commit these actions, we cannot see the reality of these deeds which are contained inside the book. In the Hereafter, our book will be opened and we will be shown the reality of our deeds. We will enjoy and rejoice over the beautiful realities of our good deeds, but we will be tormented by the ugly realities of our bad deeds.

In the Qurʾān, Allāh (SWT) says:

وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَا وَيْلَتَنَا مَالِ هَٰذَا الْكِتَابِ لَا يُغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا ۚ وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا ۗ وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا

The Book will be set up. Then you will see the guilty apprehensive of what is in it. They will say, 'Woe to us! What a book is this! It omits nothing, big or small, without enumerating it.' They will find present whatever they had done, and your Lord does not wrong anyone. [18:49]

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1- To understand that the reward and punishment of Paradise & Hell are actually the manifestations of the reality of our own deeds
2- To become acquainted with the Qurʾānic verses & aḥādīth that point to this reality

MY NOTES

GROUP ACTIVITY

Discuss in groups how the understanding of the real nature of reward and punishment that you learnt today will impact your everyday life, especially at the time you are tempted to commit sins.

MY NOTES

Similarly, in another verse, He says:

يَوْمَ يَغْشَاهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِن فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ وَيَقُولُ ذُوقُوا مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

On the Day when the punishment envelopes them, from above them and from under their feet, and He will say, "Taste what you used to do!" [29:55]

In other words, human beings do not get "paid" for their good deeds or sins in the next world - they actually create their own Paradise or Hell. This concept of our actions transforming into a physical form is called "**The Embodiment of Deeds**" (**Tajassum al-Aʿmāl**). The good that we create for ourselves in the next world can be multiplied and strengthened through persistence in good work here and the evil realities that we have created for ourselves in the next world can be neutralised or dissolved through repentance (istighfār and tawbah). In yet another verse, Allāh (SWT) says:

وَأَن لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ ، وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُ سَوْفَ يُرَىٰ

And that nothing belongs to man except what he strives for, and as for what he strove for, soon shall he see it. [53:39-40]

The verse above does not say that mankind shall see the reward of what they strove for. Rather, it says that they will see their actions themselves. In fact, the Qurʾān informs us that if we had reached the level of certainty (yaqīn) in our faith, we too could see Hell whilst in this world:

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ ، لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ

Nay! if you had known with a certain knowledge, You should most certainly have seen the Hell; [102:5-7]

Regarding the person that backbites someone else, the Qurʾān says that that person is in fact eating the flesh of his dead brother. This is not a metaphor, but the actual reality of backbiting. If we realised this, we would never backbite anyone else again, because of how disgusting its reality is!

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ ۖ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَب بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ۚ أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ

O you who believe! Avoid most of suspicion, for surely suspicion in some cases is a sin, and do not spy nor let some of you backbite others. Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? But you abhor it; and be careful of (your duty to) Allāh, surely Allāh is Oft-returning (to mercy), Merciful. [49:12]

The following ḥadīth from the Holy Prophet (S) is also very useful in understand the reality of recompense and retribution:

When I ascended to the heavens (for Miʿrāj), I entered Paradise and saw in it an open plain and I saw angels constructing (mansions with) bricks of gold and bricks of silver; and sometimes they would stop. I asked them, "Why have you stopped (constructing)?" They replied, "(We wait) until our payment comes to us." I asked, "And what is your payment?" They said, "The words of the faithful: glory be to Allāh (subhān Allāh), and praise be to Allāh (wa al-ḥamdu lillāh), and there is no god by Allāh (wa lā ilāha illallāh), and Allāh is the greatest (wa Allāhu Akbar). When he recites, we build. When he is quiet, we stop."

The following narration is another example of this reality and proof that one who is virtuous is actually in Paradise-like gardens this very moment, even if he appears to be suffering and in a pitiful condition and one who is evil is burning in a Hell-like fire, even if he appears to be living in a palace and enjoying the pleasures and comforts of this world:



When the ʿAbbāsid caliph al-Mutawakkil felt threatened by our 10th Holy Imām (A), he sent his commander to arrest the Imām and bring him to Sāmarra by force. When the Imām (A) arrived in Sāmarra, al-Mutawakkil first had him stay at a rundown place called the Inn of Saʿālik.

Sāliḥ b. Saʿīd reports:
I visited Imām al-Hādi (A) on the day he arrived in Sāmarra. I said to him, "May I be sacrificed for you! In every matter, they are only concerned to extinguish your light and to diminish you such that they have put you to stay in this hideous inn – the Inn of Saʿālik."

"Here you are Ibn Saʿīd" said the Imām (A), and he indicated with his hand. Suddenly I was amid pleasant gardens and flowing rivers and gardens in which were perfumed plants and beautiful maidens like veiled pearls. My sight became confused and I was very amazed. The Imām (A) said to me, "This is where we are. This belongs to us, Ibn Saʿīd. We are not in the Inn of Saʿālik!"

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the true relationship between our deeds and the reward and punishment in the Hereafter?
2. Can you explain two verses of the Qurʾān which point to this reality?
3. Why is it the case that our Paradise and Hell are being created this very moment?

DID YOU KNOW?

The Holy Prophet (S) said: "Three things follow a dead person (as he/she is on his/her way to be buried): his family, his wealth and his actions. Two go back and one stays: his family and wealth go back and his actions stay (with him)."

KEY POINTS

1. It is not the case that Allāh (SWT) will reward us for our good deeds like our parents reward us for doing something good.

2. It is also not the case that Allāh (SWT) will punish us for our bad deeds like a judge punishes a criminal by passing a sentence on him in court.

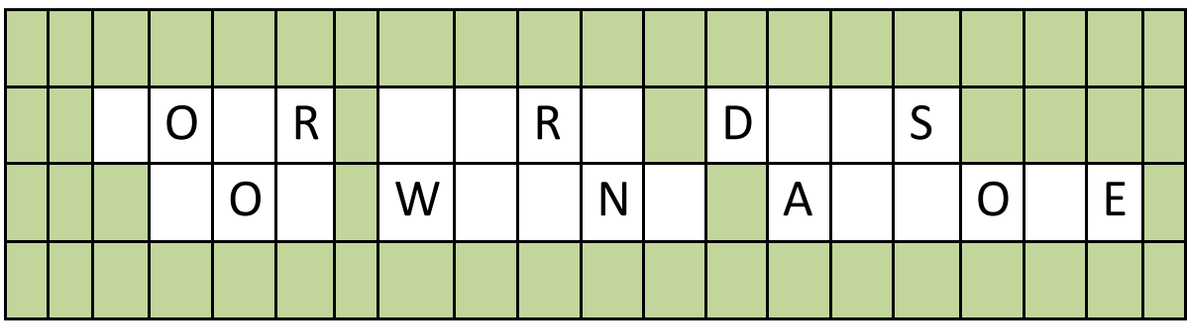
3. Rather, the reward and punishment are the deeper realities of our actions in this world which will be manifested to us in the Hereafter.

4. We cannot see the deeper reality of our action because of the veils on our eyes. The Qurʾān states that if we had reached the level of certainty, we would be able to see the Hellfire today.

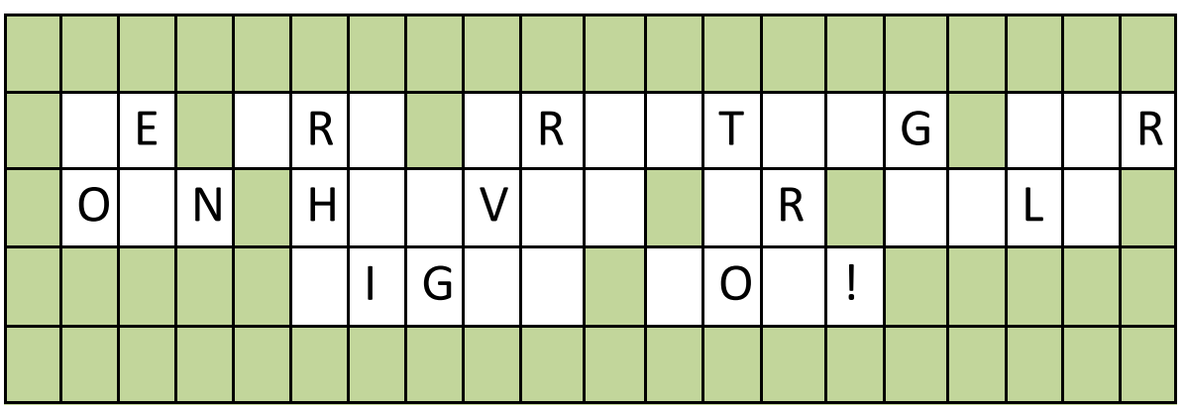
03 ACTIVITY

GUESS THE PHRASE!

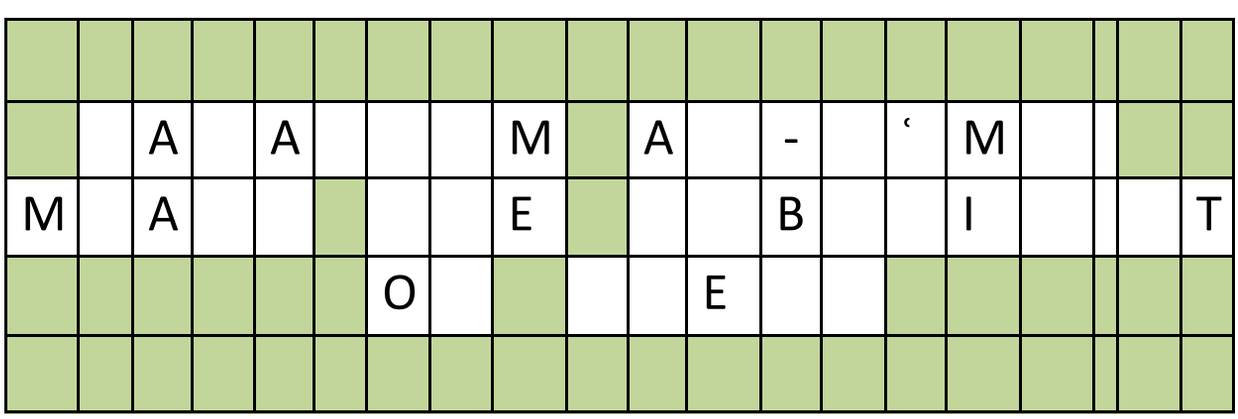
There is an alphabet bank under each table. The letters in the bank can be used multiple times.



Alphabet bank [O,E,U,R,Y,L,N,D,G,T]



Alphabet bank [A,E,I,O,U,H,W,N,T,L,C,R]



Alphabet bank [L,Ā,E,O,N,F,D,M,T,J,S,U,A,L,H]

JAHANNAM: THE ABODE OF THE WRETCHED 04

1) To start off with, it is important to remember that just like all created things around us in this world are manifestations of the different Names of Allāh (SWT), all events and places in the Hereafter too are manifestations of His Divine Names, except that the manifestations in the Hereafter are much stronger. After the long journey of numerous checkpoints that takes place on the Day of Judgment, our final home is either Paradise (Jannah) or Hell (Jahannam).



2) Hell is a place of ultimate disgrace and punishment, where Allāh (SWT)'s wrath is continuously manifested upon its inmates. Allāh (SWT) created human beings for Paradise, not Hell. He placed us in this world so that we may acquire Paradise through our good deeds. Yet, some of us use this time to amass evil deeds. Even the smallest amount of evil cannot enter into Paradise, because Paradise is a place where only goodness exists.

The purpose of Hell is to purify human beings of their evil deeds through the severe punishment that they face there. In reality, as was explained in the last lesson, the punishment that they face in Hell is the wretched reality of the evil deeds they committed in this world. Once they are purified of their evil deeds, they can then finally join the people of Paradise to live in it forever.

From this perspective, even the punishment of Hell, has an aspect of Divine Mercy, as it allows people to be purified of their sins. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

هَٰذِهِ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِي يُكَذِّبُ بِهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ ، يَطُوفُونَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ حَمِيمٍ آنٍ ، فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

This is the Hell which the guilty used to deny; they shall go round between it and between hot, boiling water. So, which of your Lord's bounties do you deny? [55:43-45]

3) However, some people have become so evil in this world, such that it is impossible to purify them from their evil deeds. No amount of punishment in Hell can separate them from their evil. Evil has become part and parcel of their core reality. The Qur'ān describes such people as deaf, dumb and blind, not being able to return to the straight path again:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the purpose of Hell
2. To become familiar with the Qur'ānic verses dealing with the description of Hell

MY NOTES

CLASS ACTIVITY

Discuss why someone even with a speck of evil in their hearts cannot enter Jannah without first being purified of his/her evil.

04 JAHANNAM: THE ABODE OF THE WRETCHED

MY NOTES

صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ

Deaf, dumb (and) blind, so they will not turn back. [2:18]

Their hearts are sealed by Allāh (SWT) once and for all:

خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِمْ ۖ وَعَلَىٰ أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةٌ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

Allāh has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing and there is a covering over their eyes, and there is a great punishment for them. [2:7]

Such evil people will be made to live in Hell for eternity:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَنَ الْكَافِرِينَ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ سَعِيرًا ، خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۖ لَّا يَجِدُونَ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا

Surely Allāh has cursed the unbelievers and has prepared for them a burning fire, in which they will remain forever and they shall not find any protector or helper. [33:64-5]

4) When we speak about the different events of the Hereafter, including Paradise and Hell, it is important to keep in mind that it is impossible for us to truly understand what will happen there and how life will be. This is because the Hereafter is a much grander world governed by totally different laws. Just like it is impossible to explain to a baby in the womb of its mother the nature of this world, it is impossible for us to truly grasp the reality of life in the Hereafter. In fact, the jump between this world and the Hereafter is much greater than the jump for the baby from the womb to this world. Having said that, Allāh (SWT) has described Hell in many verses for us so that we can have some basic sort of understanding of that dreaded reality.



A GLIMPSE OF JAHANNAM

MY NOTES

1) The Qurʾān describes Hell as a living creature that shows emotions such as rage. It seeks out sinners and envelops them:

إِذَا أُلْقُوا فِيهَا سَمِعُوا لَهَا شَهِيقًا وَهِيَ تَفُورُ ، تَكَادُ تَمَيَّزُ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ ۖ كُلَّمَا أُلْقِيَ فِيهَا فَوْجٌ سَأَلَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَذِيرٌ

When they will be cast into it, they will hear it roar as it boils, as though it will burst with rage. Every time a multitude is cast into it, its keepers will ask them: "Did no warner come to you?" [67:7-8]

يَوْمَ نَقُولُ لِجَهَنَّمَ هَلِ امْتَلَأْتِ وَتَقُولُ هَلْ مِن مَّزِيدٍ

On that Day We shall ask Hell: "Are you full?" And it will reply: "Are there any more?" [50:30]

2) In a ḥadīth, Imām ʿAlī (A) mentions that Hell has seven different gates leading to different areas of Hell. The punishment in each of these areas will be different in terms of harshness and pain. One of these is called The Crusher (al-Ḥuṭamah). It will crush everyone who is thrown inside it and grind them to powder. Then they will be made whole again, just to be crushed again and again. Unlike fire in this world, which can only burn our bodies, the Hellfire also penetrates into our souls and burns it:

كَلَّا ۖ لَيُنبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ ، وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ ، نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمُوقَدَةُ الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْأَفْئِدَةِ

No indeed! He will be thrust into the Crusher! What will explain to you what the Crusher is? It is kindled fire of Allāh, which reaches to the hearts. [104:4-7]

3) Allāh (SWT) has created angels specifically to torture the inmates of Hell and to stop them from being able to escape from the pits of Hell. These angels are referred to as the Zabāniyah:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَّا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ

O you who believe! save yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is men and stones; over it are angels stern and strong, they do not disobey Allāh in what He commands them, and do as they are commanded. [66:6]

MY NOTES

كَلَّا لَئِن لَّمْ يَنتَهِ لَنَسْفَعًا بِالنَّاصِيَةِ ، نَاصِيَةٍ كَاذِبَةٍ خَاطِئَةٍ ، فَلْيَدْعُ نَادِيَهُ ، سَنَدْعُ الزَّبَانِيَةَ

No! If he does not stop, We shall drag him by his forehead - his lying, sinful forehead. Let him summon his comrades, We shall summon the guards of Hell! [96:15-8]

4) The people of Hell always continuously suffer from the pangs of hunger and thirst. They will be given boiling hot water, which will make them even more thirsty. As food, they will only have bitter fruits from the tree of Zaqqūm. This tree grows in the bottom of Hell and its fruits will look like the heads of devils. After drinking and eating, they will be taken back to face their punishments.

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ أَيُّهَا الضَّالُّونَ الْمُكَذِّبُونَ ، لَآكِلُونَ مِن شَجَرٍ مِّن زَقُّومٍ ، فَمَالِئُونَ مِنْهَا الْبُطُونَ ، فَشَارِبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْحَمِيمِ ، فَشَارِبُونَ شُرْبَ الْهِيمِ

And you who have gone astray and denied the truth, will eat from the bitter tree of Zaqqūm, filling your bellies with it, and drink scalding water, lapping it like thirsty camels.[56: 51-6]

...أَذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ نُّزُلًا أَمْ شَجَرَةُ الزَّقُّومِ ، إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهَا فِتْنَةً لِّلظَّالِمِينَ ، إِنَّهَا شَجَرَةٌ تَخْرُجُ فِي أَصْلِ الْجَحِيمِ ، طَلْعُهَا كَأَنَّهُ رُءُوسُ الشَّيَاطِينِ ، فَإِنَّهُمْ لَآكِلُونَ مِنْهَا فَمَالِئُونَ مِنْهَا الْبُطُونَ ، ثُمَّ إِنَّ لَهُمْ عَلَيْهَا لَشَوْبًا مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ ، ثُمَّ إِنَّ مَرْجِعَهُمْ لَإِلَى الْجَحِيمِ

... Is this the better welcome, or the tree of Zaqqūm, which we have made a test for the evildoers? This tree grows in the heart of the blazing Fire, and its fruits are like devils' heads. They will fill their bellies eating from it, then drink scalding water on top of it; then return to the blazing Fire. [37:62-8]

5) Despite all these terrible punishments of Hell and others which haven't been mentioned in this lesson, the worst punishment the inmates of Hell will face will be the feeling of being extremely far from the presence and Mercy of Allāh (SWT).

كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَن رَّبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمَحْجُوبُونَ

No indeed! On that Day they will be screened off from their Lord [83:15]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا أُولَٰئِكَ لَا خَلَاقَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَا يَنظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

But those who sell out God's covenant and their own oats for a small price will have no share in the life to come. God will neither speak to them nor look at them on the Day of Resurrection- He will not cleanse them [of their sins] - agonizing torment awaits them. [3:77]

6) Due to this, the inmates of Hell will be constantly overcome with tremendous regret at how they lived there lives:

كَذَٰلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ اللَّهُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ حَسَرَاتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَمَا هُم بِخَارِجِينَ مِنَ النَّارِ

...In this way, Allāh will make them see their deeds as a source of bitter regret: they shall not leave the Fire. [2:167]

وَيَوْمَ يَعَضُّ الظَّالِمُ عَلَىٰ يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي اتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ الرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا

And the day when the unjust one shall bite his hands saying: Oh! would that I had taken a way with the Messenger! [25:27]

May Allāh (SWT) protect us all from such an outcome...



DID YOU KNOW?

Angel Jibrā'īl (A) said to the Holy Prophet (S): **"If only one garment from among the garments of the people of the Fire was to be hung between the sky and the earth, the people of this world would die of its smell."**

KEY POINTS

1. Just like in this world, all the events and places in the Hereafter are the manifestation of the Divine Names of Allāh (SWT).

2. Hell is where the wrath of Allāh (SWT) is manifested most severely.

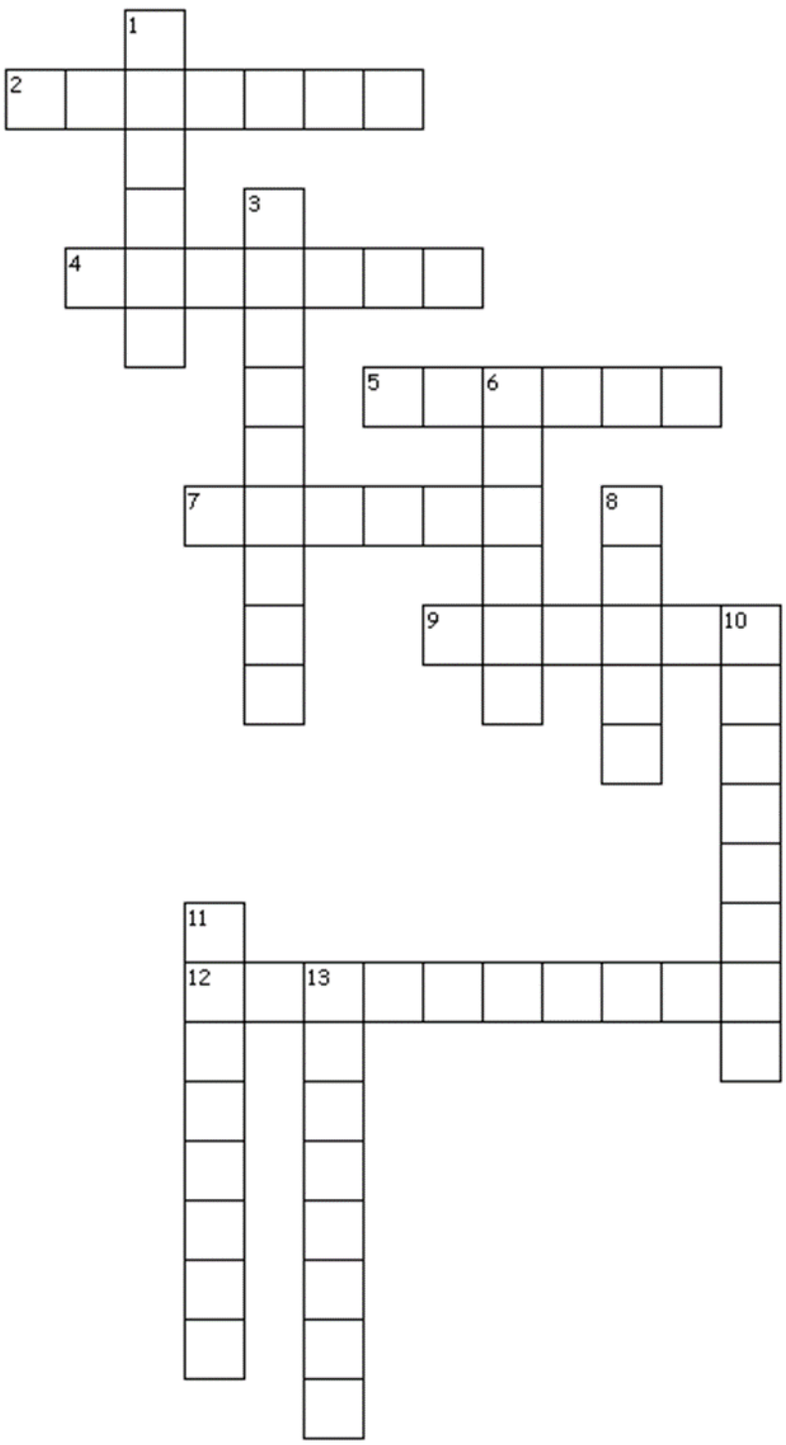
3. However, even Hell has elements of Divine Mercy because the punishments therein serve as purifying agents, such that eventually most people will leave Hell and enter Paradise.

4. Some people will remain in Hell for eternity. These are those who have committed so many evil deeds that evil has become part and parcel of their reality. No amount of punishment can remove their evil from them.

IN SUMMARY

1. How can Hell be viewed in one way as Divine Mercy?
2. How many gates are there leading to different areas in Hell?
3. What is al-Ḥuṭamah?
4. Describe the tree of Zaqqūm.
5. What is the worse punishment of the inmates of Hell?

ACTIVITY



ACROSS

2. The punishment faced in Hell is due to the _____ of our evil deeds that we committed in this world.
4. One of the gates of Hell is called al-_____.
5. The purpose of Hell is to _____ human beings of their evil deeds.
7. Hell in the Qurʾān is described as a _____creature that shows emotions such as rage
9. The _____ of the evil-doers are sealed.
12. It is _____ for us to truly understand what will take place in the Hereafter.

DOWN

1. The food of Hell will be the bitter fruits from the tree of _____.
3. Angels created specifically to torture the inmates of Hell are called _____.
6. The inmates of Hell will be constantly overcome with tremendous _____.
8. The worst punishment the inmates of Hell is the feeling of being extremely far from Allāh (SWT)'s _____.
10. The manifestation of the Divine Names of Allāh (SWT) are much _____in the Hereafter.
11. Hell is a place of ultimate _____ and punishment.
13. _____ is a place where only goodness exists.

JANNAH: THE ULTIMATE SUCCESS 05

1) The Holy Qurʾān refers to the final dwelling place of the righteous people in the Hereafter as Jannah. This Arabic word originates from the root word Ja-na-na, which refers to something that is hidden from sight. Paradise is referred to as Jannah, because of its description as a garden hidden from sight due to being covered with trees. Another possible reason for its name is because this promised garden is hidden from our sights in this world.



Apart from human beings and angels, the third type of intelligent beings described by Allāh (SWT) in the Qurʾān are the Jinn. The name Jinn originates from the same root as Jannah. They are known as such because they too hidden from human sight.

2) The Qurʾān provides us with multiple detailed accounts of the nature of Paradise and the type of life its inhabitants will enjoy. It is the abode of everlasting peace and bliss. There is no pain nor suffering in Jannah. No worries, no old age and its inhabitants will never feel any sort of tiredness or boredom. In fact, the Qurʾān is clear that no matter how much we try, we can never even get close to understanding what is awaiting the believers in Paradise:

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

No one knows what delights of the eyes are kept hidden for them as a reward for their deeds. [32:17]

3) As discussed in the last two lessons, the reward and punishment of Paradise and Hell are the manifestations of the reality of our deeds in this world. When we perform good deeds or sin in this world, we only see the apparent forms of our deeds. However, the true beauty or ugliness of our deeds will be shown to us in the Hereafter. Paradise and Hell exist today. We are creating our Paradise or Hell with every action that we perform!

4) Human beings were created to eventually live in Jannah. Anything other than Jannah is below the worth of the human being, the best of Allāh (SWT)'s creation. He granted human beings the special gift of free will, so that they can perform good deed in this world and create their Jannah.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the nature of Paradise
2. To become familiar with the Qurʾānic verses dealing with the description of Paradise

MY NOTES

CLASS ACTIVITY

Reflect upon the following ḥadīth. What do you understand from it? How is the ḥadīth relevant to you in your daily life?

Imām al-Bāqir (A): **"Paradise is surrounded by trials and patience. So whoever endures trials in the world will enter Paradise. Hell is surrounded by pleasures and desires. Thus, whoever allows himself its pleasures and desires [of the world] will enter the Fire."**

MY NOTES

Imām ʿAlī (A): **"Verily there is no price for your soul except for Paradise, so do not sell it for anything else."**

However, just like when raw material is used in a factory to manufacture precious items and in the end we are also left with some waste product, the same too goes for human beings who choose to use their free will to perform evil deeds. The only fitting place for this waste product is Jahannam.

Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) said: **"The people of the Fire will be kept permanently in the Fire because their intentions in the world were such that it if they were to live forever therein, they would disobey Allāh forever. And verily the people of Paradise will be made to remain in Paradise permanently because their intentions in this world were such that if they were to live forever therein, they would obey Allāh forever. So it is due to these intentions that these and those have their permanent residence."**

Then the Imām recited the word of Allāh, the Exalted: **"Say, 'Everyone acts according to his character"** and said that it means according to their intention.

5) The path to Paradise is through Hell. All of us will pass through Hell:

وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا

There is not one of you but shall pass by Hell. This is a decree which your Lord will fulfill. [19:71]

The most righteous people described in sūrat al-Wāqiʿah as "The Foremost of the Foremost" (al-sābiqūn al-sābiqūn), will be kept far from the Hellfire and will quickly pass through to Paradise.

As for the rest, they will need to become cleansed from all traces of evil in them before being fit to enter Paradise. This will either take place through direct Divine Forgiveness and Mercy or through purification via temporary punishment in Hell.

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ...

And we shall strip all rancour from within their hearts… [7:43]

Imām al-Bāqīr (A): **"Some people will burn in the Fire, until they are burned to ashes [and become pure] - then they will be taken out through intercession."**

Only the most evil of people, who cannot be purified from their evil no matter how much they are punished, will remain in Hell for eternity.

THE DESCRIPTION OF JANNAH

MY NOTES

1) Jannah is described in the Qurʾān as a beautiful garden where rivers will flow:

مَّثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ۖ أُكُلُهَا دَائِمٌ وَظِلُّهَا ۚ تِلْكَ عُقْبَى الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوا ۖ وَّعُقْبَى الْكَافِرِينَ النَّارُ

And such will be the Paradise promised to the God-fearing: rivers will flow beneath it, its fruits will be eternal, and so will be its blissful shade. That is the ultimate destiny of the God-fearing while Fire is the destiny of the unbelievers. [13:35]

2) The inhabitants of Jannah will live in huge palaces made of gold, silver, pearls and rubies, where they will be reclining on their thrones and socialising with other people in Jannah:

عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مَّوْضُونَةٍ ، مُّتَّكِئِينَ عَلَيْهَا مُتَقَابِلِينَ

On thrones decorated, Reclining on them, facing one another. [56:15-6]

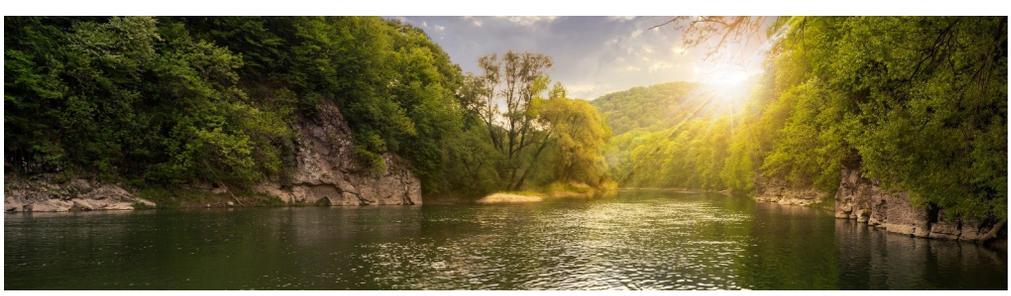
مُتَّكِئِينَ عَلَىٰ فُرُشٍ بَطَائِنُهَا مِنْ إِسْتَبْرَقٍ ۚ وَجَنَى الْجَنَّتَيْنِ دَانٍ

Reclining on beds, the inner coverings of which are of silk brocade; and the fruits of the two gardens shall be within reach [55:54]

3) In Paradise, people will be reunited with their righteous family members and will be married to the most beautiful heavenly spouses created especially for them, called the Ḥūr al-ʿĪn. Angels will be there to serve and greet the believers:

جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَن صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ ۖ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن كُلِّ بَابٍ ، سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُم بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ ۚ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ

The gardens of perpetual abode which they will enter along with those who do good from among their parents and their spouses and their offspring; and the angels will enter in upon them from every gate: "Peace be upon you. You merit this reward for your steadfastness. How excellent is the ultimate abode!" [13:23-4]



05 JANNAH: THE ULTIMATE SUCCESS

DID YOU KNOW?

Imām ʿAlī (A) has said:
"Paradise has eight doors: a door through which the prophets and the truthful ones will enter, a door through which the martyrs and the righteous will enter, five doors through which our Shīʿah and our lovers will enter...a door through which the rest of the Muslims will enter, those that bear witness to 'There is no god but Allāh and who do not bear an atom's weight of enmity towards us, the Ahl al -Bayt."

KEY POINTS

1. Jannah is the Arabic word used in the Qurʾān for Paradise. It is the eventual destination of the good-doers.

2. Paradise is a pure place and no evil can enter it. Therefore, all its inhabitants will be purified from their evil before they can enter it. This will either be by direct Divine Forgiveness and Mercy or through temporary punishment in Hell.

3. People will live physical lives in Paradise and the beauty and pleasure of Paradise is beyond our wildest imagination.

4. The greatest joy for the people of Paradise is attaining the Pleasure of Allāh (SWT).

4) There will be various different types of rivers flowing in Paradise. The food and drink will resemble those in this world, but the taste will be far greater than what is available in this world. Eating and drinking from these will also carry immense spiritual pleasure and benefit:

مَّثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِّن مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّن لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِّلشَّارِبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ ۖ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَالِدٌ فِي النَّارِ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ

A parable of the garden which those guarding (against evil) are promised: Therein are rivers of water that does not alter, and rivers of milk the taste whereof does not change, and rivers of drink delicious to those who drink, and rivers of honey clarified and for them therein are all fruits and protection from their Lord. (Are these) like those who abide in the fire and who are made to drink boiling water so it rends their bowels asunder. [47:15]

5) Anything and everything the people of Paradise desire would be made instantly available for them:

لَهُمْ فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَلَهُم مَّا يَدَّعُونَ

They shall have fruits therein, and they shall have whatever they desire.[36:57]

6) Each day the people of Paradise will be shown new manifestations of the Beauty and Majesty of Allāh (SWT) and each day they will continue to get closer to Him. Despite all of the physical pleasures that they will enjoy in Paradise, the greatest happiness for them will come from attaining the Pleasure of Allāh (SWT) (**riḍwān Allāh**), knowing that their efforts in this life paid off and that He is happy with them:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسَاكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِي جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ ۚ وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

Allāh has promised to the believing men and the believing women gardens, beneath which rivers flow, to abide in them, and goodly dwellings in gardens of perpetual abode; and best of all is the pleasure of Allāh; that is the grand achievement. [9:72]

IN SUMMARY

1. Why is the path to Paradise through Hell?
2. How are we creating our Paradise or Hell today with each action we perform?
3. Describe three different features of Paradise.

ACTIVITY

UNSCRAMBLE EACH OF THE CLUE WORDS

Copy the letters in the numbered cells to the matching cells at the bottom.

DOLG

VEIRSL

NNJI

LMKI

NEOHY

SPREAL

SUERIB

NAHANJ

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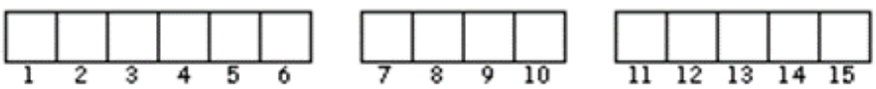
HRU

FASTASDTSNESE

NIWLADRAALH

BUYTAE

JAMSYTE



JURISPRUDENCE (ACTIONS)
FIQH

What is Fiqh?

Fiqh (Jurisprudence) is a study of the Branches of Religion (Furūʾ al-Dīn), unlike ʿAqāʾid (Theology), which is a study of the Roots of Religion (Uṣūl al-Dīn). It is an expansion of the Sharīʿah based on the Holy Qurʾān and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (S). Fiqh deals with the rulings pertaining to the observance of each of the 10 Furūʾ al-Dīn.

A person trained in Fiqh is known as a faqīh (pl. fuqahāʾ).

Why Study Fiqh?

The study of Fiqh is essential because it deals with the rulings pertaining to our daily acts of worship. Without knowing these rulings, we cannot perform our ʿibādāt (worship) correctly.

Dear Lord,
Guide us in understanding the laws and rulings you have placed within the fold of Islam, so that we may perfect our worship and reach nearer to You, with understanding.

01 MUSTAḤAB PRAYERS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. The importance of mustaḥab prayers
2. The nawāfil prayers
3. Ṣalāt al-layl

MY NOTES

THE IMPORTANCE OF PERFORMING MUSTAḤAB PRAYERS

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān that He created us so that we may worship Him. Prayer is the most important form of worship and helps us get closer to Allāh (SWT). Rasūl Allāh (S) has said that ṣalāh is the miʿrāj of a muʾmin. Therefore, if we want to get closer to Allāh (SWT), we must perform ṣalāh - not because we have to - but because we want to out of love for Him.

When we do something wājib, we don't have a choice. We have to do it because we are afraid of punishment in the Hereafter. On the other hand, when we do something mustaḥab, it is out of choice. Allāh (SWT) loves us even more for that act of sincerity, which is why the reward for mustaḥab acts is greater than the reward for wājib actions.

Every Muslim must pray 5 times a day. These wājib prayers include fajr, ẓuhr, ʿaṣr, maghrib and ʿishāʾ, making a total of 17 rakaʿāt every day.

In addition to these, there are 34 more rakaʿāt that are not wājib but highly recommended to pray every day. These are called the **nawāfil** prayers (singular is nāfilah prayer).

Imām al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A) has said that the signs of a muʾmin are five:

1. praying 51 rakaʿāt a day (17 wājib and 34 nawāfil)
2. going for ziyārah of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) on the day of Arbaʿīn
3. wearing a ring on the right hand (e.g. ʿaqīq ring)
4. a mark of sajdah on the forehead
5. reciting Bismillāh loudly in ṣalāh (for the two sūrahs during qiyām).'

The 34 rakaʿāt of nawāfil prayers should be performed as follows:

* 2 rakaʿāt nāfilah before praying fajr ṣalāh
* 8 rakaʿāt nāfilah before praying ẓuhr ṣalāh
* 8 rakaʿāt nāfilah before praying ʿaṣr ṣalāh
* 4 rakaʿāt nāfilah after praying maghrib ṣalāh
* 1 rakʿah nāfilah prayed as 2 rakaʿāt sitting down after ʿishāʾ ṣalāh, and
* 11 rakaʿāt nāfilah anytime between midnight and fajr ṣalāh. This set of prayers is also known as ṣalāt al-layl.

Note that the nāfilah of maghrib and ʿishāʾ is prayed after the wājib ṣalāh and not before.

A mustaḥab ṣalāh cannot be more than 2 rakaʿāt, so when we have to pray 8 rakaʿāt or 4 rakaʿāt nāfilah, we have to pray it in units of two (just like ṣalāt al-fajr).

If we are unable to perform all the 34 rakaʿāt of nawāfil prayers, we should try to perform as many as we can.

ACTIVITY

Create a list of people you would like to pray for in ṣalāt al-layl. You may start your list with the name of Imam al -Mahdī (A)

ṢALĀT AL-LAYL

The 11 rakaʿāt midnight nāfilah ṣalāh is called ṣalāt al-layl or ṣalāt al-taḥajjud. It is the most important nāfilah ṣalāh and is not attached to any wājib ṣalāh. It can be prayed any time between midnight and fajr, but it is recommended to pray it just before fajr time. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَكَ عَسَى أَنْ يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَحْمُودًا

And during a part of the night, pray taḥajjud, as a nāfilah (extra) for yourself. It may be that your Lord will raise you to a position of great glory. [17:79]

Q: How do we perform ṣalāt al-layl?

STEP 1	4 prayers of 2 rakaʿāt each, making a total of 8 rakaʿāt. The niyyah for each 2 rakaʿāt ṣalāh is: 'I am praying 2 rakaʿāt for ṣalāt al-layl qurbatan ilallāh'
STEP 2	Perform a 2 rakaʿāt ṣalāh with the niyyah: 'I am praying 2 rakaʿāt **ṣalāt al-shafʿ** qurbatan ilallāh'. Do not recite qunūt in this ṣalāh.
STEP 3	Pray 1 rakʿah standing with the niyyah: 'I am praying 1 rakʿah **ṣalāt al-witr** qurbatan ilallāh'. This is the most important part of ṣalāt al-layl. After reciting sūrat al-Fātiḥah and another sūrah, raise your hands for qunūt and recite the following duʿāʾ: بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيْمِ لآ اِلَهَ اِلاَّ اللهُ الْحَلِيْمُ الْكَرِيْمُ لآ اِلَهَ اِلاَّ اللهُ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيْمُ سُبْحَانَ اللهِ رَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبِّ الأَرْضِيْنَ السَّبْعِ وَمَا فِيْهِنَّ وَ مَا بَيْنَهُنَّ وَ مَا فَوْقَهُنَّ وَمَا تَحْتَهُنَّ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيْمِ وَ سَلاَمٌ عَلى الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ وَ الْحَمْدُ لِلهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ وَ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلى مُحَمَّدٍ وَ آلِهِ الطَّاهِرِيْنَ Then recite seven times: هذَا مَقَامُ الْعَآئِذِ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ Then recite seventy times: اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ رَبِّي وَ اَتُوْبُ اِلَيْهِ Then say اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِ and mention the names of 40 Muslims, either living or dead, asking Allāh to forgive them. Don't forget your parents, siblings and relatives who have passed away. If you do not have any names to mention, you can recite: اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ Then say 300 times: اَلْعَفْوَ Then do the takbīr, go to rukūʿ and complete the ṣalāh as normal.

IN SUMMARY

1. According to the ḥadīth of Imām al-ʿAskarī (A), what are the 5 signs of a muʾmin?
2. Why is it more rewarding to perform a mustaḥab action compared to a wājib act?
3. What are the nawāfil prayers? When do we perform them?
4. What is ṣalāt al-layl? When is it performed?

DID YOU KNOW?

Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) loved ṣalāt al-layl so much that in his parting advice to his sister Sayyidah Zaynab he told her to remember him in her ṣalāt al-layl.



KEY POINTS

1. Performing **mustaḥab** ṣalāh is highly rewarding because we perform them out of love for Allāh (SWT) rather than out of compulsion.
2. In addition to the 17 rakaʿāt which are wājib, there are a total of 34 **nawāfil** prayers which are highly recommended.
3. The most important of these nawāfil prayers is **ṣalāt al-layl**.

02 KHUMS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Introduction and basic rulings regarding khums
2. How to calculate khums on savings
3. How to purify wealth that has been mixed with ḥarām earnings
4. The recipients of khums

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

A person earns £24,000 and has a total expense of £20,500. How much khums is she required to pay?

WHAT IS KHUMS?

Just like ṣalāh and ṣawm, khums and zakāt are also acts of worship (ʿibādah) that are wājib on all Muslims. They are not merely taxes on one's wealth. We cannot hope to gain spiritual perfection and the pleasure of Allāh (SWT) unless we spends our wealth for others. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ

You will never become truly righteous until you spend from what you love most. And whatever you spend of anything, indeed Allāh knows it. [3:92]

By paying zakāt and khums, we show our concern for the poor and needy. These taxes also keep us away from selfishness and greed, and purify our wealth.

The main differences between khums and zakāt include the items on which they are applicable and their recipients. Khums is the right of Rasūl Allāh (S) and his family. It plays a very important role in maintaining the Islamic society, in tablīgh work (the propagation of Islam) and the independence of the ʿulamāʾ from the influence of governments. It has been mentioned in many aḥādīth that one who does not pay it has stolen a share belonging to Rasūl Allāh (S)'s family. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَأَنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ

Know that whatever thing you may come by, a fifth (khums) of it is for Allāh and the Messenger, for the relatives and the orphans, for the needy and the traveller… [8:41]

The khums we pay is divided into two equal parts. One part is the share of our living Imām and is called **Sahm al-Imām**. The other is the share of the poor Sādāt (the descendants of Rasūl Allāh (S)) and is called **Sahm al-Sādāt**.

During the ghaybah of the Imām, we give the Sahm al-Imām to our Marjaʿ, who uses it for religious and humanitarian causes. If we know of a worthy cause such as the building of an Islamic centre, helping an orphanage, tablīgh work or a humanitarian cause, we can ask our Marjaʿ for permission to give our share of Sahm al-Imām to that project.

Sometimes charitable organizations and Islamic institutions ask the Marjaʿ for permission to collect khums for their projects. The Marjaʿ will give them a written permission, called an **ijāzah**, to collect khums. You can then choose to give them your annual khums directly.

The Sahm al-Sādāt can also be given to the Marjaʿ who distributes it to the poor Sādāt. A poor Sayyid is one who lacks the means for one year's respectable living (in accordance to his/her social status). Khums is given to Sādāt who are Shīʿah Ithnā ʿAsharī and who pray and don't sin openly.

HOW IS KHUMS CALCULATED?

Khums is a one-fifth (20%) tax that all bāligh Muslims are required to pay. It is applicable on several items but the most common ones are one's annual savings and when ḥalāl wealth or property has become mixed up with ḥarām wealth.

Khums applies to all earnings including profit from business, salaries and wages. Calculating khums can be very confusing if we don't have a fixed khums date. The first step is to select a fixed date of our choice when we will calculate our khums every year.

We should then calculate our total income and subtract from this total income all our expenses for that year. Whatever remains is our savings as we did not use it during the year. We should then pay 20% of our savings as khums. The remaining 80% is ours to keep and no further khums will be applicable on it in subsequent years.



Even if a person has an ongoing debt like a mortgage, they still need to pay khums on their savings. They can however reduce how much khums they pay by paying more towards their mortgage and settling any other ongoing loans and debts before the khums becomes due.

If a person has earned wealth unlawfully (e.g. by gambling) and it is mixed with his lawful wealth and he/she has no idea how much is lawful and how much is unlawful, this wealth can be purified by paying khums once on the whole amount. THereafter it can be assumed that the remaining 80% is ḥalāl. Of course this doesn't change the fact that the person has committed a sin by acquiring the wealth unlawfully and is obligated to repent and undo the ḥarām act if possible e.g. return wealth to the rightful owner if stolen or taken unlawfully.

DID YOU KNOW?

There is no khums on the following items among others:

- Mahr (dowry), that is wājib for a husband to give to his wife at the time of marriage
- The earning or property of a child who is not bāligh
- Inheritance

KEY POINTS

1. Khums is one of the Furūʿ al-Dīn and an act of ʿibādah.

2. Khums has two parts: sahm al-Imām (share of the Imām of our time) and sahm al-Sādāt (share of the poor and needy descendants of Rasūl Allāh (S).

3. We should give our khums to our marjaʿ who will then utilise it in the right way for Islamic and humanitarian causes.

4. We can also give our khums to those who have an ijāzah, to collect khums.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is khums? Why should we pay khums?
2. How is khums calculated?
3. What are the two parts of khums? Who are the recipients of each of these parts?
4. What is an ijāzah for khums?

03 ZAKĀT

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Introduction and basic rulings regarding zakāt
2. How to calculate zakāt
3. The recipients of zakāt

MY NOTES

WHAT IS ZAKĀT?

Zakāt and khums are not merely Islamic taxes. They are acts of ʿibādah and are part of Furūʿ al-Dīn (the Branches of Religion) that are wājib on all Muslims. The literal meaning of the word zakāt is 'something which purifies'. Zakāt purifies our wealth by making those less fortunate share in a portion of it. Through zakāt and khums, we can achieve a relatively just and fair distribution of wealth in society. In an Islamic society all must live together as one family and share their wealth. Every member of society should have the means to live decently. If one group lacks it, it is the duty of the others to support them.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

And maintain the prayer (ṣalāh) and give the zakāt. The good that you send ahead for your souls, you shall find it (waiting for you) with Allāh. Indeed Allāh sees best what you do. [2:110]

In this verse, Allāh (SWT) is telling us that we should not think even for a moment that we are losing the wealth that we give away in the form of khums and zakāt. In fact, it is an investment we are making for our ākhirah (life in the Hereafter) because when we die and go to the next life, we will see our good deeds there and enjoy their rewards. Zakāt al-Māl is an annual tax that must be paid on certain items such as specific agricultural produce and livestock, and on gold and silver currency. It is wājib on nine items. If a person has any of these items beyond a certain quantity for over a year, then they must give zakāt on those items.

The nine items on which zakāt is wājib are:


WHEAT


BARLEY


GRAPES/RAISINS


DATES


GOLD COINS


SILVER COINS


CAMELS


CATTLE


SHEEP & GOATS

ACTIVITY

Read verse 9:60 and list the eight groups of people who can receive zakāt al-māl

The amount of zakāt to be paid varies depending on the item, quantity and type of crop or livestock. The amount of zakāt to be paid on gold and silver coins is 2.5%. If zakāt has been paid once on a quantity, it does not have to be paid again every year.

WHO ARE THE RECIPIENTS OF ZAKĀT?

The following āyah of Qurʾān tells us whom to give zakāt:

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

Ṣadaqāt (zakāt) are only for the poor and needy, those employed to collect zakāt, those whose hearts are to be reconciled, for the freeing of slaves, those in debt, in the way of Allāh, and for the traveller. This is an obligation from Allāh, and Allāh is All-knowing, All-wise. [9:60]

Zakāt can therefore be distributed to any of the following eight groups:

1. **Fuqarā**ʾ: The needy - those who are unable to meet their annual expenditure.
2. **Masākīn:** The poor - Those who live even below the level of the needy.
3. ʿ**Amilīn:** The salary of those who are employed to collect zakāt.
4. **Muʿallafat al-Qulub:** Those non-Muslims whom Rasūl Allāh (S) or the Imām or his representative think advisable to help from zakāt so as to gain their sympathy and support for Islam and Muslims.
5. **Riqāb:** To free the slaves. Islam greatly emphasises the freeing of slaves so that slavery can be abolished.
6. **Ghārimīn:** Those in debt to help pay off their debts if they are having difficulty repaying them.
7. **Fī Sabīl Allāh:** To help in religious matters and anything that is done in the way of Allāh e.g. building a masjid, school, improving roads etc.
8. **Ibn al-Sabīl:** A traveller who has run out of money and does not have the means to return home.

In all the cases above, the recipient of zakāt must be a Shīʿah Ithnā ʿĀsharī Muslim who is not a reputed sinner and who is not a dependant of the person paying the zakāt. The zakāt of a non-sayyid should not be given to a sayyid unless he/she is in dire need and the khums (sahm al-sādāt) given to him/her is not sufficient. The zakāt of a sayyid can be given to help a non-sayyid. When the Imām is present, zakāt should be given to him. During the ghaybah of the Imām, if a person cannot find anyone deserving to receive the zakāt, it may be given to the Marjaʿ or his agents (wukalāʾ) who will then give it to those who deserve it.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the literal meaning of zakāt?
2. When we pay zakāt, we don't lose that money. How is this possible?
3. What are the nine things on which zakāt is wājib?
4. Who are the 8 groups of people who are eligible to receive zakāt?
5. How much zakāt should be paid on gold and silver currency?

DID YOU KNOW?

Besides Zakāt al-Māl, there is also a specific Zakāt that is paid every year on the day of ʿĪd al-Fiṭr. It is given at the end of the month of Ramaḍān to help the poor. This zakāt is also wājib on every bāligh, sane Muslim and is called zakāt al-fiṭr or simply fiṭrah.

KEY POINTS

1. Zakāt is an Islamic tax which is wājib on certain items. The literal meaning of Zakāt is to purify. Zakāt purifies our wealth and ensures a more equal distribution of wealth in society.

2. Zakāt al-māl is wājib on 9 items including wheat, barley, dates, grapes or raisins, cattle, sheep or goats, camels, gold and silver coins.

3. The recipients of Zakāt have been mentioned in the Qurʾān.

04 AḤKĀM AL-MAYYIT (PART 1)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What should we do at the time of death?
2. What is sakarāt al-mawt?
3. An introduction to Islamic funeral rites.

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Perform a role play in class to show what you would do and how you would behave in the presence of someone who was about to die.

ISLAMIC FUNERAL RITES

Death is a certainty that no one can escape from. We have known right from a young age that we are here on this earth only for a short period of time. One day we will die so that we can go to the next world, which is our eternal home. Therefore, one who has prepared for the Hereafter will not fear death but in fact look forward to it.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّوْنَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَمَنْ زُحْزِحَ عَنْ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلاَّ مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ

Every soul shall taste death, and you will indeed be paid your full reward on the day of resurrection. Whoever is delivered from the Fire and admitted to paradise has certainly succeeded. The life of this world is nothing but a delusion. [3:185]

Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir (A) has said that the soul of a deceased muʾmin is asked during ghusl al-mayyit, “Would it please you to be returned to the body?” Its reply will be, “What am I to do with more suffering, loss and grief?!”

This means the next world is far more beautiful and comforting for a muʾmin compared to the life of this world. The time when a person is about to die is called the time of iḥtiḍār in Arabic, and the pangs and anguish they may feel are referred to as **sakarāt al-mawt** (the pangs of death).

Before death, Muslims should:

- Ensure they have prepared a will. They should inform their heirs where to find the will and it should be read before the funeral rites and burial as it may have specific instructions that need to be taken into account.
- Ask for forgiveness from all around and especially from those who they know may be upset with them. They should also ask Allāh (SWT) for forgiveness of sins and for the intercession of Rasūl Allāh (S) and his Ahl al-Bayt. Recite the kalimah, istighfār, ṣalawāt and any āyāt of the Qurʾān they know, as much as possible.
- If they have their own kafan, they should inform those around where to find it.
- A dying man should inform his eldest son or nearest of kin about any missed ṣalāh and fasts and if ḥajj was wājib but not done as well as any outstanding khums and zakāt. He should ask for all this to be settled as soon as possible and before inheritance is distributed. A woman can also ask her next of kin to fulfil any missed wājibāt and in particular if she has any debts that need to be settled.

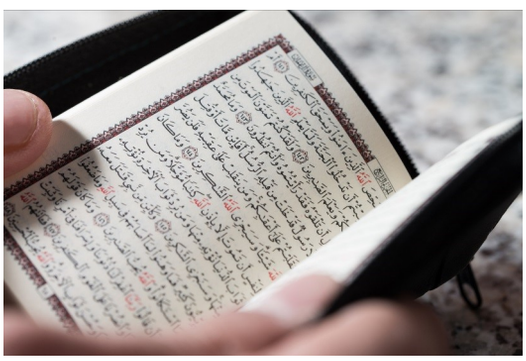
It is wājib to place a dying person such that his/her feet a facing towards qiblah. The mayyit should also be kept with its feet facing qiblah until ghusl al-mayyit has been performed. After the ghusl, the body should be placed in such a way that the right shoulder of the deceased is pointing towards qiblah.

WHAT SHOULD THOSE AROUND A DYING PERSON DO?

If a person is struggling and facing difficulties and pain in the moment of death, it is recommended to place his/her body where he/she used to perform ṣalāh and to recite for them Duʿāʾ al-ʿAdīlah. Help the dying person to recite the shahādatayn and if they cannot, then it is recommended to pronounce the shahādatayn over the dying person as follows:

نَشْهَدُ أَنْ لا اِلَهَ اِلا اللهُ وَ نَشهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَ رَسُولُه

We bear witness that there is no god but Allāh. And we bear witness that Muḥammad is his servant and His Messenger.



There are several recommended adʿiyāʾ that a dying person can recite or those near him/her can recite. It is also recommended that as much Qurʾān as possible should be recited for the dying person's comfort, especially sūrat Yāsīn, sūrat al-Ṣāffāt, sūrat al-Aḥzāb, āyah 254 of sūrah al-Baqarah and āyah 54 of sūrat al-Aʿrāf. If possible, these should be recited near the head of the person.

It is makrūh to:

* leave a dying person all alone
* sit near the dying person in the state of janābah or ḥayḍ (for women)
* place hands or any object (especially heavy objects) on the stomach or body of the dying person
* talk too much or cry too much in the presence of the dying person

As soon as a person passes away:

* Close their eyes and lips and straighten their arms and legs
* Remove any jewellery on the body that may be difficult to remove later when the body becomes cold
* Cover the whole body with a cloth
* If it is during the night, do not leave the body in darkness
* Inform people of the demise, especially the immediate relatives and local residents who can attend the funeral

It is strongly recommended that the last funeral rites including ghusl, takfīn and burial should not be delayed unless there is an unavoidable reason causing the delay.

IN SUMMARY

1. What does the Qurʾān say about death?
2. What are the things that a dying person should do?
3. What is iḥtiḍār and sakarāt al-mawt?
4. What should those around a dying person do? What makrūh actions should they keep away from?

DID YOU KNOW?

Rasūl Allāh (S) has said, **"The world is a paradise for the faithless and a prison for the faithful (muʾmin)."**
The opposite is true for the life after death.

KEY POINTS

1. Death is a certainty. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān that every soul shall taste death. We should therefore prepare for death so that we are ready for it when it comes.

2. A dying person should ensure they have written a will and make known to their heirs any outstanding debts or wājibāt that they have missed so that these can be fulfilled on their behalf.

3. It is wājib to place a dying person in such a way that the feet are facing qiblah.

05 AḤKĀM AL-MAYYIT (PART 2)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. An introduction to Islamic funeral rites
2. How to perform ghusl for a mayyit
3. An explanation on takfīn and ḥunūṭ.

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Watch a video demonstration of ghusl, takfīn and tadfīn

ISLAMIC FUNERAL RITES

The ghusl, kafan (takfīn), and burial (tadfīn) of a Muslim is an obligation on every bāligh sane Muslim. However, it is a communal duty (wājib al-kifāʾī). This means that if it is carried out by one or a group of people in the community, the rest are free of its obligation, but if it is carried out by none, all are held responsible.

All of the above mentioned rites should, as a matter of precaution, be performed with the permission of the guardian (walī) of the deceased. The walī of a wife is her husband, and of the father is the eldest son. In all cases the walī is the nearest adult male relative who inherits the most according to Islamic law. If the dead person has appointed someone to arrange his/her last rites, that person is to be considered the walī in these matters.

Q: How is ghusl al-mayyit performed?

The person who gives ghusl to a mayyit must be a Shīʿah Ithnā-ʿAsharī Muslim, aware of the rules regarding ghusl al-mayyit, ʿāqil (of sound mind), bāligh and of the same gender as the dead person (or a spouse).

Ghusl al-mayyit must be done with the niyyah of qurbatan ilallāh. It is ḥarām to charge a fee for performing the ghusl for a corpse. If someone undertakes it for the sake of money, it will be bāṭil. However one can charge for providing the facilities or materials necessary for performing the ghusl (i.e. the place, water, kafan etc.)

It is wājib to wash the mayyit three times in the following sequence:

1. With water mixed with sidr leaves (the leaves of a berry or lotus tree).
2. With water mixed with camphor.
3. With pure (muṭlaq) water.

The manner of ghusl al-mayyit is exactly as any ghusl (like ghusl for janābah) using the sequential method (al-ghusl al-tartībī). If a person dies in the state of janābah or ḥayḍ, it is not necessary to give them ghusl for that. The ghusl al-mayyit will suffice.

It is mustaḥab that:

* At least two persons should be engaged for giving ghusl. One should pour water on the dead body, while the other should change its sides.
* The soles of the feet of the dead body should face Qiblah.
* Ghusl should be given in a covered place and not under the open sky.
* The main person giving ghusl should be on the right side of the body, and before each of the three ghusls, they should wash their own arms up to the elbows.
* All involved in washing the body should recite supplications and ask for the forgiveness of the dead person throughout the ghusls.
* When the ghusls are over, the dead body should be dried with a towel before starting the takfīn (putting on the kafan).

HUNŪṬ AND TAKFĪN

Ḥunūṭ means rubbing camphor on the seven parts of body that touch the ground during sajdah. Ḥunūṭ is wājib and should be performed after ghusl al-mayyit.

It is also mustaḥab to place two pieces of fresh, green twigs in the grave with the dead body. These two twigs are called the jaridatayn and are usually placed on either side of the arms of the deceased or on either side of the grave or coffin.

Takfīn is done after the ghusl is over, the body is dried and ḥunūṭ has been done. It is mustaḥab that the kafan should be white cotton cloth. The wājib parts of the kafan are 3 pieces of cloth which should all be large enough to enable them to wrap generously around the body:

1. A cloth for the waist covering the body from the navel (just below waist line) down to the knees.
2. A shirt cloth covering the mayyit from the shoulders to the thighs.
3. A cloth wide enough to wrap around the whole body, and long enough to be tied at the head and the feet of the mayyit.

These three pieces of the kafan are wājib, although there are some other recommended pieces. Those who are involved in giving ghusl, takfīn and tadfīn should learn all the detailed rules regarding these processes.

It is recommended that a person should purchase his or her own shroud while alive, or should mention in his or her will the source of his or her shroud. Otherwise it may be provided out of the original wealth of the deceased.



DID YOU KNOW?

A dead body is najis before ghusl al-mayyit is performed. Therefore, a person who touches a mayyit before or during ghusl should perform ghusl mass al-mayyit (ghusl for touching a najis dead body).

KEY POINTS

1. The ghusl, takfīn, and tadfīn of a Muslim is wājib al-kifā'ī on every bāligh sane Muslim.

2. Islamic funeral rites should be performed with the permission of the walī of the deceased.

3. Ghusl al-mayyit involves washing the mayyit three times: first with water mixed with berry leaves, then with water mixed with camphor and lastly pure water.

4. After ghusl, ḥunūṭ should be performed, followed by takfīn.

IN SUMMARY

1. Islamic funeral rites are wājib al-kifā'ī. What does this mean?
2. What are the three types of water required for ghusl al-mayyit?
3. What are the mustaḥab acts whilst performing ghusl al-mayyit?
4. What is ḥunūṭ?
5. What are the three wājib pieces of cloth for kafan?

06 AḤKĀM AL-MAYYIT (PART 3)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. How to perform ṣalāt al-mayyit
2. An explanation on tadfīn.

MY NOTES

ṢALĀT AL-MAYYIT

Ṣalāt al-mayyit is wājib for all adult deceased Muslims and for children who are six years of age or older as long as at least one of their parents is Muslim. If the deceased child was not six years old but knew what ṣalāh was, then, as iḥtiyāt wājib, ṣalāt al-mayyit should also be performed.

The ṣalāh for the dead person should be performed after ghusl al-mayyit, the ḥunūṭ, and the shrouding (takfīn). Even though this ṣalāh is wājib al-kifāʾī, it is highly recommended and there is great spiritual reward for as many Muslims as possible to join in the ṣalāh.

Ṣalāt al-mayyit is different from other prayers. It is not necessary to perform wuḍūʾ before this ṣalāh, or for the clothes or body to be clean (ṭāhir), though it is recommended that those who perform this ṣalāh should be in a state of ritual purity (ṭahārah) and should have done wuḍūʾ. A woman is the state of ḥayḍ (menses) can pray ṣalāt al-mayyit but she should stand alone and not join the lines in the congregation.

It is wājib that the mayyit should be placed on its back in front of the people performing ṣalāt al-mayyit, with its right shoulder facing qiblah. It is recommended that those performing ṣalāt al-mayyit should stand barefoot. Before the ṣalāh, it is recommended that instead of the adhān, the people should be called to the prayer by calling out 'al-Ṣalāh' al-three times.

After making the niyyah of offering ṣalāt al-mayyit for the deceased, qurbatan ilallāh, five takbīrs should be done, each followed by a certain duʿāʾ. It is recommended to raise one's hands up to the ears during each takbīr. The Imām of the congregation should read the supplications aloud, and those in the congregation should repeat them quietly.

After 1st takbīr:

اَشْهَدُ اَن لا اِلَهَ اِلا اللّٰه وَ اَشْهَدُ اَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللّٰه

I bear witness there is no god but Allāh and Muḥammad is Allāh's Messenger

After 2nd takbīr:

اَللّٰهُمَ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَ آلِ مُحَمَّد

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad (S) and the progeny of Muḥammad (S)

After 3rd takbīr:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْمُؤمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤمِنَات

O Allāh, forgive all the faithful – men and women

ACTIVITY

List down the differences between ṣalāt al-mayyit and other ritual prayers.

After 4th takbīr:
if it is a man:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِهٰذَا الْمَيِّت

O Allāh, forgive this dead body

if it is a woman:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِهٰذِهِ الْمَيِّتَة

O Allāh, forgive this dead body

The 5th takbīr marks the end of the ṣalāt al-mayyit. The mayyit is now ready to be taken away for burial.

AN ISLAMIC BURIAL

There are many aḥādīth stressing the importance of attending funerals. It gives honour to the Muslim who has passed away, comforts the family and loved ones, reminds us of the next world, reminds us of our own mortality and how we too will one day we washed, shrouded, prayed over and buried by others. There is great thawāb in attending a funeral.

It is mustaḥab that when the coffin is taken to the grave, it should be placed on the ground several metres away from the grave, then brought a few metres nearer to the grave, and for a second time placed on the ground, then brought nearer and placed by the side of the grave.

The mayyit should be lowered into the grave gently whilst reciting this mustaḥab duʿāʾ: “O Allāh, hollow out the earth on his/her two sides, raise up his/her actions, and cause him/her to encounter the pleasures of Paradise from You.”



MY NOTES

06 AḤKĀM AL-MAYYIT (PART 3)

DID YOU KNOW?

Imām Ali (A) once accompanying a funeral when he heard someone laughing. He got angry and said, **"Is it that death is only for others? Is it that we will never die? Is it that those whom we see departing on their journey of death will come back to us? We lay them down in their graves and then enjoy their estate!"**

The mayyit should be laid into the grave on its right side so that the face is towards the qiblah and its back is not on ground, but on the side wall of the grave. The right cheek should be on the ground and the head placed on a pillow made of earth.

The person placing the mayyit in the grave should place his hands on the shoulders of the mayyit and then recite the **talqīn**. The shoulders of the mayyit should be firmly shaken each time the name of the deceased is mentioned in the talqīn. The person reciting it should try and recite it close to the ear of the mayyit. The talqīn is recited in Arabic and can be found in the risālah of the marjaʿ.

After the recital of the talqīn, the people present, except the near relatives of the deceased, should push soil into the grave. They should push the soil in with the back of their hands (palm facing down), and say:

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُون

We are from Allāh, and to Him we shall return [2:156]

Then some water should be poured on the grave and those present should thrust their fingers in the soil (such that it leaves finger marks) and recite sūrat al-Fātiḥah and sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ once, followed by sūrat al-Qadr seven times. This is called **tanzīl**. They should seek Allāh (SWT)'s forgiveness for the deceased.



KEY POINTS

1. **Ṣalāt al-mayyit** is different from other ṣalawāt. It consists of five takbīrs, with a duʿāʾ between every two takbīrs.

2. Wuḍūʾ or ṭahārah is not required for ṣalāt al-mayyit although it is preferable.

3. Instead of reciting the adhān, people should be called to perform the ṣalāh by calling out al-ṣalāh three times.

4. A mayyit should be placed on its right side in the grave, with its face facing qiblah and its head on a pillow of sand.

5. The **talqīn** should then be recited in Arabic whilst holding the shoulders of the mayyit.

6. After the grave is covered with soil, those present should put their fingers into the soil and recite the **tanzīl**.

IN SUMMARY

1. How is ṣalāt al-mayyit different from other ritual prayers?
2. What are the benefits of attending a funeral?
3. How should a mayyit be placed in the grave?
4. What is talqīn?
5. What is tanzīl?

INTOXICANTS 07

CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL AND DRUGS IS FORBIDDEN IN ISLAM

Islam forbids us from using any substance that causes us to lose control of our minds, become irrational and behave like animals. This is not only humiliating and degrading, but also detrimental to society as it leads to domestic violence, family break-ups, depression, addiction, crime, accidents and fatality among other things.

Allāh (SWT) forbids alcohol in the Qurʾān:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنْ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَفْعِهِمَا ...

They ask you concerning wine and gambling. Say, 'There is a great sin in both of them, and some profit for people, but their sinfulness outweighs their profit...' [2:219]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالأَنصَابُ وَالأَزْلاَمُ رِجْسٌ مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

O you who have faith! Indeed wine, gambling, idols and the divining arrows (a form of gambling) are uncleanliness from Shayṭān's work, so avoid them, so that you may be successful. [5:90]

Although the word khamr in these verses is commonly translated as wine, it refers to all forms of alcoholic drinks such as beer, spirits, wines and so on regardless of their quantity, purity or whether their effect is strong or weak, immediate or delayed.

Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) was once asked if it was permissible to take alcohol in small quantities that wouldn't cause intoxication. He said: "Absolutely not. Anything that intoxicates in large quantities is ḥarām even in small quantities."



The effects of intoxicants are far-reaching. They not only harm the consumer but also those around him/her. For

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Why are intoxicants ḥarām in Islam?
2. What are the negative effects of intoxicants on individuals and society?
3. What are the basic Islamic rulings on intoxicants?

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

What are the negative effects of alcohol on society?

MY NOTES

example, driving can cause the death of innocent people. Similarly, children whose mothers take alcohol in pregnancy are born with its harmful effects.

Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) explained why alcohol is condemned in Islam. He said: **"Alcohol is the root of all evil and sin. A person who drinks alcohol loses his sanity. At the time he is drunk, he does not know Allāh (SWT), does not fear committing any sin, does not respect anyone's rights and does not stop from committing evil openly. The spirit of piety and faith departs from him and only the impure and vicious spirit, which is far off from the mercy of Allāh (SWT) remains in his body. Allāh, His angels, His prophets and the true believers curse such a man, and his daily prayers are not accepted for forty days."**

The use of recreational drugs is also ḥarām in Islam, because they too are intoxicants and have similar effects to alcohol.

BASIC RULINGS REGARDING INTOXICANTS

Alcohol is najis al-ʿayn and makes other things najis. Anything that comes into contact with alcohol (that is for drinking and not for industrial use) becomes najis and must be made ṭāhir using water. Industrial alcohol that is used to make things like perfume is not considered najis.



Food containing even small amounts of alcohol is najis and cannot be consumed, even if the alcohol has "evaporated" in the cooking process. This is because even though the effects of alcohol may no longer be there in the food, it has become najis and cannot be eaten. It is also not permissible to consume alcohol for medicinal purposes.

If we buy anything with alcohol or someone gives us a gift with alcohol (e.g. chocolates or cake with rum), we cannot even give it to a non-Muslim and must throw it away.

Sitting at a table where alcohol is served is not permissible. When we go out with non-Muslim friends from college or work, it is important that we do

not sit with them if they are drinking alcohol. We should avoid any restaurant that has a bar, sells alcohol or even permits people to bring their own alcohol.

It is not permissible to grow crops for alcohol production, produce it, buy or sell it. In fact, all aspects of alcohol trade from the time crops, such as grapes and barley, are grown on the farm to the consumption of the alcoholic drink by the end user is forbidden in Islam. This includes distributing, advertising and profiting from companies that deal in alcohol production.

Islam forbids all types of intoxicants, including drugs. By 'drugs' we do not mean medicines, but recreational drugs that are taken to alter a person's state of mind. They are usually addictive and alter mood and behaviour (just like alcohol). Examples of such drugs include opium, heroin, cocaine and marijuana.

Sometimes pain-killers are taken in larger quantities or stronger doses to give the same effect as narcotics. Such usages is also considered ḥarām.



DID YOU KNOW?

Rasūl Allāh (S) cursed ten groups of people who have anything to do with alcohol:

1. Those who cultivate a crop with intention of producing alcohol from it
2. Those who crush the fruit to make wine
3. Those who transport it
4. Those who take delivery of it from the supplier
5. Those who sell it
6. Those who buy it
7. Those who serve it
8. Those who drink it
9. Those who sit at a table where alcohol is drunk
10. Those who use the income earned from alcohol

KEY POINTS

1. Consuming alcohol as well as dealing in any stage of its production, distribution, sale and consumption. is ḥarām is Islam.

2. Alcohol is the root of many evils and leads a person to sin.

3. Alcohol abuse destroys lives and leads to family breakdown. The habit is also addictive and difficult to give up.

4. We should not sit at a table where alcohol is served.

IN SUMMARY

1. What does the Qurʾān say about alcohol consumption?
2. Is it permissible to use alcoholic drinks in small quantities which do not cause addiction?
3. What are the ten groups of people that *Rasūl Allāh* (S) has cursed due to their involvement in alcohol?

08 ḤAJJ

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is Ḥijjat al-Islām?
2. What are the conditions for Ḥajj to become wājib?
3. What are the main acts of ʿUmrah al-Tamattuʿ and Ḥajj al-Tamattuʿ?

MY NOTES

HIJJAT AL-ISLĀM

Ḥajj is one of the wājib acts of worship (ʿibādāt) in Islam. It refers to the annual pilgrimage to Makkah that is performed every year in the month of Dhūʾl-Ḥijjah, the last month in the Islamic calendar. Participation in Ḥajj is wājib on all Muslims at least once in their lifetimes, as long as they fulfil the following conditions:

* **bulūgh** (puberty)
* ʿ**aql** (sanity)
* **istitāʿah** (affordability)

The conditions of istitāʿah are wealth (one should be able to afford it), health (one should be physically healthy to make the journey to Makkah and participate in ḥajj) and transport (including availability of visas).

Those who wish to go for ḥajj should:

* ensure they have no debts to pay. If they owe money to anyone they should pay it back first or ask their permission to pay it later.
* ensure the money for Ḥajj is clean and from ḥalāl earnings. This is by ensuring that any wājib taxes like khums and zakāt have been paid.
* prepare a will just in case they die before returning home; and ensure the executor(S) of their will who is not travelling with them knows where to find the will if they need to.
* it is recommended to give ṣadaqah before setting out on the journey.

The annual ḥajj (ḥijjat al-Islam) is made up of two parts:

1. ʿ**Umrah al-Tamattu**ʿ (that can be done anytime between 1st Shawwāl and 8th Dhūʾl-Ḥijjah), and
2. **Ḥajj al-Tamattu**ʿ (that must be done from the 9th to 13th Dhūʾl-Ḥijjah of the same year as the ʿUmrah al-Tamattuʿ).

Pilgrims have to start their ḥajj at any one of five specific locations away from Makkah. These five places are called **mīqāt**. At the mīqāt, a pilgrim puts on a special dress called the **iḥrām**, makes the niyyah for ḥajj and recites the **talbiyyah** as follows:

Labbayk, Allāhumma labbayk. Lā sharika laka labbayk

At Your service (here I am) O Allāh, at Your service. There is no partner for You. At Your service.

The iḥrām for men is two pieces of unstitched cloth: One piece to cover from the waist to the knees and the other for the upper body. Men cannot cover their head or feet. For women, iḥrām is a simple long dress with ḥijāb. It is recommended for the iḥrām to be white, both for men and women. From the miqāt, pilgrims head to Makkah to perform ʿUmrah al-Tamattuʿ which consists of **tawāf** (going round the Kaʿbah seven times), a two rakaʿāt **ṣalāh after tawāf**, **saʿī** (running between the hills of Ṣafāʾ and Marwah) and **taqṣīr** (clipping hair or finger nails).

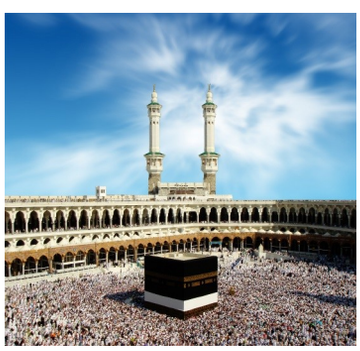
ACTIVITY

Can you recall any similarities between the acts of Ḥajj and the lives of Nabī Ibrāhīm (A) and his son Nabī Ismāʿīl (A)?

ḤAJJ AL-TAMATTUʿ

The wājib acts in Ḥajj al-Tamattuʿ (the 2nd part of the annual Ḥajj) are:

1. Making the **niyyah** for Ḥajj at-Tamattuʿ and wearing the **iḥrām** in Makkah before heading out to ʿArafah.
2. Wuqūf (stopping) at ʿ**Arafah**, an open plain outside Makkah, and staying there on the 9th of Dhūʾl-Ḥijjah from ẓuhr until maghrib.
3. Spend the night at **Mashʿar**, a place between ʿArafah and Makkah (also called Muzdalifah).
4. Going to **Minā** after sunrise on the 10th of Dhūʾl-Ḥijjah (ʿĪd al-Aḍḥā). At Minā, a pilgrim has to do **Ramī al-Jamarāt** by throwing pebbles at the last Jamarah (The Jamarāt are three stone pillars or walls that symbolise shayṭān), perform the **sacrifice** of an animal and shave the head (**ḥalaq**) or clip some hair from the head (**taqṣīr**). Women are not allowed to shave their head, but for men it is highly recommended to do so.
5. Staying at Minā for the next two nights and throwing pebbles at all three Jamarāt.
6. Return to Makkah to perform tawāf of the Kaʿbah seven times. This is called **Tawāf al-Ḥajj**.
7. Offering a **two rakʿah ṣalāh** after tawāf near Maqām Ibrāhīm.
8. Performing **Saʿī** between the hills **Ṣafā**ʾ and **Marwah**.
9. Performing **Tawāf al-Nisā** (another tawāf around the Kaʿbah).
10. Offering two rakaʿāt ṣalāh for tawāf al-Nisāʾ near Maqām Ibrāhīm.



This marks the end of Ḥajj al-Tamattuʿ and a pilgrim can then remove his or her iḥrām. It is important to note that in the state of iḥrām, there is a list of about 25 things which are ḥarām for the pilgrim. One should become familiarised with this list before going for Ḥajj or ʿUmrah. Before leaving Makkah, it is mustaḥab to do a final tawāf called **Tawāf al-Widā**ʾ followed by 2 rakaʿāt near Maqām Ibrāhīm. Whenever a person goes for ʿUmrah or Ḥajj, it is also highly recommended to go to Madīnah and visit Rasūl Allāh (S) and members of the Ahl al-Bayt (A) buried in Jannat al-Baqī near the Masjid al-Nabawī.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is Ḥijjat al-Islām? What are the conditions for it to become wājib?
2. What are the miqāt? What three things must a pilgrim do at one of the miqāt?
3. What acts does ʿUmrah al-Tamattuʿ consist of?
4. What is Ramī al-Jamarāt?
5. What are the three places outside Makkah where the pilgrim has to go during Ḥajj al-Tamattuʿ?

DID YOU KNOW?

It is highly recommended to go to Makkah for ʿUmrah in other months besides Ḥajj in Dhūʾl-Ḥijjah. When performing ʿUmrah, it is wājib to enter Makkah in Iḥrām and perform ʿUmrah al-Tamattuʿ which consists of tawāf, a two rakaʿāt ṣalāh after tawāf, saʿī and taqṣīr. Ḥajj al-Tamattuʿ is only done in Dhūʾl-Ḥijjah, so for ʿUmrah pilgrims do not go to ʿArafah, Muzdalifah (Mashʿar) or Minā.

KEY POINTS

1. The annual pilgrimage to Makkah in the month of Dhūʾl-Ḥijjah is called **Ḥijjat al-Islām**.

2. It is wājib on all sane and bāligh Muslims to perform Ḥajj at least once in their lifetime if they have the **istitāʿah** (affordability, health and possibility of travelling to Makkah).

3. Ḥijjat al-Islām consist of two parts: ʿ**Umrah al-Tamattuʿ** and **Ḥajj al-Tamattuʿ**.

4. Pilgrims must first go to one of the **miqāt** to put on the **iḥrām**, make niyyah for Ḥajj and recite the **talbiyyah**.

MORALS, ETHICS & HISTORY
AKHLĀQ AND TĀRĪKH

What is Morals and Ethics - Akhlāq?

Akhlāq is the plural of the Arabic word khulq, which means "**disposition**" (i.e. characteristics of a person and how one behaves with others). It can also be referred to as a person's nature or personality. Islam places a lot of emphasis on refining one's akhlāq by purifying the soul. We can do this by always performing all wājib actions and keeping away from everything that is ḥarām.

What is History - Tārīkh?

Tārīkh is an Arabic word meaning history. In this chapter, we will specifically look at the history of Islam. This dates back to the very beginning of creation. Our journey into Islamic history will take us through the creation of the universe, the creation of Nabī Ādam (A) (the first man), the anbiyāʾ of Allāh (SWT), the sīrah of the Holy Prophet (S), the lives of the Maʿṣūmīn (A), and Islam today.

Why Study Morals, Ethics, and History Together?

In numerous places in the Qurʾān, Allāh (SWT) narrates the stories of the past people, and asks us to ponder over them so that we may learn lessons from them. These lessons are a study of Akhlāq, teaching us good manners, morality and virtue. Through examples of those who lived before us, We are shown how to purify our soul so that we can become perfect human beings.

The Holy Prophet (S) had the most perfect Akhlāq and was sent as a role model for us. In the study of Akhlāq (A), we look at the teachings of the Qurʾān and the sunnah of the Holy Prophet (S) and the Ahl al-Bayt (A) on refining one's character.

Dear Lord,

Open our hearts and minds to reflect on history to understand who we are, where we come from, and where we are headed.. Guide us in understanding of how our character and manners, morality, and virtue should reflect true Islam. Allow us to be purified through our character so we can become perfect human beings and You can be happy with us.

01 QIṢAṢ AL-ANBIYĀʾ : NABĪ LŪṬ (A)

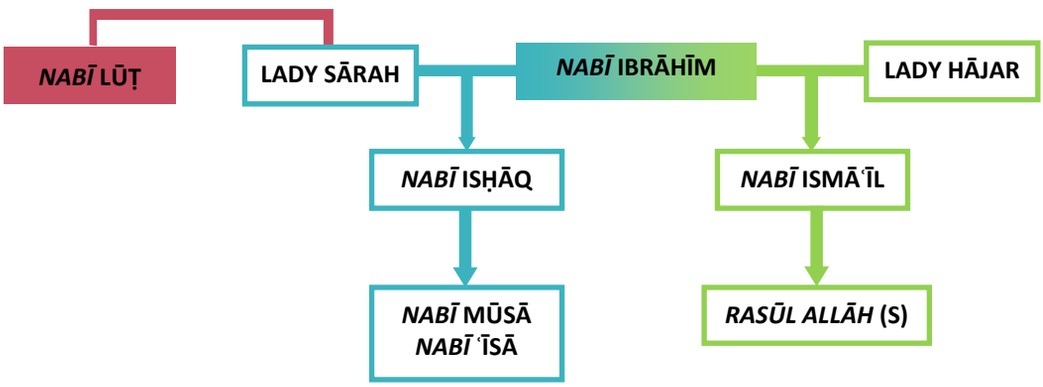
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Who was Nabī Lūṭ (A)?
2. What challenges did he face in his community?
3. How did Allāh (SWT) punish the people of Sodom?

MY NOTES

NABĪ LŪṬ (A) AND THE PEOPLE OF SODOM

Nabī Lūṭ (A) was the cousin of Nabī Ibrāhīm (A). Their mothers were sisters and Nabī Lūṭ's sister, Lady Sārah, was Nabī Ibrāhīm's first wife. The two Prophets migrated together to Palestine, and Nabī Lūṭ (A) settled in the district of Sodom in Jordan.



The people of Sodom were unsociable and treated strangers disgracefully. Anybody who passed through their town would be robbed of all their possessions. They loved singing, merrymaking and gambling. However, by far the worst vice in their community was homosexuality, which was openly practised.

Allāh (SWT) sent Nabī Lūṭ (A) to guide the people of Sodom. He preached to them the message of Allāh (SWT) and begged them to give up their evil ways. However, after 30 years of preaching, only a handful of people had accepted his teachings. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنْ الْعَالَمِينَ
إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُسْرِفُونَ وَمَا كَانَ
جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلاَّ أَنْ قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِنْ قَرْيَتِكُمْ إِنَّهُمْ أُنَاسٌ يَتَطَهَّرُونَ

And Lūṭ, when he said to his people, 'What! Do you commit an indecency none in the world ever committed before you?! Indeed you come to men with (sexual) desire instead of women! You are indeed transgressing beyond bounds. But the only answer of his people was that they said, 'Expel them from your town! They are indeed men who want to be clean and pure!' [7:80-82]

ACTIVITY

In small groups, read verses 11: 69-83 and write down the main events that Allāh (SWT) has mentioned in these verses.

While Nabī Lūṭ (A) increased his efforts to guide the people, they wanted to banish him and his followers from the town. When he warned them to fear Allāh (SWT) for their indecent behaviour they laughed and said that they did not care. Finally, Allāh (SWT)'s punishment descended on them.



ALLĀH (SWT) PUNISHES THE PEOPLE OF SODOM

Allāh (SWT) sent angels in human form, including Jibrāʾīl, to the house of Nabī Lūṭ (A). On their way to the town of Sodom, they passed by the house of Nabī Ibrāhīm (A) to give him the good news that he and Lady Sārah were going to have a son called Isḥāq, who would be blessed with a son called Yaʿqūb.

The angels then went to Nabī Lūṭ's house. When he saw that his guests were handsome youths, Nabī Lūṭ (A) became worried because he knew very well the habits of his people.

Nabī Lūṭ's wife was an evil lady. She informed the people that there were handsome guests at her house, so they started coming to the house of Nabī Lūṭ (A) with evil intentions in their mind. Nabī Lūṭ (A) said to them, **"O my people, here are my daughters. It is better for you to marry them rather than desire my male guests. Is there not a right-minded man among you?"**

They replied, "You certainly know that we have no interest in your daughters, and indeed you know what we want."

Jibrāʾīl then asked Nabī Lūṭ (A) to leave town that night with his family and the virtuous believers, but to leave his evil wife behind. As soon as Nabī Lūṭ (A) and his followers were safely out of town, rocks began falling from the sky on the town and the whole place was turned upside down. This is mentioned in various places in the Qurʾān. For example:

فَأَنجَيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلاَّ امْرَأَتَهُ كَانَتْ مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِم مَطَرًا فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ

So We saved him (Lūṭ) and his family, except his wife; she was one of those who remained behind. Then We poured down upon them a rain (of stones). So look how was the end of the guilty! [7:83-84]

Every prophet and messenger of Allāh (SWT) has condemned and cursed those who practiced homosexuality. The Aʾimmah (A) have said that those who commit this indecency will be raised with the people of Sodom on the Day of Judgement.

IN SUMMARY

1. How was Nabī Lūṭ (A) related to Nabī Ibrāhīm (A)?
2. What indecent acts did Nabī Lūṭ's people commit?
3. What did the people of Sodom say to Nabī Lūṭ (A) when he warned them of Allāh (SWT)'s punishment?
4. Why was Nabī Lūṭ's wife also punished by Allāh (SWT)?
5. How did Allāh (SWT) punish the people of Sodom?

DID YOU KNOW?

The word "sodomy" (which has the same meaning as homosexuality) comes from the word "Sodom", a district in Jordan where the people of Nabī Lūṭ (A) lived.

Allāh (SWT) refers to them as the people "whose town was turned upside down". [9:70, 53:53, 69:9]



KEY POINTS

1. Nabī Lūṭ (A) was Nabī Ibrāhīm (A)'s cousin. Their mothers were sisters.
2. Allāh (SWT) sent Nabī Lūṭ (A) to the people of Sodom, who committed many evil deeds including robbing people who passed through their town and engaging in homosexuality.
3. Nabī Lūṭ (A) spent 30 years trying to guide them but they wouldn't listen to him.
4. In the end, Allāh (SWT) sent angels to tell Nabī Lūṭ (A) to leave the town with his family and followers. He then punished the evil ones by showering stones on them and turning their town upside down.

01 CONTROLLING DESIRES

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Why is it necessary for us to control our base desires?
2. How do we control our desires?

MY NOTES

WHY SHOULD WE CONTROL OUR VAIN DESIRES?

Although we enjoy free will, we need to exercise our free will in a responsible way by having some form of self control. We cannot simply follow our whims and desires and do whatever we want. We need to have self-control and self-discipline which leads to self-purification. If we purify our nafs (soul) we will no longer need to resist our temptations and control ourselves against lower desires and lusts, since a purified person desires nothing except what is good and moral for himself and others.



Desires in themselves are not bad provided they are channeled in healthy ways and controlled by one's intellect and faith (īmān). This could be the desire for food, the desire to become powerful etc. When desires control a person, he/she stops having a purposeful life. A person addicted to and driven by worldly desires and physical pleasures ends up destroying himself/ herself.

In one ḥadīth we are told, **"Hellfire is ringed with desires while Paradise is surrounded with unpleasant things."** This means that to get to Paradise, one must undergo many hardships. On the other hand, giving in to base desires and sinning, which may feel more enjoyable in this life, will lead one to hellfire.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ طَغَىٰ وَآثَرَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

As for him who was rebellious and preferred the life of this world, his refuge will indeed be hell. And as for him who is awed to stand before his Lord and forbids the soul from following desire, his refuge will indeed be paradise. [79: 37-41]

Imām ʿAlī (A) has said, **"Jihād against your desires is the price of Paradise."**

People who do not struggle against their nafs to overcome their base desires remain shackled by their desires and are slaves to their addictions even if they think they love Allāh (SWT). A person only becomes free by becoming a true slave of Allāh (SWT) and surrendering to nothing but Allāh (SWT). That is why Rasūl Allāh (S) said, **"If you fight your vain desires, you will own (free) your selves.' He also said, 'It is with struggle (mujāhadah) that evil habits (addictions) are overcome."**

ACTIVITY

In small groups, think of a few base desires that can lead you to sin, and identify ways in which you can overcome such desires.

CONTROLLING VAIN DESIRES

Controlling our base desires is not an easy task, which is why Rasūl Allāh (S) referred to it as Jihād al-Akbar (the greater struggle).
Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا

He will indeed be successful who purifies it (the soul) and he will indeed fail whoever pollutes and corrupts it. [91: 9-10]

One of the ways in which we can overcome our desires is to constantly remind ourselves of the temporary nature of this world and the permanence of the next world. It also helps to see ourselves as being on a journey and as we struggle with our soul, we get closer to Jannah.

Another way to do jihād al-akbar is to fast. Fasting is always difficult in the beginning because it forces us to overcome our bad habits (e.g. listening to music, watching indecent programs, overeating etc.). We often don't even know how addicted we are to these habits until we are forced to give them up. Rasūl Allāh (S) has also advised, **"Fight your selves with little food and drink, the angels will shade you and shayṭān will flee from you."**



Imām ʿAlī (A) has advised us to resist evil temptations by reciting the Qurʾān. Allāh (SWT) revealed the Qurʾān and sent Rasūl Allāh (S) and the Aʾimmah (A) to guide us towards perfection. The verses of the Qurʾān and teachings of the maʿṣūmīn (A) are a great inspiration for us, and help us make the right choices in life.

Another reason why humans give in to desire is because they forget their mortality. Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) has said, **"The remembrance of death kills lusts."**

IN SUMMARY

1. Why is it necessary to control one's base desires?
2. State any two desires that can lead to sin, and explain how one can control these desires.
3. What are some of the ways in which we can overcome our desires and temptation to sin?
4. What is jihād al-akbar?
5. How does reciting Qurʾān help us overcome our base desires?

DID YOU KNOW?

The word zakāt is derived from the same root as tazkiyah (purification) which means growth and purity. This is because giving zakāt purifies one's wealth and possessions, brings blessings and an increase in sustenance.

KEY POINTS

1. It is necessary to control our base desires and not give in to temptations so that we do not forget Allāh (SWT) and fall into sin.

2. In order to keep away from desires, it is important to purify one's soul through constant struggle against the temptation to sin. This is a difficult struggle and Rasūl Allāh (S) referred to it as jihād al-akbar.

3. Those who do not purify their soul remain shackled to their desires and cannot get closer to Allāh (SWT).

02 QIṢAṢ AL-ANBIYĀʾ : NABĪ MŪSĀ (A)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. The story of Nabī Mūsā (A) and Khiḍr (A) in the Qurʾān
2. The lessons we can learn from this story

MY NOTES

NABĪ MŪSĀ (A) MEETS KHIḌR (A)

Nabī Mūsā (A) was one of the most learned man of his time, but even his wisdom did not comprehend everything. Allāh (SWT) told him to go in search of a man named Khiḍr (A) who was more knowledgeable and Nabī Mūsā (A) could learn from him.



Nabī Mūsā (A) had to travel a very long distance to meet Khiḍr (A). Allāh (A) told him he would find Khiḍr (A) at a place where the two seas met. In order to identify the exact location, Allāh (SWT) told Nabī Mūsā (A) to take some fishes with him which, at some point, would miraculously find their way back into the sea (even though they were not alive). This would be the place where they would find Khiḍr (A). Nabī Mūsā (A) met Khiḍr (A) at this location and wanted to accompany him on his travels to learn from him, so he said to him, "May I follow you so that you may teach me some of the knowledge you have been taught?"

Khidr (A) said it would be difficult for Nabī Mūsā (A) because he would not be able to understand his actions. He said to Nabī Mūsā (A), **"Indeed you can't have patience with me! And how can you have patience about that which is beyond your understanding?"**

However, Nabī Mūsā (A) insisted and said, **"You will find me, God willing, to be patient, and I will not disobey you in any matter."**

Khiḍr (A) agreed to take Nabī Mūsā (A) along with him but on one condition. He said, **"If you follow me, do not question me concerning anything until I myself explain it to you"**. Nabī Mūsā (A) agreed to this, so they went on their journey together.

ACTIVITY

In small groups, draw a storyboard showing Khiḍr (A)'s actions

When they reached the sea, they had to get on a boat to continue travelling. When they boarded the boat, Khiḍr (A) made a hole in it. Nabī Mūsā (A) was surprised at this action and said, **"Did you make a hole in it to drown its people? You have certainly done a dreadful thing!"**

Khiḍr (A) replied, **"Did I not say, indeed you cannot have patience with me?"**

Nabī Mūsā (A) remembered the condition he had agreed to and said, **"Do not take me to task for my forgetting, and do not be hard upon me."**
So they continued travelling. When they met a boy, Khiḍr (A) killed him. Nabī Mūsā (A) said, **"Did you slay an innocent soul, without him having killed anyone? You have certainly done an evil thing!"**

Khiḍr (A) replied, **"Did I not tell you, indeed you cannot have patience with me?"**

Nabī Mūsā (A) said, **"If I question you about anything after this, do not keep me in your company. You have already got sufficient excuse on my part."**

So they continued on their journey. When they came to a town, they asked its people for food, but the people refused to show them any hospitality. They then came across a wall which was crumbling so Khiḍr (A) repaired it. Nabī Mūsā (A) was surprised that Khiḍr (A) did a favour for people who did not even offer them food, and said, **"Had you wished, you could have taken payment for it."**

Khiḍr (A) replied, **"This is where you and I shall part. I will inform you about the interpretation of that over which you could not maintain patience."**



MY NOTES

MY NOTES

KHIḌR (A) EXPLAINS THE WISDOM BEHIND HIS ACTIONS

Khiḍr (A) explained to Nabī Mūsā (A) that the king was taking away all the good boats by force for himself. Making a hole in the boat would make it defective, so the king would not take it away from its owners who could then repair the hole and use the boat again.



Khiḍr (A) said to Nabī Mūsā (A), As for the boat, it belonged to some poor people who work on the sea. I wanted to make it defective, for behind them was a king seizing every boat by force.

As for the boy, his parents were faithful people, and We feared he would overwhelm them with rebellion and disbelief. So We desired that their Lord should give them in exchange a child better than him in respect of purity and closer in mercy.

As for the wall, it belonged to two boy orphans in the city. Under it there was a treasure belonging to them. Their father had been a righteous man. So your Lord desired that they should come of age and take out their treasure —as a mercy from your Lord. I did not do that out of my own accord. This is the interpretation of that over which you could not maintain patience.' [18: 79-82]

Notice the use of different pronouns by Khiḍr (A) for the three actions (underlined above). As for making a hole in the boat, Khiḍr (A) said that he did it. This is because it was a negative action, even though it was done with the right intention, and Khiḍr (A) did not want to attribute it to Allāh (SWT).

With regards to killing the boy, he used the pronoun We, indicating that although he performed the action, it is only with the permission of Allāh (SWT) that a life can be taken. Life and death are decreed by Allāh (SWT).

As for repairing the wall, this was a good and positive act, so Khiḍr (A) attributed it to Allāh (SWT), saying that it was an action that your Lord desired. This teaches us that whenever we perform a good act, especially if it is a favour to others, we should remember that we are only the means through whom Allāh (SWT) helps others. If we understand this, we would never be proud of our good actions, and would not expect any praise or reward from people.

DID YOU KNOW?

Khiḍr (A) is still alive until today. He has not been mentioned by name in the Qurʾān. Allāh (SWT) refers to him as **"one of Our servants whom We had granted a mercy from Ourselves, and taught him knowledge from Our own."** [18:65]

KEY POINTS

1. Nabī Mūsā (A) was one of the greatest Prophets of Allāh (SWT) but didn't know everything. Allāh (SWT) told him to meet and learn from Khiḍr (A) who possessed special knowledge from Allāh (SWT).

2. Khiḍr (A) was reluctant to allow Nabī Mūsā (A) to accompany him because he would not be able to understand his actions. When Nabī Mūsā (A) insisted, he agreed on the condition that Nabī Mūsā (A) should not question his actions until he himself explained them.

3. Nabī Mūsā (A) could not control his urge to question Khiḍr (A) every time he saw him do something, so Khiḍr (A) could not allow him to continue travelling with him. However, before they parted, Khiḍr (A) explained to him the wisdom behind his actions.

IN SUMMARY

1. Why did Allāh (SWT) tell Nabī Mūsā (A) to go and meet Khiḍr (A)?
2. Who was Khiḍr (A)?
3. Why was Khiḍr (A) reluctant to allow Nabī Mūsā (A) to accompany him on his travels? On what condition did he agree to take Nabī Mūsā (A)?
4. What three things did Khiḍr (A) do which Nabī Mūsā (A) could not understand? What was the explanation behind these actions?

02 ṢABR - PATIENCE

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is ṣabr?
2. Why is ṣabr important?
3. How can we maintain ṣabr at all times?

MY NOTES

WHAT IS ṢABR?

Ṣabr is the Arabic word for patience. Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) has said: **"Patience is to faith (īmān) what the head is to the body. Just as without the head the body is lost and useless, without patience faith is lost and useless."**



There are of two types of situations when ṣabr is required:

1. Ṣabr over difficulties (what pains us), and
2. Ṣabr over temptation (what pleases us)

Ṣabr over temptation is greater in reward. This is because when we are in pain, we don't have much of a choice except to bear our suffering patiently. On the other hand, when we are tempted with sinful desires, we have a choice of giving in and committing ḥarām, or remain patient and steadfast, and avoid falling into temptation. This requires a stronger willpower and great courage.

Sometimes when we don't give in to peer pressure and refuse to do what our "friends" are doing, they may mock us and call us cowards. However, true courage is in remaining patient and obeying Allāh (SWT) at all times, even when it is very difficult to do so.

Imām ʿAlī (A) has said: **"Patience is a form of courage."**

Ṣabr is a very important quality in humans. It helps us through difficult and challenging times, so that we may be able to reach our eventual goal. For example, a person who wants to be a doctor, lawyer or mujtahid has to undertake very lengthy and difficult training, sometimes studying or working for days without proper sleep. This requires a lot of patience and resilience.

Nabī ʿĪsā (A) said: **"You will never reach what you love until you are patient over what you hate."**

Allāh (SWT) tests us in this world so that we may strengthen our faith and get closer to Him. Ṣabr helps us remain steadfast in faith and pass the test. Rasūl Allāh (S) said: **"I am amazed at a believer complaining when sick. If he knew how much reward he gets in the illness, he would wish never to stop being sick until he meets his Lord, the Mighty and Glorious."**

Imām al-Bāqir (A) has said: **"If a muʾmin knew what reward he gets for suffering hardships, he would wish he could be cut up into pieces with scissors."**

ACTIVITY

Recite verses 65: 2-3 and read their translation. What lessons can we learn from these verses?

HOW DO WE MAINTAIN ṢABR DURING TIMES OF DIFFICULTY?

The best way to maintain ṣabr during difficulty is to remember that Allāh (SWT) is with us and will give us the strength to bear the difficulty with patience, and will reward us in Qiyāmah for our patience. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ

We will surely test you with fear, hunger, loss of wealth, lives and fruits; and give good news to the patient ones — those who, when an affliction visits them, say, 'Indeed we belong to Allāh, and to Him is our return.' It is they who receive the blessings and mercy of their Lord, and it is they who are the guided ones. [2:155-157]

Allāh (SWT) said to Nabī Mūsā (A): **"O Mūsā, during difficulties, make Me your shield and fort to resolve your issues" (i.e. turn to Me for help).**

Therefore, our primary reaction to suffering must be to turn to Allāh (SWT) for help, and make the difficulty a means to get closer to Him.

Imām ʿAlī (A) said: **"**When in difficulty, say: '**lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāhi al-ʿalīyy al-ʿaẓīm**' and you will overcome it."

We should pray to Allāh (SWT) even when we are not suffering. Imām ʿAlī (A) has said that the person who is not in hardship is not in any less need of praying to Allāh (SWT) for help and safety than the one who is suffering. This teaches us that we must ask Allāh (SWT) for His protection even when we are healthy and at ease.

IN SUMMARY

1. Why is ṣabr a very important quality?
2. Why does Allāh (SWT) test us?
3. How does the Qurʾān describe the patient ones?
4. How does patience help us reach our goals in life?
5. How do we maintain ṣabr during difficult times?
6. Why should we pray to Allāh (SWT) for help and protection even when we are not in any apparent difficulty?

DID YOU KNOW?

Imām al-Riḍā (A) once said: "I saw my father in a dream and he said to me, 'My son, when you are in difficulty, say:

Yā Raʿūfu Yā Raḥīmu
(O Compassionate, O Merciful).'"

KEY POINTS

1. Ṣabr means patience. There are two types of situations when ṣabr is required: ṣabr during hardship, and ṣabr to overcome temptation.

2. Ṣabr is a very important quality because it helps us get through challenging situations in life and become successful in the end.

3. We should turn to Allāh (SWT) for help whenever we are faced with any difficulties. We should also remember Allāh (SWT) and pray to him during times of ease.

03 RASŪL ALLĀH (S) - PART 1

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is the definition of a companion?
2. Were all the companions of Rasūl Allāh (S) praiseworthy?
3. Anecdotes of some prominent companions of Rasūl Allāh (S).

MY NOTES

COMPANIONS OF RASŪL ALLĀH (S)

The Arabic word **ṣaḥābah** means companions. The ṣaḥābah of Rasūl Allāh (S) are those Muslims who saw Rasūl Allāh (S) or heard directly from him. Therefore, all the hundreds of thousands of Muslims who lived during the time of Rasūl Allāh (S), saw him and heard his words are considered to be his ṣaḥābah. Those who did not see Rasūl Allāh (S) or hear his words directly from him but saw his ṣaḥābah and heard his aḥādīth directly from them are called tābiʿūn (singular: tābiʿ).



There were all types of people around Rasūl Allāh (S) during his lifetime. Some were very close to him, such as Imām ʿAlī (A) and companions like Abū Dharr, Salmān al-Fārsī and Miqdād. Others were his enemies, such as Abū Sufyān. Some of his companions were hypocrites and frequently doubted and disobeyed him. Therefore, not all his companions were honourable or great personalities even though they had the great honour of meeting Rasūl Allāh (S) and listening to his words.

SALMĀN AL-FĀRSĪ

Salmān al-Fārsī was one of the closest companions of Rasūl Allāh (S). He was from Isfahan in Persia (modern day Iran) and came from a rich family. The people of Persia were Zoroastrians and worshipped fire. The Zoroastrian priests had to take care of the fire in the temple day and night to ensure it would not go out.

Salmān was made in charge of the fire at the temple, and he started thinking about God. He realised that the fire could not be worthy of worship because it needed people to take care of it to ensure it wouldn't go out. In his search for God, he met some Christian monks and was interested in their faith because of their belief in one God. He decided to travel to Shām to learn more about Christianity.

However, Salmān was not satisfied with his newfound faith. He had heard of a Prophet who was going to some to Arabia, so he decided to travel there in search of this new Prophet, which is when he met Rasūl Allāh (S) in Madīnah and accepted Islam.

Salmān was a very loyal companion of Rasūl Allāh (S). In the battle of Khandaq, it was his idea to dig the trench which saved the Muslims from the enemy. The Muslims were so pleased with Salmān that the Muhājirūn claimed he was one of them because he had migrated to Madīnah and become a Muslim, whereas the Anṣār insisted he was one of them because he had not come from Makkah. Rasūl Allāh (S) loved Salmān so much that he said Salmān was from his own family. He told the Muslims to call him Salmān al-Muḥammadī instead of Salmān al-Fārsī.

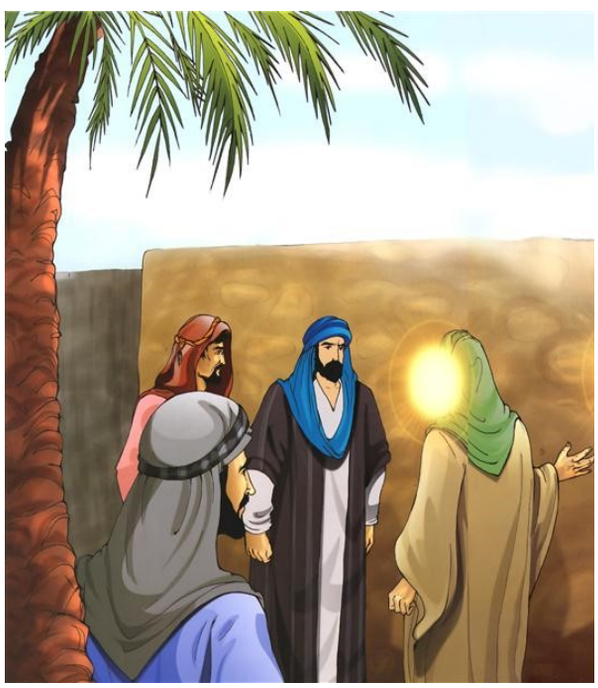
ACTIVITY

List any five companions who were loyal to Rasūl Allāh (S) and mention some of their characteristics.

ABŪ DHARR

Abū Dharr was from the tribe of Ghifār. This tribe lived in Madīnah and worshipped idols. When Abū Dharr heard of a new Prophet in Makkah who was calling people to worship one God, he decided to travel to Makkah to go and meet him.
Abū Dharr met Rasūl Allāh (S) in Makkah and asked him about Islam. After listening to Rasūl Allāh (S), he was convinced that Islam was the right religion and became a Muslim. He then went back to his people in Madīnah to spread Rasūl Allāh's message among his people.

One of Abū Dharr's great qualities was that he never lied. He was always truthful. One day, Rasūl Allāh (S) said to his companions, 'Who is one out of you who will meet me on the Day of Judgement in the same condition in which I leave him in the world?' On hearing this everyone kept quiet except Abū Dharr who said that it was he. Rasūl Allāh (S) replied, 'You are right. O my companions! Remember what I am telling you. There is no man between the earth and the sky more truthful than Abū Dharr'.



MIQDĀD AL-ASWAD

Miqdād was another great companion who was much loved by Rasūl Allāh (S). He was from the al-Kindī tribe. He was a staunch supporter of Rasūl Allāh (S) and had complete faith in Islam. He was very well versed in the Holy Qurʾān and taught it to others.

Rasūl Allāh (S) once said to his companions, 'Allāh (SWT) has ordered me to love four people whom He loves as well. They are ʿAlī, Abū Dharr, Salmān and Miqdād.'

All these companions mentioned by Rasūl Allāh (S) remained loyal to the Ahl al-Bayt even after his wafāt. Miqdād was deeply saddened and spoke out openly about the injustices carried out by the people against the Ahl al-Bayt of Rasūl Allāh (S).

DID YOU KNOW?

The city of Madīnah was known as Yathrib before the Hijrah. It came to be known as Madīnat al-Nabī (city of the Prophet) after Rasūl Allāh (S) migrated there from Makkah.

KEY POINTS

1. The ṣaḥābah (companions) of Rasūl Allāh (S) are Muslims who saw Rasūl Allāh (S) and heard his words directly from him.

2. Those who did not see Rasūl Allāh (S) but saw the companions and heard the aḥādīth of Rasūl Allāh (S) directly from them are known as the tābiʿūn.

3. Not all the companions of Rasūl Allāh (S) were the same. Some were very loyal to him whereas others disobeyed him or were hypocrites.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the definition of a ṣaḥābah of Rasūl Allāh (S)?
2. Who are the tābiʿūn?
3. Were all of Rasūl Allāh's companions good people?
4. Who were some of the great companions of Rasūl Allāh (S)?
5. Why was Rasūl Allāh's companion Salmān given the title of al-Fārsī? What title did Rasūl Allāh (S) give him?

03 THE MUSLIM UMMAH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What does the ummah mean?
2. What does the Qurʾān say about the Muslim ummah?
3. How can we maintain unity amongst Muslims?

MY NOTES

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER MUSLIMS

Unity is one of the primary goals of Muslim society (ummah) and is an obligation upon all Muslims, both individually and collectively. Ummah is an Arabic word meaning 'nation' or 'community'.

It is commonly used to refer to the collective community of Muslims worldwide. In the Quran, the word ummah typically refers to a single group that shares common religious beliefs.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Quran:

وَإِنَّ هَٰذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاتَّقُونِ

Verily this (your nation) is one nation, and I am your Lord, so uphold your duty to Me. [23:52]

Rasūl Allāh (S) always insisted on unity between Muslims. He referred to the Muslims as his ummah. He used to say, **"Whoever does not care about the affairs of the Muslims is not one of them' and 'Whoever hears a man calling 'O Muslims!' and does not respond is not a Muslim."**



One of Rasūl Allāh (S)'s greatest achievements was to unite hundreds of tribes throughout Arabia into a single powerful nation. These tribes were frequently at war with each other and ʿaṣabīyyah was high on their agenda. They would put their tribesmen above all else, even when they were wrong. Rasūl Allāh (S) managed to bring them all under the banner of Islam into one united ummah.

ACTIVITY

In small groups, think of 2 reasons why Muslims are not united, and 2 things you could do to promote unity amongst Muslims.

MY NOTES

Allāh (SWT) reminds the Muslims in the Qur'ān:

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۚ وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا ...

Hold fast, all together, to Allāh's rope, and do not be divided. And remember Allāh's blessing upon you when you were enemies, then He brought your hearts together, so you became brothers with His blessing... [3:103]

Rasūl Allāh (S) used the example of the human body to describe the Muslim ummah. Even if one small part of our body is not healthy or in pain, the entire body will suffer. Similarly, if one group of Muslims is in trouble, all Muslims will feel the effects.

Therefore, when we see or hear of a group of Muslims suffering somewhere in the world, we should feel their pain, pray for them and more importantly, do whatever we can to help them.

WHY IS THE MUSLIM UMMAH DISUNITED?

One of the main reasons for disunity amongst the Muslims is as a result of differences in thought and belief. It is not uncommon to hear one group of Muslims cursing another group or calling them disbelievers.

This attitude is wrong and cannot achieve peace and unity amongst the Muslims.



At a time when Islam is under attack on many fronts, it is essential that Muslims remain united so that they can help, support and defend one another.

03 THE MUSLIM UMMAH

DID YOU KNOW?

Allāh (SWT) has made seven rights wājib upon a believer towards another believer: To respect him, love him in his heart, share with him in his property, consider backbiting against him unlawful, visit him in his illness, escort his coffin, and say nothing but good about him after his death.

We see so many injustices carried out against Muslims all over the world, especially in the Middle East which is the birth place of Islam and occupied predominantly by Muslims.

Yet, as Muslims continue to suffer, many of them at the hands of their fellow Muslims, the ummah is occupied with infighting and mistrust of one another.

There is nothing wrong in explaining to other Muslims that their beliefs are incorrect. However, there is a way to do this effectively without insulting and cursing one another. Islam does not allow us to insult other Muslims just because their beliefs are different from ours. Allāh tells us in the Qurʾān:

ادْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ ۖ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ

Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good advice and dispute with them in a manner that is best… [16:125]

If we follow this advice and are polite to each other, we will remain united and a more effective ummah.

Another reason for disunity amongst Muslims is discrimination based on nationality and race. Allāh (SWT) tells us in the Qurʾān that He has created us into different races and cultures so that we get to know each other and benefit from our diversity. We shouldn't think therefore that any one race is better than another, such as Arabs being better than non-Arabs. The best in the eyes of Allāh (SWT) is the one who is the most God-conscious.

KEY POINTS

1. The word *ummah* refers to the community of Muslims. *Rasūl Allāh* (S) regularly used this word to refer to his community.

2. In the Qurʾān, Allāh (SWT) tells the believers that they all belong to one united community, so they should remain united.

3. We can promote unity amongst Muslims by respecting each other and being helpful to one another.

IN SUMMARY

1. What does the word ummah mean?
2. Why has Allāh (SWT) created us into different tribes and nations?
3. Why is it important for Muslims to remain united?
4. How can we promote unity amongst Muslims?
5. Can a united global ummah become a reality in our age?

RASŪL ALLĀH (S) - PART 2

04

THE SPREAD OF ISLAM AND EXPANSION OF THE MUSLIM EMPIRE

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān that there is no compulsion in religion. Rasūl Allāh (S) was sent by Allāh (SWT) as a warner and a guide for the people. His mission was not to force people to become Muslims.

لاَ إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنْ الغَيِّ

There is no compulsion in religion; guidance has become clear from error. [2:256]

فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ. لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُسَيْطِرٍ

So admonish—for you (Rasūl Allāh) are only an admonisher [88:21]

During the first 13 years of Rasūl Allāh's mission (the Makkan period), Muslims were a minority and were always oppressed by the Quraysh. They became Muslims out of love for Allāh (SWT), and not by force.

During the second phase of Rasūl Allāh's mission (the 11 years in Madīnah after Hijrah):

* **1st to 6th year AH:** The Muslims had to defend themselves against the aggression of the Quraysh and their allies. None of the battles fought were to convert people to Islam. They were all initiated by the enemies of Islam and the Muslims had to defend themselves.
* **7th to 11th year AH:** Islam was propagated through delegations sent to rulers in different parts of Arabia. Many of these people embraced Islam by being attracted to the akhlāq and qualities of Rasūl Allāh (S).



After the wafāt of Rasūl Allāh (S), some of the caliphs started waging wars on neighbouring lands to expand their empire. The aim was not to convert people to Islam but to expand their Empire. The caliphs saw themselves as kings and acted as tyrants. Their aim was to dominate rather than convert. Anyone who converted to Islam did so voluntarily. In fact, the caliphs preferred that the people living on captured lands not convert to Islam! This is because those who did not become Muslims had to pay an annual tax (called jizyah) to the Muslim rulers. Therefore the less people converted, the more wealth they acquired!

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What was the role of Rasūl Allāh (S) in spreading Islam?
2. How did Islam spread during the lifetime of Rasūl Allāh (S)?
3. How did Islam spread after the wafāt of Rasūl Allāh (S)?
4. What is the difference between the spread of Islam and the expansion of the Muslim empire?

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

In small groups, discuss the reasons why Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world today.

04 RASŪL ALLĀH (S) - PART 2

DID YOU KNOW?

Islam does not also allow a Muslim to justify killing an innocent person in any way. For example, some Muslim extremists will kidnap and kill innocent civilians and say, "this is in revenge for what the non-Muslim armies or governments did to our fellow Muslims in such-and-such a land." But this is not Islam. You cannot kill an innocent non-Muslim just because some other non-Muslims killed an innocent Muslim.

HOW DID THE SPREAD OF ISLAM OCCUR?

Islam spread around the world mostly through the efforts of individual scholars and pious ascetics who travelled to different regions of the world to share the message of Islam.

Muslims ruled India for about 800 years, but there never was a Muslim majority in that country. The numbers themselves show that force was not part of the spread of Islam in that region. Similarly, no Muslim army ever landed in Malaysia or Indonesia. Yet even today, Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world. Islam spread there only through Muslim traders and missionaries.

The Ottoman empire was a multi-religious empire ruled by a Turkish caliph. It dominated vast regions of Christian land in Eastern Europe but never forced its citizens to convert to Islam. They were given the right to live according to their own religious traditions. Greece, was colonized by Muslim Turks for about 500 years, but there is not even a sizeable minority of Muslims among the Greeks today and there never was even in the past. In fact, according to some historians, when Greece became independent, many Greeks migrated into the Ottoman Empire because they found them to be better rulers than the Greek.

When Syria was conquered by Muslims, Christians had the choice of migrating to other Christian territories but chose to remain in Syria. This shows there was no compulsion on them to accept Islam. In fact, the conversion of countries like Syria, Egypt and Persia to Islam was gradual and spread over more than a century.

Muslims ruled over Spain for some several hundred years. If the sword had been used to spread Islam, the people of Spain would be Muslims.

When the Mongols dismantled the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate and occupied the Muslim lands, they held the swords over the heads of the Muslims. Their original aim had been to destroy Islam but they ended up converting to Islam themselves.

Today Islam faces an enemy in form of the biased media. Yet amazingly, in spite of all these hurdles, Islam is still the fastest growing religion in the world. Muslims also have a strong presence in Europe. This speaks volumes about how this religion has spread and is spreading even today.

KEY POINTS

1) The spread of Islam from Arabia to the rest of the world has always taken place through peaceful means.

2) The reason why some people believe that Islam was spread by the sword (through force and compulsion) is because some tyrant Muslim caliphs waged wars to conquer lands. This was done out of greed, to expand their empires and not to spread Islam.

IN SUMMARY

1. How did Islam spread during the early years in Makkah?
2. Why did the early Muslims fight so many battles if Islam is a peaceful religion?
3. What is the difference between the spread of Islam and the expansion of the Muslim empire?
4. Why did some caliphs not encourage people to convert to Islam?

ISLAM AND CULTURE

04

SEPARATING RELIGION FROM CULTURE

Islam is a universal religion and can be practiced by people of all cultures and background. However, Muslims must ensure that their culture does not contradict the laws of the sharīʿah. At the same time, care should be taken not to portray cultural beliefs are part of Islam. This is why it is necessary to distinguish culture from religion.

When a person adds, changes or removes something in Islam, he/she creates an innovation (bidʿah) in religion, which is ḥarām. This is usually done by people who think they love Islam, but are ignorant, so they introduce practices from their own culture into Islam.

Bidʿah is to make ḥalāl what Allāh has made ḥarām, or to consider makrūḥ what is not made makrūḥ by Allāh, or to make wājib what Allāh did not make wājib or to make mustaḥab what Allāh did not make mustaḥab.

However, not every new act is considered bidʿah. According to ʿAllāmah al-Majlisī, bidʿah only applies to religion and not general matters. For example, if people wear clothes that were not worn during the time of Rasūl Allāh (S) or eat foods that Rasūl Allāh (S) did not eat, that is not bidʿah. Bidʿah is to create or innovate in worship and Islam things that have no proof in the Qurʾān or reliable aḥādīth (of a maʿṣūm) and then to implement them as if they are a part of religion.

Even though bidʿah is to add or remove from matters that are wājib and ḥarām, it is also not desirable to add or reduce from what is mustaḥab or makrūh because we are adding to or removing from what was taught by a maʿṣūm. For example, adding phrases or sentences to supplications or aʿmāl which were not originally there, is not desirable because we are changing it from the way it was originally taught by a maʿṣūm.

Similarly, there may be rituals introduced by our own communities that are not in the sharīʿah. These may not be bidʿah or ḥarām, but we need to ensure that people know the origins of these practices. The Shīʿah faith is not intolerant and does not rush to brand everything as bidʿah, provided that people don't forget with time and assume these things to be a part of religion.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. It is necessary to understand the difference between religion and culture.
2. There is nothing wrong in following one's culture provided it does not contradict with the sharīʿah.

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Can you think of any cultural practices that we often perform as part of our religious acts?

04 ISLAM AND CULTURE

DID YOU KNOW?

Rasūl Allāh (S) has said: **"The zakāt of knowledge to is to teach one who does not know.'**

THE NEED TO EDUCATE PEOPLE ABOUT RELIGION & CULTURE

To ensure a community is not misguided and does not introduce its own emotional and cultural practises into religion, those who are learned in the community must educate others of cultural practices that exist in the name of Islam, so that people are able to understand the difference and give up practices that are against the sharīʿah.

Such cultural practices may be part of ʿazādārī of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A), in praise of the Aʾimmah (A), a part of marriage ceremonies and so on.

Therefore, those who are not well grounded in matters of the sharīʿah should not take on the role of spiritually guiding a community.

Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) has said, **"Anyone who calls people to himself whilst amongst him/her there is one who is more knowledgeable than him/her, is a misguided innovator."**

Secondly, every Muslim is responsible to try and stop bidʿah in the community, just as al-amr bīʾl-maʿrūf and al-naḥy ʿan al-munkar are wājib on all who know better. Rasūl Allāh (S) has said: **"When you see one who innovates (in religion), make his lie known to him."**

He also said, **"One who smiles at the face of an innovator has helped in the destruction of his religion."**

Knowledge helps us identify what is real Islam from what is an innovation and therefore a person of knowledge is obliged to speak out against bidʿah even when everyone else keeps quiet.

Rasūl Allāh (S) said, **"When innovations become manifest in my ummah, then let the learned (ʿālim) reveal his knowledge. Whoever (is learned and) does not do so, then on him is the curse of Allāh."**

KEY POINTS

1. It is necessary to differentiate between religious and cultural practices, because creating new religious practices is not permissible in Islam.

2. Innovating new religious practices and changing or getting rid of existing religious practices is called bidʿah and is ḥarām.

3. Only bidʿah in religion is ḥarām. Innovation in general matters such the clothes we wear and the food we eat is not ḥarām.

4. When we see a cultural practice being conducted as if it is part of religion, we must educate the people doing it, so that it does not become a part of religion over time.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the meaning of bidʿah?
2. What types of innovation are not allowed in Islam?
3. Why is it necessary to differentiate between religion and culture?
4. What sort of cultural practices are not permissible in Islam?
5. Whose responsibility is it to educate people about innovations that may have crept into religious practices in a community?
6. Can you think of any cultural practices that are commonly mistaken to be religious practices?

THE AʾIMMAH - IMĀM ʿALĪ (A) (PART 1) 05

THE CALIPHATE OF IMĀM ʿALĪ (A)

After the murder of the third caliph ʿUthmān, there was great unrest in the city of Madīnah. The citizens of the city called for the immediate election of a caliph to end the danger of a civil war. Two men had ambitions to become caliph. They were Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr, both brothers-in-law of ʿĀʾishah, the widow of Rasūl Allāh (S).

The people of Madīnah wanted Imām ʿAlī (A) to be their caliph. However, Imām ʿAlī (A) refused their offer at first. He was in a very difficult position. On one hand, he knew he was the most rightful to lead. On the other hand he also knew there were many in positions of governorship or eager for power and will not be able to withstand his justice. Many of the governors in power were corrupt and would not tolerate a just rule.



The people of Madīnah insisted that they would follow none but him and at last Imām ʿAlī (A) agreed. He declared he would only rule on the basis of the Qurʾān and sunnah of Rasūl Allāh (S) and the people agreed. The next day, the Muslims gathered in large numbers to pay allegiance to Imām ʿAlī (A) in al-Masjid al-Nabawī. Amongst the first ones to do so were Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr.

A few days later, Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr and a few others came to Imām ʿAlī (A) asking that the murder of ʿUthmān be avenged. Imām ʿAlī (A) knew full well that some of these same people had been responsible for the riots that led to ʿUthmān's death, and now they just wanted to stir up trouble. However, he called for ʿUthmān's wife, Nāʾila, and his secretary Marwān to ask them if they could identify the culprits. Marwān did not come and Nāʾila said that ʿUthmān was killed by two men who she did not recognise. Under the circumstances Imām ʿAlī (A) could do nothing more unless further evidence came to light.

The first thing that Imām ʿAlī (A) did was replace the worthless governors of ʿUthmān. Most of the governors took over their new posts but the governor to Kūfah was stopped from entering the city and the governor to Syria was stopped by Muʿāwiyah's men. Both had to return to Madīnah. Imām ʿAlī (A) wrote letters to Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī in Kūfah and Muʿāwiyah in Syria demanding that they give way to the



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. The events that led to the appointment of Imām ʿAlī (A) as caliph.
2. The political situation during the time of Imām ʿAlī (A).
3. The difficulties and challenges that Imām ʿAlī (A) faced during his caliphate.

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

In small groups, draw a scene depicting the Battle of Jamāl. Explain your drawing to the rest of the class.

MY NOTES

new governors. Abū Mūsā conceded and wrote back from Kūfah, stating that the Kūfans were at the service of the new Caliph, but Muʿāwiyah did not respond.

Meanwhile, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr came to Imām ʿAlī (A) asking to be appointed as governors. Imām ʿAlī (A) refused to appoint them, so they met with ʿĀʾishah and plotted to arouse the people against Imām ʿAlī (A). Thus, Imām ʿAlī (A) was faced with a double threat to the security of his government - from ʿĀʾishah, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr in Basra and from Muʿāwiyah in Damascus (Syria).

ʿĀʾishah, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr raised an army of 30,000 and marched to fight Imām ʿAlī (A). On the way, they stopped at a place called Ḥawʾab where ʿĀʾishah heard dogs barking all night. She asked what the place was called and when she was told 'Ḥawʾab', she began screaming and crying because she had heard Rasūl Allāh (S) curse one of his wives once and say, 'Woe to the one to whom the dogs of Ḥawʾab bark!'

THE BATTLE OF JAMĀL

Imām ʿAlī (A) met ʿĀʾishah's army of 30,000 with 20,000 of his own men who were mostly from Kūfah. This was the first time that Muslims would fight one another. It was therefore the first civil war in Islam. Before the battle Imām ʿAlī (A) tried very hard to reason with ʿĀʾishah, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr so as to prevent bloodshed but to no avail. Imām ʿAlī (A) reminded al-Zubayr that Rasūl Allāh (S) had prophesized to him that one day he would fight against Imām ʿAlī (A) but he would be wrong. This shook al-Zubayr to the core. He left the battlefield when the war started and fled to another town where someone recognised him and killed him. Ṭalḥah was also shot with an arrow.

ʿĀʾishah was mounted on a red camel called al-ʿAskar. She kept encouraging the men to fight. The Basra army rallied around her camel and hence the battle came to be known as the Battle of al-Jamāl (the Camel). With Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr no more, the entire battle centred around ʿĀʾishah's camel. Thousands of men died senselessly as she urged them to fight.



Finally, Imām ʿAlī (A) ordered his commander Mālik al-Ashtar to 'kill the red camel'. As soon as the camel fell, the battle came to an end. ʿĀʾishah fell from the camel and Imām ʿAlī (A) ensured she was carried away to safety and later returned to Madīnah.

In total, 10,000 men on the side of ʿĀʾishah and 5,000 men on the side of Imām ʿAlī (A) were martyred in the Battle of Jamāl due to ʿĀʾishah's hatred and jealousy for Imām ʿAlī (A) and Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr's greed for power.

After the Battle of Jamāl, Imām ʿAlī (A) decided to transfer the headquarters of the Islamic government from Madīnah to Kūfah. This was because the expansion of the Muslim empire made it difficult to manage it from Madīnah. Imām ʿAlī (A) also felt the need to be in Kūfah because he knew his next challenge would be Muʿāwiyah in Syria; and Kūfah (being in Iraq) was closer to Damascus (Syria).

The people of Kūfah welcomed Imām ʿAlī (A) and offered him to stay at the governor's palace but he refused and instead chose a humble house for his residence.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Sunnī Muslims refer to the first four caliphs Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthmān and Imām ʿAlī as "Rightly Guided' (al-Khulafāʾ al-rāshidūn).

KEY POINTS

1. After the death of ʿUthmān, the caliphate was offered to Imām ʿAlī (A). Imām refused it at first because he knew that a lot of people would oppose him. However, when the people of Madīnah insisted, he accepted.

2. There were two main groups opposed to Imām ʿAlī (A). One of them was ʿĀʾishah, who had joined up with Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr to fight Imām ʿAlī (A). The other was Muʿāwiyah.

3. ʿĀʾishah fought Imām in the Battle of Jamāl (camel) but lost.

IN SUMMARY

1. Why did Imām ʿAlī (A) first refuse to become caliph?
2. Who were Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr?
3. Why did they plot with ʿĀʾishah to fight Imām ʿAlī (A)?
4. Why did ʿĀʾishah cry when she heard the dogs barking at Ḥawʾab?
5. 5. What were the reasons for Imām ʿAlī (A) moving his headquarters to Kūfah?

05 ENVY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the definition of envy
2. Understand the difference between envy and jealousy

MY NOTES

WHAT IS ENVY?

Envy is defined as the desire to have for oneself something possessed by someone else. We have to be careful not to be envious because it would mean that we are not satisfied with what Allāh (SWT) has given us.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qur'ān:

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا اكْتَسَبُوا ۖ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا اكْتَسَبْنَ ۚ وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِن فَضْلِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا

"And do not be envious of those things which Allāh has given as gifts more freely to some of you than to others; for men shall have of what they earn, and women will have of what they earn: But ask Allāh for his bounty. For Allāh has full knowledge over all things." [4:32]

There are three kinds of people in this world:

The first group of people do not pay much attention to the fact that someone is doing better than them or has more than them. They just carry on with their own lives.

The second group of people are those who - when they see other people doing well - work harder to achieve success like their friends. This is a good attitude to have.

The third group of people are those who are never happy with what they have, and always want what others have. This is called envy, and can easily develop into jealousy.



ACTIVITY

Draw a picture showing a jealous person. What is this person thinking?

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ENVY AND JEALOUSY?

Although jealousy and envy are often used together, there is a difference between the two.

Envy means to crave someone else's position, or want what others have. For example, when envious people see a rich person, they don't feel happy with what they have and want to be rich like the rich person. Similarly, when they see a clever student, they are not happy with their own ability and talents, and want to be as clever as the other person.

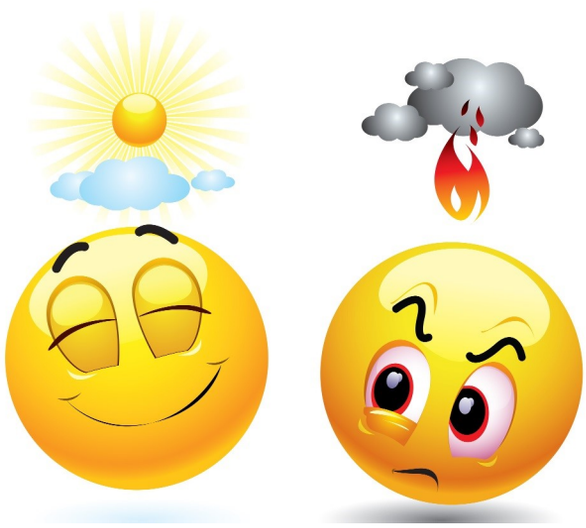
Envy can easily develop into jealousy. A jealous person not only wants to have what others have, but also wishes that others don't have it, or it is taken away from them. They cannot feel happy for others when they see them succeed.

There once was a man who had a farm. His neighbour also had a farm. One day the man saw his neighbour milking a beautiful cow. The cow was giving plenty of milk, and the milk was sweet and delicious. The man did not like it and felt very angry that his neighbour should have such a good cow.

Then Shayṭān came to the man and asked him what the problem was. The man pointed to the cow and said "Look, what a wonderful cow my neighbour has." Shayṭān replied, "Is that all, I will give you ten cows like that."

The man answered "I don't want even one cow like that, I just don't want my neighbour to have it!"

This story shows the effect jealousy can have on us.



DID YOU KNOW?

One of the miracles of Nabī ʿĪsā (A) was walking on water. One day, he was travelling with a companion when they came across a river. Nabī ʿĪsā (A) recited the Name of Allāh (SWT) and started walking on the water. His companion also recited that Name of Allāh (SWT) and started walking on the water. He became envious of Nabī ʿĪsā (A) and thought to himself, 'There is no difference between me and ʿĪsā (A). We can both take Allāh's Name and walk on water'. As soon as he thought this, he fell into the water, and cried out to Nabī ʿĪsā (A) to save him.

KEY POINTS

1. Envy is not a good quality because it makes us dissatisfied with what Allāh (SWT) has given us, and makes us want what other have.

2. Envy can easily turn into jealousy, where we not only wish to have what others have got, but we also wish that they no longer have it.

3. We should feel happy when we see others succeed, and work harder so that we are successful too.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is envy?
2. How is it different from jealousy?
3. Why is envy not a good quality?
4. What does the Qurʾān say about those who are envious of others?

06 THE AʾIMMAH - IMĀM ʿALĪ (A) (PART 2)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Why did the battle of Ṣiffīn take place?
2. What was the result of this battle?
3. Who were the Khawārij?

MY NOTES

THE BATTLE OF ṢIFFĪN

Muʿāwiyah insisted fighting Imām ʿAlī (A) rather than surrender to him as the new caliph of the Muslims. During the caliphates of ʿUmar and ʿUthmān, Muʿāwiyah had been governor of Syria and he did not want to give up his power. He had also brainwashed the Syrians against Imām ʿAlī (A) to such an extent that they were ready to fight the Imām.

Before engaging Muʿāwiyah in battle, Imām ʿAlī (A) tried to settle matters peacefully but Muʿāwiyah would not budge. Imām ʿAlī (A) then marched towards Syria to face Muʿāwiyah at a place called Ṣiffīn. Muʿāwiyah had an army of 120,000 men. Imām ʿAlī (A) had 90,000 men with him.



At first, Muʿāwiyah stopped Imām ʿAlī's men from gaining access to water from the river. Muʿāwiyah used the argument that ʿUthmān was denied water in his palace and therefore his murderers should also be kept thirsty! This was very ironic because it was Imām ʿAlī (A) who had sent water for ʿUthmān when he was under siege. Imām ʿAlī's men fought the Syrians and took over the river. Thereafter Imām ordered that the Syrians be given free access to water.

Imām ʿAlī (A) tried to minimise the loss of lives by challenging Muʿāwiyah to single combat but Muʿāwiyah was too scared to come forward. Rasūl Allāh's companion ʿAmmār bin Yāsir was martyred in Ṣiffīn. Rasūl Allāh (S) had predicted ʿAmmār would be killed by a rebellious group. When ʿAmmār fell, the Syrians were shaken in faith because they realised they were the rebels that Rasūl Allāh (S) had prophesized. To overcome their fears, Muʿāwiyah's adviser ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ told the men that Imām ʿAlī (A) had brought ʿAmmār to battle and therefore he had killed him! When Imām ʿAlī (A) heard this, he remarked, 'Subḥān Allāh! Then it means Rasūl Allāh (S) killed Ḥamzah when he brought him to Uḥud!'

At one point the battle was so fierce that the men fought each other even during the nights. Slowly but steadily, Imām ʿAlī's men were winning the battle. At one point ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ ventured into the battlefield to show off. Imām ʿAlī (A) came forward too but with his face covered. As ʿAmr got closer, Imām ʿAlī (A) uncovered his face. ʿAmr was terrified. He tried fleeing but fell off his horse. As Imām ʿAlī (A) was about to strike him, he removed all his clothes. Imām ʿAlī (A) turned away and ʿAmr fled. Muʿāwiyah forever teased ʿAmr as 'the man who used his private parts

ACTIVITY

Do a role play in class on the battle of Ṣiffīn

to save his life' while ʿAmr mocked Muʿāwiyah as a coward who dared not accept the challenge of Imām ʿAlī (A) to single combat.

When Muʿāwiyah realised he was about to lose the battle, ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ came up with the plan to raise pages of the Qurʾān on spears and shout, 'let the Qurʾān decide between us!' The plot worked. Suddenly the weak-minded people on Imām ʿAlī's side were confused. They came to Imām asking him to stop the battle. Imām ʿAlī (A) warned them this was a trick but the hypocrites led by al-Ashʿath ibn al-Qays would not listen. They threatened Imām ʿAlī (A) and insisted he declare a truce.

THE TRUCE WITH MUʿĀWIYAH AND THE RISE OF THE KHĀRIJITES

After agreeing to a truce, both sides had to choose someone to represent them. Muʿāwiyah chose ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ to represent him. Imām ʿAlī (A) wanted Mālik al-Ashtar or ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-ʿAbbās to represent his army but the hypocrites insisted they wanted Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī. Abū Mūsā was a coward and confused man who pretended to be very pious but had refused to take any side in the battle. He was once the governor of Kūfah and now spent all his time at home in worship.

During the arbitration, ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ managed to trick Abū Mūsā into confessing that ʿUthmān was killed wrongfully and that Muʿāwiyah was his rightful heir. The damage was done. The Syrians rejoiced and pledged allegiance to Muʿāwiyah as their caliph and the people of Ḥijāz (Madīnah and Makkah) as well as Iraq (Kūfah and Basra) turned away in anger.



With no conclusion to the Battle of Ṣiffīn, Muʿāwiyah had lost 45,000 men and 25,000 men were martyred on the side of Imām ʿAlī (A).

After the truce, a group of men separated themselves from the rest and began murmuring and complaining about the truce and why they had accepted the compromise. They acknowledged that they were wrong to have forced Imām ʿAlī (A) to stop the battle but now wanted Imām to also acknowledge he was wrong to have accepted their threats and they wanted him to 'repent' for his 'sin'! They were even more angry with how ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ had

DID YOU KNOW?

In 38 AH, Imām ʿAlī (A) sent his most loyal commander Mālik al-Ashtar as governor to Egypt but Muʿāwiyah arranged to have him poisoned. Mālik's death was a great blow to Imām ʿAlī (A). Muʿāwiyah rejoiced saying, "Alī had two arms. I cut one off in Ṣiffīn (meaning ʿAmmār bin Yāsir) and now I've cut the other."

MY NOTES

06 THE AʾIMMAH - IMĀM ʿALĪ (A) (PART 2)

KEY POINTS

1. Muʿāwiyah refused to accept Imām ʿAlī (A) as caliph. He brought an army of Syrians to Ṣiffīn to fight Imām ʿAlī (A).

2. Imām's army was winning the battle at Ṣiffīn when ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ came up with the idea of putting the Qurʾān on spears to stop the battle.

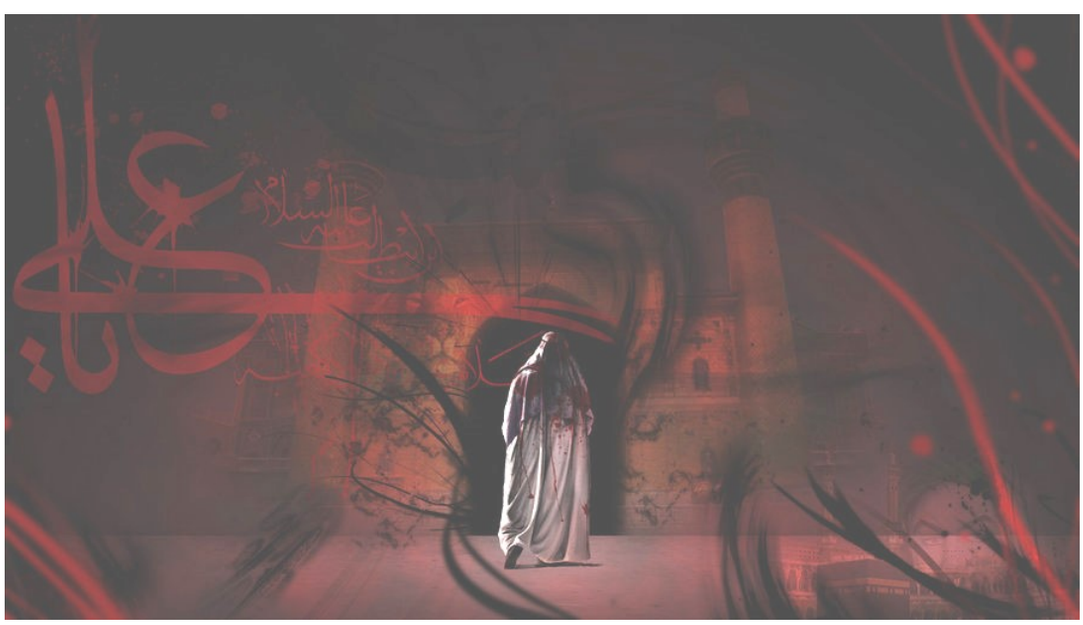
3. Seeing this, the weak-minded people in Imām's army refused to continue fighting and insisted on arbitration. Muʿāwiyah chose ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ to represent him whereas the people in Imām ʿAlī's army went against his advice and chose Abū Mūsā al-al-Ashʿarī.

4. ʿAmr tricked Abū Mūsā into accepting Muʿāwiyah as the rightful successor of ʿUthmān. This made the people in Imām's army furious. Some of them left the army and formed a group called Khawārij. They fought Imām at the Battle of Nahrwān but lost. They then plotted to kill Imām whilst he was in prayer.

tricked Abū Mūsā al-al-Ashʿarī and wanted Imām to 'repent' for allowing these two men to decide the fate of the Muslims.

Imām obviously did not accept their ridiculous requests and reminded them that it was not only they who stopped the battle when they were about to win but it was also they who insisted on having Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī as their arbitrator. The group therefore broke away claiming that their ruler was neither Muʿāwiyah nor Imām ʿAlī (A), and that 'no one has authority except Allāh (SWT) (lā ḥukma illā lillāh). This became their motto and their battle-cry.

This fanatic breakaway group came to be known as the Khārijites (Arabic: Khawārij) which means, "the outcasts". They fought Imām ʿAlī (A) at the battle of Nahrwān and lost. However, some of them escaped and plotted to kill Imām ʿAlī (A). Ibn Muljim, the person who killed Imām ʿAlī (A) by striking him with a sword whilst Imām was in sajdah, was a Khawārij.



IN SUMMARY

1. What were the reasons behind the battle of Ṣiffīn?
2. Who was ʿAmr bin al-ʿĀṣ? How did he save himself from being killed by Imām ʿAlī (A)? What plan did he use to save Muʿāwiyah's army from losing the battle?
3. Who were the Khawārij? Why did they fight Imām ʿAlī (A)?
4. Who killed Imām ʿAlī (A)?

ʿUJB AND RIYĀʾ

06

WHAT ARE ʿUJB AND RIYĀʾ?

ʿujb means vanity or self-admiration. It is closely related to takabbur, which means pride.

Q: What is the difference between ʿujb and takabbur?

ʿUjb is the lowest level of takabbur. It refers to a state where a person feels that he/she is really great at something, whereas takabbur is when a person feels that only he/she is great at something and everyone else is not.

Islam teaches us to do good only for the sake of Allāh (SWT). Any good deed that is done to make ourselves look good and impress others is not accepted by Allāh (SWT). Doing good only for the sake of Allāh (SWT) is called Ikhlāṣ, whilst doing good to show off in front of people is called **riyā**ʾ.

People with riyāʾ are like hypocrites (munāfiq), because they pretend to do good for Allāh (SWT), but their real motive is only to show off and be praised by others.

According to a ḥadīth of Imām ʿAlī (A), people who have ʿujb and riyāʾ have the following qualities:

* They rush to do good when people are watching them.
* They are lazy to do good when they are alone.
* They do more of a good action if they are praised for it.
* They do less of a good action if no one praises them for it.

A man was once praying alone in the mosque. He then heard a noise behind him, so he started praying very slowly, prolonging his qiyām, rukuʿ and sujūd so that the person who had just arrived would be impressed and think of him as a very religious person. When he finished his ṣalāh and looked behind him to see who had arrived, there was only a cat there! He had recited a very long prayer for a cat instead of doing it sincerely for Allāh (SWT)!

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُون فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلاَتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ

Woe to them who pray – those who are forgetful in their prayers, those who show off… [107:4-6]

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What does ʿujb mean?
2. What is the difference between ʿujb and takabbur?
3. What is riyāʾ?
4. What are the qualities of people with ʿujb and riyāʾ?

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Draw a picture showing a person who loves to boast and show off.

06 ʿUJB AND RIYĀʾ

DID YOU KNOW?

According to a ḥadīth of Imām al-Ṣādiq (A), Shayṭān said:
"If I subdue people in three things, I do not care whatever they do from then on, as their good deeds will not be accepted:

- When they overestimate their good deeds
- When they are forgetful of their sins
- When ʿujb permeates their heart"

HOW DO WE OVERCOME ʿUJB AND RIYĀʾ?



ʿUjb is when one feels that he/she is really good at something. In other words, it is an exaggeration of one's good deeds and achievements.

Rasūl Allāh (S) said: **A wise person takes the few good deeds of others as abundant in number and considers his numerous good deeds as few.**

Q: If someone is truly good at something, why should they not feel proud about it?

There is nothing wrong in feeling proud about our achievements, provided we understand that our talents and great achievements are not purely a result of our own efforts. Rather, they are gifts and blessings from Allāh (SWT). Without His help, we would not be able to achieve anything.

Therefore, to overcome ʿujb and riyāʾ, the first thing we need to do is to realise that everything comes from Allāh (SWT). He is the only source of all perfection. Secondly, we should re-examine the true intentions behind our good actions. Were they really sincere, without any error and only for the sake of Allāh (SWT)?

When you offer ṣalāh, we should reflect over the meaning of al-ḥamdu lillāh (all praise is for Allāh (SWT)) and try to teach our heart that all the good qualities and talents we posses, and all the good actions we have done so far deserve no praise, as it is Allāh (SWT) who deserves the real praise for everything, because without His blessings we would not be able to do anything.

KEY POINTS

1. ʿ**ujb** is a feeling of self admiration. It is when one feels they are really good at something purely as a result of their own efforts.

2. To overcome ʿujb, we must realise that whatever talents we have are gifts from Allāh (SWT), so true praise only belongs to Him.

3. **Riyā**ʾ means showing off. It is when a person does a good deed to show off to others and get praise from them rather than doing the action purely for Allāh (SWT).

IN SUMMARY

1. Define the terms ʿujb, takabbur and riyāʾ.
2. What are the qualities of people with ʿujb and riyāʾ?
3. Why are people with riyāʾ just like hypocrites?
4. If we are truly great at something, why should we not feel proud about it?
5. How can we overcome ʿujb and riyāʾ?

TĀRĪKH IN THE QURʾĀN 07

THE WRITING AND COMPILATION OF THE QURʾĀN

The Qurʾān was written down from the very beginning. There are numerous āyāt in the Qurʾān that refer to it as al-Kitāb (the Book). Al-Kitāb literally means "that which is written down". In fact, there was a time when Rasūl Allāh (S) would repeat every āyah that Jibrāʾīl was revealing to him, even as the verses were being revealed, so that he would not miss any verse or part of it. Allāh (SWT) assured him not to worry about preserving the Qurʾān:

لاَ تُحَرِّكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ. إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ

Do not move your tongue with it to hasten it. Indeed it is up to Us to put it together and to recite it. [75:16-17]

In other words, Allāh (SWT) Himself guarantees that the Qurʾān would be collected, preserved and recited. In another āyah, Allāh (SWT) says:

لاَ يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلاَ مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنزِيلٌ مِنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ

Falsehood cannot approach it (the Qurʾān) from before it nor from behind it, a [gradually] sent down [revelation] from One All-wise, All-Praiseworthy. [41:42]



Some of the companions of Rasūl Allāh (S) were specially entrusted with the task of writing down the āyāt revealed to Rasūl Allāh (S). Some of the scribes of the Qurʾān were:

* Imām ʿAlī (A)
* Ubay ibn Kaʿb
* ʿAbd Allāh ibn Rawāhah
* Khālid ibn Saʿīd
* Zayd ibn Thābit

As soon as āyāt were revealed, Rasūl Allāh (S) would dictate them to these scribes. At the time of dictation, Rasūl Allāh (S) himself would fix the position of the āyāt and tell the scribes where to place them.

Rasūl Allāh (S) used to stress the importance and reward of memorising the Qurʾān, and hundreds of people did that during his lifetime. He also selected four individuals to teach the Qurʾān to others. These were:

* ʿAbd Allāh bin Masʿūd
* Salim Mawlā Abī Ḥudhayfah
* Maʿādh bin Jabal
* Ubay bin Kaʿb

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. When was the Qurʾān compiled?
2. Who compiled the Qurʾān?

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Read verse 15:9 of the Qurʾān. What is Allāh (SWT) telling us in this verse?

07 TĀRĪKH IN THE QURʾĀN

DID YOU KNOW?

The original Qurʾān was written without any vowels or marks (i.e. without dots or signs for fatḥah, kasrah, ḍammah, shaddah and sukūn).

WHEN WAS THE QURʾĀN COMPILED?

We know that the Qurʾān is complete and nothing is missing in it. Allāh (SWT) Himself has guaranteed the preservation of the Qurʾān:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

Indeed We have sent down the Reminder (Qurʾān), and indeed We will preserve it. [15:9]

There is a common misconception amongst Muslims that the Shīʿah have a different Qurʾān or that the Shīʿah believe the present Qurʾān is incomplete or that Imām ʿAlī (A) had written a more complete Qurʾān. These are not true. What the Shīʿah believe is that Imām ʿAlī (A) had written some notes on the margins of his copy of the Qurʾān to explain the verses according to the teachings of Rasūl Allāh (S). These notes were not a part of the Qurʾān's original revelation. Some people are of the opinion that the Qurʾān was not compiled into the form of a book until the time of the third caliph, ʿUthmān. However, this is not true. The Qurʾān was compiled in full before the wafāt of Rasūl Allāh (S). Rasūl Allāh (S) himself said during his Farewell ḥajj sermon that Jibrāʾīl used to recite the entire Qurʾān to him every month of Ramaḍān but that year he had recited it twice, therefore he felt he was going to leave the world that year.

KEY POINTS

1. The Qurʾān was written down from the beginning of revelation. Rasūl Allāh (S) used to dictate verses that were revealed to him to the scribes of Qurʾān, who would then write it down.

2. The order of verses in each chapter was also done by Rasūl Allāh (S) as the verses were not revealed in order. They were revealed based on the relevance of the occasion.

3. During the time of ʿUthmān, there were concerns that the Qurʾān would be altered. He therefore appointed a team to compile an official version of the Qurʾān, and all other copies were destroyed.

There are also aḥādīth from Rasūl Allāh (S) that indicate that the Qurʾān was in the form of a book before he passed away. For example, the ḥadīth al-thaqalayn states: **"I am leaving behind two weighty things: the Book of Allāh and my family...."** Obviously Rasūl Allāh (S) would not say this if there was no Qurʾān accessible to people. During the time of the caliph ʿUthmān, there were concerns that the original Qurʾān would be altered as there were different 'versions' of the Qurʾān. ʿUthmān therefore appointed a team to compile an official version of the Qurʾān, and ordered all other copies to be destroyed. These other copies were the same Qurʾān, but they had explanatory notes and details of when and where certain verses were revealed. In this official version, the arrangement of the suwar was altered and the order of the suwar today is not the same as the order in which Imām ʿAlī (A) had arranged his copy of the Qurʾān based on the instructions of Rasūl Allāh (S).

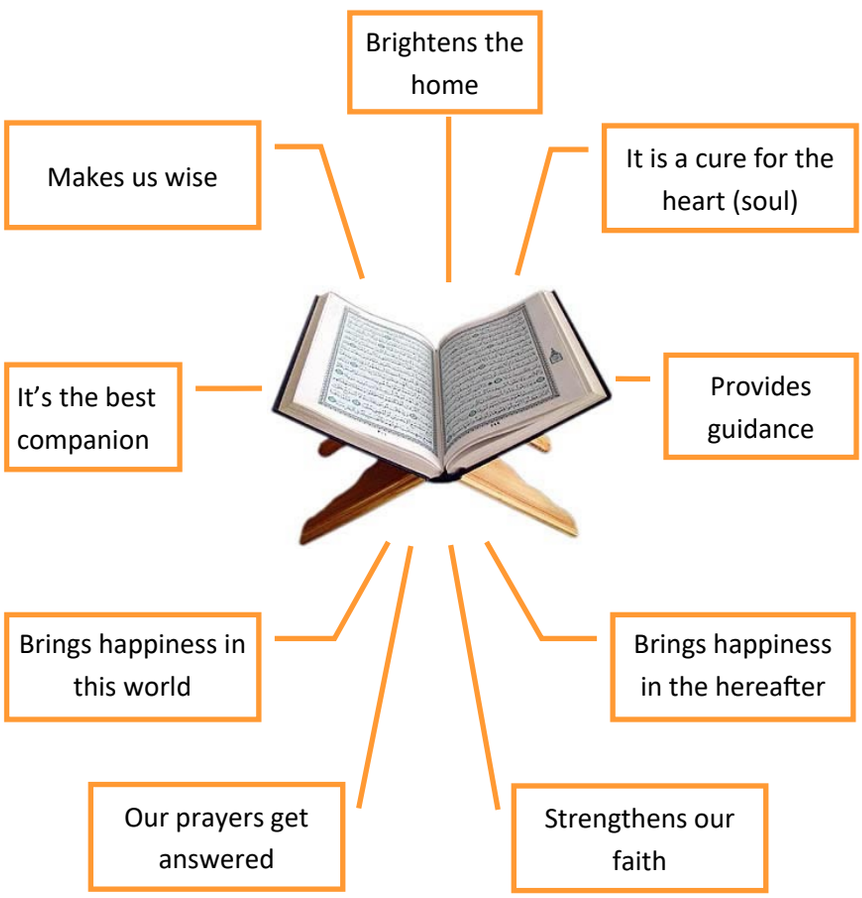
IN SUMMARY

1. When was the Qurʾān written down?
2. What are the names of some of the scribes of the Qurʾān?
3. How can we be sure that the Qurʾān we have today is complete and has not been changed?
4. How was Imām ʿAlī's copy of the Qurʾān different from other copies?
5. What did Rasūl Allāh (S) say in ḥadīth al-Thaqalayn?

IMPORTANCE OF RECITING THE HOLY QURʾĀN

The Qurʾān is Allāh (SWT)'s final revelation. It was revealed to Rasūl Allāh (S), and has remained unchanged over the centuries. It contains guidance for all of mankind, especially those who believe in Allāh (SWT).

Reciting the Holy Qurʾān has numerous benefits. The most important reason for reciting Qurʾān on a regular basis is to get guidance from it. Allāh (SWT) talks to us through the Qurʾān, and teaches us how to live a good life, as well as prepare for the hereafter.



What are the rights of the Qurʾān?

* When it is recited, we must listen to it quietly.
* We should handle it with proper care, and keep it in a safe place.
* We should recite it regularly.
* We should follow its teachings.

Rasūl Allāh (S) said:

"The best of you is he who learns the Qurʾān and teaches it to others."

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1.Why is it important to recite the Holy Qurʾān regularly?

2.What is the adab of reciting the Qurʾān?

3.What is the reward of reciting the Qurʾān?

4.What are the rights of the Qurʾān?

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Open the Qurʾān and read the following verses:

16:98

47:24

What do these two verses teach us?

07 THE QURʾĀN

DID YOU KNOW?

Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A) reports from Rasūl Allāh (S):

Recite it (the Qurʾān) as Allāh gives you ten rewards for each letter that you recite from it.

MY NOTES

THE ETIQUETTE (*ADAB*) OF RECITING THE QURʾĀN

We should perform *wuḍūʾ* before touching the writings of the Qurʾān. Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

لَّا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ

No one touches it (the Qurʾān) except the pure ones. [56:79]

We should recite a *duʿāʾ* before reciting the Qurʾān, asking Allāh (SWT) to allow us to understand the true meaning of what we are reciting and benefit from it.

We should start our recitation with:

أَعُوْذُ بِاللهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيْمِ

I seek protection from Allāh (SWT) from Shayṭān, the accursed.

Followed by:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

We should sit facing *Qiblah* if it is possible to do so.

The Qurʾān should be recited with humility, slowly and with the correct *makhārij* (pronunciation). We should also try to understand what we are reciting by reading the translation, and pondering over the meanings. If we come across a *wājib sajdah* verse, we must perform *sajdah* straight away. When we end the recitation, we should say:

صَدَقَ اللهُ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيْم

Allāh, the Sublime, the Great, is truthful in what He has said.

KEY POINTS

1. The Qurʾān is a very special and important book because it contains the words of Allāh (SWT).

2. Allāh (SWT) talks to us and guides us through the Qurʾān.

3. There are many benefits of reciting the Qurʾān regularly.

4. It is the right of the Qurʾān that it is handled with respect, recited regularly, and its teachings are followed.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the meaning of the Arabic word ḥasad?
2. Why is it not good to be jealous of others?
3. What did Qābīl do to his brother out of jealousy?
4. How can we overcome jealousy?
5. Why are some people jealous of others?

THE ʿUMAYYADS

08

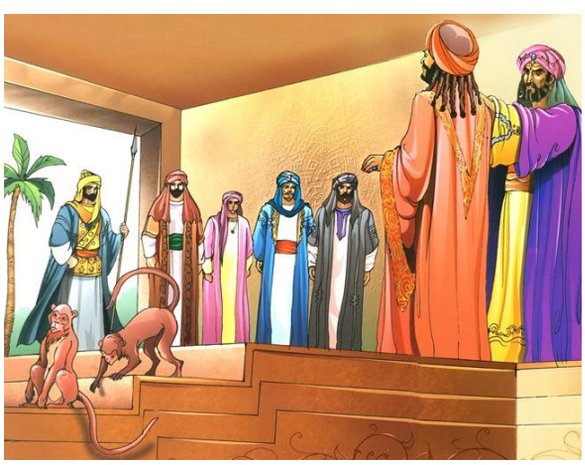
THE BEGINNING OF ʿUMAYYAD RULE

After the passing away of Rasūl Allāh (S), Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿUthmān became caliphs one after the other. After ʿUthmān was murdered, the people asked Imām ʿAlī (A) to lead them. The Sunnī Muslims refer to the first four caliphs as 'The Rightly-Guided Caliphs' (al-Khulafāʾ al-Rāshidūn) because the caliphs after them were not regarded to be 'rightly-guided'. Even though strictly speaking the first ʿUmayyad ruler was the 3rd Caliph ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān (he gave his family members positions of power that led to the creation of the ʿUmayyad dynasty), historians generally mark the start of the ʿUmayyad dynasty after the martyrdom of Imām ʿAlī (A). The first three ʿUmayyads caliphs after Imām ʿAlī (A) were descendants of Abū Sufyān and the rest were from a different line of descent of the Banū ʿUmayyah called Marwānids (descendants of Marwān).

Muʿāwiyah ibn Abū Sufyān was the son of Abū Sufyān, the arch-enemy of Rasūl Allāh (S), and his mother was Hind, the woman who chewed the liver of Ḥamzah the uncle of Rasūl Allāh (S) after he was martyred at Uḥud.

Muʿāwiyah was appointed governor of Syria by the 2nd Caliph ʿUmar and when Imām ʿAlī (A) became Caliph, he immediately asked Muʿāwiyah to step down as governor but he refused. Instead, he fought Imām ʿAlī (A) at the Battle of Ṣiffīn. When Imām ʿAlī (A) was martyred in 40 AH, Muʿāwiyah bribed the commanders of Imām al-Ḥasan's army and finally agreed to a peace treaty with Imām al-Ḥasan (A) that he quickly broke. In 50 AH, Muʿāwiyah had Imām al-Ḥasan (A) poisoned through his wife Jaʿdah and in Rajab 60 AH, Muʿāwiyah died after appointing his son Yazīd as his successor.

Yazīd loved drinking wine, playing with dogs and monkeys and gambling. He had absolutely no respect for religion and believed that the Qurʾān was forged by Rasūl Allāh (S) so that the Banū Hāshim could take power! Yazīd ruled for 3 years only. The first year he killed Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) in Karbala. The second year he ransacked Madīnah and his soldiers murdered over a thousand men, including companions of Rasūl Allāh (S) and over a thousand women were raped. The third year, he attacked Makkah, and attacked the Kaʿbah with catapults and burnt it down.



After Yazīd died, his son Muʿāwiyah II was not interested in ruling and condemned his father Yazīd. He died shortly afterwards and is believed to have been poisoned by his family members. His teacher was buried alive because the Umayyads believed he had influenced him. The ʿUmayyad rule was then taken over by Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam who was also an ʿUmayyad. He was a cousin and son-in-law of the 3rd caliph ʿUthmān. His rule was the beginning of the Marwānid dynasty, consisting of a line of 13 caliphs after him.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Who were the ʿUmayyads?
2. How did they gain control of the caliphate?
3. What were the defining features of their rule?

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

In small groups, draw a mind map showing the various ʿUmayyad caliphs and their actions.

08 THE ʿUMAYYADS

DID YOU KNOW?

After about 90 years of ʿUmayyad rule, the Abbāsids defeated Marwān II in 132 AH and took over Damascus. Marwān II – the last ʿUmayyad Caliph - was killed in Egypt. The ʿAbbāsids destroyed all the tombs of the Umayyads in Syria except for the tomb of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz.



Coin from the Marwānid era showing the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān

KEY POINTS

1. The ʿUmayyad caliphate started after the caliphate of Imām ʿAlī (A), but its roots can be traced back to the caliphate of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān.

2. The first three Umayyads caliphs were descendants of Abū Sufyān and the rest were from a different line of descent of the Banū ʿUmayyah called Marwānids.

3. Most ʿUmayyad caliphs were very cruel. They tortured and killed the Shīʿah, and ridiculed and cursed Imām ʿAlī (A).

THE MARWĀNID CALIPHS

Marwān was succeeded by his son ʿAbd al-Malik who is well known for his atrocities such as poisoning Imām ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (A), attacking the Kaʿbah and appointing the evil Ḥajjāj bin Yūsuf al-Thaqafī as one of his governors. Ḥajjāj bin Yūsuf is recorded as one of the cruellest men in history. He used to kill for fun and in particular enjoyed watching old people and children being tortured and killed. His favourite pastime was to ridicule and curse Imām ʿAlī (A), and to kill the Shīʿah. People would be afraid of even being 'accused' of being a Shīʿah. Wherever a Shīʿah was found, his limbs were immediately amputated and then he was killed or he would be thrown into prison and tortured. Amongst the famous Shīʿah that Ḥajjāj killed were Imām ʿAlī's servant Qanbar, Kumayl ibn Ziyād, and Saʿīd ibn Jubayr.

The Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān chose Ḥajjāj as his governor specifically for Iraq and Hijāz (today's Saudi Arabia) to ensure he would have no opposition from these regions while he ruled Syria, Yemen, Iran and other Muslim regions. When Ḥajjāj died in 714 CE, the Muslims rejoiced and offered thanks to Allāh (SWT) for the relief. During his lifetime, he had tortured and killed at least 120,000 Muslims, and there were another 80,000 men and women in his prisons.

After ʿAbd al-Mālik b. Marwān, his sons Walīd and Sulaymān ruled as caliphs, followed by their cousin ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. Unlike all other ʿUmayyad caliphs, ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz was loved by people for his honesty and justice. He is often regarded by the Sunnīs as the 'fifth rightly-guided caliph'. One of his virtues is that he stopped the cursing of Imām ʿAlī (A) after Jumʿah prayers and from the pulpit – a practice that was established by Muʿāwiyah ibn Abū Sufyān.

Another great deed of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz is that he returned the garden of Fadak to the descendants of Sayyidah Fāṭimah al-Zahrāʾ (A) because he believed it was taken from her unjustly. It is believed that the reason ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz was so different from the other ʿUmayyad Caliphs is because his teacher loved Imām ʿAlī (A) and had guided him correctly when he was a child. This was just like the case of Muʿāwiyah II (the son of Yazīd). This tells us the important role that teachers' play and how they can influence a person.

IN SUMMARY

1. Explain how the seeds of the ʿUmayyad dynasty were sown during the time of the caliph ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān.
2. What were the atrocities committed by Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah in each of the three years of his rule?
3. Who was Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī? What were his qualities?
4. State any two positive things that ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz accomplished during his reign as caliph.

SINNING AND ITS EFFECTS

08

MAJOR AND MINOR SINS

The ʿulamāʾ (Islamic scholars) have divided sins into two categories: major and minor. Major sins (dhunūb al-kabīrah) as those sins for which punishment is explicitly promised in the Qurʾān, whereas minor sins (dhunūb al-ṣaghīrah) are those whose punishment is mentioned in aḥādīth only.

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

إِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُمْ مُدْخَلاً كَرِيمًا

If you avoid the major sins that you are forbidden, We will absolve you of your misdeeds, and admit you to a noble abode. [4:31]

Persistence in a minor sin is a major sin. We must not think of how 'small' our sin is but rather think of how great the Lord is against whom we are sinning.

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَى مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

And those who, when they commit an indecency or wrong themselves, remember Allāh, and plead for forgiveness of their sins - and who forgives sins except Allāh? - and (they) do not persist in what they have committed while they know. [3:135]

Constant sinning causes hard-heartedness and takes one away from Allāh (SWT). Hard-heartedness is a state when a person may have a lot of knowledge but does not experience any love or feelings towards Allāh (SWT).



What are the symptoms of hard-heartedness?

- ☑ One no longer feels awe or love for Allāh (SWT)
- ☑ Cannot feel an emotional connection or cry when reciting duʿāʾ
- ☑ There is no feeling of pleasure in faith (īmān)
- ☑ There is no feeling of 'sweetness' in worshipping Allāh (SWT)

The above symptoms are an indication of hard-heartedness. We should therefore always pray to Allāh (SWT) to 'soften' our hearts.

Imām ʿAlī (A) has said, **"Eyes do not dry, except due to the hardness of hearts and hearts do not harden, except due to the excessiveness of sins."**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Sins are divided into 2 categories: major and minor
2. Sinning causes hard heartedness
3. A person who sins openly is called a fāsiq

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

List a few examples of major and minor sins.

08 SINNING AND ITS EFFECTS

DID YOU KNOW?

When people persist in sin, it makes them shameless. Thereafter, they sin openly and publicly without hiding their sinful habits.

A person who sins openly is called a fāsiq. Such a person cannot be trusted, and cannot be given a position of authority.

SINNING CAUSES HARD-HEARTEDNESS

Q: What are the causes of hard-heartedness?

Persistence in sin.

- Publicising one's sins to others or sinning openly and publicly.
- Being obsessed with physical pleasures and desires (food, sports, computer games, etc.).
- Spending too much time sleeping, eating, chatting and joking
- Not worshipping Allāh (SWT), or worshipping without attentiveness.
- Forming addictive habits (even if they are not ḥarām) e.g. coffee, smoking, games, internet, meaningless hobbies etc.
- Associating with sinful or irreligious friends.
- Not attending the Masjid and reciting the Qurʾān regularly.
- Being miserly with one's wealth and time and not volunteering unless there is some personal benefit in it.

Q: How do we overcome hard-heartedness?

- Pray ṣalāt al-layl often. This teaches us to struggle against the desire to sleep.
- Fast every Mondays and Thursdays. It is mustaḥab to fast on these days and it helps us overcome addiction to food, drink, smoking and also helps overcome lust.
- Practice muḥāsabah (self-accounting) by reviewing your actions at the end of every day. This will help you identify your weaknesses and areas that need improvement.
- Increase your knowledge of Islam. Read passages from books like Nahj al-Balāghah and Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah for inspiration.
- Recite the Qurʾān everyday even if it is a few āyāt only. Read their translation and reflect on them.
- Watch your anger. When we first start resisting temptation and not giving in to desires, we get angry easily. If you feel angry, breathe deeply, lie down and recite ṣalawāt until it subsides.
- Help those in need. Feeding the poor, carrying out a humanitarian activity or giving charity with your own hands softens the heart.
- Plead with Allāh (SWT) for help in your struggle against the nafs.

KEY POINTS

1. Sins are divided into two categories: major and minor. Major sins are those whose punishment has been clearly mentioned in the Qurʾān, whereas the punishment for minor sins is not directly mentioned in the Qurʾān. It is mentioned in aḥādīth of the Maʿṣūmīn (A).

2. Persistence in minor sins is a major sin.

3. Constant sinning causes hard-heartedness, which takes one away from Allāh (SWT).

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the difference between major and minor sins?
2. Why is it important to keep away even from minor sins?
3. Why are addictions harmful, even if they are not ḥarām?
4. What is hard-heartedness? What are its causes?
5. How do we overcome hard-heartedness?

THE ʿABBĀSIDS

09

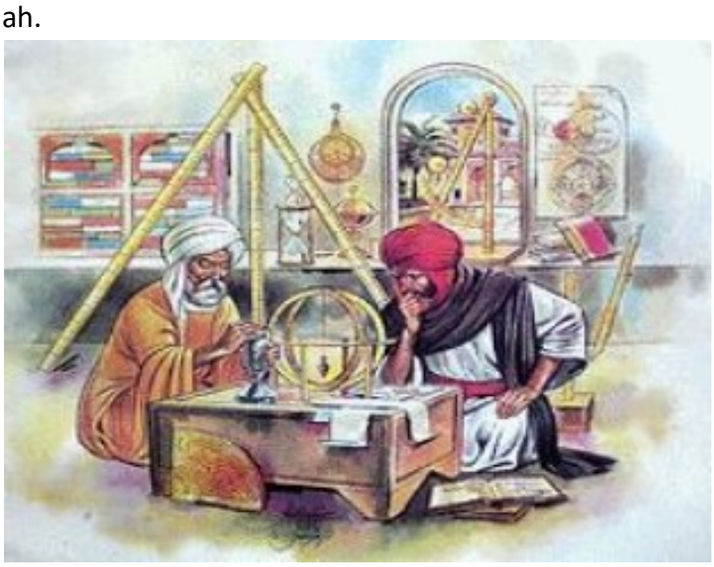
THE FALL OF THE ʿUMAYYAD DYNASTY AND RISE OF THE ʿABBĀSIDS

As the ʿUmayyads continued to show their hatred for the family of Rasūl Allāh (S) and lead sinful lives, the Muslims became more impatient and there was constant opposition against them. At the forefront of this opposition were the Banū ʿAbbās – the descendants of al-ʿAbbās, uncle of Rasūl Allāh (S). At first the Banū ʿAbbās led the Muslims to believe that they were fighting for the right of the Ahl al-Bayt (A). They made the slogan of their uprising, 'al-riḍā min āl Muḥammad' (for the sake of the chosen one from family of Muḥammad) so they got a lot of support from the masses. However, after overthrowing the ʿUmayyads, they claimed they were closer to Rasūl Allāh (S) and held on to power for themselves. In due course they were even crueller to the Ahl al-Bayt than the ʿUmayyads.

Abūʾl-ʿAbbās was the first ʿAbbāsid caliph. He ruled from Kūfah. Most of his reign was spent hunting down the ʿUmayyads and killing them. He killed so many people that he was known as al-Saffāḥ ('The one who sheds blood').

Manṣūr was the second ʿAbbāsid caliph and the brother of al-Saffāḥ. He moved the capital of the Abbāsids to Baghdād and was the first ʿAbbāsid caliph to start harassing and killing the Shīʿah of Imām ʿAlī (A). Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A) was the Imām of the time during the reign of Manṣūr and even though he was focused on teaching Islamic sciences, Manṣūr felt threatened by him. He once remarked, "Although I have killed more than a thousand descendants of Fāṭimah (A) (the daughter of Rasūl Allāh), I have not yet killed their leader and chief." He finally succeeded in poisoning Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A).

Hārūn al-Rashīd is probably the most famous ʿAbbāsid caliph. He is said to have promoted a lot of learning in the Muslim Empire by encouraging art and culture and building mosques, schools, hospitals, bridges, roads and canals. Some historians praise his era as the "golden age of Islam". However, he was no different from his forefathers with regards to his treatment of the descendants of Imām ʿAlī (A) and Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A). He continued the policy of imprisoning, torturing and killing the Shīʿah.



Hārūn once asked a descendant of Imām al-Ḥasan (A) to prove he was closer to Rasūl Allāh (S) than the ʿAbbāsid caliphs. The descendant of Imām al-Ḥasan (A) asked him, "If Rasūl Allāh (S) asked for your daughter's hand in marriage, would you accept the proposal?" "Of

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Who were the ʿAbbāsids?
2. How did they gain control of the caliphate?
3. What were the defining features of their rule?

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Draw a family tree showing how the ʿUmayyads and ʿAbbasīds were related to the Ahl al-Bayt (A)

MY NOTES

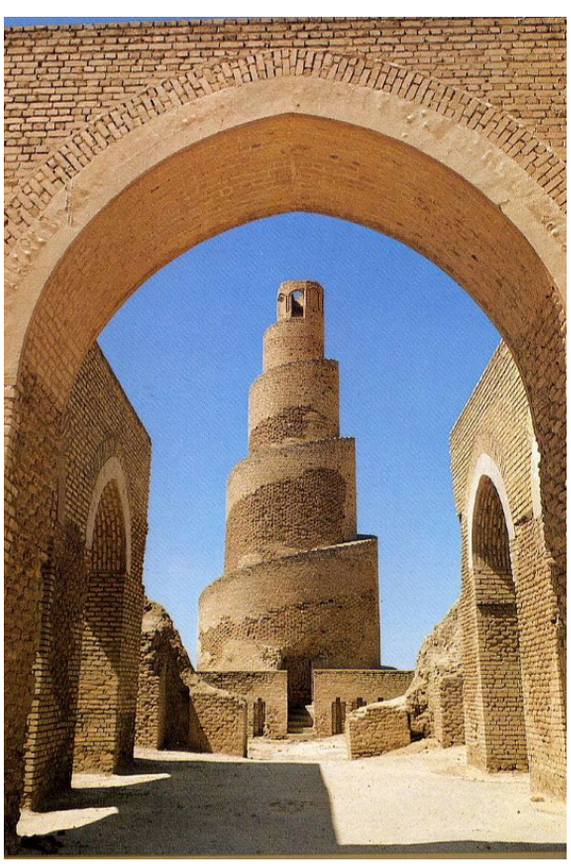
course, it would be an honour," replied Hārūn. "Well," said the Sayyid, "he wouldn't ask me for my daughter's hand in marriage because she would be his maḥram! This answers your question: while I am a descendant of Rasūl Allāh (S), you are not." Hārūn was very angry at having been defeated and left the gathering in a rage.

On another occasion, Hārūn came to Madīnah and stood before the grave of Rasūl Allāh (S) and exclaimed, 'Peace be on you, O Cousin, O Messenger of Allāh!' He did this to show off his relation to Rasūl Allāh (S) because his ancestor ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muttalib and Rasūl Allāh's father ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib were brothers. Just then Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim (A) came in and said, 'Peace be on you, O Grandfather, O Messenger of Allāh!' This humiliated and enraged Hārūn. He was responsible for imprisoning and poisoning Imām al-Kāẓim (A).

THE FALL OF THE ʿABBĀSIDS

It was during the rule of Mutawakkil that the ʿAbbāsid empire began to deteriorate, as corruption and evil behaviour became widespread. Mutawakkil did not love knowledge but loved the idea of magnificence and of being a king. He built the Great Mosque of Samarrāʾ, which was once the biggest mosque in the world. The ruins of its minaret – a vast spiralling cone - still stands today in Samarrāʾ.

Mutawakkil had an extreme hatred for the Shīʿah. He banned people from going for the ziyārah of Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) in Karbala and even tried to remove all traces of Imām al-Ḥusayn's grave by directing the flow of the river Furāt towards the graves of the martyrs of Karbala but it all failed.



During the rule of Mutawakkil, the Ahl al-Bayt (A) lived under house arrest and in extreme poverty. The Shīʿah and descendants of Imām ʿAlī (A) became almost non-existent. There was so much fear that the Sādāt (descendants of Imām ʿAlī (A) and Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A)) as well as the Shīʿah changed their names to hide their identities. Others fled to far off foreign lands where they lived in poverty and secrecy.

Mutawakkil was finally killed by his own son Muntaṣir while he was

drunk in a party in his palace. This was during the time of Imām al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A).

The ʿAbbāsids had hired many Turkish soldiers and army commanders, and after the reign of Mutawakkil, these Turkish commanders were in control of the ʿAbbāsid government. The caliphs were appointed and deposed or killed by the influence of the Turks and they remained puppets living in fear of their commanders at all times.

As a consequence of this development, the Shīʿah were able to live in peace once again and many great Shīʿah scholars were able to contribute to our present day knowledge of Islam.

In all there were 37 kings of Banū ʿAbbās, and their reign lasted until 656 AH when the Mongol king Hulagu Khan attacked Baghdad. They were completely replaced by the Ottoman Empire in 1517 that established its capital in Constantinople (present day Istanbul, Turkey).



DID YOU KNOW?

During the years when the ʿAbbāsids were busy fighting the Umayyads, the Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq (A) used the opportunity to set up schools in Madīnah to teach Islamic sciences. A lot of the contributions that Muslim scientists and philosophers made later on were as a result of their teachings.

KEY POINTS

1. The ʿAbbāsids rose to power by gathering support from the Muslims on the pretext that they were fighting for the right of the Ahl al-Bayt (A). However, once they were in power, they imprisoned and killed the Ahl al-Bayt (A), their families and their Shīʿah.

2. The ʿAbbāsids employed the Turks to fight for them. Over a period of time, these Turks became very powerful one of the main causes for the fall of the ʿAbbāsids.

IN SUMMARY

1. What were the reasons that led to the fall of the ʿUmayyad dynasty?
2. What slogan did the ʿAbbāsids use to gather support from the people?
3. How were the ʿAbbāsids related to the Ahl al-Bayt (A)?
4. Why was the period of Hārūn al-Rashīd known as the golden age of Islam?
5. What did the Imams al-Bāqir (A) and al-Ṣādiq (A) do to promote Islamic learning whilst the ʿAbbāsids were busy fighting the Umayyads?

09 ḤUQŪQ AL-NĀS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What are ḥuqūq al-nās?
2. Why should we care about ḥuqūq al-nas?
3. An introduction to Risālat al-Ḥuqūq of Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (A).

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Risālat al-Ḥuqūq contains over 50 sections. Read any one section and explain to the class what Imām is teaching us in that section.

FULFILLING THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS

Ḥuqūq is the plural of haqq, which means a person's right to have or own something. Ḥuqūq al-nās therefore means people's rights over us. Allāh (SWT) has created us as social beings, and we have the obligation of fulfilling each other's rights. People have rights over us just as we have rights over them.

Allāh (SWT) also has rights over us. For instance, it is His right that we worship and obey Him, and thank Him for His blessings and bounties. When we sin by not fulfilling Allāh (SWT)'s rights and then ask for forgiveness, Allāh (SWT) forgives us. However, if we do not fulfill the rights of others, Allāh (SWT) will not forgive us until the person we have wronged forgives us. This is why it is essential that we take great care in fulfilling our obligations towards others.

We must also remember that people have rights over us even when they are not present or have died, and whether they are Muslims or not. For example, when we backbite someone in his/her absence, we are taking away that person's right to privacy, dignity and honour. We must therefore ask them for forgiveness and try to reverse the harm we have done to them by backbiting them if we expect Allāh (SWT) to forgive us.

Similarly, if we have taken someone's property and that person is now dead, we must return the property to his/her heirs. If we are unable to find that person's heirs, we must give it in charity on their behalf, and ask Allāh (SWT) to forgive that person's sins so that we may be forgiven as well.

Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (A) has written a masterpiece called Risālat al-ḥuqūq (a treatise of rights) in which he has explained in great detail the rights of Allāh (SWT), leaders, relatives, teachers, neighbours, servants and many others over us.

In this risālah, Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (A) mentions the ḥuqūq (rights) of others including acting with others with bounty and in fairness, honouring them as they honour us, and not letting them be the first to act with generosity towards us (i.e. we should initiate kindness towards others and not just reciprocate the kindness that has been shown to us first). Imām (A) also says that we should reciprocate the kindness that has been shown to us, and wish for others what we wish for ourselves. We should also restrain others from any act of disobedience they might attempt, and be a source of mercy and not punishment for them.



OUR NEIGHBOURS' RIGHTS OVER US

Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (A) explains the rights of neighbours in his duʿāʾ for his neighbours and friends. In this duʿāʾ, which can be found in al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjadiyyah, he prays to Allāh (SWT) to give him the ability to:

* Be gentle to his neighbours
* Remedy their shortcomings
* Visit them when they are sick
* Guide them
* Give them good advice when they ask for it
* Help them when they are away on a journey and when they return
* Hide their faults and secrets
* Sharing with them
* Helping them when they are in need even before they come to ask for it

The Imām also makes special mention of the rights of neighbours in his famous work titled Risālat al-Ḥuqūq.

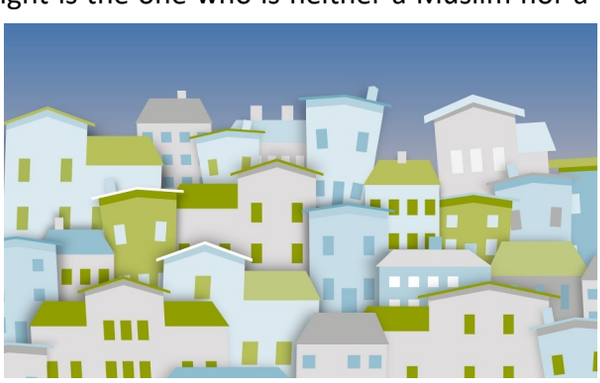
Rasūl Allāh (S) has said that neighbours are of three kinds:

1. one who has got one right upon you
2. one who has got two rights upon you
3. one who has got three rights upon you

The neighbour having three rights upon you is the one who is a Muslim and a relative. The neighbour having two rights is the one who is either a Muslim or relative. The neighbour having one right is the one who is neither a Muslim nor a relative.

Rasūl Allāh (S) also said:

"That person is not from me who sleeps contentedly while his neighbour sleeps hungry."



DID YOU KNOW?

Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (A) used to carry sacks full of dates and bread on his shoulders and distribute it to the poor. Many poor people of Madīnah used to receive food daily but they did not know its source. When the Imām passed away and the people did not receive their meals, they realised that it was the Imām who was bringing food for them in the darkness of the night.

KEY POINTS

1. Ḥuqūq al-nās means people's rights over us. Just as we have rights over others, they too have rights over us.

2. It is very important for us to fulfil the rights of others because Allāh (SWT) does not forgive those who wrong others until their victims have forgiven them.

3. Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (A) has written a detailed treatise explaining the rights of various groups over us. This treatise is called Risālat al-Ḥuqūq.

IN SUMMARY

1. What are ḥuqūq al-nās?
2. Why is it very important for us to fulfil the rights of others?
3. What is Risālat al-Ḥuqūq?
4. According to Rasūl Allāh (S), what are the 3 types of neighbours?
5. What are some of the rights people have over us?
6. What are the rights of our neighbours?

10 POST ʿABBĀSID ERA - PART 1

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

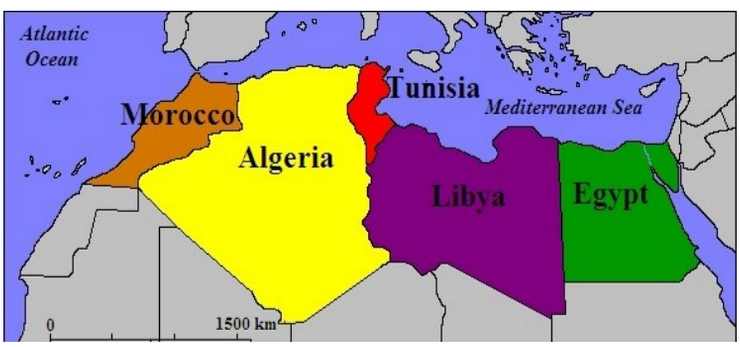
1. Who ruled the Muslim lands after the fall of the ʿAbbāsid caliphate?
2. A brief explanation on the Crusades against the Muslims.
3. A brief explanation on the Mongol invasion.

MY NOTES

MUSLIM DYNASTIES AFTER THE FALL OF THE ʿABBĀSIDS

As the ʿAbbāsid Dynasty grew, it became too large an empire to run and the cost of managing it was too great. Furthermore, the ʿAbbāsid rulers became mere puppets after the reign of Mutawakkil and the rivalry between the Arabs, Persians and Turks increased.

In the meantime, a group claiming descent from Imām ʿAlī (A) and Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A) known as the **Fāṭimids** established their own rule in North Africa covering what is today Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. They founded the city of Cairo and made it their base. The Fāṭimids were very tolerant of other groups and appointed people on merit rather than sect. Despite being Ismāʿīlī Shīʿahs themselves, many of their officials were Sunnī Muslims as well as Christians and Jews. The rest of the Muslim world (outside North Africa) was still under ʿAbbāsid rule.



In the 8th Century, the Christian Roman Empire (that extended from England to the borders of Spain), under orders from the Pope, decided to invade Muslim lands and take back Jerusalem. These attacks are known as the **Crusades** and lasted for several centuries.

Around the late 12th century, another Muslim dynasty rose in North Africa and the Eastern Arabian Peninsula called the **Ayyūbid Dynasty**. Its most famous ruler was Ṣalāḥ al-dīn ibn Ayyūb (known as 'Saladin' in the West). He is most famous amongst Muslims for his success in fighting back the Christian Crusaders. Although the Crusades could not take over the Muslim lands; they weakened the Muslim Empire and prevented it from spreading further into Europe beyond Spain.

Ṣalāḥ al-dīn also attacked the Fāṭimids and took Egypt from them because the Fāṭimids were Shīʿah. Ṣalāḥ al-dīn also had all Shīʿah libraries burnt and destroyed in Egypt including the famous library of Alexandria (north of Egypt) that housed almost 200,000 books on different sciences.

In the early 13th century, the Muslim Empire was attacked by the **Mongols** under the leadership of Genghis Khān. This marked a violent end to the ʿAbbāsid era. The Mongol Empire spread rapidly through Central Asia and Persia. They took over Isfahan (the capital of Persia), Baghdad (the capital of the ʿAbbāsids) and all other major cities including Damascus and Aleppo (in Syria).

ACTIVITY

In small groups, draw a timeline showing the various dynasties that ruled over Muslim lands from time of Rasūl Allāh (S) to date.

MUSLIM DYNASTIES AFTER THE FALL OF THE ʿABBĀSIDS

The **Mongols** were defeated by the **Mamlūks** – the Turkish slaves of the ʿAbbāsids who became powerful rulers and commanders and took over Egypt and Syria. The Mamlūks also fought the Crusaders. Meanwhile, the defeated Mongol rulers embraced Islam as they favoured it over other religions.

In the 15th and 16th centuries three major Muslim empires emerged:

* The Sunnī ʿUthmānid (**Ottoman empire**) in much of the Middle East and North Africa
* The Shīʿah **Ṣafavid empire** in Iran
* The **Mughal empire** in South Asia (today's India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan).



By the end of the 19th century all these three empires had declined significantly. The last to stand was the Ottoman Empire which was official abolished in July 1923 and reduced to what is now the Republic of Turkey. With the end of the Ottoman rule the last Muslim empire collapsed. Foreign powers took over the Middle East and broke it up into little countries.

Egypt then became the voice of the Sunnī Muslims whereas Iran and Iraq being Shīʿah-majority countries (where most of the marājiʿ lived) represented the voice of the Shīʿah.

To a large degree the Shīʿah and Sunnī lived peacefully in recognition of each other. In 1935, the **Wahhābīs** who hold extreme views of Islam (based on the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah) invaded Hijāz and renamed it the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. They began propagating their teachings and replaced Egypt as the voice of Sunnī Muslims. They were able to do this using the massive wealth generated from crude oil. The Wahhābī despise the Shīʿah and do not regard them as Muslims. The Shīʿah on the other hand have continued to promote Muslim unity throughout the world.

IN SUMMARY

1. What were the main reasons that led to the fall of the ʿAbbāsid dynasty?
2. Who were the Fāṭimids? Where was their base?
3. Who brought the fall of the Fāṭimid empire?
4. What were the Crusades against the Muslims?
5. What was the effect of the Mongol invasion on the ʿAbbāsid era?

DID YOU KNOW?

The Ṣafavid dynasty was one of the most significant ruling dynasties of Persia (modern Iran), and is often considered the beginning of modern Persian history. They ruled one of the greatest Persian empires after the Muslim conquest of Persia and established he Twelver school of Shīʿah Islam as the official religion of their empire, marking one of the most important turning points in Muslim history.

KEY POINTS

1. After the fall of ʿAbbāsids, the Fāṭimids came to power. They were Shīʿah Ismāʿīlī Muslims and set up their base in Cairo.

2. The Fāṭimids were very tolerant of other faiths and appointed people on merit rather than sect. However, Ṣalāḥ al-dīn attacked them and took over Egypt.

3. Ṣalāḥ al-dīn also fought against the Christian Crusades ordered by the Pope against Muslims.

11 POST ʿABBĀSID ERA - PART 2

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. An overview of the Mughal dynasty
2. The effects of Mughal rule on the Indian subcontinent.

MY NOTES

THE MUGHALS

The Mughal Empire ruled most of India in the 16th and 17th centuries. This was long before the partition of India when Pakistan became an independent country.

The Mughals were descendants of the Mongols. They had converted to Islam and assimilated the culture of the Middle East, while keeping elements of their Far Eastern roots, especially their military skill. They ruled India, a country with a large Hindu majority, and brought about many changes to India:

* They established a centralised government that brought together many smaller kingdoms.
* They delegated authority and allowed Hindus to reach senior government or military positions.
* They introduced Persian art, culture and architecture (e.g. Taj Mahal).
* Persian language was mixed with Arabic and Hindi to create Urdu.
* There were periods of great religious tolerance.

Babur, first Mughal Emperor, was a descendent of Genghis Khan. Under his rule, Hinduism was tolerated and new Hindu temples were built. Trade with the rest of the Islamic world, especially Persia and through Persia to Europe, was also encouraged. The importance of slavery in the empire diminished and peace was made with the Hindu kingdoms of Southern India. Babur brought a broad-minded, confident Islam from central Asia and had great ideas about civilisation, architecture and administration.

Babur's son Humāyūn succeeded him, but almost lost the empire due to his poor governance and hedonistic lifestyle. Humāyūn was succeeded by his son Akbar.



ACTIVITY

Draw a family tree listing the names of the Mughal emperors from Babur to Aurangzeb.

MUGHAL RULE IN INDIA

The Mughal emperor Akbar worked hard to win over the hearts and minds of the Hindu leaders. While this may well have been for political reasons, it was also a part of his philosophy. He believed that all religions should be tolerated, and that it was a ruler's duty to treat everyone equally, whatever their belief. Akbar's government included many Hindus in positions of responsibility. Non-Muslims were not forced to obey Islamic law, and Hindus were allowed to regulate themselves through their own law and institutions.

Akbar took his liberal beliefs a step too far when he introduced a new version of Islam, which was a mixture of Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist and Christian beliefs. He called new religion dīn-e-ilāhī. It was not popular at all and died out when he died. Akbar's son Jahāngīr re-established Islam as the state religion but continued the policy of religious tolerance. He also began building monuments and gardens by which the Mughals are chiefly remembered today, importing hundreds of Persian architects to build palaces and create magnificent gardens. Jahāngīr's approach was typified by the development of Urdu as the official language of the empire. Urdu uses an Arabic script, but Persian vocabulary and Hindi grammatical structure.

The architectural achievements of the Mughals peaked during the reign of Jahāngīr's successor Shah Jahan. He commissioned the Taj Mahal, a building which marks the peak of the Mughal Empire. Its architecture symbolises stability, power and confidence. The money Shah Jahan spent on buildings and on various military projects emptied his treasury and he was forced to raise taxes, which aggravated the people of the empire.

Shāh Jahān's son Aurangzeb was the last great Mughal Emperor. He ruled for nearly 50 years. He came to the throne after imprisoning his father and having his older brother killed. He was a strong leader whose conquests expanded the Mughal Empire to its greatest size. Aurangzeb did not support the religious tolerance upheld by previous emperors. He imposed Sharīʿah law over the whole empire and became unpopular as a result. The Hindus fought him back, often supported by the French and British. The Mughal Emperors that followed Aurangzeb effectively became British or French puppets. The last Mughal Emperor was deposed by the British in 1858.

IN SUMMARY

1. Who were the Mughals?
2. What policies did they adopt which made them popular?
3. Which of their policies made them unpopular?
4. What impact did the Mughal Empire have on India?
5. What were the main causes that led to the fall of the Mughal Empire?

DID YOU KNOW?

The Taj Mahal is a white marble mausoleum located in Agra, India. It was built by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his wife Mumtāz.



KEY POINTS

1. Mughals were descendants of the Mongols. They ruled most of India in the 16th and 17th centuries. Babur was the first Mughal Emperor.

2. Most Mughal emperors promoted religious tolerance. This made them popular amongst the masses, majority of whom were Hindus.

3. Aurangzeb was the last great Mughal emperor. He imposed Sharīʿah law even on non-Muslims, and heavily taxed the population to finance construction and the military. This made him unpopular and people rebelled against him.

12 POST ʿABBĀSID ERA - PART 3

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. When did Ottoman rule begin?
2. What were the causes that led to the fall of the Ottoman empire?

MY NOTES

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

The Ottoman Empire was created by Turkish tribes in Anatolia. It was one of the most powerful states in the world during the 15th and 16th centuries, and spanned more than 600 years. At its height, the empire included most of south-eastern Europe (including modern day Hungary, Serbia, Bosnia, Romania, Greece, and Ukraine); large parts of the Middle East (Iraq, Syria, Palestine and most of the Arabian peninsula), and North Africa (from Egypt in the East to as far west as Algeria).



After the fall of Baghdad (capital of the ʿAbbāsids) by the Mongol invasion, the Seljuks declared an independent sultanate in east and central Asia. In 1301, ʿUthmān overthrew the Seljuks and proclaimed himself the Sultan of Asia. This was the beginning of Ottoman rule. In fact, the term Ottoman is derived from his name (ʿUthmān). He was a Turk from Anatolia.

At first, Ottoman rule was insecure. To consolidate their empire they formed a powerful army and inflicted a series of defeats on the declining Christian Byzantine Empire and then quickly expanded westward.

Constantinople was the heart of the Byzantine Empire. It became the capital of the Ottoman Empire when it was conquered by the Ottoman sultan. The Ottoman empire had now replaced the Byzantine Empire as the major power in the Eastern Mediterranean. With Constantinople (now called Istanbul) as its capital city, the Ottoman Empire was a centre of interaction between the Eastern and Western worlds for six centuries. One of its most famous rulers was Sulaymān the Magnificent.

The Ottoman empire's territories were not based on national, ethnic or religious boundaries, and were determined by the military and administrative power of the dynasty. The Ottomans attempted to bring as much territory as possible under their control.

The empire came to an end in 1922 when it was replaced by the Turkish Republic and various successor states in south-eastern Europe and the Middle East. With the end of Ottoman rule the last Muslim empire (or khilāfah according to Sunnī school of thought) collapsed.

ACTIVITY

Prepare a personal development plan showing three things you can do to prepare for the reappearance of the Imām.

THE SUCCESS OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

There were many reasons that led to the success of the Ottoman empire. It was the largest Muslim empire and ruled for over 600 years. Some of the main reasons behind its success include the following:

* Religion was incorporated in the state structure, and the Sultan was regarded as the protector of Islam.
* It was united by Islamic ideology and law, and Islamic organisational and administrative structure.
* The administration was highly pragmatic, taking the best ideas from other cultures and making them their own
* The Sultans encouraged loyalty from other faith groups, and created alliances across political and racial groups
* The empire was highly centralised and power was always transferred to a single person, and not split between rival princes. Promotion to positions of power largely depended on merit.
* It had a state run education and judicial system.
* They had a very powerful military, including a strong slave-based army. They were experts in developing gunpowder as a military tool, and military ethos pervaded whole administration.

Q: How is this advice different from the approach taken by the ʿAbbāsid and ʿUmayyad caliphs?



DID YOU KNOW?

When the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet conquered Constantinople which was under Christian Byzantine rule, he renamed it Istanbul (the city of Islam).

Istanbul (current capital city of Turkey) became not only a political and military capital, but also one of the great trade centres of the world because of its position at the junction of Europe, Africa, and Asia.

KEY POINTS

1. ʿAbbāsid rule came to an end with the Mongol invasion.

2. After the fall of the ʿAbbāsid empire, the Seljuks ruled over East and central Asia.

3. The Turkish leader ʿUthmān overthrew the Seljuks and established the ʿUthmānī (Ottoman) empire. This was the largest Muslim empire and its rule lasted 600 years.

4. The Ottoman empire was the last Muslim empire to rule over Muslim lands. It came to an end in 1922.

IN SUMMARY

1. Who founded the Ottoman empire?
2. What strategy did the Ottomans use to defeat the Byzantine empire?
3. What policies did the Ottomans adopt to ensure their success?
4. What caused the fall of the Ottoman empire?

13 THE RETURN OF IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A) FROM GHAYBAH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. An overview of the key facts pertaining to Imām al-Mahdī (A), the Imām of our time.
2. How should we prepare for his reappearance?

MY NOTES

THE RETURN OF IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A) FROM GHAYBAH

Imām al-Mahdī (A) is our living Imām. His name is Muḥammad, but he is usually referred to by his titles. Some of these are:

* **Al-Mahdī** (the one guided by Allāh (SWT))
* **Al-Qāʾim** (the one who will rise to establish justice)
* **Al-Ḥujjah** (the proof of Allāh (SWT))
* **Sāḥib al-ʿAṣr wa al-Zamān** (Master of the present age and time)
* **Al-Muntaẓar** (the Awaited Imām)
* **Baqīyat Allāh** (Allāh (SWT)'s remaining representative on earth)

Key Facts	
Birth date:	15th Shaʿbān 128 AH in Sāmarrāʾ
Father:	Imām al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A)
Mother:	Sayyidah Narjis
al-Ghaybah al-Ṣughrāh:	260 AH - 328 AH
al-Ghaybah al-kubrāh:	328 AH to date

When we refer to Imām al-Mahdī (A), we say ʿajjal Allāh taʿālā farajahu al-sharīf which means 'may Allāh (SWT) hasten his return'.

Imām al-Mahdī (A) is currently in ghaybah. The Shīʿah believe that he lives amongst people but they don't recognise him. He always helps and guides people without their knowing. The 'return' of the Imām from ghaybah is therefore the revealing of his true identity to people.



The first people to pledge allegiance (give bayʿah) will number 313. They will be the most pious, learned and courageous people on the earth at that time and will come from different parts of the world. Through a miracle, Allāh (SWT) will bring them all together to Makkah for this grand event in the history of humankind.

These 313 will give their pledge of allegiance to Imām al-Mahdī (A) while he stands between the Rukn (the corner of the Kaʿbah where the Ḥajar al-Aswad is lodged) and Maqām of Ibrāhīm.

ACTIVITY

Prepare a personal development plan showing three things you can do to prepare for the reappearance of the Imām (A).

PREPARING FOR THE REAPPEARANCE OF IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A)

Waiting for Imām al-Mahdī (A) to return is called Intiẓār. During this period, the most important thing is not losing faith in the existence of the Imām. We should never doubt in the presence of Imām al-Mahdī (A). If Allāh (SWT) could raise Rasūl Allāh (S) physically all the way to the heavens for miʿrāj, and raise Nabī ʿĪsā (A) and keep him alive until he returns, it is also very easy for Allāh (SWT) the Imām (A) alive on the earth for a long time.

During the time of Intiẓār, it is the duty of all the followers of the Imām (A) to work for the good of humanity and be good role models for others, showing them how people will live after the establishment of peace and justice when the Imām (A) returns. It is therefore necessary that we live our lives based on justice, honesty and fairness.

Naturally, those whose values and character are most similar to the values of the Imām (A) will easily be able to join the him on his return. Obeying Allāh (SWT) and keeping away from ḥarām are the first duties we have towards showing our loyalty to Imām al-Mahdī (A). Thereafter, serving humanity and praying for the return of the Imām (A) are also part of our duties to the Imām (A).

We should pray for the safety and reappearance of the Imām (A) by reciting the duʿāʾ: Allāhumma kun li-waliyyik al-faraj… after every ṣalāh. We should also say salām to our Imām (A) every day by reciting his ziyārah. We should also try to recite duʿāʾ al-ʿahad as often as we can. It is said that one who recites this duʿāʾ on 40 consecutive mornings after ṣalāt al-fajr, he/she will be one of the helpers of the Imām (A).

Other ways in which we can remember the Imām (A) of our time and build a strong connection with him, include giving ṣadaqah on his behalf, remembering him in our prayers especially ṣalāt al-layl, congratulating him on happy occasions such as the wilādāt of the Maʿṣūmīn (A), and sharing in his grief on the wafāt of the Maʿṣūmīn (A). Just as we are doing 'intiẓār' (waiting) for the Imām (A), so is the Imām (A) doing 'intiẓār' for us. The Imām (A) will only return when Allāh (SWT) wills. Imām (A) is made aware of all our activities every week. He rejoices when he hears good things about his Shīʿah, but feels sad when he is told that the Shīʿah are committing evil or neglecting their religious and moral obligations.

IN SUMMARY

1. What are some of the titles of Imām al-Mahdī (A)?
2. What is intiẓār?
3. Where will the Imām (A) first reappear?
4. What can we do to prepare for the return of Imām al-Mahdī (A) from ghaybah?
5. How is it possible for the Imām (A) to have such a long life?

DID YOU KNOW?

Rasūl Allāh (S) said:

"One who dies without knowing the Imām of his time dies the death of Jāhiliyyah"

Jāhiliyyah refers to the period of ignorance. This was the time before Islam when most people in Arabia worshipped idols.



KEY POINTS

1. Imām al-Mahdī (A) is our living Imām. His name is Muḥammad, but we refer to him using his titles.

2. When we mention his name, we say ʿajjal Allāh taʿālā farajahu al-sharīf which means 'may Allāh (SWT) hasten his return'.

3. The Imām (A) is currently in ghaybah. Waiting for his reappearance is called intiẓār.

13 IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE GHAYBAH (PART 1 & 2)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To become familiar with some of the titles of the 12th Imām (A)
2. To understand why the Imām (A) went into ghaybah

MY NOTES

THE TITLES OF THE 12TH HOLY IMĀM (A)

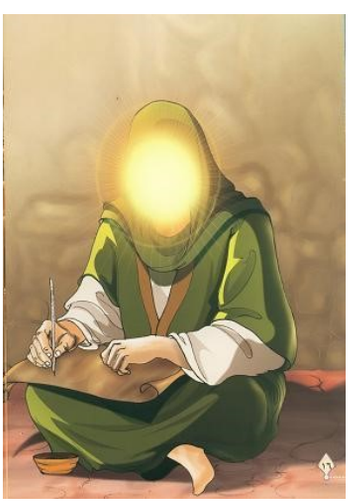
The name of our living Imām (A) is Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan. However, out of respect for our Imām, we do not usually refer to him by his own name. Instead, we refer to him by his many titles. Some of these are:

1. **al-Mahdi** - The Guided One
2. **al-Qāʾim** - The One Who Will Rise Up
3. **Ṣāḥib al-ʿAṣr wa al-Zamān** - The Master of the Age and Time
4. **al-Muntaẓar** - The Awaited One
5. **al-Ḥujjah** - The Proof of Allāh (SWT)
6. **Baqiyyat Allāh** - The Remnant of Allāh (SWT)

WHY DID OUR IMĀM (A) GO INTO GHAYBAH?

In order to understand some of the most important reasons for the ghaybah of our Imām (A), we need to recap what took place to the other Imāms (A) before him:

After the passing away of the Holy Prophet (S), the companions eventually pledged their allegiance to Abū Bakr, followed by ʿUmar and ʿUthmān. Imām ʿAlī (A) was sidelined from his rightful position.



When Imām ʿAlī (A) finally became the caliph, his enemies were not happy and kept him engaged in battles throughout most of his caliphate. He fought in the battles of Jamal, Ṣiffīn and Nahrawān. His caliphate came to an end very prematurely when he was assassinated by one of the Khawārij while praying in Masjid al-Kūfah.

Imām al-Ḥasan (A) succeeded his father as caliph, but Muʿāwiyah did not allow him to lead the Muslim Ummah in peace and he was eventually poisoned by the latter.

Muʿāwiyah took over as caliph. After his death, he appointed his son, Yazīd, as caliph despite agreeing in his peace treaty with Imām al-Ḥasan (A) that he would not. Yazīd went a step ahead of his father and publicly disregarded the laws of Islam. Under his leadership, Islam was going to become completely distorted and corrupted.

Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) could not allow this to happen and rose up to defend the religion of Islam. Along with his family and close companions, Imām al-Ḥusayn (A) was tragically massacred on the plains of Karbalāʾ.

ACTIVITY

Write a letter to Imām al-Mahdī (A). Speaking from your heart, inform him about the problems in this world, as well as your personal problems in life and ask him to help you and those suffering around the world.

MY NOTES

After him, the Holy Imāms, one after another, strove to protect and teach the true message of Islam and purify their followers. However, each of the Imāms were harassed by the oppressive rulers of their times and eventually killed.

The largest threat to the oppressors was the Divine promise of the coming of the Imām al-Mahdī (A), which they knew about. They were so fearful that they went to the extent of putting Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (A) under constant surveillance, so as to monitor the potential birth of any sons and have him killed. The 11th Imām (A) was also killed while he was very young for this same reason, but the oppressors could not stop the Divine Will of the birth of the 12th Imām, Imām al-Mahdī (A).



When the 11th Holy Imām (A) was killed, our 12th Holy Imām (A) was only 5 years old. For his protection, his birth was kept a secret and only the very close companions of the 11th Imām (A) were allowed to see him.

After the passing away of the 11th Imām (A), Imām al-Mahdī (A) went into the Minor Occultation (al-Ghaybah al-Ṣughrā). He was hidden from the public eye and the general public did not know of his whereabouts. He communicated with his Shīʿahs through four successive deputies (nuwāb). When the last of them died, the Major Occultation (al-Ghaybah al-Kubrā) of the 12th Holy Imām (A) started. Keeping the above context in mind, below are some of the reasons why our Imām (A) is in ghaybah:

1. For the protection of the 12th Imām (A): Each of our Imāms (A) were killed at the hands of the oppressors. Allāh (SWT) in His Wisdom willed that there would be 12 Imāms after the Holy Prophet (S). Imām al-Mahdī (A) is the last of them and until the appropriate time comes for him to establish the promised just government on earth, he needs to be protected from being unjustly killed like his forefathers.

2. Due to the lack of appreciation by the Muslims: The presence of an Imām is a grace from Allāh (SWT). However, ungratefulness towards this grace and the evil actions of the people can become the cause of the deprivation of this Divine grace. The ghaybah of the Imām (A) will continue until the time people realise the dire need for a Divinely appointed leader to rule over them and until he has enough sincere and worthy followers who will support him. In some aḥādīth, we have been told that the Imām (A) will reappear when he has 313 devoted followers. It is a very shameful truth, that despite the large number of Shīʿahs in the world, the Imām is still waiting for as little as 313 true Shīʿahs.

13 IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE GHAYBAH (PART 1 & 2)

MY NOTES

THE FAMOUS STORY OF SAHL B. AL-ḥASAN IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE NECESSARY LEVEL OF FAITH OF THE TRUE FOLLOWERS OF THE IMĀM (A):

Sahl b. al-Ḥasan al-Khurasānī, who was one of the Shīʿahs in Khurāsān (a province in Iran), once came to Madīnah to meet Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (A). Sahl asked the Imām: "O son of the Messenger of Allāh, you are of the Imāms of the Ahl al-Bayt. What prevents you from claiming your right (to rule) while you have more than one hundred thousand Shīʿahs who are ready to fight for you?"

The Imām (A) asked him to sit down and requested someone to turn on the oven that was in the house. After the oven became very hot and turned red, the Imām (A) told Sahl to go and enter inside the oven. Sahl became scared and said: "My master, O son of the Messenger of Allāh! Do not punish me by fire and make it easy for me."



At this time, Hārūn al-Makkī, a close companion of the Imām, entered the room and after the greetings exchanged, without providing any explanation, the Imām (A) told him to enter inside the oven. Without asking any questions, he immediately did so. The Imam (A) turned back to Sahl and started talking to him about Khurāsān as if nothing had happened. Sahl became very confused. After some time, the Imām (A) told Sahl to stand up and go and look inside the oven. Sahl looked inside the oven and to his surprise, saw Hārūn sitting cross-legged inside the fire. Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) asked Hārūn to come out of oven and he came out healthy with no burns or injury. At this time, the Imām (A) asked Sahl how many of the Shīʿahs he was speaking about believed in the Imām like Hārūn did. Sahl replied: "By Allāh, not even one."

3. As a test for the believers: The Holy Prophet (S) used to tell his some of his companions that the believers who would live at the end of the times will have a greater status than them. This is because they would believe in Allāh (SWT), His messenger (S) and the Imāms (A) without even seeing them. The ghaybah of our Imām (A) is a great test for us. Many people have failed in this test. However, for those of us who work ourselves and prepare for the coming of the Imām (A) by becoming God-conscious servants of Allāh (SWT), we have been given this great opportunity to pass this test and raise our status in the eyes of Allāh (SWT).

Allāh (SWT) questions us in the Qurʾān:

أَحَسِبَ النَّاسُ أَن يُتْرَكُوا أَن يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ، وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۖ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِينَ

Do people think that they will be let go merely by saying: "We believe," and that they will not be tested? And certainly We tried those before them, so Allāh will certainly know those who are true and He will certainly know the liars. [29:2-3]

4. To prove that the Imām (A) is the only solution: Imām al-Mahdī (A) will reappear once all types of ideologies will have been tested and failed. At that time people will understand that they do not have any more solutions and they will be more willing to accept the solution presented by the Imām (A).

5. Divine Wisdom: Although many explanations have been put forward for the ghaybah of our Imām (A), Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) has informed us that we will only truly understand the Divine Wisdom behind it after the Imām (A) reappears and we see it for ourselves. He compared the ghaybah to the story of Prophet Mūsā (A) and Khiḍr (A) in the Qurʾān.

In the story, Khiḍr (A) told Prophet Mūsā (A) that he can stay with him and learn from him as long as he does not ask him any questions regarding his actions until he himself informs Mūsā (A) regarding them. However, when he performed those actions, Prophet Mūsā (A) could not understand them and found them very questionable. He kept losing patience with Khiḍr (A) until he was finally told the Divine Wisdom behind those actions and then it all made complete sense for Prophet Mūsā (A).

In other words, the Imām (A) is telling us that we must be patient and not arrogantly assume that we are able to understand all of the Divine mysteries. We must not lose faith in the existence of our Imām (A) and use this time to prepare ourselves for his coming. When he reappears, he will inform us of the reasons for his ghaybah and it will make perfect sense at that time, just like it eventually made perfect sense to Mūsā (A).

IN SUMMARY

1. List three titles of the 12th Holy Imām (A) along with their meanings.
2. How did the Muslims treat all of the Imāms prior to the 12th Holy Imām (A)?
3. List three reasons why the Imām (A) is in ghaybah and provide an explanation for each.
4. Why can we not fully understand all the reasons for the ghaybah? Which example did Imām al-Ṣādiq (A) use to explain this?

DID YOU KNOW?

When Imām al-Mahdī (A) reappears, the true followers of the Imām who passed away during his ghaybah will be brought back to life to be with the 12th Holy Imām (A) and help him in his mission. This belief is known as the Rajʿa, meaning "The Return".



KEY POINTS

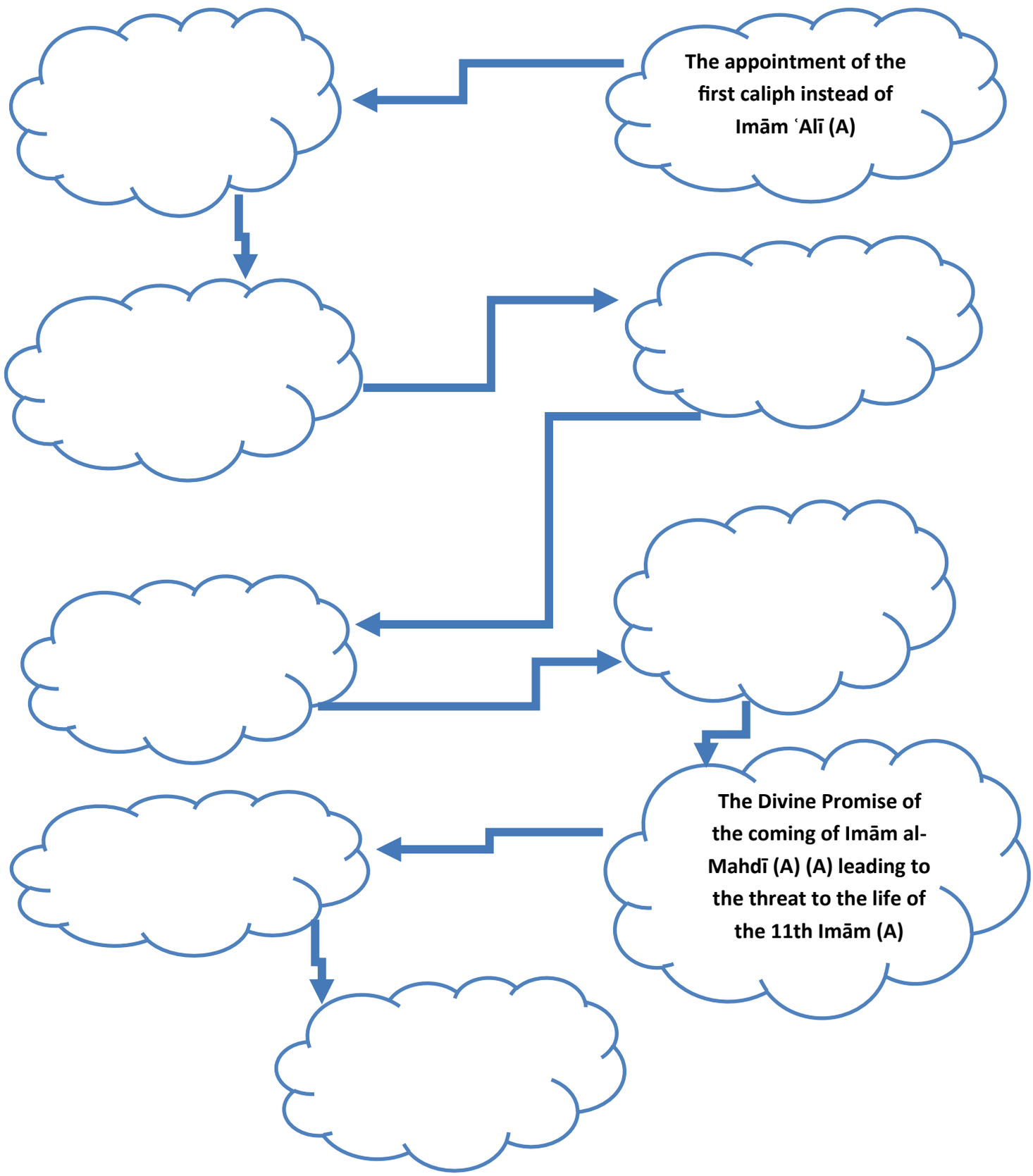
1. The 12th Holy Imām (A) has many titles. One of them is al-Mahdī, meaning "The Guided One".

2. Many reasons have been given for his ghaybah. Among them include his safety, the lack of appreciation for Allāh (SWT)'s chosen guides and as a test for the believers.

3. However, we cannot fully understand all the reasons for the ghaybah because it is from among the Divine mysteries. It is only when the Imām (A) will reappear that we will truly understand the Wisdom behind his ghaybah.

13 IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE GHAYBAH (PART 1 & 2)

SUMMARISE THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT THAT LEAD TO THE *GHAYBAH* OF IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A)



SHĪʿAH AND SUNNĪ BELIEF IN IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A)

Both Sunnī and Shīʿah Muslims believe in the coming of Imām al-Mahdī (A) to establish a universal government. Both sect also believe that he will be a descendant of Imām ʿAlī (A) and Sayyidah Fāṭimah (A) and that his name will be the same as the name of the Holy Prophet (S). The major difference between the two sects is that Shīʿahs believe that the Imām (A) is already born and will reappear one day, while the Sunnīs believe that he is yet to be born.

IS IT POSSIBLE FOR IMĀM AL-MAHDĪ (A) TO LIVE SUCH A LONG LIFE?

Imām al-Mahdi (A) is now over 1180 years old. Some people question how it is possible for a human being to live this long. It is true that every human being is a mortal and has to die one day, including Imām al-Mahdī (A). However, there is no maximum time that a human being can live for. That is down to the will of Allāh (SWT). There are many examples in the Qurʾān and ḥadīth about people who have lived for a very long time, so it should not be a surprise for us that the Imām (A) is also able to be alive for so long.

According to the Qurʾān, Prophet Nūḥ (A) preached to his people for 950 years and according to some aḥādīth of the Maʿṣūmīn (A), he lived for 2500 years!

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ فَلَبِثَ فِيهِمْ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ إِلَّا خَمْسِينَ عَامًا فَأَخَذَهُمُ الطُّوفَانُ وَهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ

We did indeed send Noah to his people and he lived among them a thousand years save fifty. Eventually the Flood overtook them while they were engaged in wrongdoing. [29:14]

In fact, all Muslims believe that some prophet are still alive even today. For example, we all believe that Prophet ʿĪsā (A) was not crucified. He ascended to the heavens and one day, he will return to the earth and pray behind Imām al-Mahdī (A).

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَٰكِن شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا لَهُم بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا

And they said, 'We have killed the Messiah, ʿĪsā, son of Maryam, the Messenger of God.' They did not kill him, nor did they crucify him, though in was made to appear like that to them; those that disagreed about him are full of doubt, with no knowledge to follow, only supposition they certainly did not kill him.m[4:157]

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the major difference between the Sunnī and Shīʿah belief regarding Imām al-Mahdī (A)
2. To understand whether it is possible for the 12th Imām (A) to live such a long life
3. To understand how we benefit from the 12th Imām (A) while he is in ghaybah

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Think of three things you can do to prepare yourself for the reappearance of the 12 Imām (A). Discuss these with the rest of your class.

13 IMĀM AL-MAHDI (A) & THE CONCEPT OF THE GHAYBAH (PART 1 & 2)

MY NOTES

Other prophets that are still alive include Prophet Idrīs (A), Prophet Khiḍr (A) and Prophet Īlyās (A). Each of them are much older than our 12th Holy Imām (A)! In the beautiful words of a poet:

Almighty God who does with ease
the whole wide world sustain,
Can with His Might, should He so please,
His proof on earth maintain.



HOW CAN WE BENEFIT FROM THE IMĀM (A) IF HE IS IN GHAYBAH?

Many people often ask this question because they believe that the Imām (A)'s only purpose is to answer the questions of the people and guide them in their daily lives. However, in reality, the Imām (A)'s role is much greater than that. The Imām is Allāh (SWT)'s chosen representative and His proof (ḥujjah) in the world. It is through the Imām that Allāh (SWT) sends down His blessings to His creation and it is because of the physical existence of the Imām (A) on earth that life as we know it continues.

The Holy Prophet (S) said:
"My Ahl al-Bayt are security for the inhabitants of the earth. If my Ahl al-Bayt are not there, the inhabitants of the earth would be destroyed."

He also said:
"This religion shall always be upright till there are 12 chiefs from Quraysh. When they pass away, the earth will swallow all its inhabitants."

Imām ʿAlī (A) said:

"I swear by Allāh that from the day Ādam (A) died, He has not left the earth without an Imām who guided people to Allāh, being His proof over His creation. The earth will never remain without an Imām as the proof of Allāh over His servants."

Our 12th Holy Imām himself has explained to us how we derive benefit from him while he is in ghaybah. He said:

"The way that people benefit from me during my occultation is as they benefit from the sun when the clouds cover it from the sights. I am indeed a (source) of security for the dwellers of the earth."



This is a very profound example from which we can learn a lot:

* Denying the existence of the Imām while he is in ghaybah is like denying the existence of the sun while it is hidden behind the clouds.
* Despite being hidden behind the clouds, we still benefit from the light and heat of the sun.
* If the sun was not there, we would not be able to survive. In the same way, if our Imām, as the proof of Allāh (SWT) on earth, was to no longer be there, the world would cease to exist.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is the exact age of Imām al-Mahdī (A) today?
2. Which other prophets lived long lives?
3. How do we benefit from the Imām (A) while he is in ghaybah?
4. What important example does the 12 Holy Imām (A) give to explain how we benefit from his ghaybah?
5. What are three lessons we can learn from this example?

DID YOU KNOW?

We are told in aḥādīth that despite his old age, when Imām al-Mahdī (A) reappears, he will look like a handsome 40 years old man.

KEY POINTS

1. It is not a surprise for the Imām al-Mahdī (A) to live such a long life. Many prophets have also lived long lives in the past. Some prophets are still alive today.

2. We benefit from the 12th Imām (A) while he is ghaybah like we benefit from the sun while it is hidden behind the clouds.

3. From the time of Prophet Ādam (A), there has not been a moment in this world, but that there has been a ḥujjah of Allāh (SWT) present. Without the presence of a ḥujjah of Allāh (SWT), the world cannot continue.

14 GENDER INTERACTION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. What is the Islamic perspective on gender interaction?
2. What sort of relationships should we develop with others?
3. What sort of relationships should we keep away from?
4. What is zinā? Why is it such a great sin?

MY NOTES

ACTIVITY

Is it appropriate for Muslims to have very close friends of the opposite gender?

ZINĀ - A MAJOR SIN IN ISLAM

Islam views sins related to sexual behaviour as the result of a lack of chastity and modesty, or put simply, a lack of shame (ḥayāʾ). In the Western world, chastity is defined only as sexual abstinence before marriage, but the word "chaste" and "chastity" originally meant "pure" or "virtuous". A Muslim should be chaste in speech, dress, interaction with others, as well as - of course - in their sexual behaviour.

Islam puts restraints on the intermingling of the sexes to prevent sexual promiscuity. It is not permissible for a man and woman to be together in private if there is a possibility of sexual temptation. It is forbidden to look at someone of the opposite sex with desire, unless, of course, one is married to him/her.

In English, fornication refers to sexual relations between an unmarried man and woman, whereas adultery is when a married person has sexual relations with someone other than his/her spouse. In Islam, both are ḥarām and major sins and referred to by one word – zinā. The Qurʾān forbids it strictly:

وَلاَ تَقْرَبُوا الزِّنَى إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلاً

Do not go near zinā, it is indeed an indecency and an evil way. ([17:32]

Rasūl Allāh (S) has warned us: **"Zinā has three punishments in this world and three in the Hereafter. In this world, people who commit zinā lose their respect, their life is shortened and they become poor. In the Hereafter, they will have a harsh trial (hisāb), Allāh will be wrathful with them and they will live in Hell forever."**

Zinā starts with looking at a non-maḥram with lust. This is called zinā of the eyes. Then it is followed by thinking sinful thoughts (zinā of the mind), followed by speaking sinful things or going towards it. Allāh (SWT) tells us not to even go near zinā, let alone commit this sin. This means that we should keep away from even looking at or chatting to a non-maḥram with lust, as it is the first step towards zinā.

Some of the many reasons why Islam forbids zinā is because it discourages people from getting married, brings many social evils into society, breaks families, denies children their rightful inheritance, causes the spread of sexually-transmitted infections (STIs), promotes prostitution and generally drives human beings to become immoral and live like animals.

HOW DO WE REMAIN CHASTE?



Remaining chaste in today's world is not easy because physical pleasure is greatly emphasised and sex is thrown at us everywhere – in newspapers, TV, computer games, the internet, advertising, magazines and so on. We live in a Godless society where religion has no value to people and no one sees a problem with having a girlfriend/boyfriend, dressing indecently, drinking alcohol, listening to music, swearing, partying and just making physical pleasure the goal of life.

We must remember that the desire for a companion and spouse is not evil or wrong. It is natural and Islam has provided marriage as the means to acquiring it. One of the ways of combating the indecency all around us is to be married. Another way to be chaste is to observe ḥijāb especially when interacting with the opposite gender. Ḥijāb for men is to lower their gaze, to dress modestly, to speak with God-consciousness and not flirt with the opposite gender. Ḥijāb for women is also to dress decently with loose clothing as per the sharīʿah, not interact excessively with the opposite gender, whether in person or online.

We can also maintain chastity by avoiding places where we know we will be tempted to commit ḥarām acts. However, being chaste does not mean isolating oneself from society. We can get involved in society whilst ensuring we remain chaste by keeping our thoughts clean and acquiring taqwā. Chastity starts with being pure in thought and heart. We should always be aware that Allāh (SWT) is watching us and always ask ourselves this question: **If Imām al-Mahdī (A) was with me here today, would he be proud to call me his Shīʿah? What would my Imām think of me if he saw me doing this right now?**

Sometimes people are chaste in their speech and dress, but behave indecently when chatting with friends on the phone or computer. This is because it is easier to "hide" behind the keyboard, webcam, text messages etc. However, we must never forget that Allāh (SWT) watches everything we do.

DID YOU KNOW?

Imām ʿAlī (A) has said, **"Beware of sinning when you are alone because at that time, the Judge is also the only Witness!"**

KEY POINTS

1. Islam puts great emphasis on social harmony. To maintain this harmony, it is necessary for everyone to remain chaste. Having ḥayāʾ (shame) helps one keep away from sexual evils.

2. Zinā refers to adultery or fornication. This is when a person commits a sexual act with someone he/she is not married to.

3. Allāh (SWT) tells us not to even go near zinā, meaning that we should not do anything that may lead to zinā. This includes unnecessary chatting with someone non-maḥram on the computer or phone.

IN SUMMARY

1. What is ḥayāʾ? How does a person with ḥayāʾ behave?
2. What is zinā? Why is it such a great sin?
3. What are the effects of zinā on a family?
4. What are the effects of zinā on society?
5. What can we do to keep away from sexual evils?

15 MARRIAGE IN ISLAM

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. An introduction to marriage in Islam
2. The importance and benefits of marriage
3. How to select a good spouse

MY NOTES

MARRIAGE IS THE SUNNAH OF RASŪL ALLĀH (S)

Islam teaches us to channel all our natural desires, in a positive way and within the bounds of the sharīʿah. Islam is against the total suppression of the sexual urge and condemns celibacy and monasticism. Every Muslim should therefore marry early to channel sexual energy in a positive way. In fact, marriage becomes wājib if by not getting married a person is likely to engage in unlawful acts.

Rasūl Allāh (S) has said:

اَلنِّكَاحُ مِنْ سُنَّتِيْ فَمَنْ رَغِبَ عَنْ سُنَّتِيْ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّيْ

Marriage is my sunnah (practice), one who leaves this sunnah is not one of my followers.

Just as some foods are permissible and others forbidden in Islam, some sexual activities are permissible and others forbidden. The only legitimate way of satisfying one's sexual desires is with one's spouse. All other forms of sexual activity including adultery, homosexuality, and masturbation are forbidden and are major sins.

Muslims should also not flirt when interacting with non-maḥram people. It is forbidden to try to seduce someone, in whatever way (in person, via internet chat or email). Muslim men and women should be models of chastity and dignity. This does not mean, however, that Muslims should be confined to their homes and not interact in society. They should study, work and participate in all social and political activities, but without infringing any of the laws of the sharīʿah. In an Islamic marriage, a solemn contract is made between a man and a woman to become life-partners and to fulfil all the responsibilities and enjoy those rights that the sharīʿah has laid down for them. An ʿaqd of nikāḥ (marriage contract) is recited to formalise the marriage.

The mahr (also called ṣadāq) is the wājib wedding gift that the bridegroom gives the bride. It is a token of friendship, a mark of honour for the woman, and security for her. It becomes the property of the wife and she can use it as she pleases. Anything that has value can be given as mahr. There is no specified amount but it should not be so high as to be beyond the financial status of the husband. When you feel you are ready for marriage, discuss with your parents or an older relative you trust (who can speak to your parents on your behalf) about your need to get married sooner.

This is especially true if your parents expect you to first complete university, find a job, etc. Parents usually want their children to show a sense of responsibility before they get married. Learn to be responsible and mature so that you can take on the responsibility of your own family sooner.

ACTIVITY

Make a list of things that you feel are important to you when selecting a spouse.

WHAT QUALITIES SHOULD WE LOOK FOR IN A SPOUSE?

The most important quality that one should look for in a spouse is taqwā (God-consciousness). One who has taqwā will never violate the limits of religion and therefore will not be unjust to his or her spouse. If a woman receives a proposal from a man who is not wealthy but is God-conscious, prays the daily ṣalāh, comes from a respectable family and is not a reputed sinner, the proposal should not be rejected only because of his financial situation.

Some aḥādīth relate that the cause of corruption and mischief in society is when women reject the proposal of decent men or demand high sums of dowry (mahr).

Allāh (SWT) says in the Qurʾān:

وَأَنْكِحُوا الْأَيَامَىٰ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّالِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَإِمَائِكُمْ ۚ إِنْ يَكُونُوا فُقَرَاءَ يُغْنِهِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

Marry off those who are single among you and the upright... If they are poor, Allāh will enrich them out of His grace, and Allāh is all-bounteous, all-knowing. [24:32]

What sustains a marriage in the long-term is not physical looks or wealth, but piety, kindness of heart, patience, love and hard work. What often causes a marriage to break is selfishness, laziness, intolerance, impatience, sinful habits and disregard for Allāh (SWT) and religion, even when there is beauty and wealth.

A pious and religious spouse who is intelligent and not lazy will be a positive influence on one's progeny; and the children from such a marriage will be productive and useful members of their society. As a rule of thumb, one should seek a life partner who is as close to his or her self in religious values and social status. There is also no harm is seeking someone who is closer in financial status, education, culture and even physical stature as such closeness and compatibility only helps the new marital relationship adjust and thrive more easily.

IN SUMMARY

1. Why does Islam place a lot of emphasis on marriage?
2. What has Rasūl Allāh (S) said about marriage?
3. Why should one not reject the marriage proposal of a good person purely based on his financial status?
4. What qualities should we look for when selecting a spouse?

DID YOU KNOW?

Divorce is permissible but highly discouraged and disliked in Islam. One should not take the decision of selecting a spouse lightly as an incompatible choice of life partner often leads to divorce.



KEY POINTS

1. Islam highly encourages and recommends marriage because it is the ḥalāl way to fulfil one's sexual desires and start a family.

2. Rasūl Allāh (S) has said that marriage is from his sunnah, and whoever leaves this sunnah is not one of his followers.

3. In an Islamic marriage, an ʿaqd of nikāḥ is recited to formalise the marriage, and the husband has to give a gift called "mahr" to his bride.